

# First Annual ISEOC Symposium on Evangelical Theology in Orthodox Settings

## Symposium Program



### 22-23 May 2020 Conference Theme

Evangelical Engagements with Renewal Movements in Contemporary Orthodox Theologies

### Summary Schedule & Zoom Call Log-in Details

| Symposium Session  | Zoom Meeting Time                     | Zoom Link, Meeting IDs & Passwords |
|--|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>“Towards a Deification Theology” with Dr. Robert Letham</b> | Friday, 22-May, 11:00-13:00 (GMT+3)   | Emailed to registrants             |
| <b>Session One: Doctrinal Topics</b>                           | Friday, 22-May, 17:30-20:30 (GMT+3)   | Emailed to registrants             |
| <b>Session Two: Patristic Engagements</b>                      | Saturday, 23-May, 9:30-12:30 (GMT+3)  | Emailed to registrants             |
| <b>Session Three: Biblical Discussions</b>                     | Saturday, 23-May, 14:30-17:30 (GMT+3) | Emailed to registrants             |

### Zoom Meeting Preparation Tips:

- Visit <https://zoom.us/test> to ensure your audio/video is working before joining the meeting
- Find a quiet space and inform others to “please not disturb”
- Refrain from unrelated parallel activities during sessions (avoid the temptation to multitask!)

## Session One: Doctrinal Topics

Friday, 22-May, 17:30-20:30 (GMT+3)

Session One [link](#) / Webinar ID & Password: Emailed to registrants



### Long-form Paper #1: Rev. Dr. Panagiotis Kantartzis of First Greek Evangelical Church of Athens

“Recent Evangelical Theologies of Retrieval: Their Promise & Limits in an Orthodox Setting”

Abstract: Dr. Kantartzis looks in this paper at recent models of retrieval being developed in the context of Evangelical theology, particularly in the West, and he brings them into dialogue with Eastern Orthodox theology, which yields a synthetic proposal and fresh articulation of remaining challenges.

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Dr. Kantartzis has been pastor of the First Greek Evangelical Church of Athens since 1998. Dr. Kantartzis completed his Master’s of Divinity studies at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, his Master of Sacred Theology from Boston School of Theology and his doctorate in Old Testament on the book of Isaiah at the Divinity School of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. God used him to initiate a church planting network in Athens called Polis, and has recently initiated the founding of the ISEOC which is providing the kind of institutional context for our discussions today and tomorrow.

Q&A Moderator: Dr. Andrew Keuer

### Long-form Paper #2: Dr. Kosta Milkov of Balkan Institute for Faith & Culture

“Basil’s Letter 38 on Ousia & Hypostasis and the Council of Constantinople (381 AD)”

Abstract: None

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Dr. Milkov is the founder and director of the Balkan Institute for Faith & Culture (BIFC). After earning an MA at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Dr. Milkov became a Langham Scholar and took an MSt and DPhil in early Christian studies and patristics at University of Oxford. He regularly presents Christian truth in North Macedonian public forums and has recently published a book of poetry (*Looking for the Word*, 2014) as well as a collection of short stories (*Life is...beautiful!*).

Q&A Moderator: Dr. Andrew Keuer

**Short Paper #1: Mr. Kyle McCracken (M.Th.), Ph.D. Candidate at University of Aberdeen**

“A Reformed Engagement with Bulgakov’s Doctrine of Wisdom”

Abstract: This paper an interpretive account of the controversial Russian Orthodox theologian Sergii Bulgakov’s sophiology as a presentation of Orthodoxy to the modern world. After tracing the lineaments of his theology of wisdom, Mr. McCracken explores what kind of conversation Bulgakov’s depiction opens between evangelicals and Orthodox believers.

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Mr. McCracken currently serves on the preaching team of an international church plant in Athens. He is a graduate of the Greek Bible College and completed his M.Th. with Union School of Theology in 2019, focusing in his dissertation on Karl Barth’s theology of wisdom as a rich theological frame for reading Proverbs as Christian Scripture. Mr. McCracken is freshly enrolled as a Ph.D. candidate in systematic theology at University of Aberdeen.

**Short Paper #2: Prof. Andei Murzin (Th.M.) of Kyiv Theological Seminary**

“Assessing the Soteriology of Sergius Stragorodskiy”

Abstract: In this paper, Prof. Murzin analyzes the influential book by the Russian Orthodox theologian and priest, Sergius Stragorodskiy entitled "The Orthodox Doctrine of Salvation" (1895). Prof. Murzin highlights biblical threads in Stragorodskiy's presentation from which Evangelical soteriology can be strengthened, though only after shifting the foundational soteriological emphasis from the process of overcoming passions to the gift of justification.

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Prof. Murzin is currently the assistant director of the Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling at Kyiv Theological Seminary. He completed his graduate studies at Reformed Theological Seminary in the United States in 2003, writing a ThM thesis on contextualizing Protestant ministry in Orthodox culture and the Evangelical-Orthodox dialogue. It is very closely related to the topic, which he now presents to us, namely Orthodox soteriology, though in this paper he introduces us to and analyzes a specific soteriological account, namely the one given by the influential Russian priest of the revolutionary era, Sergius Stragorodskiy.

Q&A Moderator: Dr. Panagiotis Kantartzis

## Session Two: Patristic Engagements

Saturday, 23-May, 9:30-12:30 (GMT+3)



Session Two [link](#) / Webinar ID & Password: Emailed to registrants

### Long-form Paper #1: Dr. Octavian Babin of The Baptist Theology Faculty at University of Bucharest

“The influence of Cyril Loukaris (1572-1638), Patriarch of Constantinople, on a Culture of Bible Knowledge and Commentary in Eastern European Countries – a Romanian Case Study”

Abstract: Dr. Babin describes a renewal work over the past 30 years among the evangelical churches of Romania that has encouraged a stronger culture of biblical study, including in Orthodox circles, and he examines this movement in light of Peter Movila (Moghila, Mohyla), a Kyiv Metropolitan of Romanian origin, who reacted to Cyril Loukaris’ progressive uses of the bible.

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Dr. Babin is Associate Professor of New Testament at the Baptist Theological Institute of Bucharest and is on the Baptist Theology Faculty at University of Bucharest. He serves as a pastor in Bucharest. Dr. Babin has published on various aspects of New Testament theology as well as practical church life. His most recent project is as co-chair (with Dr. Drake Williams) of a Romanian biblical commentary series.

Q&A Moderator: Dr. Theodosios Karvounakis

### Long-form Paper #2: Dr. Daniel Patterson of Saint Trivelius Institute, Bulgaria

“Mediating Perfection Through Images: Evangelical Reflections on Icons in John of Damascus”

Abstract: Icons are a ubiquitous feature of life in majority Orthodox contexts. What light does a doctrine of general revelation shed on John of Damascus’s theology of icons? How might a theology of images help us think about the role of creation in God’s salvation purposes? If an icon is a window into heaven, where do the images of Adam and Eve lead us?

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Dr. Patterson has recently completed a doctoral project at the University of Aberdeen (which is soon to be published with Routledge) on the ethics of gender that theologically engages the thought and writings of Judith Butler, drawing on a wide range of theological sources. He is currently a professor of theology at Saint Trivelius Institute in Sofia, Bulgaria. Dr. Patterson also runs a coffee house and is the organizer of an annual “Day with the Fathers” event in October that is hosted by and at the University of Sofia that you will all want to mark on your calendars.

Q&A Moderator: Dr. Theodosios Karvounakis

**Short Paper #1: Ms. Tatiana Ntompridou (M.Th.), MA Candidate in Church History at KU Leuven**

“The Heavenly Role of Martyrs towards the Earthly Church in Origen’s Tabernacle Theology”

Abstract: This paper investigates a lesser-known text of Origen of Alexandria’s, *The Exhortation to Martyrdom*, seeking therein to trace the biblical-exegetical roots of his theology of martyrdom. Particular attention is paid to how Origen relates martyrdom and ecclesiology in this work.

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Ms. Ntompridou is a graduate of the Greek Bible College, after which she completed an M.Th. with Union School of Theology in 2019, focusing in her dissertation on the implied ecclesiology in Origen’s theology of martyrdom. Ms. Ntompridou has further pursued her interest in historical theology at KU Leuven.

**Short Paper #2: Ms. Olga Politi (M.Th.) of the Greek Bible College**

“Ioannis Romanides’ Conflict with an Athanasian Doctrine of Scripture”

Abstract: Ms. Politi outlines the doctrine of Scripture that is articulated in the theosis process as described by the profoundly influential recently deceased Greek Orthodox theologian, Ioannis Romanides. She finds an entry into his system through his depiction of Athanasius and explores the extent to which the great Alexandrian theologian correlates theosis with the kind of knowledge Scripture provides.

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Ms. Politi is a graduate of the Greek Bible College, after which she completed an M.Th. with Union School of Theology in 2018, focusing in her dissertation on an Athanasian doctrine of Scripture in the context of his theosis doctrine. Since 2016, Ms. Politi has been the Librarian for the Greek Bible College and is currently taking her pick of a doctoral program.

Q&A Moderator: Dr. Theodosios Karvounakis

## Session Three: Biblical Discussions

Saturday, 23-May, 14:30-17:30 (GMT+3)

Session Three [link](#) / Webinar ID & Password: Emailed to registrants



### Long-form Paper #1: Dr. Eduard Borysov of Kyiv Theological Seminary

“Evangelical Notes on the Deification in Paul Movement”

Abstract: Dr. Borysov asks in this paper whether the notion of theosis, which encapsulates most of Eastern Orthodox theology, is an appropriate term for Pauline studies? Can Evangelical and Eastern Orthodox Christians benefit from this ancient concept of transformation into the image and likeness of God? Before using it as a lens in our theology, we must consider the history of its interpretation, biblical concepts of salvation, and our view of God.

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Dr. Borysov considers himself a student of theology, Greek literature and Pauline studies. After pursuing those interests in a Th.M. degree at the Evangelical Theological Faculty in Leuven, Eduard went on to complete a Ph.D. in Pauline studies at University of Aberdeen. Dr. Borysov is currently a professor of New Testament at Kyiv Theological Seminary and the on-site director for Talbot School of Theology’s Kyiv Extension. His doctoral thesis was published in 2018 under the title *Triadosis: Union with the Triune God* – which you should all rush out and purchase.

Q&A Moderator: Dr. Panagiotis Kantartzis

### Long-form Paper #2: Dr. Drake Williams of Evangelische Theologische Faculteit of Leuven and Baptist Theological Institute, Bucharest

“Conversion and Active Witness in Cyril of Alexandria’s Luke Commentary”

Abstract: This paper begins with a grammatical-historical exploration of some key texts in the Gospel of Luke: Luke 5:27-32, 15:1-10 and 19:1-10. Dr. Williams then engages Cyril of Alexandria’s comments on these passages, demonstrating that Cyril’s commentary serves as a helpful “bridge text” for speaking with Orthodox theologians about the significance of active witness and individual conversion.

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Dr. Williams is currently the Associate Professor of New Testament at the Evangelical Theological Faculty of Leuven and is also Minister of Theology and Mission at Central Schwenkfelder Church in Worcester, Pennsylvania. Dr. Williams has written and been involved in editing six books, including his 400-page monograph, *The Wisdom of the Wise: The Presence and Function of Scripture within 1 Corinthians 1:18-3:23* (2001). Today, Dr. Williams speaks from the perspective of his recent involvement with a biblical commentary project in Romania, of which he co-chairs the editorial committee with Dr. Octavian Babin.

Q&A Moderator: Dr. Panagiotis Kantartzis

### **Short Paper #1: Mr. Nikos Stamoulis (M.Th.) of Katerini Greek Evangelical Church**

“The Biblical Significance of Elijah, in Light of Athanasius of Alexandria’s *Life of Antony*”

Abstract: This paper takes seriously the prominence of Elijah in the folk theologies and spiritualities of Orthodox communities in contemporary Greece, highlighting both coherence and regional diversity. The text, *Life of Antony*, by Athanasius of Alexandria is presented as a model for how evangelical biblical scholars can redirect rather than directly negate folk portrayals of Elijah.

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Mr. Stamoulis currently serves as Youth and Young Adult Pastor of Katerini Greek Evangelical Church in northern Greece. He is a graduate of the Greek Bible College and is soon to complete his M.Th. through Union School of Theology, focusing in his dissertation on Athanasius’ book, *Life of Antony*, proposing how this work can inform contemporary evangelical pastoral care.

Q&A Moderator: Dr. Panagiotis Kantartzis

### **Symposium Closing Address, “Where Have We Been, Where Are We Going?”**

Dr. Andrew Keuer, Professor at the Greek Bible College and ISEOC Symposium Coordinator

### **ISEOC Symposium Organizing Team**

Dr. Panagiotis Kantartzis, ISEOC Director (kantartzis@yahoo.com)

Dr. Theodosios Karvounakis, ISEOC Research Coordinator (t.karvounakis@gmail.com)

Dr. Andrew Keuer, ISEOC Symposium Coordinator (ajkeuer@gmail.com)