

Subverting the Norm

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Welcome

Welcome to *Subverting the Norm* at Drury University. We look forward to a wonderful weekend of dialogue and conversation on the emerging church, postmodernism and the future of Christianity, and we thank you for being part of it. All activities will take place in the Findlay Student Center unless otherwise noted. Information about schedules, presenters, maps, and a variety of other items can be found on the following pages:

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Meal options

Friday: You are welcome to visit the Commons Dining Hall from 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. (located next to the registration booth in the Findlay Student Center) or the CX from 7 a.m. – 9 p.m. (which is located on Drury Lane just four buildings south of the Findlay Student Center in Springfield Hall). In addition, several downtown venues are only a five minute drive away. See enclosed [brochure](#) for details.

Saturday: Coffee and bagels will be available at 8 a.m. in the Findlay Student Center. Those who registered for the Saturday lunch option will gather at 11:30 a.m. in the Hoblit Room in Freeman Hall (one building east of the Findlay Student Center). See enclosed [brochure](#) for downtown venues.

Book Display

The Drury University bookstore has several of the presenters' books available for purchase. The bookstore is located on the lower level of the Findlay Student Center and is open on Friday from 8 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. and on Saturday from 11:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. For your convenience, the bookstore will also set up a display near the Findlay Student Center ballroom on Friday evening from 6:30 p.m. – 10 p.m.

Wifi & Twitter

Wifi: Log on as "DU_GUEST" with the password "Panthers0710" (capital 'P')

Twitter Hashtag: #subvertingthenorm



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Friday's Schedule

Radical Theology in Emerging Christianity

All activities will take place in the Findlay Student Center unless otherwise noted.

9 am: Registration

10 am: "Beating God to Death: Radical Theology & the New Atheism"

Roundtable conversation with Jeffrey Robbins, Christopher Rodkey and professors from Drury's department of philosophy and religion

11 am: "An Emerging Radical Theology: On Politics and Ecclesiology"

Jeffrey Robbins and Christopher Rodkey

12 pm: Lunch (on your own)

1 pm: "The Emerging Church 101: An introduction for those new to the conversation"

Gary Black

2 pm: "To Believe Is Human, to Doubt Divine: Introducing Žižek's Christology"

Peter Rollins

3 pm: "An Emerging A/Theistic Fighting Collective? A Caputian Introduction to Žižek's Pneumatology"

Katharine Moody

4 pm: "Just Us: The undeconstructible Christ community in the age that is passing away"

Carl Raschke

7 pm: Keynote presentation I: "Radical Theology—or What's the Emerging in Emergent?"

John Caputo

8:15 pm: Keynote presentation II: "Religionless Faith: An Emerging A/theism"

Peter Rollins

9:15 – 10 pm: After Session

Conversation with John Caputo, Peter Rollins, Carl Raschke, Katharine Moody, Jeffrey Robbins & Christopher Rodkey

10:30 pm: Revival!

Transformance Art with Peter Rollins and VOID

At the Creamery Arts Center in Downtown Springfield (see map on page 10)

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Saturday's Schedule

Emerging Christianity and the Future of the Church

8 am: Coffee & Bagels

8:30 am: Keynote Presentation III

Karen Ward

10 am: Church practitioners workshop

Peter Rollins & John Caputo

11:30 am: Lunch

On your own unless you registered for the Saturday lunch option, which will be served in Freeman Hall's Hoblit Room. See enclosed [brochure](#) for local options.

1 pm: Keynote presentation IV

Karen Ward

2:15 – 3:15 pm: Breakout Sessions for Church Practitioners (see page 8 for descriptions & locations)

Emily Bowen: "Megachurch or Megasubversion? Transformative Ritual in the Emerging Church"

Chris Rodkey: "Satanism in the Suburbs: Ordination as Insubordination"

Julie Kennedy: "The Open Invitation: Tearing Down Labels at the Door"

Phil Snider: "Preaching After the Death of God: With A Little Help from Derrida & Caputo"

3:30 – 4:30 pm: Breakout Sessions for Church Practitioners (see page 8 for descriptions & locations)

Laura Fregin: "Art and Justice in Emergent Communities"

David Weiss: "Putting the 'Queer' back in Christianity: How extending a full welcome to LGBT persons reclaims the work of Jesus for today"

Lindsey Arnold: "Messiahs, Monsters & Others: The Search for Christ Figures in the TV Show *Lost*"

Travis Cooper: "Postmodernism, Pentecostalism & the Emergent Church: The Persistence of Azusa-Oriented Praxis"

Matt Gallion, Chris Rodkey & Phil Snider: "Why We're Not Emergent: By Three Guys Who Used to Be"

7 pm: [D]emergent meet-up

At the Coffee Ethic, on the square in downtown Springfield (see map on page 10)

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About the presenters

Peter Rollins is a widely sought after writer, lecturer, storyteller and public speaker. He is also the founder of ikon, a faith group that has gained an international reputation for blending live music, visual imagery, soundscapes, theatre, ritual and reflection to create what they call 'transformance art'. Peter gained his higher education from Queens University, Belfast and has earned degrees (with distinction) in Scholastic Philosophy (B.A. Hons), Political Theory (M.A.) and Post-Structural thought (Ph.D.). He is currently a research associate with the Irish School of Ecumenics in Trinity College, Dublin and is the author of the much talked about *How (Not) to Speak of God*. His most recent work is entitled *The Orthodox Heretic and Other Impossible Tales*. He was born in Belfast but currently resides in Greenwich, CT.

John D. Caputo, Thomas J. Watson Professor of Religion and Humanities at Syracuse University, is a hybrid philosopher/theologian intent on producing thoughts which circulate between philosophy and theology, short-circuits which deny fixed and rigorous boundaries between philosophy and theology. Caputo treats "sacred" texts as a poetics of the human condition, or as a "theo-poetics," a poetics of the event harbored in the name of God. His past books have attempted to persuade us that hermeneutics goes all the way down (*Radical Hermeneutics*), that Derrida is a thinker to be reckoned with by theology (*The Prayers and Tears of Jacques Derrida*), and that theology is best served by getting over its love affair with power and authority and embracing what Caputo calls, following St. Paul, *The Weakness of God*. He has also addressed wider-than-academic audiences in *On Religion* and *What Would Jesus Deconstruct?* and has an interest in interacting with the working church groups like ikon and the Emergent Church. He is currently working on a book on our frail and mortal flesh, probably to be entitled *The Fate of All Flesh: A Theology of the Event, II*.

Karen Ward, an ordained Episcopal priest, is the founder of Anglimergent.org (a relational network of Anglicans engaging emerging church and mission), and cofounder of Episcopalvillage.org (companioning parishes and leaders in emerging/ fresh expressions of church and mission). She is Abbess of Church of the Apostles (Seattle, Washington), an influential emerging mission in North America. She is coauthor of *Listening to the Beliefs of Emerging Churches: Five Perspectives*, and contributor to *Rising from the Ashes: Rethinking Church*, and *Ancient Faith, Future Mission: Fresh Expressions in the Sacramental Tradition*.

Katharine Sarah Moody earned her Ph.D. in Religious Studies in April 2010 from Lancaster University, UK, which used an examination of how the notion of truth is conceptualised in emerging Christian discourse to assess the viability of Radical Orthodoxy and deconstructive theology as theoretical frameworks for the emerging church milieu. She is now working on her first book, and seeking funding to further investigate how theological engagements with European philosophy might supply insights for a radical ethico-political sociality. She is particularly interested in working at the intersection of philosophical thought and the empirical study of religion to explore how contemporary theo-philosophies might be enacted in practice by religious collectives. Katharine is engaged to her partner, Sim, and together they are trying to work out how to have an "a/theistic" wedding ceremony!

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Jeffrey W. Robbins is Associate Professor of Religion and American Studies at Lebanon Valley College in central Pennsylvania where he has been honored with the Thomas Rhys Vickroy Award for outstanding teaching. He is the author of three books, *Radical Democracy and Political Theology* (forthcoming from Columbia Press), *Between Faith and Thought* and *In Search of a Non-Dogmatic Theology*, as well as being the editor of *After the Death of God* and *The Sleeping Giant Has Awoken: The New Politics of Religion in the United States*. Each of these works seek to apply a postmodern deconstructive analysis to the contemporary practice and understanding of theology, and as such, continue in the proud tradition of American radical theology. He also co-edits a book series on religion, politics and culture for Columbia University Press and is associate editor for the online Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory. He is a member and supporter of organizations such as the American Academy of Religion and Americans United for Separation of Church and State, both of which attest to the importance our faith traditions play in our private and public lives while also honoring and seeking to understand the diversity of beliefs and practices.

Christopher Rodkey is Pastor of Zion “Goshert’s” United Church of Christ in Lebanon, Pennsylvania, and teaches at Lebanon Valley College. He holds doctorates from Drew University (Ph.D.) and Meadville Lombard Theological School (D.Min.). His work as pastor and scholar focuses upon a forced intersection of the pastoral with the philosophical, with particular interests in radical expressions of the Christian faith. His forthcoming book, *The Synaptic Gospel*, engages phenomenology and neuroscience to offer a pastoral theology of pan-generational worship. He lectures often on the practice of youth ministry and is an occasional contributor to the blog, “An und fur sich.”

Emily Bowen is an ordained minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and coauthor of *Toward a Hopeful Future: Why the Emergent Church is Good News for Mainline Congregations*. Emily is a graduate of Chapman University, Christian Theological Seminary, and Phillips Theological Seminary, and she currently serves as a pastor at Brentwood Christian Church in Springfield, Missouri, where she lends leadership to the Awakening, an emerging community rooted in Brentwood Christian Church.

Carl Raschke is an internationally known writer and academic who in the past decade has been concerned with postmodern Christianity and its significance in a global context. His most recent book *GloboChrist* examines the most recent trends in globalization, particularly religious ones, in light of what he calls “the planetary postmodern moment.” The book explores the shift in Christianity’s center of gravity from the West to the “global south” as well as the impact of the new “rhizomic” and “relational” (i.e., “incarnational”) church on Christianity as a whole, including its confrontation with a revived Islam. His previous book *The Next Reformation* examines the impact of postmodern thought on current Christianity. He is the author and co-author of approximately 20 books, hundreds of articles, and a frequent news commentator on religion and contemporary culture as well as higher education. He is Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Denver and adjunct faculty at the Mars Hill Graduate School in Seattle. He is co-founder and senior editor of the Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory. He holds a Ph.D. from Harvard University.

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Laura Fregin is a member of the Emergent Village Council and the minister of National Avenue Christian Church in Springfield, Missouri, which is a progressive faith community with a heart for social justice that is housed in a traditional framework. She is also a wife, mother, and grandmother and loves working at the intersection of faith, art, and justice. She has gratefully been a part of the emergent conversation for about six years.

David Weiss is a theologian, writer, poet and hymnist committed to doing “public theology” around issues of sexuality, justice, diversity, and peace. After a decade of teaching religion at the college level David presently devotes his primary time and energy to writing for and speaking in communities of faith about faith, sexuality, and welcome. He is the author of *To the Tune of a Welcoming God: Lyrical reflections on sexuality, spirituality, and the wideness of God’s welcome*. He holds degrees from Wartburg College (B.A.), Wartburg Seminary (M.A.) and the University of Notre Dame (M.A.). David and his wife, Margaret, live in St. Paul, Minnesota where they have a blended family of five children, three grandchildren, and assorted animals that approximate a peaceable kingdom.

Phil Snider is a writer, speaker and pastor who pays attention to the intersections between religion and postmodernism, particularly the way they play out in community practices and rituals. He is an ordained minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who presently serves as a pastor of Brentwood Christian Church in Springfield, Missouri. He is the coauthor of *Toward a Hopeful Future: Why the Emergent Church is Good News for Mainline Congregations* and editor of *Re-Traditioning: How Emergence Christianity is Shaping Mainline Practices* (forthcoming from Chalice Press). He holds degrees from Missouri State University (B.S.), Phillips Theological Seminary (M.Div.) and Chicago Theological Seminary (D.Min.).

Lindsey Arnold is a graduate student at Missouri State University, pursuing an M.A. in Religious Studies. Stemming from her love of Jesus films, she has focused her research on the intersection of religion and popular culture. Lindsey holds a B.A. in religion and philosophy from Drury University.

Matthew Gallion is a graduate student at Missouri State University where he is pursuing an M.A. in Religious Studies. Matt studies responses to American evangelicalism in postmodern contexts, particularly the emerging church and the emergent conversation, and the intersection of faith and culture, particularly in crossing the “digital divide.” He is the author of “The Price of Freedom: Bribery, the Philippian Gift, and Paul’s Choice in Philippians 1:19-26,” which won the prize for best graduate paper at the annual meeting of the Central States Society of Biblical Literature. He received his B.A. from Southwest Baptist University and currently serves as Pastoral Resident at National Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Springfield, Missouri.

VOID is an experimental faith collective that utilizes a live mix of music, art, spoken word, personal reflections, and ritual to creatively engage questions of faith and doubt. A provocative and experiential event, VOID is marked by the religious question but remains radically open and non-confessional. VOID finds its home at Treff’s Bar in Waco, Texas.

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Gary Black is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Exeter whose research interests include the effects of postmodern epistemology and theology within American Evangelicalism and the Emerging Church. He comes to the study and practice of theology after a successful twenty-year career as a partner in a large international investment firm. His experience has been in the areas of leadership development and management, strategic planning, trend analysis and organizational dynamics. In 2006 Gary retired from the corporate world and decided to focus his attention on the leadership future of the Christian church. He graduated Summa Cum-Laude with a Masters degree in Divinity from the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary before beginning his studies at Exeter.

Julie Kennedy, self-described dancer with God, continually finds herself in dips, turns, slow, and fast dances with the Trinity. Sometimes it is messy but mostly it turns out beautiful. Julie encourages others around her to take on the dance in all its beauty and not to let a single boundary stand between the dance with the Trinity. Julie blogs for “[D]mergent,” guest contributes to “Queermergent” and writes on her personal blog “The Wonderer.” Julie works with special needs students in Kennett, MO where she resides. She is also full time student at Southeast Missouri State University in pursuit of a Masters in Social Work.

Travis Cooper is a graduate student in religious studies at Missouri State University. As a master’s student, much of his research has been geared towards the study of American Pentecostalism and its broader Evangelical context, specifically through ethnographical, sociological, and historical lenses. Travis is fascinated by the intersections of religion with studies in embodiment, everyday life, ritual(ization), and materiality. Currently, he is doing ethnographic research in Springfield-area congregations that will culminate in his master’s thesis, titled, “Ecstasy and the Kinesthetic Body: A Case Study of Pentecostal-Charismatic Contemporary Worship.” As a corollary to his studies of Evangelical religion, postmodern and post-Evangelical shifts in religious praxis have recently joined his burgeoning list of interests. Travis lives with his wife and two daughters in Springfield. He is a full-time stay-at-home-dad and part-time researcher, and is currently applying for doctoral programs in American religion.

Special Thanks

We express our gratitude to the Coffee Ethic (located on the square in downtown Springfield) for graciously providing coffee on both Friday evening and Saturday morning, as well as to the Springfield Regional Arts Council for providing space at the Creamery Arts Center for Friday night’s transformance art.



www.thecoffeeethic.com



www.springfieldarts.org

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Breakout Session Descriptions

Emily Bowen: “Megachurch or Megasubversion? Transformative Ritual in the Emerging Church”

(Findlay Student Center 204 – Main Level)

Churches often turn to revitalization of worship in order to attract new members, but this workshop focuses on designing worship services that are more interested in faithfulness to the subversive edges of the gospel than in numbers. We'll look at ways worshiping communities can tune into their giftedness and calling in order to structure transformative rituals for their respective communities of faith.

Chris Rodkey: “Satanism in the Suburbs: Ordination as Insubordination”

(Findlay Student Center Diversity Office – Lower Level)

If we are to consider an ecclesiology of the church that is a radical reversal, how might we speak of the so-called "traditional" church in America and its implicit symbiosis with principalities, powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places? We will begin by reversing what might be the church's most be-laughable folly, the institution of ordination. Chris will present theological groundwork to share stories, search for healing, and move into something New and Extraordinary.

Julie Kennedy: “The Open Invitation: Tearing Down Labels at the Door”

(Findlay Student Center President's Dining Room – Main Level)

When we walk through the doors of a church gathering, we wonder which labels are “in” or “out.” Are churches friendly toward the GLBT community? Are they open to my political beliefs? To beliefs different than my own? This breakout will consider putting a new label on the doors of our gatherings that is rooted in a radically open invitation.

Phil Snider: “Preaching After the Death of God: With A Little Help from Derrida & Caputo”

(Freeman Hall – Hoblit Room)

Due to the legacy of the Enlightenment, sermons in mainline Protestant churches usually focus on the ethical actions of human beings (what we must do) much more than on the activity and agency of God (what God is doing), and this reduces all too many progressive sermons to grand ethical exhortations that (1) effectively render God as “dead” and (2) lead listeners to experience exhaustive compassion fatigue. However, by drawing on postmodern approaches to theology, this breakout session helps preachers recapture a sense of the activity and agency stirring in the name of God in ways that resonate with progressives who, on the heels of the Enlightenment, “don't do the supernatural well.”

Laura Fregin: “Art and Justice in Emergent Communities”

(Findlay Student Center 204 – Main Level)

This breakout addresses questions such as these: What is the relationship between art and justice in emergent communities? Why are emergents drawn to art and justice? How might communities of faith cultivate art and justice in their respective contexts?

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David Weiss: “Putting the ‘Queer’ back in Christianity: How extending a full welcome to LGBT persons reclaims the work of Jesus for today”

(Freeman Hall – Hoblit Room)

The Emerging Church has been criticized by its evangelical cousins for its (mostly timid) welcome to LGBT persons. That the emerging church even entertains the possibility of lining up the words gay and Christian to describe the same person is characterized as a fundamental break with its own biblical roots. In this session we’ll consider how the prophetic heritage in which Jesus stood, the messianic ministry in which he engaged, and the community that he founded all feature an arc of radical welcome that still unfolds in new directions today.

Lindsey Arnold: “Messiahs, Monsters & Others: The Search for Christ Figures in the TV Show *Lost*”

(Findlay Student Center President’s Dining Room – Main Level)

Who is the Christ figure in *Lost*? Is it Jack? Kate? Charlie? Sun? Hurley? Desmond? Locke? Jacob? Sawyer? (The list goes on and on. . .) By drawing on a variety of theological methods, Lindsey will lead participants in a conversation that considers various Christological traits in several of the characters from *Lost*. **Spoiler Alert:** All the twists and turns of the plot are up for conversation, so don’t attend if you want to be surprised by the show!

Travis Cooper: “Postmodernism, Pentecostalism & the Emergent Church: The Persistence of Azusa-Oriented Praxis”

(Findlay Student Center Diversity Office – Lower Level)

Questions to be considered include: How is Pentecostalism connected to postmodernism and the emergent church, if it is connected at all? Can Pentecostalism share a healthy relationship with postmodernism and the emergent church, or is it in fundamental opposition to each? What is the future of Pentecostalism in a postmodern world?

Matt Gallion, Chris Rodkey & Phil Snider: “Why We’re Not Emergent: By Three Guys Who Used to Be”

(Findlay Student Center – Ballroom)

Is the initial (theological) impulse that led to the birth of the “emerging church” in danger of being lost, if it ever existed at all? Can emergent theology be understood as “postmodern,” or is it just a popularized form of progressive Christianity? Does emerging thought offer anything that might be considered “new” or “inventive”? And what does all of this mean for the future of the church anyway?

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General Map



1. Drury University
2. Creamery Arts Center
3. Downtown Springfield
4. University Plaza Hotel
5. Holiday Inn Express

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Campus map



1. Findlay Student Center
2. Freeman Hall – Hoblit Room
3. Lot 7 (free parking)
4. Springfield Hall (site of CX food option)
5. Lay Hall (Not planning to use, but reserved in case we need expanded seating)

Thanks to our additional sponsors

Drury University School of Religion

Drury University Department of Philosophy and Religion

Council of Churches of the Ozarks

The House: United Ministries in Higher Education at Missouri State University

Help us go green

If you received a printout of this registration packet then please recycle it in one of the bins set up in the Findlay Student Center.

Also, please return your plastic name badges to the registration table upon departure so they might be used again. Thanks!

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Staying over on Sunday? Visit one of the sponsoring congregations

Brentwood Christian Church www.brentwoodcc.org

The Awakening Worship at 11 a.m. (Chris Rodkey preaching)

David Weiss presenting at 10 a.m.

Central Christian Church www.centralchristianspringfield.org

Traditional Worship at 9:30 a.m.

Christ Episcopal Church www.christepiscopalchurch.com

Holy Eucharist Rite I at 8 a.m.

Holy Eucharist Rite II at 9 & 11 a.m.

Grace United Methodist Church www.yourgraceplace.org

Traditional Worship at 10:30 a.m.

Marshfield Christian Church www.marshfieldchristianchurch.com

Traditional Worship at 10:30 a.m.

Messiah Lutheran Church www.messiahmo.org

Traditional Worship at 8:30 a.m.

Contemporary Worship at 11 a.m.

National Avenue Christian Church www.natlave.com

Worship at 10 a.m.

David Weiss speaking at 3 p.m.

St. John's Episcopal Church www.stjohnsepiscopalmo.org

Holy Eucharist Rite I (said) at 8 a.m.

Holy Eucharist Rite II (sung) at 10:30 a.m.

South Joplin Christian Church www.southjoplindisciples.org

Traditional Worship at 10:40 a.m.

South Street Christian Church www.southstreetchristian.org

Traditional Worship at 10:15 a.m.