



The Queen's Foundation  
for Ecumenical Theological Education  
Birmingham

The British and Irish Association for Practical Theology

Mission Studies Special Interest Group

In Association with The Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education

**Monday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2018**  
10.30am for 10.45am until 4pm

## MISSIONAL SPIRITUALITY

If missional communities are 'joining in with what God is up to' their core task is the spiritual gift of *discernment*; discernment of the movement and activity of the Triune God. This day conference will explore what approaches and traditions of Christian spirituality support missional communities.

**Keynote Speaker: Prof Elaine Heath**



Elaine Heath is Dean of Duke Divinity School in Durham, NC, USA and Professor of Missional and Pastoral Theology there. Elaine's scholarly work integrates systematic, pastoral, and spiritual theology in ways that bridge the gap between academy, church, and world. Her research interests focus on evangelism and spirituality, evangelism and gender, the new monasticism, and emergence in church and in theological education. She is the co-founder of the Missional Wisdom Foundation, (<https://www.missionalwisdom.com/>) which provides opportunities for clergy and laity to learn how to live in intentional communities and how to develop missional communities and social enterprise in diverse social contexts. Her publications include *God*

*Unbound: Wisdom from Galatians for the Anxious Church* (2016), *Missional. Monastic. Mainline* (co-authored with Larry Duggins, 2014), *The Mystic Way of Evangelism, Revised and Updated 2nd Edn.* (2017). Dean Heath is an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church.

### BOOKING

The cost of the day is £20 which will include refreshments at the start and end of the day and a hot lunch. Payments will be made on the day. There is an opportunity for a few delegates to stay overnight at the Queen's Foundation before or after the conference for £25 for B&B. Please contact [hospitality@queens.ac.uk](mailto:hospitality@queens.ac.uk).

It is essential to book your place on the day as numbers are limited. To do so please send an email to Eve West (BIAPT Administrator) [admin@biapt.org](mailto:admin@biapt.org) and note any dietary requirements or other needs with her.

### PROGRAMME

<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Introductions via Dwelling in the Word</b>
<b>11.10am</b>	<b>Elaine Heath: "Missional Spirituality" followed by Q&amp;A.</b>
<b>12.15pm</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>1.00pm – 2.00pm</b>	<b>Series Paper Session – all together with James Butler and Simon Foster</b>
<b>2.10pm – 2.40pm</b>	<b>Parallel Paper Session 1 Ruth Stock / Ed Mackenzie</b>
<b>2.45pm – 3.15pm</b>	<b>Parallel Paper Session 2 Ian Mobsby / Oscar Siu</b>
<b>3.15pm</b>	<b>Break</b>
<b>3.30pm</b>	<b>Final Plenary and Future Planning</b>
<b>4pm</b>	<b>Finish – at the latest.</b>

## **Series Paper Session 1pm-2pm**

**James Butler**

### **Beyond 'Discern and Bless': How Small Missional Communities extend Charismatic Spirituality to sustain their engagement in social action**

Within Charismatic Evangelicalism social action is often seen as a response to an encounter with God. The individual encounters God in the worship service and responds to that encounter. This can have the effect of pushing social action to the periphery of the church. Many Small Missional Communities have formed with a desire to place social action in the middle of the Christian community. Particularly focusing on Small Missional Communities from a Charismatic Evangelical background I have explored the ways that they have both drawn on their Charismatic Evangelical spirituality and extended it, moving from an understanding of God experienced in the worship service to God experienced in the midst of social action. Drawing on my PhD research I will describe the ways these Small Missional Communities have developed understandings and practices which help them sustain social action and keep it at the centre of the Christian community.

**Simon Foster**

### **Discernment and accountability in Anglican Missional Engagement**

The Church of England's Church Commissioners have recently adopted a 'development funding' approach to some of the money they provide to English dioceses, inviting diocese to submit carefully developed plans for funding for strategic development. Proposals sometimes aim to support emerging and innovative missional projects on the ground within a diocese. Such 'mission projects' usually extend or challenge traditional practices of parish ministry and existing church structures. Ongoing evaluation can provide an account of how such projects emerge and are constructed in practice.

This paper looks at the early stages of fourteen such projects across two dioceses where missional projects have emerged alongside or at one remove from traditional parish/church structures. It considers three aspects of those projects: the role of skilled discernment in enabling missional work to emerge, sometimes against the grain of established denominational structures; how mission projects are provided with the appropriate accountability; and what spirituality supports the projects.

## **Parallel Paper Session 12.10pm-2.40pm**

**Ruth Stock**

### **Spirituality, Evangelism and Human Flourishing**

In this paper I will reflect on my experiences of facilitating meditative practices in church settings which were designed to be good news for both Christian and non-Christian participants.

In Britain's complex, and perhaps 'post Christian', society falling church attendance has often become one of the main drivers for evangelism. Our models of evangelism are frequently based on the idea of 'being saved'. But the question most non-Christians are asking is not "What must I do to be saved?" but "How can I live well?" For many non-Christians the rhetoric of salvation is not only irrelevant but threatening.

Grace Jantzen has drawn our attention to human flourishing as "the unacknowledged foundation of 'salvation' in the western theological text". Recognising that human flourishing requires attention to the 'spiritual' (acknowledging its multifarious aspects and understandings) as well as physical and

mental wellbeing, I will argue that 'spirituality' is not only, in Martin Warner's phrase, a point of congruity between Christian and non-Christian, but may also contribute to the flourishing of its Christian practitioners.

I will consider the effect on my own spiritual journey of this approach to evangelism as focussed on spiritual growth, using the concept of *phronesis* or practical wisdom to consider what it means to 'live well'. I will also draw on some responses by participants to questions of their experience of increased well-being, growth in their spiritual journey and perhaps a (re)discovery of a sense of the transcendent.

**Ed Mackenzie**

### **Missional Spirituality at Home: Families and the Call of the Kingdom**

Missiological texts typically focus on the church or individuals as the agents of mission (within the *Missio Dei*) and it is rare to find any reference to families or the home. Such an omission, however, overlooks the extent to which families can witness to the transforming grace of God in the midst of the world. In this paper, I explore the importance of family spirituality for mission, and begin by arguing that just as the church can be seen as a family so the family can be conceived as 'little church'. I then argue for the significance of three scriptural themes for family spirituality; holiness, hospitality and mutual service. Given the significance of life within the home, the disciplines of missiology and Christian spirituality need to engage more deeply with the family as a context for Christian formation and outreach.

**Parallel Paper Session 2**

**2.45pm-3.15pm**

**Ian Mobsby**

### **The worldview of the 'spiritual not religious' and the search for a post-secular spirituality.**

There is much evidence that our western post-secular consumer and market society is driving a new search for spirituality but where people continue to reject the church and Christianity as having anything to contribute to the needs of the contemporary world. This paper will explore these needs and begin to examine the challenge for Christian mission and evangelism.

**Oscar Siu**

### **How do Chinese 'reverse' missionaries in Europe discern their callings?**

Statistics show that China has become the biggest sending country of international students in UK. In response to the large number of Chinese students, some missionaries have been actively engaged in evangelistic activities. Among them are so-called 'reverse' missionaries from China who hope to "bring the Gospel back to Europe". Their target groups of evangelism not only include Chinese university students, but also Chinese immigrants and their next generation who are born and grow up in Europe as Europeans.

This paper is an empirical-theological attempt to explore the theology and practice of three Chinese reverse missionaries, focusing on how they discern their callings to become reverse missionaries in this continent. Specifically, I seek to answer the following research questions: (1) How do they discern their callings or vocations from God to become reverse missionaries in Europe? (2) What are the contextual factors that shape their understandings of such callings? (3) What is the mission theology posited by the Chinese reverse missionaries? (4) How do these spiritual and theological understandings affect their missional practice in Europe?