

**THE 2022 STUDENT RELIGIOUS STUDIES CONFERENCE**  
**Sponsored by the**  
**Midwest Region Society of Biblical Literature**

February 4, 2022  
Virtual Meeting

**ALL TIMES ARE CST**

**Friday, February 4**

**10:00-10:20 a.m.**

**ORIENTATION**

<https://luc.zoom.us/j/81719448368?pwd=SXlic1hxbU1TRDU4em9mblhhZHRGUT09>  
Meeting ID: 817 1944 8368  
Passcode: 484634

**10:30-11:45 a.m.**

**SESSION ONE**

**Chair:** Jonathan Sanchez, University of Notre Dame  
[jsanch23@nd.edu](mailto:jsanch23@nd.edu)

<https://luc.zoom.us/j/83842117432?pwd=Mng2UDJZZ1A1aFgwclUxMXpLWlQ1Zz09>  
Meeting ID: 838 4211 7432  
Passcode: 733482

Claudia Basile, Knox College

*“One Will Be Taken and the Other Left:” Connections Between The Second Coming and the Rapture and Marvel’s Avengers: Infinity War and Avengers: Endgame and HBO’s The Leftovers*

Kacie Barrett, Loyola University Chicago

*Disney’s The Hunchback of Notre Dame: The Spirituality of the “Other” in 15th Century France*

**Chair:** Zechariah Eberhart, Loyola University Chicago  
[zeberhart@luc.edu](mailto:zeberhart@luc.edu)

<https://luc.zoom.us/j/81225978791?pwd=NTIHT2U2TGVITm10TE5NNGxMSE5WQT09>  
Meeting ID: 812 2597 8791  
Passcode: 524936

Daniel Ryne Warwick, Loyola University Chicago

*Queer Church Construction: Towards a Temporal Ecclesiology in Augustine’s Distentio*

Sarah LaVanway, Loyola University Chicago  
*Pride: The Christian Demonization of Self-Love and the Path to Reclaiming Queerness*

**11:45-12:45 p.m.                      BREAK**

**1:00-2:45 p.m.                      SESSION TWO**

**Chair: TBD**

<https://luc.zoom.us/j/82111174290?pwd=eFg3VXUzeU5DSkpnRktkb3pqRjMyZz09>

Meeting ID: 821 1117 4290

Passcode: 058250

Scott Willis, Wheaton College  
*Reading Psalm 24 with the Great Tradition: Identifying and Explaining Two Examples of Patristic Prosopological Exegesis*

Claud-Ian Joseph Martin, Andrews University  
*Divine Ethics and the Lying Spirit of 2 Chronicles 18*

Noah Dale, Portland Seminary  
*Scribal Agenda in Literary Allusion: Jeremiah 3:15-18 and the Priestly Creation Account*

## ABSTRACTS

**Kacie Barrett**, Loyola University Chicago

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*Disney's The Hunchback of Notre Dame: The Spirituality of the "Other" in 15th Century France*

The narrative space has always provided an opportunity for those who engage with stories to approach questions that might otherwise be left unexamined and unanswered. These fictional worlds provide a landscape for encountering characters whose stories explore what it means to be human and the world without putting their own lives and their own worlds on the line. The fictional world and its heroes feel just distinct enough that one might not even consider that they are coming to terms with their own problems and questions as they watch another fight the villain, save the girl, and fall in love. These characters come into contact with their own political, social, and religious structures that shape their worldview. As Alicia Spencer-Hall writes in her book *Medieval Saints and Modern Screens: Divine Visions as Cinematic Experience*, "I ascended the lofty heights of knowledge of how to be human, how to be in the world, and perhaps most importantly how, eventually, I would be an adult. I was in the film; the film was in me." Taking on their lens makes explore the details of and coming to terms with the shortcomings of our own structures less frightening, making possible conversations and considerations that might have otherwise go unspoken. In particular, narrative structures provide the space for history and theological development to be explored by looking at stories and characters that embody spiritual engagement through time.

Disney's 1996 film *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, directed by Gary Trousdale and Kirk Wise, is a prime example of where complicated theological discussion can be facilitated through the stories of the film's main characters. Conversations surrounding the theological perspective on the perceived "other" in the 15th century are opened up and highlighted by individual characters and the ways they interact with one another. Frolo serves as an example of social expectations and response to the "others" who threaten his established power. Quasimodo and Esmeralda both push back on the accepted understanding of who is allowed to participate in spirituality and ultimately have a relationship with God. Quasimodo brings to light the ways in which the church is not just meant for the able-bodied, and Esmeralda pushes against the expectations and judgements placed on her based on her race. Phoebus is accepting and unwilling to believe that Esmeralda and Quasimodo are any less than him. The film provides both an accurate depiction of the different Roman Catholic responses to disability and race in the 15th century, while also serving as a commentary on the shortcomings of such beliefs and the limitations they create in the Catholic tradition.

**Claudia Basile**, Knox College

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*"One Will Be Taken and the Other Left: " Connections Between The Second Coming and the Rapture and Marvel's Avengers: Infinity War and Avengers: Endgame and HBO's The Leftovers*

The Second Coming and the Rapture in the New Testament are two events that involve a sudden disappearance. The people who are “taken” are “the righteous”, while the ones who are “left” are cursed to remain on Earth. There are five framing questions that can be used to analyze these texts: who, what, where, when, and why. Once analyzed with this framework, we can see that Marvel’s Avengers: Infinity War and Avengers: Endgame along with HBO’s The Leftovers, each of which features a sudden disappearance event, provides insight into how people cope with the answers (or lack thereof) to these questions. The key difference is that the films and the television show focus on the lives of those left behind. These framing questions allow us to understand why and how people use extreme methods of coping with an unprecedented and incomprehensible event, which are not a focus in the New Testament texts.

**Noah Dale**, Portland Seminary  
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*Scribal Agenda in Literary Allusion: Jeremiah 3:15-18 and the Priestly Creation Account*  
Jeremiah 3:15-18 is the central section within God’s polemic against “faithless Israel” (Jer. 2:2-4:2). This section offers scattered Israel the promise of multiplicity and fruitfulness if they were to return to YHWH along with new leadership, the reunification of Judah and Israel, and for the divine presence fixed within the temple to extend into all of Jerusalem. This text makes use of vocabulary and concepts found in the Priestly creation account (specifically day three) to bolster that future hope. The scribe behind this text uses literary allusion as a powerful tool for persuasion in a post-exilic setting.

**Sarah LaVanway**, Loyola University Chicago  
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*Pride: The Christian Demonization of Self-Love and the Path to Reclaiming Queerness*  
“LGBTQ+ and Christian”? This phrase may seem more like a contradiction than a possible reality. The relationship between queer people and organized religion is often one of intense tension, with queerness frequently at the center of “culture wars” infused with religious and moral language. In this paper, I will explore how traditional, ambiguous notions of Christian self-love have had profoundly negative consequences for LGBTQ+ people, and how a more nuanced definition of self-love needs to be reclaimed in order to pave a better path forward for queer people and the church. I will address the way shame often shows up in Christian spaces, both in purity culture and in the more extreme example of conversion therapy. These shameful practices effectively destroy queer individuals’ ability to not only love themselves, but also to love others and God. Furthermore, I will examine how exactly Christianity got to a place of demonizing self-love before I begin to examine alternative visions of self-love. Ultimately, I will propose that self-love is an essential first step for queer people to also fulfill the Christian ideals of loving the neighbor and loving God.

**Claud-Ian Joseph Martin**, Andrews University  
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*Divine Ethics and the Lying Spirit of 2 Chronicles 18*

This paper examines God's actions regarding the lying spirit and persuasion of Ahab in 2 Chronicles 18:18-27. It argues that although it may seem like God is committing a sin in this passage, He is in fact acting in ways that both reveal the true perpetrator of the sin, and give Ahab an opportunity of repentance. Through looking at the presence of the Hebrew definite article when paired with "spirit", it can be inferred that the "lying spirit" in this passage is a definite, well-known spirit, one commentator even noting it as an evil spirit or the Devil himself. With this information, after looking at the semantics of verses 19-21, it can be discovered that God is not recruiting the lying spirit to go and deceive Ahab and his false prophets, but that God is actually revealing the malicious intents of this spirit to all of heaven. Because this is likely an evil spirit, God is not authoritatively sending it, but is removing His protective hand from Ahab and allowing the evil spirit to do what it would have naturally done. The fact that God revealed these things to Ahab through Micaiah shows that He did not want Ahab to be left without any hope. The work of the lying spirit was revealed to Ahab so that he could make a choice to turn back to God and repent, or continue in his own ways and die. Key Words: lying spirit, Ahab, Micaiah, Ramoth Gilead, persuasion, deceit, false prophets, God's nature, God's character, repentance, revelation.

**Daniel Ryne Warwick**, Loyola University Chicago

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*Queer Church Construction: Towards a Temporal Ecclesiology in Augustine's Distentio*

How does one go about creating a space for queer people in the Church today while fully respecting the trauma and pain ecclesiological structures have caused. What does it mean to construct a Queer Church? There is often talk about "creating space" for people within the walls of the Church, but queer existence does not exist in space the same way gender and race perhaps do. Rather, as I will argue, our existence is a temporal one surviving within the spatial normativity of a heteronormative realm (i.e., "the closet"). Therefore, creating a space for queer bodies within this realm does us no good; it is still the heterodox space on loan to us and constantly skeptical of us. Queer Church construction, then, cannot concern its first steps in the creation of space, for unlike our creator, we cannot build ex nihilo. Instead, we should turn our focus to the less recognized aspect of the field of ecclesiology: time.

**Scott Willis**, Wheaton College

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*Reading Psalm 24 with the Great Tradition: Identifying and Explaining Two Examples of Patristic Prosopological Exegesis*

The aim of this paper is to ask two questions: how did patristic interpreters read Psalm 24 prosopologically, and what may have led them to do so? I will first summarize the evidence that patristic interpreters utilized prosopological exegesis to detect the actions of Jesus and the words of angelic figures in verses 7-10 of Psalm 24. Additionally, I will suggest that redemptive-historical patterns, logical ambiguities, and intertextual correspondences within the text of the psalm laid the foundation for such identifications.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We offer special thanks to **Stacy Davis** and **Lauren O'Connell** for help in coordinating this virtual conference.

### **Officers of the Midwest Region Society of Biblical Literature**

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