



North American
Paul Tillich Society

Benjamin Chicka
President

Greylyn Hydinger
President Elect

Kirk MacGregor
Vice President

Ilona Nord
Past President

**2024 Annual Meeting
Call for Papers**

**November 22, 2024
San Diego, California**

2023 marked the 60th anniversary of the completion of Paul Tillich's three-volume *Systematic Theology*. In this monumental project, Tillich devised and deployed a system of categories to correlate the truth of Christian theology with the contemporary religious situation. Although Tillich framed his project as a Christian theological project, his system of categories also provides fruitful resources for comparative theological inquiry and responses to religious pluralism, as Tillich himself realized and sketched in his *Christianity and the Encounter of World Religions*. Tillich's strategy also required the engagement of existential and theological questions raised outside of Christian communities and across various disciplinary boundaries, including the arts, metaphysics, ethics, and the natural sciences.

For the 2024 Annual Meeting of the North American Paul Tillich Society, the Society seeks papers vaguely organized around the theme of *Employing and Revising Paul Tillich's System of Categories for the Present Religious Situation*.

Three main questions shape this theme:

How are Tillich's categories currently used to guide inquiry?

How should Tillich's categories be revised in light of the findings of such inquiries?

What new theological claims are enabled by such uses and revisions?

The Society is particularly interested in how Tillich's major categories in *Systematic Theology* (e.g., ultimate reality, ultimate concern, the human condition—including predicaments and ecstatic fulfillments) might be used, revised, and refined, based on the past 60 years of inquiry. The following areas of inquiry are of special interest (but other lines of inquiry are also welcomed):

Tillich's System of Categories for Religious Pluralism and Comparative Theology

Political Theory, Teaching, Analysis, Action, and Overcoming Polar Oppositions

The Natural Sciences

Fine Arts

The Society will hold a book panel on Robert Cummings Neville's 2024 book *Strange, Surprising, and Sure* (State University of New York Press).

In the time since the completion of Tillich's *Systematic Theology*, Robert C. Neville has exemplified the simultaneous use and revision of Tillich's categories, developing an even more expansive system than Tillich's. In Neville's 2024 book—*Strange, Surprising, and Sure*—he provides a theory of ultimate reality, indebted to Tillich's theory of the ground of being; an account of the human condition, building on and revising Tillich's, and an account of religion, moving beyond Tillich's connection of the Holy Spirit with the Christian church to a global account of religiosity. Additionally, the volume contains artistic works of poetry and sophisticated sermons. The Society invites papers on Neville's book as a whole or papers that deal with the following themes, topics, or questions:

How would Tillich respond to Neville's "strange" account of the ground of being as an ontological creative act that is nothing apart from the beings grounded?

Neville's analysis of the human condition as a "surprising," arbitrary, and gratuitous gift

Comparisons of Neville and Tillich's alternative analyses of the relationship between human predicaments and ecstatic fulfillments

The relationship between Tillich and Neville's homiletical approaches

How might Tillich's theory of art criticism analyze Neville's poetry?

Open Call

Of course, apart from the theme of contemporary uses and revisions of Tillich's system of categories, papers on other generic themes which are timely and intended to advance the contemporary development of Tillichian studies are also welcomed.

To propose a paper for one of these panels, please submit an abstract of approximately 350 words and a current CV to Greylyn R. Hydinger at tillichsociety@gmail.com no later than May 1, 2024.

Notifications regarding acceptance will be sent by June 1, 2024. Panel presentation durations will be limited in order to privilege time for Q&A and discussion of the papers.