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WISDOM FOR THE COMMON GOOD

Learning into the Spirit



THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RECEPTIVE ECUMENISM
DISCERNMENT, DECISION-MAKING AND RECEPTION
CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA | NOVEMBER 6-9, 2017

Other Speakers - Bios

María Ágústsdóttir

María Ágústsdóttir is Chair of the Interchurch Committee of Iceland and a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland Committee for External Affairs. She has been serving as a district pastor in the Deanery of Reykjavík West and received her doctorate in Ecumenical Theology at the University of Iceland in 2016. Her academic work is mapping the experience of people active in ecumenical work through a phenomenological and hermeneutical qualitative research method under the title: "Receiving the Other. The Lived Experience of *Oikoumene* as a Practical, Relational, and Spiritual Reality".

Hans Boeryd

Church of Sweden (Lutheran), parish priest in Jönköping since 2001, member of the local ecumenical council and in the Swedish receptive ecumenism "pilgrimage" as well. Local reflection over ecumenism, religious dialogue and interest in international ecumenism as well, brings me to Canberra.

Dr Mary Coloe pbvm

Dr Mary Coloe pbvm is an Associate Professor of New Testament within the University of Divinity, Melbourne. She currently serves on an international dialogue of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, between the Catholic Church and the Church/Disciples of Christ. Her special focus is the Gospel of John and she is much published in this field. Further details can be found in her home page www.marycoloe.org.au

Viorel Coman

Viorel Coman (b. 1984, Romania) is a FWO post-doctoral researcher at the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, KU Leuven, where he studies the interaction between the Neo-Patristic Movement and the French *Ressourcement*. His doctoral dissertation focused on *Dumitru Staniloae's Trinitarian Ecclesiology in the Context of the Debates on the Filioque: The Synthesis between Christology and Pneumatology in Ecclesiology* (KU Leuven, 2016).

Protopresbyter Dr Doru Costache

Protopresbyter Dr Doru Costache is Senior Lecturer in Patristic Studies at St Cyril's Coptic Orthodox Theological College, Sydney. Co-founder of the Australian Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies, Sydney. Participant in the *Science and Orthodoxy Around the World* project,

funded by the Templeton World Charity Foundation and hosted by the National Hellenic Research Foundation, Athens.

Adelbert Denaux

Adelbert Denaux is professor emeritus at the Faculty of Theology of the Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium), where he was teaching exegesis of the New Testament, Biblical Greek and Ecumenism. He is Dean emeritus of the Tilburg School of Catholic Theology, The Netherlands. His publications are in the field of Bible interpretation, Biblical Greek, Ecumenism, Spirituality and New Religious Movements. He is a member of ARCIC III.

Denis Edwards

Denis Edwards is a professorial fellow in theology at Australian Catholic University, Adelaide campus, and a member of ACU's Institute for Religion and Critical Inquiry. He is a priest of the Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide, involved in Tranmere parish, and a member of two ecumenical dialogues, the International Methodist-Roman Catholic Commission and the national Australian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission.

The Rev'd Sven-Erik Fjellström

The Rev'd Sven-Erik Fjellström has served in local parish work both in Sweden and Zimbabwe for 11 years, before working in a bishop's office on diocesan level 1992-2011. From 2011 until recent retirement he has worked as Ecumenical Officer at the national level of the Church of Sweden – Africa desk.

The Rev'd Dr. Karen Petersen Finch

The Rev'd Dr. Karen Petersen Finch is Associate Professor of Theology at Whitworth University in Spokane, Washington, U.S.A. She is also a Minister of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A). Karen earned her M.Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary and her doctorate from Gonzaga University, and is a Fellow of the Lonergan Institute at Boston College.

The Rev'd Tony Franklin-Ross

The Rev'd Tony Franklin-Ross is an ordained presbyter in the Methodist Church of New Zealand. He serves in the Napier Methodist Parish (itself a partner to a 30-year inner-city ecumenical covenant), and is Co-Superintendent of the Lower North Island District (of which over 70% of its parishes represent ecumenical cooperating parishes). Tony is the Methodist Co-Chair of the Anglican-Methodist dialogue, and a member of the

Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue. An alumni of Bossey Ecumenical Institute, Tony intends to pursue doctoral studies in ecumenism. As secretary of the Ecumenical Relations Committee of the World Methodist Council, he will likely represent the WMC at this Conference.

Dr Sara Gehlin

Dr Sara Gehlin is a researcher and lecturer in theology. Her research concerns issues of ecumenism, peace, and gender. Her current post-doctoral project is carried out partly at the Church of Sweden Research Department in Uppsala, Sweden, partly at the Theological Faculty of Helsinki University, Finland.

Dr Marelle Harisun

Dr Marelle Harisun is a member of Pilgrim Uniting Church, Adelaide, Co-Chair of South Australian Dialogue of the Roman Catholic and Uniting Churches, Secretary of the Ecumenical Relationships Committee of SA Synod (UCA) and member of General Council of South Australian Council of Churches. She attended REIII in Connecticut as a UCA representative.

Nausikaa Haupt

Nausikaa Haupt is a member of the ecumenical Focolare movement in Sweden. She has a master in theology (Uppsala) and canon law (Cardiff) with theses on interreligious dialogue and apostolic succession and is working as a notary at the tribunal in the Catholic diocese of Stockholm, embracing all Sweden.

Peter Hooton

Peter Hooton is a former career diplomat. He is now a full-time PhD candidate in CSU's School of Theology, at St Mark's National Theological Centre. His research focuses on Dietrich Bonhoeffer's concept of a religionless, but nonetheless Christ-centred, Christianity, and its place in his broader theology.

The Rev'd Fr Thomas Hughson

The Rev'd Fr Thomas Hughson, a member of the Society of Jesus, is emeritus at Marquette University, Milwaukee, USA. Recent publications include *The Holy Spirit and the Church: Ecumenical Reflections with a Pastoral Perspective* (2016), and "Creation as an Ecumenical Problem: Renewal of Belief through Green Experience," *Theological Studies* (2014).

Dr Virginia Ingram

Dr Virginia Ingram is a research fellow with the Centre for Public and Contextual Theology (PaCT), Charles Sturt University, Canberra. She is the Director Elect of the Centre for Ecumenical Studies. She is currently writing a book on the implications of the *Royal Commission into the Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse* for the work of ARCIC.

The Rev'd Dr Gerard Kelly

The Rev'd Dr Gerard Kelly is President of the Catholic Institute of Sydney where he lectures in theology. He is co-chair of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue in Australia. He is a member of the Faith and Unity Commission of the National Council of Churches in Australia and a Catholic representative at the NCCA Assembly.

Clara Khayat-Nordblom

Clara Khayat-Nordblom serves the community of Wagga Wagga, NSW, with Sisters Housing and NSW Health Service as Arabic-English interpreter. Qualifications include an MA in Public & Contextual Theology, Charles Sturt University (CSU); Graduate Certificate in Islamic Studies, ISRA/CSU; BA in Humanities, CSU; and BA (English Language & Literature), Aleppo University.

Rev'd Dr Olle Kristenson

Rev'd Dr Olle Kristenson has a doctorate in Mission Studies at Uppsala University in Sweden. He is priest in the Church of Sweden (Lutheran) and is presently director of Ecumenical Theology at the Christian Council of Sweden where he is mainly responsible for issues regarding Faith and Order, Mission and the Prayer Week for Christian Unity.

The Rev'd Dr John Littleton

The Rev'd Dr John Littleton is a Learning Community practitioner and researcher in the parish context. He is a consultant on Learning and Teaching in Parishes. John has 40 years' experience as an Anglican priest serving three parishes and ministering as Consultant on Education in four Australian Dioceses.

Rev'd Anna Ljung

Rev'd Anna Ljung is a local pastor of the Uniting Church in Sweden and a chaplain at a hospital. She has served in the Commission of World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches for 14 years and as executive staff of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches during 3 years along with a number of other international ecumenical missions.

Rachel Lopez

After studying theology at Ridley College, Melbourne, Rachael Lopez spent a year at Lambeth Palace in London, as part of the *Community of St Anselm*. She is now a write-at-home-mama who seeks to encourage the church to be a 'live tradition that extends in both directions of time'.

JK Melton

JK Melton is a doctoral candidate in Systematic Theology at Fordham University and a priest in the Episcopal Church. His research examines how the Eucharist serves as a model for Christian mission in a secularized and pluralistic world, and his dissertation examines the Eucharistic ecclesiology of Rowan Williams.

Andre van Oudtshoorn

Andre van Oudtshoorn is Academic Dean and Lecturer at Perth Bible College. Previously Andre has served a Church pastor and as a TV director. Originally from South Africa he has lectured in many lands and seeks to place Christ as the central focus in all he teaches and lives.

The Rev'd Dr. Keith F. Pecklers, S.J.

The Rev'd Dr. Keith F. Pecklers, S.J. is Professor of Liturgy at the Pontifical Gregorian University, and Professor of Liturgical History at the Pontifical Liturgical Institute, Rome. His latest book is *Liturgy: The Illustrated History* (Libreria Editrice Vaticana and Paulist Press). He is a member of the Malines Conversations Group Steering Committee.

The Rev'd Margaret R. Rose

The Rev'd Margaret R. Rose, Deputy for Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations, for The Episcopal Church, oversees dialogues and interreligious engagement as they relate to anti-racism, peace building and reconciliation, within the United States and internationally. She holds an A.B from Wellesley College, an M.Div from Harvard with continuing studies at the Institute of Politics and Protestant Institute of Theology in Paris and the University of Geneva and WCC's Ecumenical Institute. She has held positions in parish leadership, community organizing, seminary programs in feminist theology and urban mission.

Greg Ryan

Greg Ryan is a doctoral student at Durham University, UK. His research draws on the theological hermeneutics of Francis Schüssler Fiorenza and Ormond Rush to examine the notion of 'receiving with dynamic integrity' found in Receptive Ecumenism. Greg is also Adult Formation advisor for the Catholic Diocese of Hallam.

The Rev'd Dr Don Saines

The Rev'd Dr Don Saines is Farnham Maynard Senior Lecturer in Systematic Theology & Director of the Ministry Education Centre, Trinity College Theological School Melbourne; was Dean of the United Faculty of Theology in Melbourne, 2013-2015, and Director of Theological Education and Principal of St Francis' Theological College, Brisbane, 2004 -2009.

Mr David Schütz

Mr David Schütz (Bth BA GradDip Min GradDip LIM) is executive officer of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne (since 2002). He was a Lutheran pastor from 1992 to 2001. As a long serving member of Victorian Council of Churches Faith and Order Commission, David was Chair of the Commission from 2012 to 2015.

Callan Slipper

Callan Slipper is the Church of England's National Ecumenical Officer. He is an Anglican priest living in a Focolare Community and a member of the Focolare's international Study Centre. He is author of *Five Steps to Living Christian Unity* and *Enriched by the Other: A Spiritual Guide to Receptive Ecumenism*.

The Rev'd Ernest Sorensen

The Rev'd Ernest Sorensen is a Uniting Church Minister of the Word who is in placement with the Lighthouse Church in Port Pirie, in the mid north of South Australia. Married with three teenage boys, Ernest has spent most of his 20 years in ministry in regional placements building and growing God's people in a spirit of ecumenical co-operation and relationship.

Ray Temmerman

Ray Temmerman (Catholic) is married to Fenella (Anglican). Both are active in the Interchurch Families International Network (<http://interchurchfamilies.org>). The experience of worshipping together in both churches has led Ray to begin a Doctorate on the topic "Interchurch Families and Eucharistic Sharing: In Search of a New Hermeneutic".

Michael Trainor

Michael Trainor is a Roman Catholic priest of the Archdiocese of Adelaide, South Australia. He is senior lecturer in biblical studies at the Australian Catholic University, President of the Australian Catholic Biblical Association, Co-chair of the South Australian Uniting Church-Roman Catholic Dialogue, Chair of the Australian Council of Christians and Jews, Co-chair of the South Australian Council of Christians and Jews, and executive member of the International Council of Christians and Jews.

The Rev'd Cannon Richard Tutin

The Rev'd Cannon Richard Tutin is the General Secretary of Queensland Churches Together the peak ecumenical organisation in Queensland Australia with sixteen member churches. He has been an Anglican priest for 39 years and has served in parish and associated ministries in Queensland, New South Wales and Tasmania. Richard is an adjunct lecturer in the Schools of Theology and Humanities at Charles Sturt University and teaches as a sessional lecturer at St Francis Theological College Brisbane in homiletics. He has participated in ecumenical groups and committees throughout his ministry. Nationally Richard heads a small task group that prepares resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on behalf of the National Council of Churches in Australia.

The Rev'd Tim Watson

The Rev'd Tim Watson is an Anglican priest and member of the Chemin Neuf Community. He is Continuing Ministerial Development Officer in the Diocese of Chichester, and leader of the Chemin Neuf Community Mission in Brighton & Hove. He is also a member of the Church of England's Advisory Council on Relations between Bishops and Religious Communities.

Revd Elizabeth Welch

Revd Elizabeth Welch is Co-chair of the International Reformed Anglican Dialogue; minister at Clapton Park United Reformed Church, London, UK; previously Moderator of the General Assembly of the URC and Synod Moderator of the West Midlands Synod; also currently undertaking research at King's College, London in the Holy Spirit and worship.

The Rev'd Alison Whish

The Rev'd Alison Whish lives in Victor Harbor South Australia placed with the Newland Memorial Uniting Church congregation. She is a member of the RC UCA dialogue in South Australia and has participated in WCC Assemblies in Canberra and Harare. Currently she convenes the South Australia Chapter of the Australian Academy of Liturgy and is a member of Societas Liturgica.

The Rev'd Dr Ray Williamson OAM

The Rev'd Dr Ray Williamson OAM is an Anglican priest who has served in parish ministry in Newcastle, Sydney and Canberra, and he has taught at both an Anglican and a Greek Orthodox Theological College. For two decades he was the General Secretary of the NSW Ecumenical College and secretary of the theological commission of the National Council of Churches in Australia; and he was a Delegated Representative at the Canberra and Harare Assemblies of the WCC. He is the Honorary Director of the Centre for Ecumenical Studies, Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture.

Other Speakers - Abstracts

María Ágústsðóttir

Receiving the gifts of Reformation.

Constantly reforming through receiving gifts of God and the *ecclesially other* could be said to be an existential need of every church. A static and isolated church is an ecclesiological contradiction as the Church is per definition a living organism, being the Body of Christ. In the aftermath of Reformation commemorations within and beyond Lutheran churches the question will be discussed: What are the gifts of 16th century Reformation, worthy to be received by our various churches in the 21st century?

One gift could be said to be a *sharpening of ecclesial identity*, less needed in a uniform religious environment. It is claimed that the ecumenical encounter helps bring about a refocused or even reformed ecclesial self-understanding. Thereby a possible deepening of faith could take place, connected to some other gifts of Reformation. Those might for example be the emphasis on grace and Bible, received from Christ without intermediaries by the believer to the glory of God. How a sharpened ecclesial identity relates to an *emerging ecumenical identity* will also be discussed in this paper, partly relying on a recent phenomenological research on ecumenical experience (María Ágústsðóttir 2016).

Jane Lee-Barker

Receptive Ecumenism: Contributions from two philosophers and a theological, philosopher of religion.

In this paper I will begin from the insights of the Phenomenologists, specifically, Husserl (and his basic method of phenomenology) and Heidegger with his insights concerning human persons, to show how a person, or indeed institution, can be open to the gifts of the other without fear or loss of personal integrity. I will then use the work of the 20th century, Roman Catholic theologian and philosopher of religion, Romano Guardini, to show how these initial insights of the phenomenologists, can be developed, in the grace of God, by a person open to others and to the Spirit of God. Guardini who studied the phenomenology of Christian believers, by working from human biography, has been frequently cited by the present Pope (Pope Francis). His work firmly places the context of human interaction in the love of God and the relationship with God, through Christ. Conversion is integral to this relationship. Using Guardini's insights I will argue that discernment, decision making and reception is not an action made alone but always in mutual accord with God. When a person, or their Church, acts with integrity in prayerful relationship

with God their discernment, decision making and reception of the gifts of the other can be in accord with the most Holy intention and plan of the living God.

Mary Coloe

Breaking the Rules. Jesus transformed by his experience.

An issue in ecumenical dialogue is the tension between the tradition, often formulated in regulations, and new experience. This was an issue faced by the early Christian believers as seen in the question of admitting Gentiles, and under what conditions. The narrative sequence in Mark 6 – 8, framed by the two feeding miracles, offers one example of when Jesus “broke the rules” to open a new pathway in his ministry.

The first feeding narrative is presented as a feeding of the children of Israel on the western side of Lake Galilee. With 12 baskets of leftover pieces.

This feeding is followed by the challenge in Mark 7 of the Syrophonecian woman that the dogs under the table can feed on the scraps when the children have been fed. Jesus heals her child and then moves to the Gentile territory on the Eastern side of the Lake. Now he feeds the Gentiles with seven baskets of scraps remaining. The narrative sequence shows that the children have been fed thus opening the way for Jesus to expand his ministry to include the Gentiles. Included in this sequence is a discussion about the traditions of the Law.

Viorel Coman

Revisiting the Agenda of the Neo-Patristic Movement: A Plea for Receptive Ecumenism in Contemporary Orthodox Theology.

It has been argued by scholars that one of the main reasons that explains the growth of anti-ecumenical and anti-Western attitudes in contemporary Orthodox Church is the largely still prevailing dominance of the 20th-century Neo-Patristic movement's agenda: the 'purification' of Orthodoxy from the negative influences of Western Scholasticism through a return *ad mentem patrem*. Even though it is true that the program to 'de-westernize' Orthodox theology has been a central feature of this movement and may have caused anti-Roman Catholic feelings, my paper argues that the interaction of the Neo-Patristic theologians with the West was much more complex than previously thought, for it cannot be reduced to their efforts to set Orthodoxy free from the influences of Latin Scholasticism. The architects of the Neo-Patristic movement were willing to learn from other Christian traditions and let themselves inspired by the valuable theological and spiritual acquisitions of their Western colleagues. In so doing, this paper (1) detects

solid elements of Receptive Ecumenism in the program of the movement that continues to have a significant influence upon Orthodoxy today, and (2) pleads for Orthodoxy's need to give strategic priority to a learning-mode of ecumenical interaction, especially since it faces today an increase in number of those who adopt conservative positions and reject any form of dialogue with non-Orthodox.

Doru Costache

What Should the Australian Orthodox Learn from the Local Lutheran—Roman Catholic Dialogue?

In August 2017, the Lutheran—Roman Catholic dialogue in Australia published the document 'The Ministry of Oversight: The Office of Bishop and President in the Church,' the outcome of seven years of elaboration. Building on the international agreement on justification (1999), the document is structured in seven sections preceded by an introduction. It outlines the early Christian and medieval understandings of the episcopal ministry, together with its representations from the Reformation onwards, down to the contemporary Roman Catholic and Lutheran doctrines and practices. Further sections refer to the divine institution of oversight, its status as a gift, apostolic succession, the rapports between overseer and the synod, and the pastoral dimension of episcopacy. The sections summarise the traditional views of both Roman Catholics and Lutherans, followed by statements on the dialogue's findings. The resulting depiction of the episcopal ministry is complex, nuanced and shaped by ecclesial considerations. The document ends by mapping the current challenges and the future steps to be taken with reference to the dialogue's findings. The document is striking on several levels, such as the humble approach of the representatives involved in the dialogue, their realistic appraisal of their own traditions, their capacity to recognise in the experience of the counterparts valid and shared aspects, beyond the various morphologies. Foremost, it surprises by the ecclesial conviction with which the episcopal ministry is considered therein, somehow at odds with the realities of the Orthodox in the Antipodes. In the wake of the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church (2016), my paper offers a reflected summary of the document, together with highlighting lessons which Australian Orthodox should learn from this dialogue concerning the relationships between themselves as well as between Orthodox and other Christians.

Christian Council of Sweden/Swedish Mission Council

Receptive ecumenism in mission: A practical example from Sweden

In 2016 the Christian Council of Sweden and the Swedish Mission Council initiated a process called the Pilgrim Process, where we have applied receptive ecumenism with a focus on the theme of *mission*. We have organised our work as a "pilgrimage" where we have visited central places of the four church families that are represented in Sweden: the Orthodox churches, the Roman Catholic Church, the Lutherans, and the Reformed and Pentecostal churches. We have come to each place to listen, learn, and receive from the thoughts and practices of mission of the hosting church family. We have also participated in their prayer life and prayer traditions. As it is a "pilgrimage", we have arranged our receptive ecumenical dialogue with regard to three dimensions of the pilgrimage: the *stillness* with own reflection; the *crossroads* where we have shared our thoughts in small groups; and the *mountain* where we have approached a broader landscape of thoughts together.

In our presentation we will share our experiences and reflections from the Pilgrim Process and give examples from our practice of receptive ecumenism in a Swedish context and church landscape.

Adelbert Denaux

Discernment, Decision-Making and Reception in the Early Church.

The Jerusalem Meeting of Acts 15 as a Test-Case.

One of the greatest challenges of the Early Church was the move from the Jewish to the Hellenistic World. Should circumcision and the observance of the Jewish Law be required from pagans who wanted to convert to the Christian movement or is baptism in Jesus' name and the observance of the new Law of the Messiah Jesus sufficient to obtain salvation? In Acts 15, Luke narrates how Early Christians dealt with this issue. The local Church of Antioch, where the problem arose, sends a delegation to the mother church of Jerusalem. There is mutual dependence, open discussion and mutual listening. The centre listens to the margins, and the margins want to get their mission among the Gentiles tested and approved by the centre. Care is taken that the decision is in accordance with Scripture (15:16-18). The decision makers (the apostles and elders) are aware that the Holy Spirit has led them to this decision (15:28). The whole church is involved with the process (15:4, 5, 12, 22). The developments in Antioch are approved. However, some minimal requirements (of a ritual nature) are

imposed (15:20.29) to assure the peaceful co-existence of Jewish and pagan Christians. *Koinonia* demands some practical arrangements in everyday life, without compromising the essence of the Gospel. The reception of the decision takes times and sometimes implies further consideration (21:25).

Denis Edwards

Ecclesial Decision-Making: Exploring an Insight from Karl Rahner.

How does a church decide whether a gift offered by an ecumenical partner is to be received as God-given? This paper takes up what Karl Rahner has to say about decision-making at the level of the individual Christian, and applies it at the communal level of church decision-making in an ecumenical context. Rahner's position is based on his interpretation of Ignatius's teaching on the discernment of spirits in his *Spiritual Exercises*. According to Rahner, Ignatius offers a systematic approach to the logic of Christian decision-making. He points to the importance of Ignatius's "consolation without previous cause," and offers an interpretation of this consolation in terms of the experience of grace, when we are open to the mystery of the incomprehensible God, and to the love that is beyond concepts and words. Rahner proposes that such experiences can become the touch-stone not only for major vocation moments, but also for finding the way of God in the concrete circumstances of daily life. This paper will ask how such insights might help a church discern the way of God in its ecumenical engagement with a partner church.

Karen Petersen Finch

Loneran's Method as Scaffolding for Ecumenical Discernment.

Jesuit theologian Bernard Lonergan wrote *Method in Theology* in 1972. In it he defined method as a series of interrelated tasks (not in a rigid order) which provide support for the emergence of fresh theological understanding, common doctrinal judgments and shared decisions. This paper will probe the role of decision-making in Lonergan's theological method. It will focus primarily on two of Lonergan's "functional specialties" (interrelated tasks): Dialectic and Foundations. Dialectic encourages dialogue partners to probe their differences "to the roots." How have our communities arrived at such different decisions on the meaning of history, Scripture and tradition? Under what conditions might we be able to make fresh decisions, together? Foundations, the counterpart of Dialectic, takes Lonergan's focus on decision-making and turns it inward. Here ecumenists judge our own participation in dialogue from the standpoint of Christian conversion. Do I represent my

tradition as one whose decisions have been transformed by "falling in love with God"? Are there barriers to communion not only in my community's theology, but also in me? After demonstrating the utility of Dialectic and Foundations for wise decision-making in dialogue, this paper will conclude with a brief application of Lonergan's method to ecumenical reception, which is also a series of decisions.

Tony Franklin-Ross

Receptive Episcopacy: a reflection from the Anglican-Methodist Dialogue in Ireland and Aotearoa New Zealand.

A significant component of many national and international ecumenical dialogues has been the distinctive understandings and expressions of episcopacy, including *episcopate* and episcopal ministry. This has been important particularly for dialogues between churches who have a threefold ministry including that of bishops expressing historic succession, and those churches which shape their ministry differently or make no such claim of historic succession.

Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry ('BEM') gives a challenge to continue the task of convergence of understanding and agreement on episcopacy. Rather than establishing a common form of episcopacy (unity by uniformity), might the ecumenical pilgrimage explore a way to recognise and reconcile episcopacy without calling into question the authenticity of each other's ordination and episcopate (unity in diversity)? Thus, BEM might challenge both traditions towards both self-recognition and mutual-recognition of legitimate diversity in expressing episcopacy.

Referencing Anglican-Methodist dialogues, particularly in Ireland and New Zealand, this paper explores a continuing convergence on episcopacy which reflects the work that BEM encouraged. Is recognising consonance of diverse models possible to form a 'communion of episcopacy'? Is an expression of 'receptive episcopacy' a way to recognise the apostolicity of each other's churches?

Sara Gehlin

Recognition and Integrity – A Feminist Theological Approach to Receptive Ecumenism.

In year 2000 the Security Council of the United Nations adopted the Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. The Resolution, also called a "landmark", has formed a springboard for reflection within the ecumenical movement since the beginning of the new millennium. The goals of the Resolution, which include the equal participation of women in all efforts for peace as well as the protection of women and girls from gender-based violence, have given rise to an engaged dialogue. The Resolution brings to the fore two issues which are also

central to receptive ecumenism: *recognition* and *integrity*. However, critical questions arise when these two issues are considered at the crossroad between receptive ecumenism and the ecumenical dialogue on women, peace and security. The Resolution 1325, in connecting recognition with equality, calls for consideration of the aspect of asymmetrical relations in the practice of receptive ecumenism. It evokes the question of whether and how attitudes of receiving and self-critical learning might develop in the face of such asymmetries. In the paper, this question is considered with regard to feminist theological thinking and its possible impetus to the discussion of recognition in receptive ecumenism. Moreover, in connecting integrity with protection, the Resolution 1325 calls for consideration of the aspects of presence and participation in receptive ecumenism. In the view of feminist theological thinking, it evokes the question of who has access to the table of conversation. Who speaks, remains silent, or speaks in ways that are not heard? Considering these questions, the paper investigates how receptive ecumenism can pave new ways for encounters of listening and learning from a multiplicity of voices, also from those who speak in ways that are not otherwise heard.

Marelle Harisun and Ernest Sorensen

Case studies of RE: Denominational and Congregational.

The paper will describe how the Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of South Australia, has engaged with Receptive Ecumenism since the RE III Conference in Connecticut. The report to the 2014 Synod by an attendee resulted in re-establishment, after 15 years, of a Synod body to encourage receptive ecumenism within congregations and to make links with ecumenical bodies in other state denominations and in UCA. Members were attenders at 2013 Adelaide meetings with Paul Murray. Commitment to “receptive learning” resulted in specific inter-denominational relationship building in their congregations. The SER Committee places an increasing emphasis on resourcing congregations and candidates preparing for ordination for commitment to RE.

Reflection on these experiences demonstrates that Ecumenism as an expression of church in many rural areas leads to co-operation between denominations essential for Christian community formation and survival in difficult times. Co-operation at congregation or regional level is often innovative and practical and arises from grassroots conversations or ideas.

Experience of training ecumenically at Adelaide College of Divinity also strengthened understanding and relationships in Congregational service.

Short case studies of relationship building and greater cooperation will be shared.

Peter Hooton

The ecumenical Church and the things that make for exile.

“Why do we fear the fury of the world powers? Why don’t we take the power from them and give it back to Christ? ... The trumpets of war may blow tomorrow. For what are we waiting? Do we want to become involved in this guilt as never before?” With these words the German theologian, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, briefly electrified a meeting of the Ecumenical Council of Christian Churches in Fanø, Denmark, in the summer of 1934. But the moment passed, vanquished by the pressing ‘realities’ of a world preparing for war. Bonhoeffer believed that, if the ecumenical movement was to provide Christians with a new form of ecclesial self-understanding, it needed a theology of its own, grounded in the authority of *Christus praesens*, and speaking always to the contemporary situation. As such, the ecumenical Church must be ready to challenge the established order, especially when it became clear that that order was no longer open to Christ. This paper asks whether Bonhoeffer’s critique of ecumenism speaks to us today; and, if not, whether it should. In doing so, the paper explores Jeffrey Pugh’s suggestion that Christianity “may perhaps best be shaped in the contemporary setting by commitments that place it in a position of exile.” Might a Church that is focused on the things that make for “exile” – the radical critique of violence, inequity, and injustice – be more likely to find a “way of being with each other” (Paul Murray, receptive ecumenism) than one whose various expressions are concerned chiefly with their own continuance?

Thomas Hughson

Lutheran Reception of Pope Francis’ Laudato si: Receive in Turn?

Receptive ecumenism has a logic exceeding Catholic realizations. Reception can be in and by any church. So, for example, a group of Lutheran theologians have received Pope Francis’s *Laudato si* in view of 1517. (Lisa E. Dahill and James B. Martin–Schramm, eds., *Eco-Reformation: Grace and Hope for a Planet in Peril* [Cascade Books/Wipf and Stock: Eugene, Ore., 2016]). They hold as “a common conviction...that a gospel call for ecological justice belongs at the heart of the five hundredth anniversary observance of the Reformation in 2017.” The conviction arises in common reception of a papal teaching.

Directing their contributions primarily to Lutheran and other Protestant readers the separately authored chapters propose a new understanding of “ecclesia semper reformanda.” Sustaining the Reformation requires of the churches an ecclesial conversion to a renewed relation to God through a renewed relation with creation, in effect

then, an Eco-Reformation with a new appreciation of grace and hope.

Then the question arises, could Catholic theology receive in turn the variously-argued Lutheran proposal? The purpose and goal of the 20 minute paper consists in testing my hypothesis in favour of Catholic reception. Three sections engage the book: 1) what is Eco-Reformation? 2) does shifting from the 16th c. focus on human salvation/justification before the gracious God to focus on planetary well-being in reference to the creating God spring from strong principles of a theological nature? and 3) do the book's understandings of divine creation carry ecclesiological implications open to Catholic reception?

Virginia Ingram

Receptive Ecumenism in view of the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

This presentation takes as a starting point the Royal Commission's recommendation that the Catholic Church must have more women in leadership positions. Not surprisingly, this recommendation has excited conversation about the possibility of the ordination of women in the Catholic Church. However, historically these conversations do not bear fruit as the Catholic Church have repeatedly stated that they will never ordain women. In view of the fundamental principle of receptive ecumenism, to be receptive to the 'other', and for the purposes of this exercise, I accept this position. I also accept the position of the Royal Commission – who are included in this discussion as a further dialoguing partner – that women must be represented in leadership roles in the Catholic Church. This view, as expressed by the Royal Commission, is consonant with psychological studies into stereotypes and implicit learning. Such studies suggest that a patriarchal worldview is reinforced at a subconscious level by an unbalanced observation of men in leadership positions. The awareness that women have been harmed by a patriarchal worldview is also consonant with the Catholic Church's commitment to justice for women. In response to this, the following presentation explores the idea of the 'complementary' role of a woman as a just role. This presentation also asks, and seeks to answer the question, what just role can women play in the Catholic Church? The answer to this question is imagined as a new role for women. A ministry that is modelled on that of Mary

Gerard Kelly

The Anniversary of the Reformation as a moment for ecclesial learning.

This paper will argue that the anniversary of the Reformation this year is an occasion for ecclesial learning – which is at the heart of receptive ecumenism. The paper will begin by considering the current state of Roman Catholic–Lutheran relations after almost five decades of theological dialogue. There is no doubt that in Australia these two churches are in a different relationship with each other than was previously the case. The various dialogue topics go to the very heart of the questions that divided the two churches at the time of the Reformation. The central focus of the paper will be a consideration of some of those topics from a receptive ecumenism point of view. I will do this as a Roman Catholic. Rather than read Luther asking either what doctrines are still not able to be accepted by the Catholic Church, or which doctrines can be recognised the paper will ask what can the Catholic Church learn from Luther and the Lutheran Confessions. While particular attention will be given to the doctrine of Justification, consideration will also be given to the more recent dialogue on episcopal and papal authority. While these two areas – justification and episcopal/papal authority – have typically been regarded respectively as Lutheran and Catholic concerns, a consideration of them in a receptive mode may shed some further light on how receptive ecumenism facilitates ecclesial learning.

Clara Khayat-Nordblom

Unity in Faith in Syria.

Deliberating upon alternate interpretations of the Holy scriptures in every age has provided ongoing challenges. A focus on differences in doctrines defines the branching and sub-branching which arises from variations in culture, custom, language and environment. Too often these obscure rather than foster appreciation of the founding principles that unite us.

I approach the concept of ecumenical receptiveness through interfaith dialogue; in particular, Islam's rich roots are in Christianity and extend through the Old Testament prophets who, like Abraham believed, thanked and praised the same Merciful and Benevolent God.

God's mercy encompasses all. It is shown in the kindness of people toward one another. Engagement in interfaith dialogue provides opportunities to explore beyond the world of our traditional faiths, to see the perspectives of others: their hopes, their beliefs, their concerns and their problems. It is an expression of our common humanity and desire for peace and harmony in this world.

I trust my perspectives on Islam and Christianity will contribute to that harmony. Given the recent several year's news from Syria, you may be surprised to hear that "harmonious" is how I would describe that great country where I spent the first 40 years of my life. Born there to a Christian Arab family, my school-mates, friends and neighbours were mostly Muslims aware of their relation to Christianity in Islam. Christians likewise know the support and kindnesses of the Muslim majority. In this paper, I focus on bringing out historic and current testimonies and lessons of this harmony.

John Littleton

Ecumenical Learning and Learning Communities.

In *Creative Ecumenical Education*, Simon Oxley identified the connection between ecumenical learning and a learning community approach. He wanted to help churches become learning communities. Oxley discussed educational processes that facilitated ecumenical learning: encounter with the "other", multiple perspectives, critical thinking and communal learning.

Such learning processes relate to the findings of my recent doctoral research study on the enhancement of learning in 47 parishes within the Anglican Diocese of Adelaide. This research examined parish educational ministry through the lens of a learning community approach. A learning community in the parish context is defined as:

a visionary community of faith where leaders and members, while respecting a diversity of abilities and perspectives, practise holistic, collaborative and theologically reflective learning processes.

In that study, I argue that the learning community processes—of holism, collaboration and theological reflection—when intentionally practiced in parishes, enhance learning outcomes in terms of the knowledge, understanding and practice of the Christian faith in and through Jesus Christ.

Parish survey and focus group results revealed a spectrum of responses from across the parishes in the Diocese. The research showed a moderate, positive and clear association between learning processes and learning outcomes.

During the paper I discuss the research findings in relation to the enhancement of ecumenical learning in Receptive Ecumenism activities with parishes.

JK Melton

Learning across the Colonial Divide: Receptive Ecumenism and Postcolonial Schisms.

Receptive Ecumenism has provided the ecumenical

movement with an effective method to engage in dialogue, particularly by exploring what each tradition can learn from the other. Unfortunately for ecumenical efforts, different Christian denominations face numerous schisms, increasing the number of separations to be healed tremendously. In recent years, divisions have increased, particularly in terms of conflict over human sexuality. As can be seen in Lutheranism, Anglicanism, and Methodism, these schisms also fall along the line between colonizer and colonized, which further complicates matters. An emphasis on receptive learning could be more deeply received within Christian traditions to discern how a denomination can move forward, maintaining communion, even when bitter divides remain.

This paper will explore what resources Receptive Ecumenism may offer to the postcolonial struggles of various denominations that have experienced schism or where schism threatens. In particular, this paper will argue, first, that schisms such as those based on human sexuality are primarily rooted in colonialism, and, it will argue, second, that Receptive Ecumenism offers tools that allow there to be dialogue among Christians who are particularly divided within denominations along lines created by colonialism, largely because of its posture of learning and listening. As a result, Receptive Ecumenism has potential to be a potent postcolonial method. Indeed, if churches were to receive the methods of Receptive Ecumenism, they would have additional tools to lean into the Spirit as they discern ways forward. By adopting a stance of active listening and learning, rather than a stance of advocacy and argument, the churches may find ways to heal internal divisions. As a result, they become adept at such skills that are needed to bridge larger doctrinal divides between denominations.

Andre van Oudtshoorn

Bracketing Belief. Engaging Receptively with Different Traditions on Baptism Through a Phenomenological Analysis of Ephesians 4:4-6.

Many theological issues around baptism remain contentious and unresolved, resulting in deep divisions between denominations, churches and individual believers. Baptism informs the way in which Christians practically experience their faith. Many Christians consider baptism to be a unique event between them and God. Others view baptism as a Christian identity marker which binds different generations to the realm of the Spirit and the church. Some believers link baptism to obtaining salvation while others view it as completely unnecessary for salvation. Apart from these personal and theological considerations, many practical questions around the different modes of baptism remain. How should believers

be baptised, by immersion or the sprinkling of water? When should a person be baptised? Is it right to baptise infants? Can one be re-baptised? Questions about the 'right' baptismal practices seem only to inflame the debate without showing any signs of reaching a consensus.

Too often the answers to all these questions, and the arguments to support them, flow from unacknowledged connotations surrounding the term "baptism". What is required is a form of analysis which allows our presuppositions to be challenged by becoming receptive to other theological connotations. I argue that baptism should function as a unifying symbol allowing different denominations to understand each other more clearly. I propose using a phenomenological analysis of Eph. 4:4-6 to isolate the term baptism within its immediate context to ascertain its essential meaning and primary connotations. This will be done by bracketing out all non-essential connotations surrounding the term and rebuilding the term in the light of its function in this passage. The essential character of baptism, I will argue, enables it to become a grounding concept for theologians of diverse positions to listen receptively to each other.

Keith F. Pecklers

"United, Not Absorbed": The Malines Conversations Revisited.

The Malines Conversations (1921-1926) between the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church, hosted by the then Archbishop of Malines-Bruxelles Cardinal Desiré Mercier, focused on revisiting the 1896 text of Pope Leo XIII *Apostolicae Curae* on the invalidity of Anglican orders, and offered the hope for mutual recognition of ministry within both Communions.

Six years ago, with the blessing of both the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity and Lambeth Palace, The Malines Conversations Group was established as an informal dialogue of Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops and scholars with the task of revisiting those Conversations in light of the Second Vatican Council and more than fifty years of Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue.

From an examination of anthropological, ecclesial, liturgical, and social developments in both Communions, the group has proceeded to study "degrees of communion"; questions of ethics and gender; the changing face of Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism in the twenty-first century; sacramentality, apostolicity, and ministry; and the gifts to be received from one another's churches. This presentation will offer a report on this "work in progress" after five international meetings.

Margaret R. Rose

Leaning into the Spirit: "Reveal its Unity, Guard its Faith".

These words from the ancient Eucharistic prayer call present day ecumenists to pay attention to new ways the Spirit is indeed revealing the Unity of the Church. This paper will explore how shared mission and ministry are creating new understandings of "church uniting" rather than "church dividing" issues. As Christian worship and discipleship cross boundaries of private prayer and public theology, as lay engagement deepens the connection between every day work and lived faith, as the lines between "secular" and "sacred" blur, we see the work of the spirit lived in the public realm of everyday life. Such fluid boundaries in a so called "secularizing world" re- shape our theological and ecumenical method. Theological and relational barriers which once seemed intractable are broken and bridges are built.

Concrete examples from the American context include worshipping communities outside the traditional walls of the church: The Slate Project an ecumenical dinner and online church. Ecclesia New York and The Crossing, Boston: regular outdoor eucharists and worship which include many who are homeless, St. Lydia's: a dinner church and co-working space in Brooklyn, NY.

Other gatherings include ecumenical worship which emerges from shared works of mercy and justice. In my own Episcopal Church parish (mostly Caucasian) a deep partnership was built with an African Methodist Episcopal parish (mostly African American) in the work of community organizing for affordable housing. It was, however, in the shared worship of foot washing on Maundy Thursday that we truly understood our engagement as a sacramental and unifying act of revolutionary love.

Gregory A. Ryan

'Receiving with dynamic Integrity': Exploring some hermeneutical commitments of Receptive Ecumenism.

One of the striking things about Receptive Ecumenism is the apparent simplicity of the central idea. Indeed, Paul Murray claims that the ethic of RE is 'as simple yet all-pervasive as the gospel it represents.' That the basic principle of 'receiving with integrity' is easily grasped, adapted and applied can be seen in the rich diversity of pastoral and academic engagements with RE since the first conference in 2006. Yet that principle has deeper roots than might at first appear. Antonia Pizzey, for example, has recently completed research demonstrating the relationship of RE to Spiritual Ecumenism. My approach is along rather different lines, but is intended to complement rather than contradict Pizzey's work by asking what RE looks like viewed as

a practice of responsible interpretation. What are the hermeneutical commitments involved in 'receiving with dynamic integrity'?

If receiving from the other in RE is not to be simply instrumental but also transformative – of understanding, structures and practices- then both reception and integrity involve an interpretative element. The key to 'dynamic integrity' can be found by clarifying the relationship between Murray's programmatic articulation of RE and his work on theological rationality, and this forms the first part of my paper. On the other hand, hermeneutical resources dealing with 'reception' are not explicitly addressed in Murray's work but have been engaged in depth by Ormond Rush. The second part of the paper therefore indicates some initial structural parallels between RE and Rush's appropriation of H.R. Jauss. If RE is to be a long-term strategy, then an ongoing attention to 'roots' such as these, as well as the 'reach' of adoption, remains significant.

Don Saines

Cultural Diversity, Theological Education and a vision beyond Receptive Ecumenism.

Receptive learning, a key practice within receptive ecumenism, is an invitation to institutions of theological education to be more fully what they are intended to be as environments of deep learning and practice. Paul Murray writes of receptive learning as an exercise in 'collaborative ecclesial learning,' a *poiesis* or constructive activity as a result of encounter with difference, and exploration into truth. An underlying theological perspective here, as Daniel Hardy once observed, is a trust 'that Christ's work begins with whatever one finds in the world, rather than beginning with theological concepts that precede the world and require the world to reshape itself in order for Christ's work to begin to be done.'

Recent discussion about culturally diverse theological education highlights the need to further this vision of receptive learning with its sense of mutuality: as teachers, we need to be fully immersed in the world of the learner. Educators point out that, while learning and knowing always takes place through participation with particular communities, we also live and learn in 'multiple overlapping and permeable communities.' Learning theory and Christian theology invite our churches to learn from our current culturally diverse social context, to not isolate our learning so as to 'narrow God's work unduly.' This paper draws from recent learning theory and reflection about culturally diverse theological education to argue that receptive ecumenism may be most effective when theological education seeks to participate more fully in our wider diverse social context.

David Schütz and Don Saines

An Affirmative and Critical Response to the World Council of Churches' Faith and Order Commission document The Church: Towards a Common Vision (TCTCV).

In 2012 the WCC F&O released *TCTCV*. The document engages and explores the concept of *koinonia* with the aim of offering a convergence text on the common understanding of the Church by Christian communities.

In its recent response to *TCTCV*, the Victorian Council of Churches (VCC) F&O Commission were on the whole affirmative of its content, especially Chapters 1 and 4. In these sections *TCTCV* situated the Church squarely within 'the design of God,' and points to the challenge of our mission in this globalized world where religious pluralism, moral discernment and moral living, are integrally intertwined.

The Commission also welcome the way *TCTCV* names the Church's past as both valued and viewed within the reality of failures (e.g., imperialist colonialism, invasions, cultural hegemony). The 'eschatological' emphases help give voice to these realities of faithfulness amidst failure, but also to a deep acknowledgement of diversity and a church that exists within a 'rich variety of cultures.'

The Commission also noted areas where difference and ongoing conversation and openness to God and each other is needed: areas such as leadership and oversight, limitations to acceptable diversity, the nature and importance of sacraments, the basis of church unity and the idea that the Church itself could be called 'sinful.' Surprisingly, minimal reference to the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in and for the world was noted in the final chapter about moral questions and the church in the world.

The Commission was also very conscious of the churches not formally part of the WCC who have not contributed to the formulation of the *TCTCV*. In the Spirit of further ecumenism, might these views have been named or acknowledged? Many further questions formed part of the report as a way of furthering conversation. The Commission affirms *TCTCV* as a genuinely valuable tool for expressing some of the key themes of Christian identity as Church, as well as providing a solid context for fruitful dialogue.

This paper is also presented to promote further discussion and reflection on *TCTCV*.

Callan Slipper

Chiara Lubich and decision-making: a spiritual methodology of mutual reception based on Christ crucified and forsaken.

Chiara Lubich's spirituality of unity has a number of profound affinities with Receptive Ecumenism. These are outlined as the spirituality of unity is briefly presented. This spirituality offers a way of discernment that produces an effective form of decision-making that is theologically and pneumatologically grounded and so capable of deep openness to discovering what God wants. This process is then described by recounting lived experiences of decision-making within the Focolare Movement, the Movement founded by Chiara Lubich which exists to exemplify and convey the spirituality of unity. A core element of the decision-making process, significantly, is mutual reception. This mutual reception is explored by reference to an intense period of mystical understanding that took place in the life of Chiara and her first companions during and following the summer of 1949. What emerges is analysed through the lens of key terms within the decision-making process of the historic Christian community: personal and communal authority as two poles combined in different ways across the Christian denominations. This points to the possible contribution of the spirituality of unity both to the actual process of discernment and decision-making within denominations and to the ecumenical practice of learning from one another. This underlines the value of the range of institutional patterns of discernment and decision-making, offers suggestions for how they can be evaluated or even reconciled, and points above all to the suggestion that while institutional patterns are helpful, and indeed necessary, for them to be fully successful they must be rooted in the dimension of the Spirit. This dimension is accessed by a living *theologia crucis*: putting into effect the gift given by Christ in his God-forsakenness.

Ray Temmerman

Eucharist: An opportunity for familial reception?

Coming from an interchurch family perspective, this paper asks whether the Eucharist might become an opportunity for welcoming to the table estranged brothers and sisters in Christ. Normally such brothers and sisters would eat their meals in their own home. Is it possible that when these brothers and sisters come to our home at meal time, seeking to enhance familial unity, we might receive them, welcome them to share in our table to the full, taking and eating, taking and drinking? Might our canons, rather than serving as rules for differentiation and delineation, serve in such cases as guidelines for table etiquette? As we engage in the time-honoured and truly

human tradition of meal sharing, guided by such table etiquette, might we be able to welcome and include our estranged siblings? Through this, might ecclesial communion be revealed and real-ized, in its domestic, local and universal expressions?

Michael Trainor

Encountering Receptive Ecumenism in the First Century CE.

The experience of Receptive Ecumenism is not new, or rather, the practice of Receptive Ecumenism lays at the foundation of the earliest ecclesial gatherings of Jesus followers in the first century CE. Luke, writing in the mid-80s of the first century CE, describes an event (Acts 6.1-7) where two religiously divided Jerusalem groups overcome their divisions and experience communion (*koinonia*). The issue that the author of Acts focuses upon occurs in a setting, which hitherto and generally up to this moment in Acts' narrative development, of common life amongst Jerusalem's Jesus followers. This is clear in the summaries in Acts 2.41 and 4.32-37. These describe how Jerusalem Jesus followers hold everything in common. They clearly live out the Greek ideal of friendship. However as the story in Acts unfolds from this point on, 'cracks' seem to appear in Luke's theologically idyllic community: A couple deceive each other and the disciples as they attempt to keep some of their property rather than have it available for distribution (Acts 5.1-11); the temple preaching of the apostles is scrutinised by the religious authorities (Acts 5.12-21) who bring them before the Sanhedrin for judgement (Acts 5.22-42). These two events symbolically reflect what is happening *within* the Jerusalem Jesus followers: What seems to be 'common' is now a source of division. In a discernment of how to address this new issue and to receive the 'other', the leaders of Jerusalem's Jesus followers return to a path of communion founded on discernment of God's word. This leads to concrete engagement, practical hospitality and ecclesial growth. This discernment from an early Christian story can speak into our own journey in Receptive Ecumenism.

Michael Trainor, Alison Whish, and Marelle Harisun

Receptive Ecumenism in practice: South Australian Dialogue of the Roman Catholic and Uniting Churches.

The South Australian Dialogue of the Roman Catholic and Uniting Churches (SADRCUC) will report on their activities 2014-7, focused on studying documents about Receptive Ecumenism as our major focus, so that we could discover ways we could encourage congregations engage in receptive learning. We developed a statement and a diagram and encouraged two pairs of local congregations (RC AND UCA) to work together as action research on RE. We will report on the outcomes of this work. We also

studied the World Council of Churches (WCC) document “The Church: Towards a Common Vision”, in order to discern where an understanding of RE could enrich this resource for member churches and sent our response to WCC Faith and Order Commission. The workshop will report on the contrasts between the work of RE in a rural and central capital city, together with a resource leaflet describing our theoretical and practical ideas for use in congregations seeking to discern the gifts brought by each other.

Richard Tutin

Do we wait for approval or do we just get on with it – putting into action decisions made by local churches about ecumenical ministry in rural areas.

In rural areas of Australia, particularly Queensland, local churches have found the value of working ecumenically to provide ministry in their communities. For some congregations to discuss common worship, gathering at significant times of the year such as Christmas and Easter and meeting for prayer and bible study, has been a very courageous step due to historical reasons that have prevented churches from doing activities together.

This paper explores ways in which Church leadership and hierarchies can both affirm initiatives being discussed and acted on at the local level and provide support for those ministries that may emerge as a result of the conversation. This is particularly relevant in communities where there are no resident clergy and all initiatives are led by lay people.

These initiatives do not mean that individual church teachings, beliefs, practices and traditions are subsumed or reduced by churches working together in rural areas. Receptive Ecumenism through its emphasis on listening with integrity and its seeking to learn through conversation between different traditions provides a medium that allows ecumenism to grow and continue to play an important role in these areas of church life.

Working ecumenically in rural areas can allow communities to feel supported and cared for by the whole church including their respective denominations.

Tim Watson, Jonathan Lopez and Rachel Lopez

This paper offers a comparative study of different paradigms for religious life ‘both traditional and ‘new monastic’) within the Roman Catholic Church and in the Church of England / Anglican Communion. It will seek to highlight ways in which the methodology of Receptive Ecumenism could lead to a fuller understanding of the meaning and purpose of religious life within the Church, and especially its potential contribution to

church renewal. The authors of the paper have personal experience of two communities which have a close association with each other, the Chemin Neuf Community – a Roman Catholic community with an ecumenical vocation, founded in France in 1973 – and the Community of St Anslem – an Anglican community with an ecumenical membership, based at Lambeth Palace and founded by Archbishop Justin Welby in 2015. By taking Chemin Neuf and St Anslem as its principal case studies, our paper will look at the practice of two communities which sit at the interface between traditional and ‘new’ expressions of religious life, which are each rooted in one church/ community (RC on the one hand, C of E on the other) while being ecumenically and internationally open, and which are therefore particularly susceptible to this kind of learning. It will assess the strengths and weaknesses of each community paradigm, highlight some of the possibilities for conversion & development (personal and institutional) through the relational dynamics of community life, and draw conclusions about the potential contribution of Receptive Ecumenism to the future renewal of religious life in both churches.

Elizabeth Welch

Communion and the Holy Spirit.

This paper takes as its starting point the theme of Communion. This theme arises out of the present round of the International Reformed Anglican Dialogue (started in 2015). The dialogue is looking at the significance of Communion as it is understood in the Anglican and Reformed World Communions. Communion arises out of reflection on the three-fold nature of the triune God and the relationality of the three persons-in-one of the Holy Trinity. Communion is visibly rooted in each church in the celebration of Holy Communion.

This paper will focus on the significance of an understanding of relationality within the persons of the Trinity alongside the particular significance of the activity of the Holy Spirit in developing the relationality between the Trinity and the human community that is the church. This thinking will be developed through looking at the way in which the Holy Spirit can be seen as leading into truth, alongside the role of the Holy Spirit as transformative. This will lead into an examination of the ecumenical implications for seeing the truth-giving and transformational work of the one Holy Spirit within the church and in creation.

Ray Williamson

Formation of an Ecumenical Self.

Pope Francis has described the quest for Christian unity as a sacred and noble cause: “The search for unity among Christians is an urgency from which today, more than

ever, we cannot subtract ourselves” – especially in a ‘post-truth’ world of ‘populism’ and fragmentation, of inequality and environmental degradation.

Theological education in ecumenism is a necessary instrument through which we can receive from each other, and through which the vision of unity and justice can shape the churches’ life and work.

Drawing some parallels with David Ford’s idea of “a eucharistic self”, this paper will focus on the shaping of an ecumenical self and the crucial role of theological education in that formation process. It is not simply a matter of teaching ecumenically. This formation process involves the teaching of Ecumenics as an integrative focus for theological study, not only because it involves an investigation of the theological foundations of unity and diversity, and the history, achievements and new challenges of the modern ecumenical movement, but also because it provides a framework whereby all theological disciplines are seen to be interrelated and interdependent. Furthermore, through the teaching of Ecumenics, the student is being invited to enter the dynamics and dynamism of a movement which he or she is to take part in developing.

Ecumenism is a way of being Christian people engaged in the ministry of Christ. For the shaping of an ecumenical self, the particular challenge of ecumenical teaching is to cultivate an ecumenical attitude, to foster an openness to receiving from each other, to take the student to the sources of faith where unity is to be found – enabling the student to appropriate the ecumenical vision for the student.