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Presentation Abstracts: **(alphabetical order)**

Prof Lily Arasaratnam-Smith, Alphacrucis University College

Prof David Perry, Alphacrucis University College

Spirit-Filled Approach to Quadrant of Understandings: An Exploration

One of the recent models for developing students with global competencies presents a quadrant of understandings that should be inculcated in every student (Arasaratnam-Smith 2023; 2025). Namely, understanding of self, understanding of others, understanding of self's responsibility to others, and understanding of others' contribution to self. Understanding of self refers to curriculum that addresses worldview and assessment that addresses tools for iterative self-reflection and understanding. Understanding of others refers to curriculum that helps students understand different perspectives and tools that facilitate empathy and relatability. Understanding of self's responsibility to others focuses on students' awareness of themselves as social beings, with responsibilities for fellow humans therein. Understanding of others' contribution to self refers to awareness and understanding of one's place in a specific time in history and the contributions others have made to shape the benefits to which one has access. These understandings are meant to be inculcated holistically.

Past research has focused on the applications of this model to developing curricula that best prepare students for the global market place, and developing assessments that prevent over-reliance on AI tools (Arasaratnam-Smith & Luetz, in review). The premise of the present proposal is to explore what these four understandings mean from the perspective of Pentecostal higher education. The proposal is to present the exploration as a dialogue between myself and a colleague whose expertise is in Pentecostal theology, with the objective of arriving at practical suggestions for application in pedagogical considerations.

Ps Anne Bakker, Alphacrucis University College

Inspired Speech and Speech-Act Theory in Acts 2:1–13 and Ezekiel 3:4–7

In Acts 2:1–13, Jesus's disciples are filled with the Spirit and speak with other tongues as the Spirit enables them. Their hearers are from the house of Israel, but they live in many different nations with their own native languages. The hearers are bewildered because they hear what the disciples are saying in their own languages, even though they identify the speakers as Galileans. This exchange is of interest from the perspective of speech-act theory. There are many questions that arise from this passage. Concerning the speakers' locution, do the speakers know the various languages? Is their speech with ἐτέραις γλώσσαις intelligible to the speakers, or only to their hearers? In terms of the illocution of the exchange, what is the communicative intent? Does the intent originate in the disciples, or the Spirit who enables them to speak? Is the perlocution of the speech successful? If yes, in what respect may the perlocution be said to be successful? In comparison to the inspired speech of the disciples, God commissions Ezekiel to



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speak to the house of Israel and describes them as a people who will understand him (Ezek 3:5–6). This study will build on Jacqueline Grey’s exploration of speech-act theory in Ezekiel 37 and other scholars who have explored narrative and linguistic parallels between Luke-Acts and Ezekiel. As such, I will compare and contrast Acts 2:1–13 and Ezek 3:4–7 in terms of inspired speech and speech-act theory in the context of the respective calls to prophetic ministry. In conclusion, I will consider the potential metaleptic import of Ezek 3:4–7 for the interpretation of Acts 2:1–13.

Dr Narelle Coetzee, Alphacrucis University College

Who is Forming the Faculty in Pentecostal Higher Education? Calling, Compliance, and Charisma

In maintaining the vision, mission and culture of Pentecostal higher education, faculty are central to embodying and mediating Pentecostal identity within institutional life. Yet Pentecostal identity among faculty is often assumed rather than deliberately formed and inculcated. This paper asks a deceptively simple but theologically and educationally critical question: "Who is forming the faculty in Pentecostal higher education?"

Drawing on Pentecostal theology, higher education studies, and theories of professional formation, this paper argues that faculty formation occurs at the intersection of three formative forces: calling, compliance, and charisma. First, Pentecostal institutions frequently hire faculty based on their calling to a faculty vocation and a faith profession aligned with Pentecostalism. Yet few structures nurture, embed, or sustain this calling in their teaching and scholarship roles. Second, faculty are powerfully shaped by compliance regimes, such as accreditation standards, quality assurance frameworks, performance metrics, and institutional policies, which implicitly form academic identities, priorities, and practices. Third, Pentecostal distinctiveness is sustained through ongoing openness to the charismatic work of the Holy Spirit, but how is this openness engaged amid the pressures of academic work?

The paper contends that Pentecostal faculty are often shaped more by a hidden curriculum embedded in institutional expectations and academic norms than by explicit theological commitments. As a result, Pentecostal faculty identity, whilst assumed, can be marginalised rather than intentionally cultivated. This paper, therefore, contributes to an under-researched area in Pentecostal faculty formation, inviting us to reflect critically on the question: who is forming Pentecostal higher education faculty? It also aims to propose a way forward for faculty to maintain their Pentecostal distinctiveness as they navigate calling, compliance and charisma.

Rev Dr John D. Griffiths, Alphacrucis University College

What’s So Unique About Pentecost?

Given the significant place that the outpouring of the Spirit at the day of Pentecost plays in the Pentecostal worldview, numerous scholars have sort to elucidate the uniqueness of Pentecost



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against the backdrop of the Spirit in the Old Testament. Some scholars state that the Spirit is “in” people after Pentecost, rather than just being “upon” in the OT, but this overlooks OT characters who have the Spirit of God in them (e.g., Gen 41:38; Dan 4:8, 9, 18; 5:11, 14). Other scholars state the Spirit is a permanent endowment after Pentecost, with the Spirit being only temporary in the OT, but again, this overlooks key OT figures who have an enduring endowment of God’s Spirit (e.g., 1 Sam 16:13; Exod 28:3; 31:3). Finally, scholars commonly state that the Spirit is given to all after Pentecost, while the Spirit is given to select leaders in the OT, but this again overlooks key OT passages that describes God’s Spirit in all (e.g., Gen 2:7; Job 27:3; 32:8; 33:4). These simple dichotomies do not work.

This paper proposes a different path, arguing that Jesus is the first figure to possess the “fullness” of the Spirit, which at Pentecost is passed on to his disciples. The plethora of OT Spirit passages that are quoted or alluded to in relation to Jesus at the start of Luke’s Gospel (Luke 1:35; 3:22; 4:1, 14, 18) indicates that Jesus’ endowment of God’s Spirit includes the full spectrum of the Spirit of God’s work in the Old Testament (the royal, prophetic, creator, wisdom and eschatological Spirit). Therefore, what is unique about Pentecost is that Jesus, as the one who experiences the fullness of the Spirit in his life, now opens that same fullness on to us.

Dr Fraser Hannam, Alphacrucis University College, Morling College
Gifts, Fruit, and Formation: Toward a Mature Pentecostal Ecclesiology

Pentecostal theology has historically emphasised the experiential and empowering work of the Holy Spirit, particularly through manifestations such as tongues, prophecy, healing, and other spiritual gifts. Yet many pastors and church leaders continue to observe a troubling tension within Pentecostal communities: the presence of significant spiritual gifting alongside limited spiritual maturity. This paper explores the relationship between Pentecostal experience and spiritual formation by arguing that authentic Christian maturity requires both Christlike character (fruit) and Spirit-empowered ministry (gifts). Rather than positioning these dimensions in opposition, the paper proposes that biblical maturity emerges through their integration.

Drawing from Pauline theology, especially 1 Corinthians 12–14 and Galatians 5, the study distinguishes between spiritual empowerment and character formation while demonstrating their necessary interdependence within the life of the believer and the corporate church. Experiences such as speaking in tongues are affirmed as valuable expressions of the Spirit’s activity, yet they are not presented as the fullness of Spirit-led living. The paper contends that Pentecostal spirituality must move beyond valuing manifestations alone toward cultivating a holistic spirituality shaped by love, discernment, humility, and communal edification. Attention is also given to the ecclesiological tensions faced by Pentecostal leaders who seek to remain open to the leading of the Spirit while maintaining healthy governance and order. Using the metaphor of the “vine and trellis,” the paper argues that structure need not restrict the Spirit but can instead create hospitable space for Spirit-led ministry. Ultimately, the paper envisions a mature Pentecostal church in which every believer is formed in character, activated in spiritual gifting, and equipped to contribute to the growth and unity of the body of Christ.



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Dr. Esa Hukkinen, Alphacrucis University College

Pentecost as Paradigm: Biblical Foundations for Participatory and Heutagogical Discipleship

Pentecost is often affirmed doctrinally while its implications for discipleship may remain underdeveloped. In some churches, spiritual growth continues to be shaped by passive learning, externally imposed programmes, and narrow religious performance. Against this backdrop, Pentecost is re-examined not merely as an empowering event in salvation history, but as an enduring paradigm for participatory, Spirit-led, and missional discipleship. Heutagogy, or self-determined learning, is advanced as a fitting framework for such Pentecost-shaped growth because it honours disciple agency without severing growth from Scripture, Christian community, and the Holy Spirit's leading.

The biblical foundations for this claim are traced through the wisdom tradition, the teaching of Jesus, and the Holy Spirit's continuing. Wisdom literature presents growth as reflective, integrative, and concerned with the whole of life under the fear of Yahweh. Jesus, as wisdom incarnate, continues and deepens this tradition by engaging his hearers as responsible agents, collapsing the sacred-secular divide, and calling them to loving obedience across every sphere of existence. The Holy Spirit, in turn, continues the work of Christ by guiding disciples into all truth, forming them in holiness, and leading them into faithful and missional living. The Cornelius episode provides a concrete example of participatory, contextual, and Spirit-led growth within God's unified mission.

Taken together, these biblical trajectories suggest that Pentecost does not create passive recipients of divine power, but active disciples who discern, respond, and participate in the Spirit's transforming work across all of life. Heutagogy, especially when augmented by non-directive mentoring, offers a theologically sound and fruitful framework for nurturing such discipleship. A Pentecost-shaped church will therefore seek more than information transfer. It will cultivate disciples who are reflective, obedient, discerning, and outward-facing, increasingly appropriating the wisdom of God, the teaching of Christ, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit for the life of the world.

Karoline Kohl, Alphacrucis University College

Entertaining Suffering: A Joban Response to Suffering and the Implications of Success-oriented Pentecostal Healing Theology

This paper argues that the book of Job provides a theological model for integrating non-healing into Pentecostal healing theology and pastoral practice. The Pentecostal practice of shared testimony, which often privileges dramatic healing, marginalises experiences of prolonged suffering and non-healing. This creates a gap between the expectation that healing is available for all and lived experiences. Job's movement from retributive expectation to relational encounter with God offers a model for a faithful response to non-healing. It further argues that non-healing belongs within "ordinary" Pentecostal healing theology and pastoral responses to unrealised healing. Using the framework of Richard Osmer's Practical Theology methodology,



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this paper examines parallels between the Pentecostal practices of divine healing and the retributive principles in Job, arguing that Job offers a scriptural voice that reframes suffering as a site of spiritual formation. The Joban model “entertains” suffering through lament, relationship with people and intimacy with God. As a spiritual practice, this approach emphasises personal growth and development, challenging and encouraging Pentecostals who experience non-healing.

Ps Kristy Mills,

Charism for The Public Square: Australian Pentecostal Political Participation 2010-2025

Prior to iconic Pentecostal leader Andrew Evan’s foray into politics, Australian Pentecostal political participation is best described as ad-hoc and episodic. Evans’ formation of a minor party was motivated by a distinct sense of call—a charism for the political sphere. In the recent period (2010 – 2025) political influence has been tactically reconfigured to include representation in a major party, a more ecumenical, interfaith and bipartisan institutional lobbying strategy, and the cultivation of public leadership pipelines. For Pentecostals, this shift, signalling both a matured religious movement and a response to sociological changes in Australia, is similarly animated by a sense of charism: charisms to enrich the common good and represent the church in the public square. Examining three case studies, nodal points of recent Pentecostal political participation, this paper contends that Australian Pentecostal political actors operate with a sense of vocation and Spirit empowerment—charisms for contemporary political participation.

Ps Layla Nahavandi, Alphacrucis University College

The Spirit of Pentecost and the Retrieval of the Early Church: Why Pentecostal Primitivism Matters

This paper will argue that Pentecostal primitivism, understood as the desire to recover the life, power, and spirituality of the apostolic church, remains one of the most significant yet under-explored theological impulses within global Pentecostalism. From its inception, Pentecostalism has understood the Pentecost event of Acts 2 not merely as a historical occurrence, but as an ongoing theological paradigm for the life and mission of the Church. The Spirit of Pentecost therefore functions not only as an experience to be repeated, but as a call to recover apostolic Christianity in doctrine, practice, spirituality, and mission. This paper explores how Pentecostal primitivism has historically shaped Pentecostal identity, spirituality, and ecclesiology, while also examining its potential to foster constructive ecumenical engagement in the contemporary Church. Rather than viewing primitivism as a form of restorationist anti-traditionalism, this study will argue that Pentecostal primitivism can function as a retrieval impulse that draws Pentecostals into deeper engagement with the broader Christian tradition, particularly the theology and praxis of the Early Church. Through historical and theological analysis, the paper will demonstrate that the Pentecostal pursuit of New Testament Christianity shares important resonances with the broader Christian tradition. The retrieval of the Early Church, therefore, need not diminish Pentecostal distinctives, but can strengthen Pentecostal theological identity



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while opening pathways toward ecumenical renewal, and dialogue. Ultimately, this paper will propose that Pentecostal primitivism offers a constructive framework for understanding the continuing Spirit of Pentecost today: a Spirit that not only empowers the Church for mission, but also calls the Church toward historical rootedness, theological depth, and renewed unity.

Assoc Prof Dr Jon K. Newton, Alphacrucis University College

The Spirit of Revolution

The Spirit of Pentecost is an invading force that revolutionizes the world. Drawing especially on the NT books of Acts and Revelation, which I see as parallel stories, and illustrated by events of church history and current issues, I argue that the Spirit of Pentecost brings renewal, revival and ultimately restoration, not only to the church but to society at large and even all of creation. This requires a revolution of human affairs in line with the two great commandments and resistance to all ungodly powers and cultures. Embracing this change requires a reframing of our mindsets which can be infiltrated with traditions and cultural values. Modern Pentecostalism has been a revolutionary force in the world but its very successful growth leaves it vulnerable to compromise with ungodly culture and triumphalistic complacency, the very issues the Spirit revealed in many of the seven churches of Revelation 2-3. Contemporary Pentecostals need to live up to their name and “turn the world upside down” as did their forebears.

Prof Neil Ormerod, Australian Catholic University, Alphacrucis University College

Can the Spirit be institutionalised? A Catholic take on the work of the Spirit.

Charism and institution are often viewed as in opposition. The Spirit blows where she will, while institutions are rigid and controlling. In general, Catholic theology does not accept such a disjunction. While not limited to institutional forms, charism is also linked with institution. This paper will argue that the Catholic papacy has demonstrated the charism of prophetic witness through the body of Catholic Social Teaching, often referred to as the Church’s best kept secret. It will illustrate this through the prophetic witness of two recent papal documents, *Laudato Si’* by Pope Francis on the environment, and *Magnifica Humanitas* by Pope Leo XIV on Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Prof Stuart Piggin, Conjoint Associate Professor and Director of the Centre for the History of Christian Thought and Experience, Macquarie University (Retired) and Professorial Fellow, Alphacrucis University College

Shining with an Emblematic Radiance: Reflections on Congregational Charisms in Australian Anglican Parish Church Histories



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For the churchgoer, local parishes are where most of us hone our faith and give us a taste of the glorious reality of the world-wide and heavenly church. Article 28 of Vatican II's "Dogmatic Constitution of the Church" affirms that the universal church is to be found within the local church. Is THE Church made up of all the local churches? If so, for all their particularity, indeed because of their particularity, local church histories are foundational to the understanding of the world-wide church. History, we are commonly told, possesses the "scandal of the particular." Because every local church is unique, it gives rise to that scandal, and it is in its particularity that local church history is truly historical. Do the writers of the best local church histories discern what it is that makes their particular local church shine with an emblematic radiance? A way of identifying the emblematic radiance that shines from the particularity of any local church might be to ask what its "charism" is. With papal guidance, we know that individuals can be given a charism, a distinctive spiritual gift, for the common good. So, too can communities such as religious orders. Could local church congregations also possess this divine gift? Might a history of a local congregation attempt to discern its charism, its distinctive spiritual gift which gives it its particular character? Here, we review a number of histories of local Anglican parishes none of which have been particularly sympathetic towards Catholic or Pentecostal traditions. Have their authors identified the defining, distinctive characteristics of these local churches, and insofar as these characteristics are manifestations of the divine presence, is it possible and profitable to encourage church members to discern and cultivate their parish charism rather than more human church growth categories such as each church's "Mission, Vision, and Values" or its "DNA"?