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# first things first



11-13  
June  
2024

## KIRBY LAING CENTRE ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

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In word, image and practice, our first annual conference explores the ongoing spiritual formation essential to our life and work.

Chesterton Mill and St Luke's Church Centre

## Tuesday 11 June

### AT CHESTERTON MILL

From 10:00 Registration

*Coffee, tea & goodies*

### AT ST LUKE'S CHURCH

11:30 Welcome & opening

*Craig Bartholomew & Hugo Herfst*

13:00 Lunch

14:30 Group sessions

*Parallel small-group electives  
(various venues)*

17:00 Evening prayer

17:45 Wine tasting

18:00 Evening meal

19:30 Keynote Address

*Craig Bartholomew: The Jon Hyde  
Annual Lecture in Public Theology*

## Wednesday 12 June

### AT ST LUKE'S CHURCH

10:30 Coffee

11:00 Group sessions

*Parallel small-group electives  
(various venues)*

13:00 Lunch

14:45 Christianity, the Arts  
& Spirituality

*Henk Reitsema and  
Roger Henderson*

17:00 Evening prayer

17:45 Cheese & wine reception

18:00 Evening meal

19:30 Spirituality & Public  
Theology

*Panel discussion*

**KLC at Chesterton Mill**

[chestertonmill.com/](http://chestertonmill.com/)

**St Luke's Church Centre**

[churchatcastle.org/church/st-lukes-2/](http://churchatcastle.org/church/st-lukes-2/)

Venues

## Thursday 13 June

### AT ST LUKE'S CHURCH

10:30 Coffee

11:00 Group sessions

*Parallel small-group electives  
(various venues)*

13:00 Lunch

14:45 Reflections & closing  
celebration of the Eucharist

*Bishop Graham Kings presiding*

### AT CARPENTERS ARMS

18:00 Evening meal

*For those still in Cambridge, pizza  
at Carpenters Arms pub  
(carpentersarmscambridge.com/)*

## Elective Topics

Choose one of the following  
topics for the group sessions:

### Arts

*Otto Bam*

### Mathematics & Physics

*Mikael Normann*

### Mission

*Cas Monaco*

### PhD Research

*Michael Wagenman*

### Politics

*Ross Hendry*

### Spirituality

*Hugo Herfst & Ian Randall*

Sit in on KLC's recording of  
a video series with Oliver  
and Joan O'Donovan.

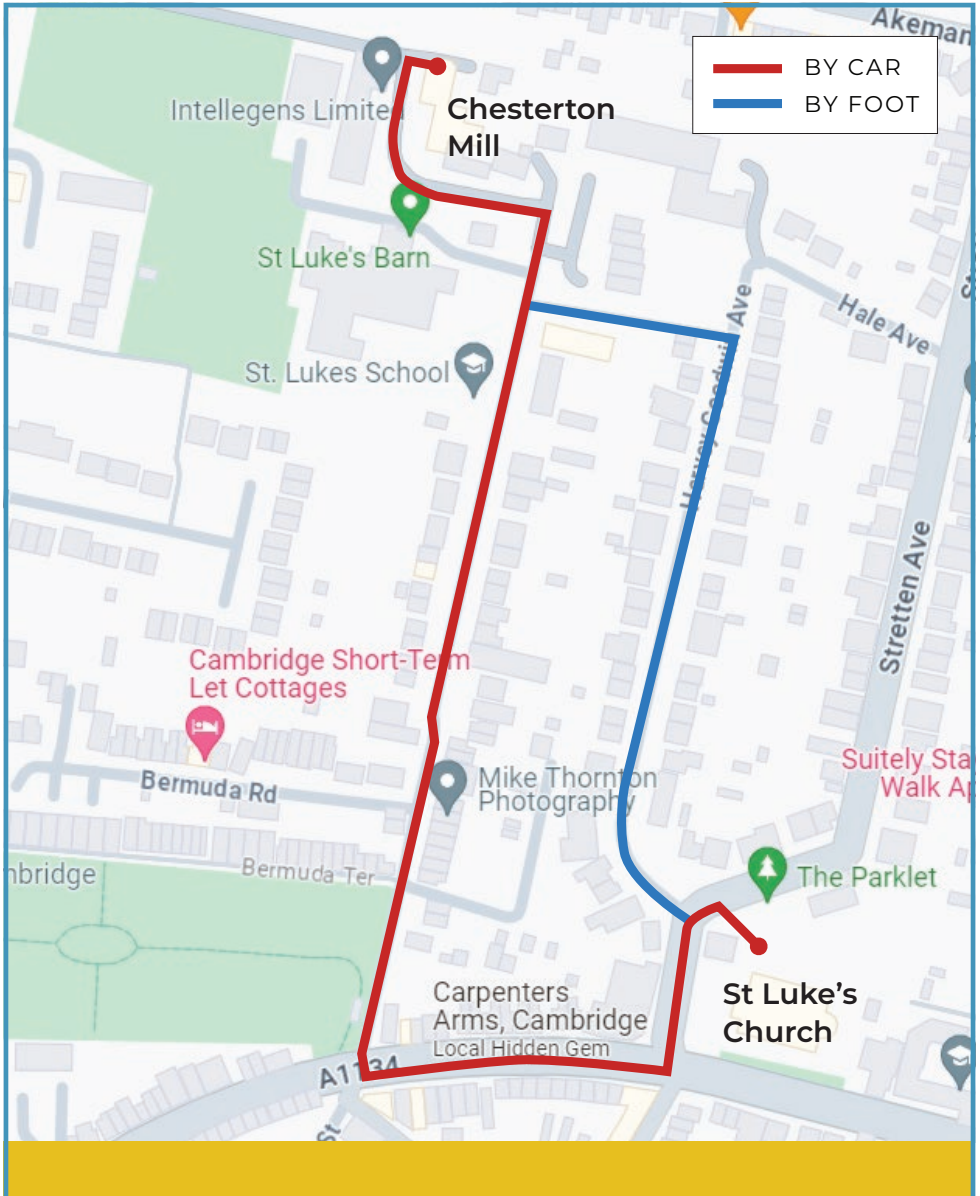
Friday 14 June 2024,  
at St Luke's (am) and  
at Chesterton Mill (pm).

The schedule is as follows:

- 09:30-10:30 Ethics
- 11:00-12:00 Political Theology
- 13:30-14:30 The University
- 15:00-16:00 The Church

**Oliver & Joan O'Donovan Recording**

# MAP TO CONFERENCE VENUES



# GROUP SESSIONS INFO: Arts

OTTO BAM

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The KLC arts community's multifaceted and rich work will be on full display, including an exhibition, lectures, a book launch, and a new ArtWay.eu website.

The arts are uniquely able to straddle different spheres of reality. Art can lead us inwards, into the unseen, accompanying us on the spiritual pilgrimages we make. Art can communicate what is most individual and what is most universally comprehensible. The arts track examines the arts as a means of spiritual formation and a gift that forms part of the riches of God's good creation.

## SESSION 1

### **A lecture by writer and author, Murray Watts**

Murray Watts has written several acclaimed works for the screen, including the BBC's *The Dream*, *The Miracle Maker*, and *KJB: The Book That Changed the World*. He is the founder and director of The Wayfarer Trust, an international arts charity offering support and

encouragement to people in the world of arts and media.

## SESSION 2

### **A presentation by scholar and musician, Rachel Yonan**

Rachel Yonan serves as the Artistic & Executive Director of the Marinus Ensemble. She graduated Magna cum Laude from Rice University with a degree in Viola Performance and German Literature. Rachel has performed as a soloist and chamber musician in concert halls across the USA, Europe, and China, and on UK and Canadian Public Radio.

## SESSION 3

### **Session 3: "Walking with Women from the Bible"**

Bishop Graham Kings will guide us in thinking about the potential of art for facilitating missional and spiritual encounters, referencing Bulgarian artist Silvia Dimitrova's paintings of Seven Women of the Bible – two of which will be on display.

# GROUP SESSIONS INFO: Math & Physics

MIKAEL NORMANN

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## SESSION 1

### Modern Cosmology on Trial

Talk by Dr. Ben D. Normann.

*Associate professor at The Norwegian University of Science and Technology.*

A brief overview of modern cosmology with an emphasis on its status in terms of observation is given. Is the dark sector of the universe justified? What should we make of the perceived crisis lurking in the shadows of seemingly incompatible observational data?

## SESSION 2

### Beauty, Physics, and Plato's Project

Talk by Dr. Mitch Stokes.

*Senior fellow at New St. Andrews College.*

It is shown how physics and philosophy have grown up together in the West, and how the current debate in physics over beauty is really (albeit often

unknowingly) about Plato's agenda. Finally, we discuss why all this is crucial for Christians to understand, especially in academia.

## SESSION 3

### The Mathematics and Physics Hub

Discussion lead by Dr. Mikael Normann.

In this session we aim to establish a plan for the coming year and beyond. We will focus on the following:

- The impact of our faith on our research
- Vision
- The Abraham Kuyper Christian Leadership Fund
- Contents for webpage/video ad

# GROUP SESSIONS INFO: Mission

CAS MONACO

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“What would be involved in a genuinely missionary encounter between the gospel and this whole way of perceiving, thinking, and living that we call ‘modern Western culture?’”<sup>1</sup> Newbigin raised this question after he returned home to England from the foreign mission field and discovered a new mission field in his own backyard.

KLC’s Missional Hub is wrestling with Newbigin’s perennial question by engaging in research related to mission in today’s changed and changing context. The *missio Dei* is grounded in history. Being in Cambridge offers the rare opportunity to learn more about mission history in real-time. We’re offering an immersive experience aiming to prompt missiological reflection, encourage conversation, and inspire a new community of collaborators to consider “how then shall we live” amid today’s unique challenges and opportunities.

<sup>1</sup> Leslie Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 1.

## **The *Missio Dei* and the Great Century of Mission: An Immersive Walking Tour<sup>2</sup>**

*Bishop Graham Kings, Founder of Cambridge Centre for Christianity Worldwide*

*Dr Cas Monaco, VP Missiology, FamilyLife*

*Janice Randall, Round Church Volunteer / Christian Heritage Cambridge*

Our tour will begin at two of the epicenters for spiritual revival for world mission between 1782–1836, and mission to China in 1885, a catalyst of Christian interest in missions at the time. Our thirty-minute walk will take us through historic Cambridge, to Westminster College and the Cambridge Centre for Christianity Worldwide (CCCW). We will view the portraits of twin sisters Dr Agnes Lewis and Dr Margaret Gibson, Bible scholars and founders of Westminster College, and we will conclude by reflecting together on the ways this rich history influences a new era of mission and missiology.

<sup>1</sup> This experience will involve quite a bit of walking.

# GROUP SESSIONS INFO: PhD Research

MICHAEL WAGENMAN

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The PhD sessions are intended for any prospective, current, or recent PhD students - or anyone generally who would like to explore the conference theme of spirituality as it relates to the academic vocation. They will be hosted and moderated by Dr Michael Wagenman, KLC Director of PhD Studies and Union Theological College Research Associate (serving with Global Scholars Canada).

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the PhD sessions is to provide PhD students with a unique collaborative space in which the conference theme of spirituality is directly related to our PhD research. How can we move towards a vision of academic work that is deeply sustained by, integrated with, and oriented towards a vibrant missional spirituality? These sessions will also allow current PhD students the opportunity to offer brief, formal presentations of their

research to date and receive feedback from other session participants. An open and inviting forum for students to also bring their questions!

## SESSION 1

A moderated group discussion on how Christian faith relates to the academic vocation. We will explore a philosophical framework for the inherent integrity of scholarship within a robust doctrine of creation and culture-making.

## SESSION 2

Presentations of student research.

## SESSION 3

A moderated group discussion on what we've heard or learned in our time together and how we can take our experience at the conference back into our ongoing academic work.



# GROUP SESSIONS INFO: Politics

ROSS HENDRY

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## **Electing Hope:** Christ-centered Formative Engagement in Elections

In 2024, people in at least 64 countries, representing about 49% of the world population, are voting in national elections. Millions of followers of Jesus will be affected by the campaigns, the votes, and the outcomes. How we choose to engage will say much about our spiritual maturity. How do we prepare for and experience elections, and deal with the results?

### SESSION 1

#### **Before: preparation**

*Tom Kendall*

How do we prepare for General Elections? Getting our own thinking and behaviour straight.

Empowering the Church in the public square – why and how the local church should get involved in election campaigns.

‘It’s about relationships, stupid.’  
Why and how to build relationships with politicians.

### SESSION 2

#### **During: engagement**

*Peter Ladd*

How will we vote when we believe that there is no good option? How do we balance our vote as personal and a common-good issue? How do we get along with those we disagree with? How do we cope with the apathetic or uninformed?

### SESSION 3

#### **After: outworking**

*Ross Hendry*

The election is a moment but in many ways the real work of politics only starts with the outcome of a vote. How do we chart the path between triumphalism and despair post election? How do we put our theology into practice and avoid being political hobbyists?

# GROUP SESSIONS INFO: Spirituality

HUGO HERFST & IAN RANDALL

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## SESSION 1

### What are the goals of spiritual practices?

We will look at participation in the life of God, delight in God as well as the transformation of life as disciples of Jesus Christ: personal, family, church, work, home, etc. How might a deeper appreciation of these goals encourage us to realign our priorities with 'the one thing needful?'

## SESSION 2

### Prayer and Public Theology

We will discuss Jean Daniélou's *Prayer as a Political Problem*, and draw from the deep tradition of the Church to examine different forms of prayers and the context of a life of prayer.

## SESSION 3

### Spiritual Direction

What it isn't; what it is, why it could be helpful and how to find a

spiritual director. This session will be led by Rev. Dr Ian Randall who has extensive experience as a spiritual director and trains aspiring spiritual directors.

## PANEL DISCUSSION

Our Wednesday-evening panel will explore how spirituality and academia intersect so that, as conscientious members of both Christian and civil communities, we live as light and salt with greater intentionality and hope. We will discuss:

- Wisdom - as informed by the wisdom literature of the Old Testament and articulated by Christian ethics as an essential aspect of maturity.
- Vocational holiness - enhancing the reputation of Christ through beautiful work.
- Faith, hope, love and joy - living the Christian virtues as a way to witness the reality of the Risen Christ in a fragmented and broken world.