



A Learning Event on the Future of Christianity  
Featuring Phyllis Tickle  
Author of *The Great Emergence:  
How Christianity Is Changing and Why*

Thursday, March 26, 2009  
Cathedral Church of St. Paul-Boston

## Schedule

- 11.30-1.30 Lunch and Question/Answer Session with Phyllis Tickle  
*Special gathering for Episcopal clergy, seminarians, postulants and candidates*  
*Menu: chicken kabobs or salmon or grilled vegetables, salad, rice and pita*
- 2-3.30 Phyllis Tickle keynote #1
- 3.30-3.45 Break
- 3.45-4.45 Phyllis Tickle keynote #2
- 4.45-5.15 Break-out Reflections: Led by facilitators from The Crossing community
- Key Questions:
1. What is your personal response to what you've heard today? What would your congregational response be? What life-giving insights will you take home? What questions linger?
  2. What impact could emergent Christianity have on a traditional/conventional congregation? How might these insights affect your mission? Your "framing story"? Your worship? Your engagement with the wider community?
  3. How could the wider church (deanery, diocese, province, etc.) enable or empower groups wanting to practice emergent Christianity within established congregations? How could the wider church enable those practicing outside of established parishes? How do we encourage mutually enriching, non-competitive relationships between emergent and conventional congregations?
- 5.15-5.30 Final Questions, Final Thoughts from Phyllis Tickle
- 5.30-6 Heavy Snack Break
- 6-7.30 Worship @ The Crossing
- 7.30-9 Lenten Soup and Bread Gathering (all are welcome!)

Sponsored by the Massachusetts Episcopal Clergy Association,  
The Crossing worship community and Episcopal Divinity School

## A LIST OF WORDS....AND, OF COURSE, THE STORY THEY TELL

*In 2006, Jeffrey Burton Russell, Emeritus Professor of History at the University of California, Santa Barbara, wrote and published through Oxford University Press a volume entitled Paradise Mislaid - How We Lost Heaven and How We Can Regain It. In the course of presenting his argument, Russell, a specialist in intellectual history, observes:*

*In the history of language and of ideas, the appearance of any new concept is quickly followed by the invention of a word or phrase to denote it. Conversely, if a word is not yet developed, that indicates that the concept was not yet there to be formulated. (p88)*

*While Russell does not chart his synopsis of post-Reformation thought by charting the relevant words and terms whose appearance have marked its evolution, he does frequently reference, in the body of his work, the dates for the emergence of many pivotal words and terms. Listed below are some of those selected words along with a page number citing the page in Russell's work where the reader may find a fuller explanation of the historical context for the emergence of each.*

*Looked at chronologically, as here, the items Russell has selected as worthy of note form a kind of mini-history of the five centuries from Reformation to Modernism.*

TERM OR WORD	TIME OF 1 <sup>st</sup> APPEARANCE IN ENGLISH	PAGE REFERENCE
Progress	1425	69
Atheist	1571	18
Skeptic	1587	18
Bigot	1598	18
Rationality	1626	31
Evolve	1641	69
Develop [Unwrapping or de-enveloping]	1656	69
Nature [referring to the physical features of creation]	1662	35/78
Objective reality	1662-66	31
Materialist	1668	13
Pantheism	1705	44
Physics	1715	88
Science [study of physical world]	1725	36/88

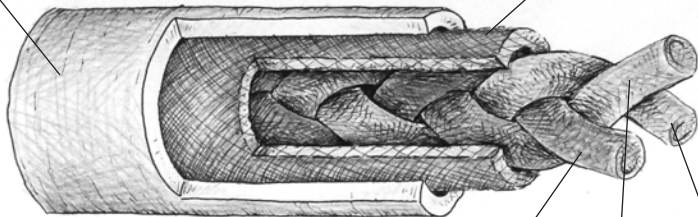
Geology	1735	88
Materialism	1748	13
Development	1756	69
Utilitarian	1781	56
Utilitarianism	1789	56
Capitalism	1791	75
Geologist	1795	88
Biology	1800	88
Evolution	1832	69
Scientist	1833	69
Paleontology	1838	88
Feudalism	1839	76
Physicist	1840	88
Communism/ist	1840	75
Communism/ist first politicized	1848	75
Sociology	1843	72
Capitalism	1854	75
Progressive [political term]	1865	69
Agnostic	1869	91/94
Biologist	1874	88
Pentecostal	1906	111
Behaviorism	1913	111
Fundamentalist	1922	128
Fundamentalism	1923	128
Physicalism	1931	13
Dialectic Materialism [Stalin's book title]	1938	75
After-life	20 <sup>th</sup> . C.	4
Charismatic	1970's	111

# CABLE OF MEANING

waterproof covering  
(story of community)

## The Cable

mesh sleeve  
(common imagination)

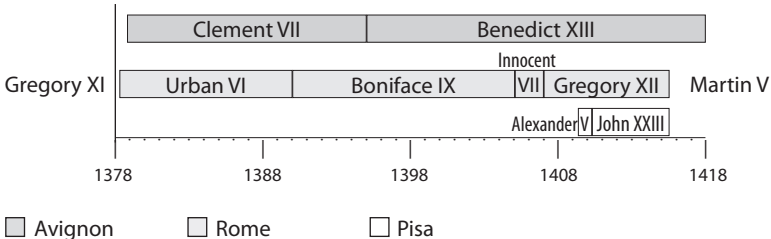


spirituality coporeality morality



Illustration by Justin Banger for *The Nick and Josh Podcast*. Used by permission.

# Popes of the Late Fourteenth and Early Fifteenth Century



# The Quadrilateral

Liturgicals

Social Justice Christians

Renewalists

Conservatives

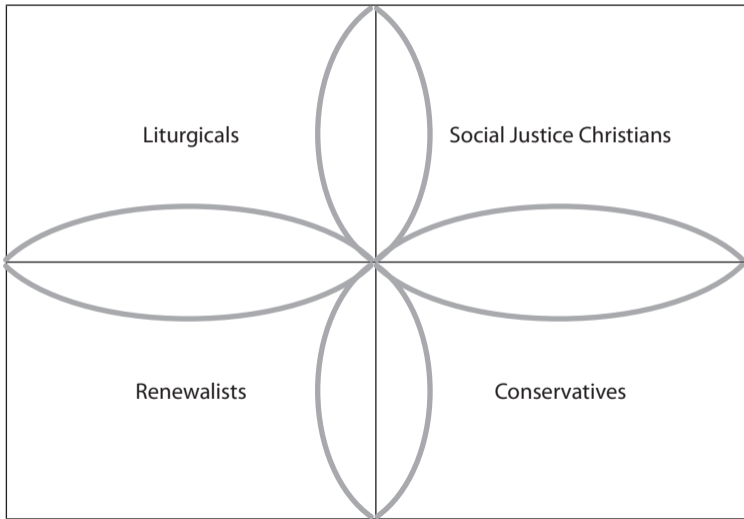
# The Cruciform

Liturgicals

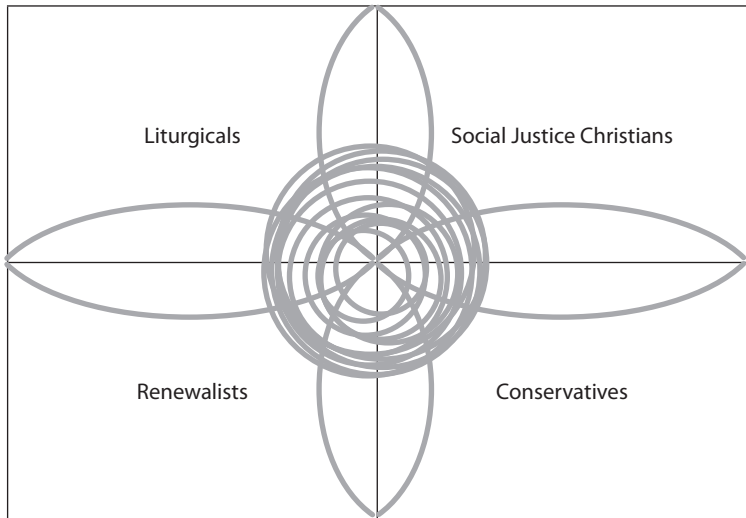
Social Justice Christians

Renewalists

Conservatives



# The Gathering Center





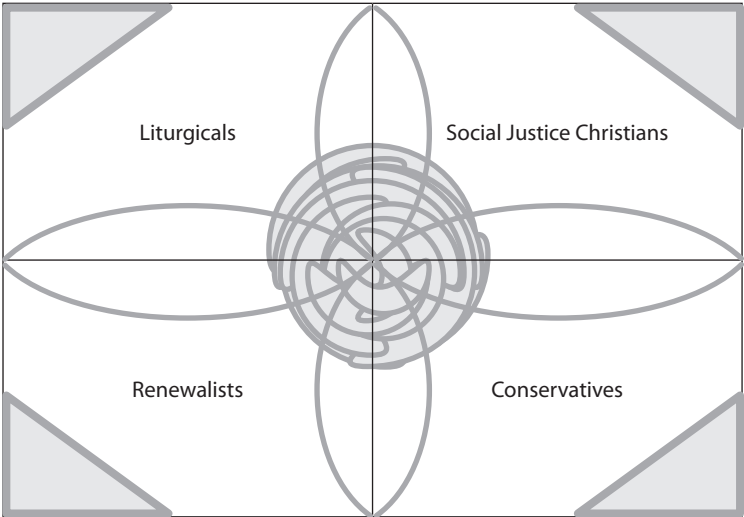
# The Rose

Liturgicals

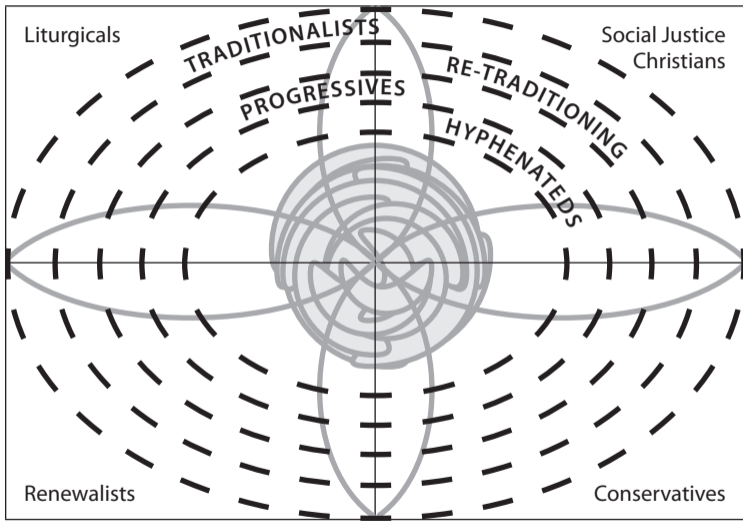
Social Justice Christians

Renewalists

Conservatives

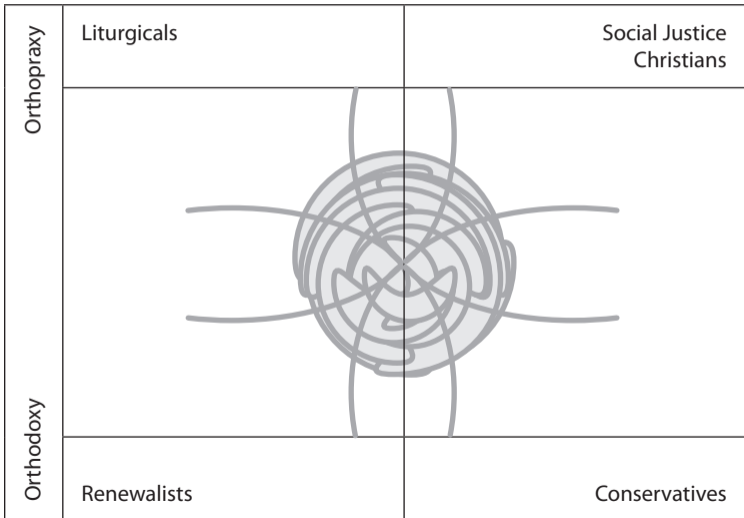


## The Surrounding Currents

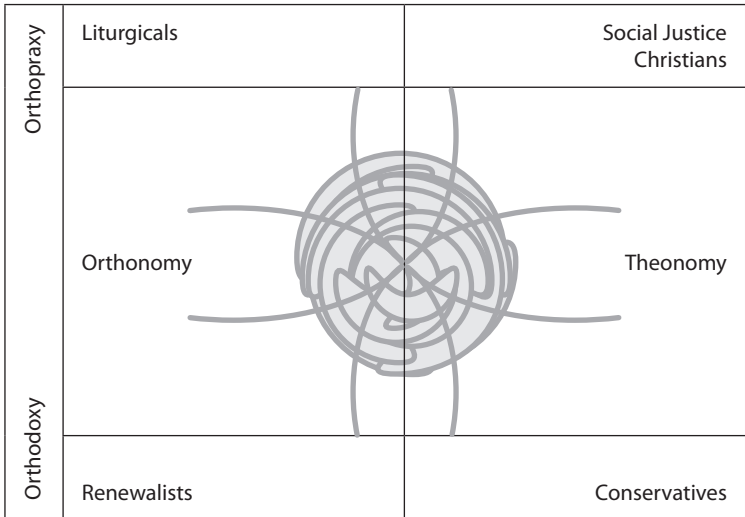


This illustration is not drawn to scale; in actuality, the outer circles constitute only about a third of what North American Christianity may look like in the near future.

# The Bases of Authority (a)



# The Bases of Authority (b)



**ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BOOKS TO BE CITED &/OR OF  
RELEVANCE**  
**Prepared for the Massachusetts Clergy Association Meeting March 26, 2009**

**Interpretive Background (Historical)**

*\*The Reformation - A History*, Diarmaid MacCulloch (Viking, 2004) is a highly readable and detailed account of the events leading to and occurring within the Great Reformation. History buffs will thoroughly enjoy the style and scholarship. It is a classic on its subject.

*\*The Great Transformation - The Beginnings of Our Religious Traditions*, Karen Armstrong (Knopf, 2006) This one is a beautifully written, highly accessible overview of the Axial Age-- that is, of the great social/cultural/political/economic/religious shifting that transpired in the five plus centuries prior to the coming of Christ and that attended the rise of most of the world's great religions. A bestseller from its first day of publication, this too is a classic.

*Kepler's Witch-An Astronomer's Discovery of Cosmic Order Amid Religious War, Political Intrigue, and the Heresy Trial of His Mother*, James A. Connor (HarperSanFrancisco, 2004) As jazzy and off-beat as its title, this one comes as near as any book I know of to putting a very human (and immediate) face on what it meant both to be a scientist in the years of the Great Reformation and to endure the repercussions of the total upheaval that were the decades after it.

*\*\*Paradise Misaid: How We Lost Heaven...And How We Can Regain It*, Jeffrey Burton Russell (Oxford University Press, 2006) In this brief, but tight and exquisitely researched, book, Russell manages to overview credibly and interpret brilliantly the progress of Western...i.e. Christian... thought from the Great Reformation to the current Great Emergence in which we find ourselves.

*The Roads to Modernity - The British, French, and American Enlightenments*, Gertrude Himmelfarb (Knopf, 2004) Not for the faint of heart, but very much for the truly curious, this book is probably the best essay popularly available on its subject. Part of the reason for that is undoubtedly that it is written by one of America's most respected moral and cultural historians.

**Interpretive Background (Present Day)**

*\*\*The World Is Flat - A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century*, Thomas Friedman (Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2002) Probably no book on this list needs less introduction than does this one. A bestseller almost before it was off the presses, it is far and away the most talked-about explication of the economic upheaval which is to our current era of transition as the growth of the middle class and capitalism was to the Great Reformation. A good read, it is written for the popular audience.

*blink - The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*, Malcolm Gladwell (Little, Brown, 2005) Like Friedman's work above, *blink* hardly needs introduction. It is pertinent here only in that it exposes in very popular fashion the whole uneasiness we have about the concept of "thinking" as a proper definition of, and index for, ourselves and our beingness.

*The End of Faith-Religion, Terror, and the Future of Reason*, Sam Harris (Norton, 2004) Harris, because of his work in Neuroscience, is perhaps the most articulate and accessible of the activists within the Secular Humanist movement or sensibility. While devout believers of any organized faith will find his arguments inflammatory at worst and distressing at least, his line of reasoning needs to be read and dissected by those who wish to understand with any kind of completeness the nature of our current cultural and social discussions as well as our rising secularization.

### **Interpretive Commentary on Current Christianity**

\*\*\**A Generous Orthodoxy*, Brian McLaren (Zondervan, 2004) While this title has a subtitle, even a casual glance at its cover will tell you why I have not included it here. McLaren is the acknowledged leader of emergent Christianity, the Martin Luther of our current reformation. Any reader over twenty (and some who are younger) will find much to deplore here and much to applaud. Either way, one should think of this volume as being a kind of contemporary edition of the Ninety-Five Theses tacked to the door of the church in Wittenberg five centuries ago.

*Everything Must Change*, Brian McLaren (Nelson, 2007) While hardly light reading, this most recent statement from McLaren is none the less the clearest and most energized exposition to date of the radical world vision of the emergent movement in this country.

\*\**An Emergent Manifesto of Hope*, Doug Pagitt and Tony Jones, eds (Baker, 2007) This is a candid, thorough, and dynamic collection of essays by some two dozen leaders of the Great Emergence. Anyone even mildly curious about what emergent and the next Christianity are, will be well served by three or four hours with these men and women...not to mention being deeply assured and affirmed by the passion of their faith and vocation even as they give to the Church a new face and a new way of doing its business.

\*\*\* *A Christianity Worth Believing*, Doug Pagitt (Jossey-Bass, 2008) This very lively, candid, and accessible book gives voice and body to the basic theology of the Great Emergence in a way that most previous essays have failed to do.

*The New Faces of Christianity - Believing the Bible in the Global South* and/or *The Next Christianity - The Coming of Global Christianity*, Philip Jenkins (Oxford University Press, 2002 and 2006 respectively) Jenkins, Distinguished Professor of History and Religious Studies at Penn State, is perhaps our most trusted and most quoted authority on the subject of globalizing Christianity. Readers will find his take on globalization's impact on first world Christianity's present situation, as well as on our immediate future,

to be immensely helpful and immensely unsettling. Jenkins has another work forthcoming in Sept. which promises to be even more revelatory of patterns, esp. for communions that have international reach and concerns.

\*\*\*\*\**The Lost History of Christianity - The Thousand-Year Golden Age of the Church in the Middle East, Africe, and Asia*, Philip Jenkins (Oxford University Press,2008) Any useful understanding of the contemporary Church of necessity must rest upon a clear understanding of Christianity's global history. Nobody understands the nuances and implications of that truism better than Philip Jenkins, who has long-since established himself as an authority on global Christianity today. This most recent addition to Jenkins's work in that field should be required reading for every Christian leader and thinker.

Those who do not have time to read the above volumes themselves, will find Jenkins's work readily accessible in precis on the web from sources like [The Atlantic Monthly](#). Even a passing familiarity with what he is telling us about our world will be of benefit.

*Rising from the Ashes – Rethinking Church*, Becky Garrison (Seabury Books, 2007) Garrison is an editor with [The Wittenburg Door](#) and by profession a religion satirist. She is also more knowledgeable about emergent and emerging Christianity than almost any other reporter covering the scene. In *Rising* she has managed to present with great clarity most of the major voices that are shaping North American Christianity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

*Emerging and Fresh Expressions of Church – How Are They Authentically Church and Anglican ?*, Ian J. Mobsby (Moot Community Publishing, 2007) The tendency among North American Christians often is to see emergent and emerging Christianity as an American experience of American origin. In actuality, emergence was far more discernible in the UK in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century than it was in the United States. Mobsby's slim volume, while not always easy reading for Americans, is none the less a classic in its overview of emergence in England and in its singular accommodations with Anglicanism, making this is useful study for all who are interested in the new Christianity both in terms of the established branches of Protestantism and in terms of international patterns.

*An Introduction to the Theology of Religions - Biblical, Historical, and Contemporary Perspectives*, Veli-Matti Karkkainen (IVPress, 2003) The theology of religion–i.e., of how we can live with integrity as faithful adherents to one faith in a world of many faiths–is one of the two most compelling issues facing the next quarter to half century of Christian thinking; and Professor Karkkainen is one of our leading thinkers and commentators on the subject. This book, while it is probably most appropriately addressed now by those with considerable interest in the subject, is still worthy of mention here; for awareness of Karkkainen's work will be requisite very soon for any serious discussion of the issues involved.

*Who's Afraid of Post-Modernism - Taking Derrida, Lyotard, and Foucault to Church*, James K. A. Smith (Baker Academic, 2006) For those who want to get a concise, albeit evangelical and radical, distillation of what post-modernism is and what it means to at least some large part of the American Church, this book is a god-send. It is short, authoritatively presented, and accessible.

*The Next Reformation - Why Evangelicals Must Embrace Postmodernity*, Carl Raschke (Baker Academic, 2004) Like Smith's *Who's Afraid*, this book comes from an evangelical perspective, but it is a superb analysis of what is happening to us currently, just as it is a useful engagement of the emerging new body of Christianity.

\**The Hidden Power of Electronic Culture-How Media Shapes Faith, the Gospel, and Church*, Shane Hipps (Zondervan, 2005) This deceptively easy-going book deftly weaves Marshall McLuhan and Co. into an at-times brilliantly insightful critique of current "church." It's well worth the time it takes to read it and more than worth the time it takes to ponder it.

*The Great Worship Awakening - Singing A New Song in the Post-Modern Church*, Robb Redman (Jossey-Bass, 2002) Redman, a Presbyterian pastor in San Antonio, is a vice-president of Maranatha! Music and, as a result, intimately involved in the changing landscape of American worship—its whys and wherefores, its implications, and its influence on the emerging church movement. A gentle read, this book is also an informative one for seeing the world outside of ECUSA and for understanding why the community church that blends Anglican liturgy with post-modern worship is not a hodge-podge or an offense, but rather an almost inevitable next step for many Christians in this culture.

\* *Spirit and Flesh - Life in a Fundamental Baptist Church*, James M. Ault, Jr. (Knopf, 2004) Ault has produced one of the most poignant but clear-eyed studies to date of the "fundamental fundamentalist" community. Humane and human in its approach and appeal, this record of time among people whom he came to hold in affection as well as despair, should be required reading for every liberal Christian who thinks one side of the current conversation is admirable and the other totally without redemptive virtue.

\*\*\**emerging churches - creating christian community in postmodern cultures*, Eddie Gibbs and Ryan K. Bolger (Baker Academic, 2005) I keep this one on my desk top for ready reference. Those who want a field guide to the emergent movement will find it invaluable. Its lists of the churches now within this movement, its precise presentation of how main-line churches are church-planting within the emergent movement, and its brief bios of the major players make this one worth a long look.

\*\**The Practicing Congregation - Imagining a New Old Church and/or From Nomads to Pilgrims - Stories from Practicing Congregations*, Diana Butler Bass (The Alban Institute, 2004 and 2006 respectively with Joseph Stewart-Sicking as co-author on the



second) Bass is the recognized Anglican authority on the current evolution of re-traditioning main-line churches. Her work is being used all over the country as a diagnostic tool for parishes and dioceses. To approach the response to emergent Church by main-line Protestantism without her insights would be not only foolhardy, but almost impossible.

*A New Spiritual Home - Progressive Christianity at the Grass Roots*, Hal Taussig (Polebridge Press, 2006) A Methodist pastor and Visiting Professor at Union Theological, Taussig has also been associated with the Westar Institute and the fellows of the Jesus Seminar. He brings to this overview of contemporary American Christendom a liberal, but still very pastoral and professorial interpretation of where Christian theology really is in the minds of many pew-dwellers and former pew-dwellers.

\*\**The Phoenix Affirmations*, Eric Elnes (Jossey-Bass, 2006) This volume is a kind of “Here I Stand” declaration for that part of main-line Christianity that is hesitating between re-traditioning or re-configuring into the new Protestantism and/or becoming fully emergent. Elnes, a UCC pastor in Arizona, is a brilliant observer of the intersection between culture and faith [See [www.crosswalkamerica.org](http://www.crosswalkamerica.org) to understand the full implications of what he is daring.] and a clear-eyed student of the theological shifts involved in our current and heated ecclesial discussions.

*Simply Christian - Why Christianity Makes Sense*, (HarperSanFrancisco, 2006) and \*\*\*\**Surprised By Hope*, (HarperOne, 2008) both by N. T. Wright, the Bishop of Durham. These two books will, I suspect, stand for decades as classics in Christian apology. Together, they certainly constitute the best in the theology of emerging Christianity.

Some parts of Wright’s theology will offend American Christians; hopefully, most of it will not. Rather, they will find here a reasoned and pastoral voice offering a blessed place of thoughtful and faithful quiet in the midst of an otherwise disturbing storm system. Well worth the read by folk on all sides of our current debates, the first is the kind of “lest we forget” book that’s good for all of us now and again; and the second is a clarion call to a re-considered Christian theology.

*The New Conspirators – Creating the Future One Mustard Seed at a Time*, Tom Sine (InterVarsity Press, 2008) Sine, a founder along with his wife Christine, of the Mustard Seed Community, is an expert on neo-monasticism and its placement within the emergent/emerging Christianity movement. His overview here will be invaluable to those trying to understand what this renewed and radical ancient sensibility is about in today’s world.

\*\*\*\* *The Fidelity of Betrayal – Towards a Church Beyond Belief*, Peter Rollins (Paraclete, 2008) Rollins, the founder of Ikon in Ireland, is a leader internationally in the emergent movement. He also holds a PhD in philosophy. The two together make him singularly well-equipped to be one of the outstanding thinkers and theologians of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. He is especially brilliant and accessible in this volume.

*An Emergent Theology for Emerging Churches*, Ray S. Anderson (IVP, 2007). Professor Anderson's presentation of the parallels between the first century Church and that of the twenty-first century illuminates the road we are on; and his identification of the Jerusalem Church as Inherited Church and of the Antioch Church as a Fresh Expression Church is particularly compelling.

\* *Signs of Emergence - A Vision for the Church That Is Organic/Networked/Decentralized/Bottom-up/Communal/Flexible {Always Evolving}* Kester Brewin (US edition: Baker Books, 2007). Brewin, who is the founding pastor of the alternative worship group, Vaux, in London, is one of the most respected leaders of emergence Christianity in the UK. The fourth chapter of this volume - "The Character of the Emergent Church" - is as clear a description of the its subject as there currently is.

*Emerging and Fresh Expressions of Church - How Are They Authentically Church and Anglican?*, Ian Mobsby (Moot Community Publishing, 2007) Mobsby is a central figure in emergence Christianity in the UK as well as internationally; and Moot, the fresh expression community he founded and pastors, is an almost classic example of what Anglimergent Christianity is and of how it functions. This title, the distillate of Mobsby's doctoral research and dissertation, is loaded with insights and an almost surgical clarity about what fresh expressions is/are and about the nature of the interface between Anglicanism and the ecclesiology of emergence Christianity. While succinct and to the point and certainly not light reading, *Emerging and Fresh Expressions* is massively informative and very central to the discussion.