

**Canadian Theological Society
Virtual Conference 2021
University of Alberta
May 31 – June 3, 2021**

Monday, May 31	
10:00 – 10:05 am MT	Welcome (William Sweet)
10:05 – 10:55 am	Panel 1: “Bridging Divides: Reimagining Christianity and Culture” Presenters: Hanbyul Park, Néstor Medina, Becca Whitla
11:00 – 11:50 am	Panel 2: “Bridging Divides: Engaging Secular Society” Presenters: Sarah Johnson, Gordon Rixon, Kelly Vanbuskirk
12:00 – 12:50 pm	Special Session: “The State of Theological Education” Presenters: Marie Green, Edwin Aponte, Christopher Duncanson-Hales Organized by CTS Dignity, Equity and Justice Committee
1:00 – 1:50 pm	Panel 3: “Unsettling Northern Relations: Theology and Place” Presenters: Ray Aldred, Sarah Brubaker, Mary Duba, Ryan Turnbull
2:00 – 2:50 pm	Panel 4: “Bridging Divides: Resistance and Bridging Ethics” Presenters: Channele Robinson, Monica Marcelli-Chu, Hyung Jin Kim Sun
3:00 – 3:50 pm	Cocktail Hour / World Café

Tuesday, June 1	
10:00 – 10:50 am MT	Panel 5: “Bridging Divides: Theological Responses to Indigenous Witness” Presenters: Carolyn Mackie, Fiona Li, Jane Barter, Jean-Pierre Fortin
11:00 – 11:50 am	Jay Newman Lecture Ronald Kuipers
12:00 – 12:50 pm	Networking Lunch

1:00 – 1:50 pm	Panel 6: “Bridging Divides: Community Building Politics” Presenters: Nicholas Olkovich, Stephen Martin, Sasha Kovalchuk
2:00 – 2:50 pm	Panel 7: “Unsettling Northern Relations: Eschatological Perspectives” Presenters: Don Schweitzer, Peter Slater, Jon Coutts, Joshua Zentner-Barrett

Wednesday, June 2

10:00 – 10:50 am MT	Panel 8: “Bridging Divides: Pathways to Healing and Reconciliation” Presenters: David Byrne, Kate McCray, Christine Jamieson
11:00 – 11:50 am	Panel 9: “Bridging Divides: Rethinking Unity, City Planning and Pilgrimage” Presenters: Christopher Hrynkow, Abigail Lofte, Rob Fennell
12:00 – 12:50 pm	Religious Studies and Theology Brainstorming
1:00 – 1:50 pm	Panel 10: “Unsettling Northern Relations: Indigenous Experience/Theology of Creation” Presenters: Brett Potter, Michel Andraos, Robert Timmins
2:00 – 4:00 pm	AGM

Thursday, June 3

10:00 – 10:50 am MT	Panel 11: “Bridging Divides: Decolonizing Theology” Presenters: Zane Chu, Karola Radler, Brian Bajzek
11:00 – 11:50 am	Panel 12: “Bridging Divides: Inclusive Ecclesiologies” Presenters: Liam Farrer, Eun Suk Oh, Steven Studebaker
12:00 – 12:50 pm	Special Session: “ Circles of Conversation: Celebrating Expansive Imagination in the Practice of Theology ” Presenters: Jean-Pierre Fortin, Jane Barter, Catherine Caufield Doris Kieser, Nick Olkovich, Michael Buttrey Chanelle Robinson, Darren Dias, Abigail Lofte Catherine MacLean
1:00 – 1:50 pm	Presidential Address William Sweet

1:50 – 2:00 pm	Closing Remarks
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Abstracts

Panel 1:

Hanbyul Park, Emmanuel College

Who Makes Just Hospitality? Three Types of Moral Agency and Their Contributions to De-Colonizing and Re-Humanizing Christian Hospitality in the Canadian Multicultural Context

Hospitality has been encouraged to be exercised in the Canadian context in order to support multiculturalism that highly values diversity. Christian hospitality, as a way of supporting the Canadian multiculturalism by white settler Christians, has consciously or unconsciously helped to deprive Indigenous peoples of their original hostship and perpetuate the vulnerable statuses of African and Asian immigrants. Based on the shared understanding that Christian hospitality is the colonized notion, I will argue that it needs negotiations for the sake of justice as building right relationships in this presentation. Moral agency, the notion of the personhood that makes sense of ourselves as moral beings who are created in the image of God and act morally, will be mainly focused; more exactly, how diverse understandings of moral agency affect re/conceptualizing Christian hospitality will be paid attention in this presentation. I will provide three types of moral agency. The first type of moral agency is autonomy, which is deeply rooted in the Western moral tradition. I will argue that the first type of moral agency not only affects the moral formation of white settlers as divinely entitled pioneers but also justify the colonial process of othering Indigenous peoples as the inferior or the uncivilized. Here, I will give an example of the residential school system to educate Indigenous children in a way that assimilates them to be autonomous like white settlers. The second and third types of moral agency will be explained as feminist and womanist criticisms to the universal understanding of moral agency with autonomy; the second type envisions relational agents and the third one seeks resilient agency. I will provide two alternative types of moral agency, by drawing feminist and womanist theological resources that shows that moral agency is re/formed in its own context, to argue that Indigenous peoples, African and Asian immigrants should be treated as moral agents who are differently formed from white settlers and take the shared moral responsibility for constructing more hospitable society. I will also argue that appropriating diverse type of moral agency to the study of Christian hospitality in the Canadian multicultural context is necessary for decolonizing and re-humanizing Christian hospitality in that the dignity of all peoples is recognized and affirmed through multiple practices of welcoming. In conclusion, I will envisage multiculturalism as a stepping-stone to moral pluralism in the Canadian context.

Néstor Medina, Emmanuel College

Morality, the Church and Ethnoracial Relations in Colonial Latin America

This paper is part of a larger archival research that I have been conducting for the last 15 years concerning the connections between ethnoracial relation and religious faith in colonial Latin America. It focuses on the ways in which Christianity (mainly Catholic Christianity) was instrumental in determining ethnoracial differences (Indigenous, African, and Europeans), preserving racialized hierarchies, supporting racialized social structures, and colluding with the Spanish and Portuguese in managing morality inspired by notions of purity of blood and internal sense of ethnoracial and religious superiority. Particular attention is given to how mixed children (of Indigenous, African and Spaniards) in colonial Latin America faced great social and political limitations including the ability to aspire to the priesthood because of the perception of being

inadequate to handle the sacred. To claim that the Catholic Church, in fact, Christians were involved in the Spanish conquests is nothing new. We know that the Catholic church was most invested in spreading the Gospel. In so doing, it failed to see the inherent contradictions of forced evangelization through priests becoming *encomenderos*, catechists in the *reducciones* (Indigenous reservations), or by priests accompanying the Spanish or Portuguese colonizing ventures and blessing conquering expeditions inland. But how did ethnoracial differences emerge and cement in the Americas in the colonial societies? The records show that the Spanish arrived to the Americas with a sense of hierarchy of ethnoracial groups on the basis of racialized honour and status, generational faith, legitimacy by birth in wedlock, which is commonly referred to as purity of blood. As the Spanish arrived, soon after mixed or *mestizo/a* children began to be born. A number of dynamics started to develop. The presence of *mestizos/as* brought an added instability. Most *mestizos/as* were the direct result of the Spanish (and Portuguese) invasions; they were the material evidence of the brutal violation of Indigenous female bodies and feminization of Indigenous males resulting from colonization. The colonial societies were not prepared for them! As this new group of mixed children grew, so did the social and political structural limitations of colonial societies in preventing them from having access to the social privileges reserved for the Spanish. Even in the church, the development of a morality of intermixture developed which insisted on preventing mixed descendants from becoming priests or even handling the sacred. It is this aspect of my research which I intend to talk about in this brief presentation.

Becca Whitla, St. Andrew's College

The Empire Sings: Confronting Coloniality in Hymns

Much of the repertoire and values of the church music inheritance in the mainline churches in Canada, along with the rest of the English-speaking world, come from the hymnic traditions of Victorian England. This inheritance has often been unquestioningly and proudly accepted as the core of hymnic canons in these church contexts. While in many ways singing from this era did encourage the active participation of the people in worship in their own language, the very rise of English language hymnody, this uplifting of the people's song, was also enmeshed and coincided with—and became conditioned by—the ascendancy of the British Empire. As a result, congregational singing from this inheritance is imbued with coloniality—the all-encompassing residual web of colonizing processes, tendencies, and practices. The British version of coloniality includes the promulgation of “a” superior British culture and identity which is intrinsically intertwined with the imperial and colonial projects of the British Empire. This superior British self-understanding is bolstered by the construction and then entrenchment of systems of racialized classification which places Anglo Saxons at the top by establishing white supremacy as a key mechanism to enforce colonialism throughout the British Empire and settler colonialism in Canada. One of the most insidious means of culturally entrenching this superiority and its expansionism was (and is) through hymn singing. This paper seeks to unmask the ways in which hymns from the Victorian era preserve, reproduce, and reinscribe ideologies and theologies of empire, in order to expose coloniality in music. To help in this analysis, I also draw on some current debates in the field of ethnomusicology in which scholars are beginning to dismantle eurocentrism in the study of music. I consider text, music, and context, including initial insights into hymn singing in residential schools as one example of a culturally genocidal enactment of coloniality.

Panel 2:

Sarah Johnson, University of Notre Dame

Bridging the Divides between Religion and Nonreligion in Canada

The North American religious landscape is characterized by declining participation in religious institutions, increasing uncertainty about matters of faith, and a growing proportion of the

population who identify as nonreligious. Nevertheless, people with a range of relationships with religion continue to turn to religious practices, including Christian rituals, to mark occasions such as birth and death. These rituals become moments of encounter and dialogue among participants with different ways of relating to religion. Occasional religiosity is a way of being religious that is defined by occasional participation in religious practices—attending religious services occasionally rather than routinely, usually in association with specific occasions, such as holidays, life-course transitions, or crises. While their practice may appear remarkably uniform, occasional practitioners understand themselves in diverse ways including identifying as deeply religious, nonreligious, somewhere in between, or even affiliating with other religious traditions. This study assumes there are a diversity of valid ways of engaging with religion, including occasional practice. I approach liturgical participants with a range of relationships with religion from the perspective of interreligious or intercultural dialogue rather than evangelization. There is a long history of comparative religious studies and dialogue among traditions defined by distinct beliefs and practices. As the different ways that people relate to religion become as significant as the distinct content of religious beliefs and practices (Pew Research Center 2018, Bibby 2017) new forms of dialogue are required to bridge the divides between these different forms of religiosity. Recognizing that Christian scholars and clergy have been the historically and culturally dominant partner in conversations about religion, I adopt a posture of listening that privileges the perspectives of occasional practitioners. Drawing on more than 50 interviews with family members involved in baptisms and Anglican clergy in the Anglican Diocese of Toronto, I explore baptism as a moment of encounter that brings together participants with divergent ways of knowing and navigating the world. As a dominant expression of religion in Canada today, occasional religiosity is central to understanding how people engage in religious practices together across difference in ways that produce lasting, meaningful, and life-giving relationships. Determining through dialogue how diverse communities can better ritualize together is crucial for bridging divides a changing religious landscape.

Gordon Rixon, Regis College

Discernment, Preferences and (Mature) Secularized Society

My paper elucidates the role of the universal apostolic preferences of the Society of Jesus in fostering a discerned, responsible participation by people of faith in a maturing secular society. First, I explore the notion of a mature secular society and its relevance to the apostolic preferences by considering contributions to contemporary social theory by authors such as Judith Butler, José Casanova, Nancy Fraser, Axel Honneth, Pankaj Mishra, Paul Ricoeur and the 2019 Ratzinger Prize recipient Charles Taylor. Although modern societies are profoundly challenged by social fragmentation, there is a growing appreciation of the dynamics of social development and linguistic, cultural and religious pluralism. I contend that elements of these and similar approaches to social anthropology present specific points of resonance with the apostolic preferences and suggest pathways of fruitful apostolic engagement within the confluences of diverse societies. Each of these authors draws our attention to some aspect of humanity's participation in world process, elevating the awareness required for well-grounded, discerned action. I argue that the maturity of secular society is characterized by both this responsible assumption of autonomous agency and the free engagement of a self- and even species- transcending project. Second, I consider the contribution of the universal apostolic preferences as people of faith reflect on their role within a maturing secular society. Broadly, I locate the preferences as a contextualization of the decision guiding criteria embedded in the first principle and foundation of the Spiritual Exercises, namely: grateful acknowledgement of creaturehood, freedom in the use of the gifts of life and talents, and a spirit of service in a project transcending immediate human interests. Participation in a project that finds its ultimate expression in praise, reverence and service of God. Acknowledging the eclipse of universal, even broad, agreement about the desired outcomes of social and ecclesial movements—I present the universal preferences as specifications of the dispositions advising

movement toward a necessarily undetermined goal. Spiritual dispositions clarified as encompassing gratitude, expanding freedom and selfless service advise practical actions of showing the way to God, walking with the excluded, journeying with youth and caring for our common home. Spiritual dispositions that develop through concrete specification but in the absence of cognitive clarity about their future fruits. In a sense, my concluding claim is no more than a re-appropriation of a very simple spiritual insight recast in light of contemporary social theory: the Ignatian dispositions specified through the preferences obtain liberating and creative efficacy as they encourage responsible agency and dispose humble, transitional action in the service of a transcendent project.

Kelly Vanbuskirk, University of New Brunswick

“Do as we say, and also as we do”: An Anglican opportunity to import Scriptural conflict resolution directives into secular workplaces

This paper will seek to illuminate the gap between conflict resolution approaches that are prescribed in Scripture and those that are applied by the Anglican Church to intra-Church interpersonal disputes. Further, it will encourage an examination of how the Church conceptualizes and pursues interpersonal justice and what opportunities exist to convey a Scriptural conflict resolution model within the Church. It is expected that similar opportunities regarding increasing interest in the resolution of secular interpersonal conflicts, particularly in secular workplaces, to make it possible to conceive of Scriptural influence in irreligious settings. It is notable that, while North Americans and Europeans are becoming increasingly secularized, secular legal justice models have not received full popular subscription. In this regard, a 2018 report of the World Justice Project suggests that the majority of people who experience disputes resort to resolution processes that fall outside of the courts. At the same time, interest in and willingness to pursue legal remedies for perceived interpersonal wrongs (as examples, harassment and sexual harassment) in Canadian organizational contexts, and notably in workplaces, is increasing, and this invites greater demand for expedient and efficient dispute resolution models. The need to address interpersonal conflict has also permeated the Church, in which disputes amongst Diocesan and parish employees and parishioners has resulted in the implementation of often secular anti-harassment policies that may also produce less than optimal participant experiences and outcomes. On this basis, it is contemplated that Scriptural justice and conflict resolution concepts offer useful direction in, and even viable alternatives to, the secular legal constructs being utilized in both the Anglican Church and in Canadian workplaces. It is anticipated that a comparison of the perceived fairness and efficacy of conflict resolution procedures currently prescribed in Anglican Church against those prescribed in Scripture may identify an opportunity to not only enhance the application of Scriptural values in intra-Church matters but, also, to import these into secular workplaces.

Panel 3:

Theology and Place: A Dialogue Concerning All Our Relations

The theme “Unsettling Northern Relations” immediately raises questions of place. Phenomenologists and geographers (Malpas, Relph, Tuan) recognize that “place” is a seat of relations. How we name these relations reveals an implicit convergence of power and intelligibility. “Northern” is a cardinal orientation, yet as a concept seeking “unsettling” exposes the reality that it is also a region whose intelligibility is determined by structures of colonial logics including *terra incognita*, *terra nullius*, and the “Doctrine of Discovery.” These structures are often thought by the social sciences in terms of their horizontal relations, but it falls to theology to also consider in what ways these relationships are taken up in the divine economy, for God, as creator of all, stands in some sort of relation to every discrete creaturely place. The question this panel will consider from a variety of perspectives is the nature of this relationship between God and place. Does God have

place? How does God relate to place? Finally, how do our answers to these questions of God's relation with place work to reinforce or unsettle the political relations that the 'North' entails?

Panel 4:

Chanelle Robinson, Boston College

Viola Desmond and Womanist Theologies of Resistance

In an attempt to articulate anti-black racism as a theological problem in Canada, this paper unpacks the story of civil rights activist Viola Desmond. In 1946, Viola Desmond was jailed for refusing to leave the white section of a segregated movie theatre in Nova Scotia. In this paper, I argue that Viola Desmond exemplifies the womanist struggle for survival in deathdealing circumstances. Since her recent placement on the Canadian ten-dollar bill, Desmond's experience of racial discrimination has shed light on the country's former practice of racial segregation. Ultimately, this paper examines how embodied acts of transgression in public spaces form the pedagogy of a womanist understanding of resistance. Offering a theological interpretation of her civil disobedience, this paper examines the theological significance of Viola Desmond as a 'Hagar figure,' who navigates the Canadian wilderness. Building on Delores Williams's theological interpretation of 'survival' and a 'quality of life,' and adding a critical race dimension to Judith Butler's notion of 'livability,' my paper elucidates the salvific value of public protest. I argue that Desmond's struggle personifies an embodied theology of resistance from a position of precarity. Finally, I interrogate the Canadian government's decision to appropriate Viola's image for their new bank note. My project attempts to bridge the divide between womanist theological concerns and contemporary issues in Canada. The struggles and lived histories of African Canadians can be considered a starting point for emancipatory theologies in Canada. This paper is an imaginative project, an act of remembering, that theologizes how black bodies interrupt Canadian public spaces.

Monica Marcelli-Chu, Regis College

Learning to Be Challenged by An-Other's Will: Receptivity in Theological Virtue Ethics

Oliver O'Donovan has critiqued an understanding of virtue as acquired skill, and has emphasized the category of rest as the end of action, understood on the level of particular actions and as a larger horizon for human fulfillment. Using the category of rest and drawing on an Augustinian heritage, O'Donovan avoids the language of habit in the theological virtues, and gradually shifts the emphasis in moral formation from the self to the neighbour. This shift, however, requires practice in order to attain, and appears to re-introduce an understanding of virtue as acquired habit (via practical reasoning) into his thought. In this paper, I bring O'Donovan into dialogue with Thomistic thinkers who have emphasized the spiritual dynamism to Aquinas' thought, and have made claims about the role of prayer in human activity. I then consider the difference that attention to prayer makes in a Thomistic account of virtue. While virtue implies the idea of "working on yourself," in a Christian frame this work is ultimately ordered towards a receptivity before an-Other will. Placing O'Donovan and Aquinas in dialogue, I present an analogous dynamic of human action and prayer as activity ordered towards receptivity, in which activity characterizes the beginning of the moral/spiritual life, and rest characterizes the end. I argue for the significance of an understanding of disposition as a middle category which carries the tension between activity and rest/receptivity over the course of a human life. The middle category of disposition, which opens up to both activity and receptivity, but with a "bending" towards receptivity as one develops morally and spiritually, I argue, carries a pedagogical goal: namely, that of transforming agents of human will to agents of an-Other's Will. This, in turn, opens the possibility of discerning, recognizing, and heeding the divine call in another's call, namely, in the one who challenges my willfulness with their own.

Hyung Jin Kim Sun, Emmanuel College

A Theo-Ethical Praxis of Situating Oneself & Just-Bridging

Bridging is crucial, but not every linking is necessary, and in some occasions, we should burn down bridges that seek to colonize or oppress. Also, even before discussing about it, we should reflect from where we are connecting since every bridge starts from a particular location. By incorporating some insights from contextual theologians and considering the Canadian sociohistorical context, I propose that situating oneself and just-bridging is a necessary theoethical praxis, that consists of two parts, if one truly seeks for life-giving relationships with diverse groups in our society. Contextual theologians, from their beginning, have argued that all theologies are contextual. They explain that every theo-ethical view is local and particular and that there is no universal view. At the same time, they have taught us how to “bridge” and engage appropriately with other local and particular views since theology cannot remain isolated and insulated only within them. For this reason, they have in-depth insights on explaining *why* and *how* to situate ourselves, and *how* to bridge with others in a meaningful way. In order to explain the importance of the theo-ethical praxis and what it entails, this paper is divided largely into three sections. In the first section, I will briefly explain what contextual theology and ethics is and present some of the core arguments. The second part examines how to situate ourselves. While there are various ways of situating oneself in one’s context, I will focus on the aspects of culture, experience, and intersectionality and clarify why situating in these aspects is imperative. The third section explores how to bridge justly. Going beyond the settler colonialism and multiculturalism models that exist in Canada, I will argue for a just-intercultural model that strives for life-giving relationships and the flourishing of all groups in our shared space.

Panel 5:

Carolyn Mackie, Wycliffe College

**Guilt and Responsibility: The Church as Repentant Sinner(s)
(Student Essay Contest Winner)**

This paper considers some of the philosophical and theological difficulties surrounding corporate sin and repentance as relating to the Church. How can a member of a group join in repentance for a sin that she did not personally commit? How can a group be said to repent collectively? The paper considers these questions, looking to proposed answers as a source for understanding more fully what the Church is, by understanding in what way the Church, or individual churches, can be said to have agency. The paper turns to twentieth-century philosopher Hannah Arendt’s analysis of corporate guilt and responsibility in the wake of the Holocaust as a resource for considering how distinctions between sin, guilt, and responsibility might apply to the Church. The paper then draws from theologians George Lindbeck and Ephraim Radner to consider the Church as a nation or people, reaffirming the essential relationship between the Church and the nation of Israel. Drawing Lindbeck and Radner’s proposal together with Arendt’s analysis, the paper proposes that understanding the Church as a nation or people may provide the best way in which to understand ecclesial sin, repentance, and responsibility.

Fiona Li, Regis College

Red Dresses: A Feminist Theological Response to the Systemic Oppression of Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada

In this paper, I raise the question of “What does it mean to be “Pro-Life” and feminist in a Canadian context?” and will use the category of Indigenous women and girls in Canada as a case study to explore this question. Every year thousands of Roman Catholics and allies descend upon Parliament Hill to participate in the annual March for Life, as a way to respond to the Roman Catholic teaching to be “pro-life”. However, I would argue that “life” is defined in a particular way by those who are

organizing this event (protecting the “naturalness” and fruit of biological conception in a heterosexual marriage) and thus promoting a particular ethos to the general public. Glaringly, there is one issue that is not mentioned in Campaign Life Coalition’s list of issues it fights for/against: gender violence. Within the realm of gender violence, Indigenous women and girls are the most vulnerable in Canada. Returning to the question mentioned above, when one looks at a broader understanding of “life”, one must conclude that one can no longer claim to be “pro-life” and disregard Indigenous women and girls’ plight. By looking at 4 particular sources, I will argue that Indigenous women are not experiencing the fullness of life due to systemic oppression. As such, there needs to be a paradigm shift within the general Canadian society that will allow for the flourishing of Indigenous women. And this paradigm shift is centered on the concept of *imago Dei* and a broader understanding of the term “life” that is derived from feminist theology. On the basis of this paradigm shift, I will explore some ways in which the general Canadian society, specifically the Roman Catholics as they are part of a religious institution that identifies as “Pro-Life”, can help foster Indigenous women’s flourishing. The ways I will discuss in the paper are: recognizing particularities; autonomy, determination, and resistance; Truth-telling and truth-listening.

Jane Barter, University of Winnipeg

And Yet Where in Our History Books is the Tale? Thinking Theologically about the National Inquiry’s Report on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

This paper seeks to think theologically about the models of redemption that tacitly inhere in two documents arising from colonial Canada. Specifically, it wishes to think of the spatial imaginaries that inhere in the respective representations of restored Indigenous life in Canada in the 2015 Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the Report of the National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019), titled “Reclaiming Power and Place.” In these respective visions, I wish to suggest that the bounded spatiality of the TRC remains the nation state, which brokers redemption construed as reconciliation between Indigenous persons and the state. In contrast, the space of restored relations implicit in the Report of the National Inquiry is much more radically construed as it consists in the reclaiming of space that was taken—bodies and land alike. The model of redemption implicit is not spatially constructed within the bounds of future nationhood, but is instead messianically announced wherever missing bodies are remembered. Not only does this form of messianic remembering constitute a far more thorough critique of colonization, it also affirms the possibility of hope for Indigenous resurgence beyond the (colonial and patriarchal) nation state.

Jean-Pierre Fortin, University of St. Michael’s College

Redeeming Memory: Rewriting Canadian History and Theology with Lee Maracle, Terry LeBlanc and Thomas King

Considering the theme of this year’s conference – “Bridging Divides” – and the invitation to reflect on and discuss Christian theology’s involvement in and response to settler colonialism as it defines and impacts the living conditions of Canadians today, this presentation proposes to listen to the critical voices of Lee Maracle, Terry LeBlanc and Thomas King. Speaking from the standpoint of their own experience of the detrimental effects of white Christian settler colonialism and privilege, these leading Indigenous scholars engage Canadians in ways helping the latter acquire a more accurate sense of the real challenges confronting Canadian society. Before and in order to define a positive future for Canada, one that is truly inclusive and multicultural, white Canadians must first become aware and let go of the constructed self-identity and history they project and impose on others (Indigenous peoples, especially), which enables them to objectify and use persons and nature for their exclusive benefit. The appropriation of nature (land) supposes a corresponding and as profound dehumanization of the human person and community, themselves made possible by the operationalisation of human knowledge and the Christian religion. The positive redefinition of Canadian identity demands the rewriting of history and theology based on actual engagement with

and accurate interpretation of the (far from noble and glamorous) past. Such engagement and interpretation in turn require listening to the voices silenced for centuries by white Christian colonialism and privilege. Maracle, LeBlanc and King combine their efforts to retrieve the untold past and demystify the present so as to pave the way for a constructive future for all Canadians. They thus show that what, from the standpoint of unjustified privilege and discrimination, appears to be located at the margin (and therefore marginal) in fact resides in and forms the centre of a vision enabling personal and communal healing, transformation and integration. Listening to “inconvenient Indians” (King) may therefore contribute to enabling white Canadians to retrieve and nurture a new sense of memory—one that saves (Maracle)—, itself fostering a redefined and more faithful sense of mission for Christians of all affiliations grounded in and oriented toward reconciled relationships (LeBlanc).

Panel 6:

Nicholas Olkovich, St. Mark’s College

After Liberalism: Constructing ‘the People’ in Post-Conciliar Catholic Theology

This paper draws on the influential theory of populism developed by political philosophers Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe as a heuristic for examining diverse constructions of the church as ‘people of God’ in post-conciliar Catholic theology. According to both authors, ‘third way’ neoliberalism’s vision of a world ‘beyond hegemony’ blinds it to the constitutive role that conflict, and antagonism play in politics. This inability to recognize that all political identities depend upon the construction of a *demos* or ‘people’ predicated upon some form of exclusion leaves proponents of neoliberal globalization ill-equipped to negotiate our current ‘populist moment.’ Mouffe’s constructive response to the rise of populism – the return of what Carl Schmitt terms ‘the political’ – has two main components. By contrast with Schmitt’s reliance on the friend/enemy distinction, Mouffe develops an ‘agonistic’ conception of liberal democracy that conceives politics as a contest between ‘adversaries’ who disagree fiercely about the meaning of ‘liberty and equality for all.’ At the same time, she calls for the radicalization of democracy or a ‘left populism’ that constructs the people in inclusive rather than exclusive ways. Contrary to what many self-styled ‘non-ideological’ Catholics claim, I contend that efforts to define the church’s internal nature and structure as well as its relationship vis-à-vis ‘the world’ are inherently populist enterprises. This paper explores the populist nature of ecclesial politics *ad intra* and *ad extra* by focusing on three interrelated episodes in the evolving construction of the church as ‘people of God.’ The first episode focuses on connections between the populist strategy of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan; the subsequent consolidation of neoliberal hegemony; and the neoconservatism of Richard John Neuhaus, Michael Novak, and George Weigel. The second focuses on the contest between authors associated with *Communio* and *Concilium*, prominent postconciliar theological journals typically associated with *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento* respectively. The third focuses on the tension between right-wing populist forms of Catholic traditionalism and Pope Francis’ ‘theology of the people.’ While both sides of the *Communio/Concilium* debate take issue with liberal individualism, their distinctive interpretations of the Council reflect opposed accounts of the relationships between nature and grace as well as between history and truth. Radicalized elements of the *Communio* school critique of *Concilium*’s ‘revisionism’ play not a small role in right-wing Catholic populist attacks on Pope Francis. The latter’s own ecclesial vision represents a more inclusive populism than that offered by polarized options on the right and left.

Stephen Martin, The King’s University

Theology, Democracy, and the Common Life

The acclaimed new work by Luke Bretherton, *Christ and the Common Life: Political Theology and the Case for Democracy*, represents an important contribution to thinking theologically about

Christianity and Democracy. My paper places it in critical dialogue with two other important works, Reinhold Niebuhr's *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness* (1944), and John W. de Gruchy's *Christianity and Democracy: Theology for a Just World Order* (1995). The former was written as the Second World War was ending and the United States was contemplating a new, assertive role in promoting democracy around the globe. The latter was penned after the fall of the Berlin Wall (and apartheid in de Gruchy's South Africa) and the advent of new, democratic movements in the developing world. De Gruchy argued that the identification of democracy with "the polity of modernity" was coming under serious question in such new movements, which led him to revisit Niebuhr's attempt to give democracy "a more compelling justification" than present in liberalism. Bretherton's contribution comes at a time of further crisis in democracy as populism seeps into the cracks of failing institutions and cynicism attends the thought of anything healing and hopeful. Drawing on a different set of resources than Niebuhr and de Gruchy, Bretherton reconfigures democracy as a process in which "multitude" is transformed into "people," but on a smaller and more limited scale than the liberal nation-state. This raises new questions not only about the future of that institution but about the place of the church in relation to system and movement, and the democratic praxis it needs to support.

Sasha Kovalchuk, McMaster University

Political Theology of Sanctuary Cities: Preliminary Findings of a Political Science Literature Review

Political Science often theorizes Sanctuary Cities as a continuation of the ancient and medieval religious practice of centers of worship sheltering individuals on the run from the law. Moreover, American (and Canadian) churches in the 1980s were involved in the practice in sheltering large asylum claimant populations facing deportation back to war torn Central America. Perplexingly missing in the Political Science field in applying the notion of *political theology* to the Sanctuary City phenomenon. In the spirit of interdisciplinarity, this paper researches two concomitant puzzles where Political Science and theologians find common ground. To what extent is the gap in Political Science literature associated with secularization of activism and social movements? Moreover, has the refugee and undocumented person Sanctuary Cities protect risen to the level of divine figure? Wider Sanctuary Cities' rhetoric is anti *political theological* because the movement rejects basing its political claims on rationalistic/modernist teleological notions of history used to ground humanitarian migration policy. Yet, by definition the movement is *political theological* by claiming revelatory political truths (such as the Christian notion [or its "secularized" cosmopolitan variants] to provide asylum). The very term 'Sanctuary City' betrays any possibility policy and critical politics, geography, migration, and citizenship scholars, analysts, and activists who converge over the movement could conduct a secular mode of analysis. I argue Sanctuary City Political Science literature should interest theologians because the refugee became a political theological figure during the early years of globalization and debates over EU migration policy. Theorists Agamben, Balibar, and Derrida demoted philosophically Europe into an epistemic signifier over which I argue the *political theology* of law is fought via determining the divine or secular status of refugees. In arguing how European law relates to divinity or secularism became a stand-in for locating the political formation of bodies should occur; whether that should be 'city', nation, ethnicity, state, regional body, or supranational transnationalism. The *political theologies* I read within Agamben, Balibar, and Derrida early EU comments are then applied to decipher Sanctuary City literatures' commitments as being either ethical, moral, metaphysical, or divine.

Panel 7:

Don Schweitzer, St. Andrew's College Jesus' Resurrection Enlarges Our Hearts

Augustine preached that Jesus' resurrection enlarges Christians' hearts with love that ought to lead them to live better lives. Jürgen Habermas has argued that in the context of a modernization threatening to spin out of control this kind of moral empowerment from religion can provide an awareness of moral violations in the present and crucial motivation to address them. This paper will bring these ideas together by examining how Jesus' resurrection can enlarge the hearts of white Canadian Christians in relation to challenges they face in seeking to build better relationships between themselves and Indigenous peoples and peoples of colour. It will examine the hope that the resurrection of the crucified Christ gives rise to and how it relates to aspects of the current Canadian context. It will study how the risen Christ unburdens people so that they can love more freely. It will show how Jesus' resurrection puts Christians into a community of conversation with others that bridges divides between divergent ways of knowing and navigating our world, and between religions, races, and cultures, so that white Canadian Christians are directed and motivated to listen to what Indigenous peoples and peoples of colour have to say to them. Building "lasting, meaningful and life-giving relationships" between peoples of colour and white Canadians requires that the latter be aware of the injustices existing between themselves and the former and be moved to rectify these. It also requires working towards reconciliation between Indigenous peoples and settler Canadians. Both these efforts towards social transformation require strong moral empowerment that is inclusive, recognizes and accepts cultural, racial and ethnic differences, and is self-critical and open to critique. This presentation will show how Jesus' resurrection can provide this kind of empowerment.

Peter Slater, Trinity College The Wisdom Principle in/on Religion

This paper addresses theological issues raised by Paul Tillich and Wilfred Cantwell Smith concerning Christian theological assessments of "other" religions. Tillich invoked an existential dialectical application of what he called the Protestant Principle, reflecting his Lutheran critique of catholic priestly sacramentalism. On living traditions, Cantwell Smith gave the final say on the faith animating historical traditions to followers of those traditions, when in dialogue with others, privileging "insider" rather than "outsider" accounts of them. His Calvinist heritage attuned him to Islamic praxis and poetic Arabic locutions informed his sense of transcendence in God-talk. Besides priestly and prophetic expressions of insider convictions, the history of religions includes texts acknowledging common wisdom communicated in collections, such as the psalms and proverbs included in the Hebrew Bible, acknowledging mature insights concerning common human experience from various ages and stages of human life. These articulate what we may call "the wisdom principle" affirmed by sages across the ages. Drawing on Mikhail Bakhtin's analyses of dialogical imagination, contrasted with Hegelian, Kierkegaardian and Marxist dialectics, I conclude by drawing briefly on examples from Martin Luther King Junior's appeals for common action in the war on poverty and Francis X. Clooney's conception of comparative theology to illustrate my conclusions regarding the dialogical and dialectical positions of Smith and Tillich.

Jon Coutts, Ambrose University *Apokatastasis* as a Framework for Decolonizing the Motive of Missions

Canadian evangelicals need to work toward a decolonized recalibration of missiology. This presentation questions the notion of a cause-effect exchange that begins with the already saved missionary and ends with the eternal salvation of the proselytized, and instead proposes the missionary motive of faithfulness to the promise of *apokatastasis*, or restoration of all things. On

this reckoning, Christ is only fully known with the healing of the nations at the end of history, such that those who seek Christ in the meantime must participate in that reconciling work, not only by preaching but also by listening to the wonders of God declared in other tongues (Rev 22:2, Acts 2:11). This puts the missionary in the position of a receiver, and not just a giver, because Christ is not fully known until the other is a full partner in that knowing. Both parties know God in their midst only in the reciprocity of that long-term exchange. The motive for mission is therefore to learn Christ from the other, and not solely to make Christ known. This argument grows out of my essay “The Prince of Peace Smokes a Peace Pipe,” which appears in *Theology and the Political* (Brill, 2020). As a teacher and member in a missional denomination with decolonizing work to do, it would be helpful to outline this argument for an academic audience and to be sharpened by the questions and corrections that arise.

Joshua Zentner-Barrett, Saint Paul University
Turning to God: Exploring Hope and Wonder

The secular understanding of “hope” might best be termed as “optimism,” a kind of wishful thinking based on probability. By contrast, the theological virtue of hope is a risky proposition, founded on the promise of God as revealed in the paschal mystery. This hope, then, is filled with both wonder and doubt, two elements that stretch the individual beyond the bounds of humanity. Along with psychological studies in behaviour and creativity (Glăveanu, 2019, and Silvia et al., 2015), this paper draws on the liberative, feminist theology of Cynthia Crysdale and the eschatological reflections of Jürgen Moltmann who offer insight into an often-marginalized understanding of theological hope. Developed in three stages, the first part of this paper examines hope as liberation from control, in which humanity is not defined by mastery over the world but by the encounter with the ineffable. The second part explores the paradoxical nature of hope and its connection to the encounter with the ineffable, shown in the paschal mystery, particularly in simultaneity of suffering and joy in the crucifixion narrative. Part three expands on this understanding, suggesting that an openness to wonder and awe is a critical factor in engaging with the ineffable and so to hope in the promise of God. By further understanding hope and its connection to wonder and awe, we discover a means of holding on to hope in the midst of the immense challenges of our world and glimpse a virtue embedded in the very core of our humanity.

Panel 8:

David Byrne, University of St. Michael’s College
An Ointment Poured Over the Wounds or Preventative of a Common Future for All?
Assessing the Role of Reparations in dialogue with Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz’s Theory of Justice as Reconciliatory Praxis

In “Justice as Reconciliatory Praxis: A Decolonial *Mujerista* Move” Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz presents a liberative theory of justice as reconciliatory praxis of care and tenderness. Isasi-Diaz develops her theory as a response to the inability of liberal and neo-liberal theories of justice to produce just conditions for oppressed people. A significant feature of Isasi-Diaz’s theory is a rejection of any action that might prevent perpetrators from participating in a restored community, including reparations. This claim is problematic because many of the reconciliatory processes on which Isasi-Diaz bases her theory, including the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in South Africa, feature reparations as a significant component. In this paper I will argue that while Isasi-Diaz accurately identifies the potential that reparations may prevent the ‘creation of a common future,’ they can still be a positive component of justice as reconciliatory praxis. I will first explore the development of Isasi-Diaz’ thought on justice, illustrating how she develops her theory out of earlier accounts of justice and how she came to prohibit reparations in the process of reconciliation.

Next, I will provide a brief description of what reparations are and the settings in which they are utilized, focusing on Mary Urban Walker's differentiation between corrective and restorative approaches to justice. After showing why reparations are preventative of reconciliation in corrective justice settings I will then proceed to identify instances where reparatory practices have been central to addressing injustice, for example in the South African TRC and in recent attempts to heal historical injustice committed by Whites against Blacks in the US, assessing the extent to which reparations may play a positive role in reconciliation.

Kate McCray, University of St. Michael's College

Imagined Erasure: Fieldnotes on Genocide from the Christian East

Canadian Christians often wonder what they can do to help Syrian refugees, support humanitarian efforts, and act in solidarity when they hear about race or religion-based violence. As Canada wrestles with its own dark history of residential schools and other systems for erasing First Nations cultures, Christian communities wonder how to grasp the magnitude of complicity in these genocidal actions and how to display solidarity in these contexts. My paper turns to the historic communities of the Christian East for wisdom. Orthodox communities have particular experience with genocide and reconciliation, memory making and resilience, and we also have critiques that are rooted outside European colonial history to offer to Canadian advocates. This otherness makes Orthodox social critique a vital interlocutor when unmasking implicit bias and social coding. The persistence of Orientalism in Protestant Christianity, as an inheritor of imperial models of faith and conquest, undermines any work of restoration between Canadian churches and marginalized communities. By examining the ways in which public images and modern ecumenical models for dialogue in Christian contexts communicate dominance, we can begin to undermine them. Minority Christianities have important critiques and contributions to Canadian Christian movements for peace building and reconciliation efforts. My paper presents an Eastern Orthodox critique of Christian Orientalism and suggests constructive suggestions to dismantle dangerous social coding when communicating with underrepresented groups.

Christine Jamieson, Concordia University (Montreal)

Indigenous Spirituality: Resiliency and Encounter

The paper is part of a larger project exploring Indigenous spirituality through three lenses. The first is the oral traditions and teachings of the Nlaka'pamux people of southern British Columbia. As with all Indigenous people, the spirituality of the Nlaka'pamux is rooted in their relationship to the land and they consider spirituality as interconnected with all aspects of life. It is a world view that is fundamentally relational. The second lens is expressions of Indigenous spiritualities more generally, bringing together common themes. The expressions can be found in art, clothing, architecture, ceremony, stories, and many other manifestations. The expressions are always linked back to spirituality and the quest to express something of that reality. The third part considers the relationship between Indigenous spirituality and Christian spirituality. Despite the horrific damage of colonialism at the hands of European settlers and the Christian Churches, many Indigenous people in Canada self-identify as Christian. There is evidence that this is not merely a passive acceptance of something imposed but, rather, a deep insight into a foundational congruence between the roots of Indigenous spirituality and the roots of Christianity. The third lens considers Indigenous appropriation of Christian spirituality, an appropriation that was and is made in many cases without the loss of rootedness in Indigenous ways of living and being. My short presentation for the conference will mainly focus on the first lens, the spirituality of the Nlaka'pamux people. My interest and connection to the Nlaka'pamux people is through my great grandmother who was Nlaka'pamux and my grandfather who grew up among the Boothroyd First Nation people in the Fraser Canyon, B.C. I will end the presentation linking Nlaka'pamux spirituality with the second and third lenses; expressions of Indigenous spirituality more generally and Indigenous

appropriation of Christianity. For her 2018 CBC Massey lectures, Tanya Talaga chose the title, *All My Relations: Finding the Path Forward*. Her lectures and the subsequent book seek to make clear the damage Indigenous people in Canada have endured. Yet, there is an underlying hope as she seeks to explore “the path forward.” It is in exploring resiliency and “the path forward” that my research enters this conversation. Indigenous peoples’ deep spiritual ways of being in the world survived an attempted genocide and are crucial as a beacon pointing to a path forward.

Panel 9:

Chris Hrynkow, St. Thomas More College

Greening Unity in Diversity: Canadian Ecotheological Perspectives and a Vital Ethical Future

A green approach unites social and ecological concern and in the process offers life-giving alternatives to colonization, patriarchy, androcentrism, racism, sexism, classism, and militarism. Applied in the service of analyzing, transforming, and adding substance to the Canadian cultural trope of unity in diversity it poses several contextual challenges to unjust status quo manifest in different forms from sea to sea to sea. As a contextual reflection concerned with green issues and unity admits a reality of healthy diversity, ecotheology will and should take on different characteristics depending upon the location in which it undertaken. This presentation maps select contributions from Canadian ecotheologians by focusing on their visions for a necessary and vital ethical future marked by mutuality enhancing and just intra-human and human-Earth community relationships. It places those contributions in light of cross-border influences on ecotheological discourses, alternatives to present realities of exploitation accompanying the extractive economy, and competing expressions of national, regional, and Indigenous identities active in the Canadian socio-political context. In the spirit of bridging divides, this presentation concludes by connecting the greening of unity in diversity to incarnating a vital ethical future, inclusive of but spilling beyond Canada’s borders, and characterized by wide and emancipatory socio-ecological flourishing.

Abigail Lofte, University of St. Michael’s College

Finding Eden in the Urban Jungle: The Greening of City Planning

In this present age of climate crisis, at no time has the psychic-spiritual chasm between humans and the rest of Earth been vaster and in need of reconciling. As human civilization has progressed, we have lost the sense of the numinous, most especially during periods of industrialization in the modern age that exploited the planet and embraced the utilitarianism of Earth and human beings. To recover that sense and heal broken Earth relationships, humans need the transformative power of Earth experiences to beckon them toward conversion to greater ecological sensitivity. One challenge to recovering that sense of the divine in the natural world, however, is the ongoing industrialization of Earth and growing urbanization of its human population. Therefore, in this paper I will discuss the inherent tensions between human progress and Earth relationships while advocating for more ecologically conscious lifestyles through accessible and authentic Earth experiences. Since the majority of Canadians reside in cities, this paper will develop strategies to help people have meaningful encounters with nature who have limited access to green space and parklands. The work of American-Canadian urban planner, Jane Jacobs, provides a model for greening the city and improving human quality of life through the ways that communal spaces are shaped and valued. A deeper experience of nature, land, and space that is less mediated by human construction and appropriation of land necessarily demands dialogue with indigenous peoples about colonial notions of property and the process of owning and selling that which is gift and mediation of the divine, requiring responsible and reciprocal human partnership. Dr. Janice Barry’s work on indigenous planning practices and policies regarding ownership and collaborative land

management offers insights about urban coexistence of cultures and diverse human-Earth relationships. Overcoming settler colonialism in urban spaces demands a reimagining of urban planning that offers organic interaction between humans and the rest of Earth in inventive ways so that we can be as at home among concrete and steel as in the wild.

Rob Fennell, Atlantic School of Theology

Problematizing Pilgrimage: Theological Reconsideration of Contemporary Spiritual Tourism

Historic and contemporary pilgrimage practices have many similarities, but also some nuanced differences. From the famous Camino de Santiago to the newly developed Camino Nova Scotia, pilgrimage routes and pilgrims themselves are as varied as the stars in the sky. In this paper, I briefly review the motives and purported benefits of pilgrimage, then reconsider it in theological terms with respect to the human-divine relationship and understandings of purgation, salvation, and sacrifice. I conclude by reflecting on the ways that voluntary dislocation (as practiced by privileged global-north pilgrims) both prevents insight about and fosters the possibility of critiquing some aspects of colonialism that have caused massive involuntary dislocation of indigenous populations, both historic and contemporary. The recent example of a European pilgrimage/study tour organized by a Canadian theological school will illustrate the problematic features of contemporary pilgrimage as they intersect with the global crises of migration.

Panel 10:

Brett Potter, Huron University College

Christ the Shaman: Creation and Christology through the Paintings of Norval Morriseau

As David Brown has pointed out, art is a resource for theology which enables “fresh handlings of inherited traditions.” Two closely related occasions for such “fresh handlings” are the present ecological crisis and the ongoing reality of the oppression of indigenous peoples. Christian theology, particularly in the Canadian context, needs to recover a richer doctrine of creation, responsive to the spiritual insights of indigenous communities. A path towards such a renewed theological imagination emerges in the paintings of Anishnaabe artist Norval Morriseau, also called Copper Thunderbird (1931-2007). Morriseau’s expressive renderings of Ojibwe legends and mythic archetypes, such as the famous *Man Changing into Thunderbird* (1977), have become ubiquitous in Canada. Perhaps lesser-known are Morriseau’s unique interpretations of Christian iconography. Influenced by traditional Anishnaabe tradition, Catholicism, and Eckankar, Morriseau’s colourful works evoke a deep, erotic mysticism which embeds human beings within nature. The emergent Christology of Morriseau’s paintings, visible in *Indian Jesus Christ* (1974), *The Virgin Mary* (1966), *Portrait of the Artist as Jesus Christ* (1966), and *Self-Portrait Devoured By Demons* (1964), interprets biblical imagery in fresh ways that underscore the link between creation and cross, human and animal. Morriseau represents both Christ and himself in the garb of the Midewiwin shaman, an ambiguous image which evokes Christ as both a cipher for European colonialism and as a healing, suffering presence within the spiritual life of Ojibwe culture. Looking at key paintings from Morriseau’s *oeuvre*, this paper will investigate new perspectives on creation, sin, and Christology, “fresh handlings” that only arise as we open our eyes to a liberating ecological vision.

Michel Andraos, Saint Paul University

Land as Deep Theology: A Theological Dialogue with Indigenous Spiritualities and Epistemologies of the Land

Their particular relationship to the land/ earth, Mother Earth, has always been a main defining characteristic of Indigenous peoples. Their ways of life, languages, songs, ceremonies, political struggles, and spiritualities are intimately related to and emerge from a deep connection and relationship with the land. In the same spirit, Indigenous resurgences and revivals in the Americas over the last few decades are also rooted in renewed relationships with the land and the territories where people live. For these movements, relationship with the land is a source of their vision as well as their spiritual and political force for resistance, survival, and transformation. Focusing on dialogue with Canadian Indigenous academic voices and epistemologies (e.g. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson's notion of "land as Pedagogy" and John Borrows' "reconciliation with the earth," among others) this paper explores, from the perspective of a non-Indigenous person, the importance of dialogue with Indigenous movements, thought, and practices, and the potential contribution for expanding Christian imagination and theologies of a renewed relationship and reconciliation with the Earth.

Robert Timmins, University of St. Michael's College

"Je me souviens": The High Arctic Relocation, Two Generations On

In his 2002 documentary, *A License to Remember: Je me souviens*, Thierry Le Brun travels Quebec in search of the meaning of the province's motto, *Je me souviens* (I remember). Le Brun's interviews with Quebecers reveal a variety of interpretations. For some, the motto serves as an exhortation to remember those who died in the Second World War, while for others it signals a need to commemorate the Quiet Revolution's dismantling of Catholic hegemony within Quebec. Other interpretations abound, as well, and Le Brun's film emphasizes the inscrutable and unstable meaning(s) behind this motto; while Quebecers are exhorted to "remember," it is not altogether obvious what one is *supposed* to recall. The following political-theological endeavour offers its own answer to the question of what, precisely, we might remember. While reflections upon these words – *Je me souviens* – often reference aspects of the (at times fraught) relationship between Francophones and Anglophones, this paper instead focuses on Indigenous experiences in Quebec. In particular, it touches upon the High Arctic Relocation of the 1950s, whereby 92 Inuit were forcibly relocated from northern Quebec to Nunavut. Drawing on the anamnestic political theology of Johann Baptist Metz, this paper argues that praxis-oriented Christians must recall this tragic event - with *dangerous and liberating intent* - in order to seek justice for Indigenous peoples throughout Canada, and to act in accordance with the demands of the *memoria Jesu Christi* in which our Christian faith is grounded.

Panel 11:

Zane Chu, Regis College

Decolonizing Christian Love: Thomas Aquinas as Problematic and as Resource

Love is the core of Christian doctrine and practice. Thomas Aquinas enriched the understanding of Christian love, or charity, by defining it as friendship with God. He developed this understanding out of his reading of the Gospel of John, which contains Christ's new commandment to "love one another" (John 13:34). Christ continues, "You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer... but I have called you friends" (John 15:14–15). Aquinas interpreted Christ's words with the assistance of Aristotle's thought on friendship as a pedagogical framework. Christian charity as friendship with God thus involves mutual benevolence, and is

founded upon the shared good of eternal happiness, through graced conformity to Christ. Such friendship easily extends to the Christian neighbour who returns benevolence and shares in the same graced conformity to Christ. In this way, the commandment to “love one another” may be perfectly accomplished. Contemporary Johannine scholarship uncovers ambiguities in the Gospel of John that render problematic the commandment to “love one another.” It reflects the sectarian tendency of the Johannine community to focus on itself in the midst of a hostile world. Reinforced by dualisms and anti-Jewishness, this tendency develops an “us versus them” outlook that underlies practices of exclusion of the “other.” Read as a postcolonial text, Johannine resistance to the colonial-imperial powers of Jerusalem and Rome results only in the substitution of one power dynamic for another, i.e., that of the kingdom of God. Love, then, becomes a marker of sectarian identity that fosters exclusion and sustains colonial-imperial power dynamics. This paper attempts to negotiate this problematic of love through continued engagement with Aquinas. Though he did not deal with these questions, and while his thought on charity may also illustrate this problematic, I propose that Aquinas offers resources for a response in both content and method. Elements of his account of the ordering of charity suggest a pattern of thinking about love as friendship that complicates sectarian identity, promotes inclusion, and subverts dynamics of power. Prioritizing friendship with God grounds a transcending love of the “other.” This account also shows Aquinas performing canonical criticism, which contemporary scholars suggest as one way of responding to problematic Johannine texts. Aquinas promotes an ongoing correction of language that critiques notions of love and friendship in accord with divine transcendence and with all of Scripture that may assist the postcolony.

Karola Radler, Stellenbosch University

The Abstract Contrast: Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s Christological Disclosure of the Heretical Foundation of Carl Schmitt’s Theory of State

In the South African context in which Bonhoeffer’s theology played a decisive role in the fight against Apartheid, recently the question emerged inasmuch he can inform the discourse that assesses the manifestation of political programs within democracy. In this regard I propose to read Bonhoeffer’s early 1933 statement that ‘... [in] every abstract doctrine of God ... there is at bottom the same ... contrast between idea and appearance’ as a criticism and rejection of the jurist Schmitt’s ecclesial, but secularized decisionism that is based on a contrast between subject and content and carried the National-Socialist theory of state. A discourse on “abstract contrast” discloses the tension and attempts to bridge the divide between democratic process and ethical boundaries for political actors which is central to today’s renegotiation of the relation between democratic theory and autocratic populist personalities and will determine the life of future generations. Schmitt based his Modern theory of state on a method of a ‘sociology of juristic concepts’ and applied it to the institutional “heir of Roman jurisprudence”. In an analogy to the Catholic Church’s ability to unify oppositional thought and its ‘jurisprudential invention’ of the office of the Pope through which the idea of God was represented to the world, he insisted that in the Modern state a figure of self-significant personality could overcome any abstraction between content and subject through representing the political idea of a unified people in synchronized identity. In analogy to divinity entering humanity in the office of the Pope a political idea “becomes human”. Bonhoeffer observed that the negative Christology of the heresy of *Docetism* continued to be present in a different form. It conceptualizes Christ’s incarnation as an only incidental appearance of the godhead exclusive of the essence of Christ’s humanity which in effect eliminates the individuality which constitutes a person. Christ is turned into a prior religious idea and Jesus into a “necessary” representative form for its appearance in reality which prevents salvation that frees the human being to conformed life in his true nature and the observance of ethical boundaries. Concluding that ‘everything depends on Jesus’s existence in history’ his rendering of salvation history and use of semiotic tools established the once-ness and one-ness of Jesus Christ who

“became human” which preserved the incomprehensible mystery of the Triune God despite Schmitt’s comprehensible abstract method.

Brian Bajzek, Marquette University

A Church Challenged by Christ: Decentering Ecclesial Privilege through the Crux of Horizontal and Vertical Alterity

This paper builds upon my contributions to a panel at the CTS 2019 Annual Meeting (“Whose Populism? Which People?”). In that presentation, I drew from my experiences teaching in a Catholic seminary, arguing that populism fosters an impoverished approach to the complex interplay of church, world, alterity, similarity, “us,” and “them.” My teaching experiences this past year have concretized the escalation of this problem, especially as the overlap between North American Christianity and reactionary conservatism has increased. This crisis is urgent, obligating me to nuance and develop my suggestions from last year’s paper. I am also increasingly aware that my own contributions to this conversation must avoid adding to the chorus of “dominant white [and especially male] theologians” James Cone admonishes for “speak[ing] as if they and they alone can set the rules for thinking about God.” The aforementioned problems of American Catholic culture are rooted in the idolatry of hegemony (both ecclesial and academic). This paper, therefore, bridges my own reframing of alterity and similarity (drawn from Robert Doran and Emmanuel Levinas) with the decentering, contextual insights of Cone and M. Shawn Copeland. Copeland and Cone both place the onus for receptivity on those in positions of privilege, who ought to afford ecclesial priority to those most othered. They do so by re-focusing Christian theology on the radical, marginalized particularity of Jesus of Nazareth. For both Cone and Copeland, any Christian church that is truly imitative of its namesake must be a church for the Other, a church standing for and with the suffering. Drawing from Cone, Copeland, Levinas, and Doran, my paper employs categories present in *all* of their works: kenosis, suffering servanthood, and the need to return to biblical accounts of Jesus’ radical solidarity with the suffering. Through an ecclesiological reintegration of these categories, I will offer my own suggestions for how those with privilege in the church might recognize the crux of horizontal and vertical alterity in the face of the Other, responding self-emptyingly to the God that exhorts us there. This God’s love is the self-giving love that returns good in the face of evil. Reconciliation for past and present abuses of power, ecclesial idolatry, and theological inauthenticity will only be possible when those with power renounce idolatrous or exclusionary accounts of divinity, seeking instead to imitate the cruciform example of this God, the God of the oppressed.

Panel 12:

Liam Farrer, Regis College

A Modest Proposal for the Development of a First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Ordinariate in the Catholic Church in Canada

It is no secret that the “spiritual, cultural, emotional, physical, and sexual abuse of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis school children in Catholic-run residential schools” have created “wounds that cry out to heaven” to which the current Catholic Church in Canada must respond both to achieve reconciliation with FMNI Canadians and to minister to FMNI Catholics moving forward. While the commission itself has suggested conditions for the immediate Reconciliation, neither it, nor the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops have suggested practical long term ways of establishing and maintaining respect for and solidarity with FMNI communities specific cultures moving forward. In this paper I will attempt to propose such a way. I will begin by discussing the current state of relations between the institutional Church and the FMNI communities by employing Bryan Massingdale’s analysis of racism and the importance of solidarity in combating it. I will then introduce Matthew Lamb’s principle of agapic solidarity with the victims as the approach with the

Catholic Church ought to take in this instance. Following this, I will argue that the best way for the Church to achieve this solidarity is through inculturation. I will then suggest that the best way for the Catholic Church in Canada to do this is to create an FMNI Ordinariate in Canada. I will begin by discussing the history of inculturation within the Catholic Church, drawing heavily on the Second Vatican Council's document *Ad Gentes*, the final document on the Amazon Synod, and the canons regarding ordinariates within the Catholic Church. I will then discuss the role that having an ordinary of FMNI descent can play in increasing the autonomy of the FMNI peoples within the Church in Canada. Following this I will outline my proposal for the presence of the Church within individual FMNI nations throughout Canada which is centred on each Church having an ordained minister from that particular nation who is familiar with both the teachings of the Church and the specific nation and is thus able to incorporate the nation's individual beliefs and customs into the worship service through legitimate inculturation. I will also discuss the feasibility of married clergy within this model drawing again on the final document of the Amazon Synod. I will then conclude by arguing how, I believe, the establishment of this ordinariate would lead to an ongoing dialogue of truth through respect and reconciliation through forgiveness.

Eun Suk Oh, Knox College

Remembering the Future: A Eucharistic Vision of Unity in Bodiliness

The Great Schism may no longer represent a certain historical event of the Church, but it vividly marks today's world. Between ideologies, religions, ethnicities, genders, socioeconomics, politics, and more, it is difficult to erase the image of the schism cynically dividing the world. Despite the Church's calling to be "one body of Christ" in the world, the churches have been amputated and silenced rather than diversified. Rather than being a reconciliatory agent, the Church has become a stumbling block. The Eucharist, the foundation of the Church, reveals the irony of the divisions of the Church and her broken relationship with the world. On several theological levels, seeing differences among numerous traditions is inevitable, and it is hard for people to celebrate around one table with each other. However, the Church eschatologically becomes what she receives from the table, and what the Church receives from the table is eschatologically who she is: the Crucified and Resurrected Body of Jesus Christ, present here and now. From an eschatological perspective, the Church can move on from the traditional metaphysical notion of the Eucharist (the traditional Catholic stance), a reactionary antagonistic stance toward it (the traditional Protestant stance), and indifference to the surrounding world (the traditional Eastern Orthodox stance). Instead, the Church can move toward the social and bodily notion of the Eucharist and its calling for the Church to be a formative place for reconciliatory mediums for various divisions in the world. The theologies of John Zizioulas, Jürgen Moltmann, and Louis-Marie Chauvet, which represent Eastern Orthodox, Protestants, and Roman Catholics, respectively, show that the Eucharistic understanding of the Church is unavoidably eschatological. An eschatological understanding of the Church relentlessly invites all Christians to unfold the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ in their own bodily ways—more specifically, the Church invites all Christians to embody the scandalous bodiliness of God in Jesus Christ—and to call on the Church to be the Eucharist for the world. This presentation will aim to bridge theological differences with regard to the Eucharist among Eastern Orthodox worshippers, Protestants, and Roman Catholics from an eschatological perspective. This presentation will further claim that the Eucharist accentuates not only centripetal force but centrifugal force, thus becoming a source of empowerment in the hopes that the Church will promote the Eucharistic vision: a world in which God, whose mystery was revealed in the bodiliness of Jesus Christ, is all in all.

Steven Studebaker, McMaster Divinity College

Pentecost and Transcending Tribalism

Social and political divides are stark in North America today. Political, lifestyle, and religious differences almost immediately escalate into zero-sum battles. Mainstream institutions from media to public education maintain that multiculturalism is the solution to this culture of toxic tribalism.

Multiculturalism endeavors to overcome differences by advocating inclusiveness and celebrating diversity. In practice however, it can replace one self-enclosed worldview and morality with a multicultural one. The aspiration of multiculturalism is correct, and it has produced many benefits, but in practice it can be exclusionary toward certain political, religious, and social voices and groups. Paralleling the wider cultural movement, multicultural churches and what Gerardo Marti and Gladys Ganiel call pluralist congregations are attempts to overcome the ethnic and class divisions in North American society. Although again their aspiration is correct, their success is mixed. This paper proposes that the Spirit of Pentecost empowers communities of inclusive diversity that can support church-based efforts to transcend the toxic tribalism that characterizes contemporary North American public life. The Spirit of Pentecost empowers people to embody the inclusive and diverse communities represented in pluralist congregations and sought for in multicultural churches and society. The Spirit of Pentecost transcends key areas of social division in contemporary society—ethnic/racial, gender, and class. After outlining the multicultural and diverse character of the many tongues of the Spirit of Pentecost, the paper highlights the praxis of Valley Gate Vineyard in Kentville, Nova Scotia because it embodies the multicultural promise of Pentecost. Churches like Valley Gate Vineyard point the way forward for Christian life and ministry in the face of current cultural forces in North America that threaten the formation of redemptive communities of inclusive diversity. The inclusive diversity created by the Spirit of Pentecost is contrary to forces and movements of nativism, ethnocentrism, and political partisanship. It also critiques reductionistic forces within multiculturalism that strip away cultural particularities and impose a common culture in the name of social unity. In practice, multiculturalism can move toward a secular mono-culture that excludes religion for the sake of tolerance. Pentecost promotes the manifold diversity that arises from human beings bearing the Spirit breathed divine image. Pentecost promotes public witness that advocates on behalf of all people. Congregations empowered by God's Spirit to embrace others in love, moreover, can foster authentic multicultural communities and practices.