



March 31, 2018

Location:

[Link Centre](#)

1800 West Main Street

Tupelo, MS 38801

[\(Click here for Maps & Directions\)](#)

Theme: Ecology as the Heart of Theology

9 AM - Lecture 1: Reality 101: Deep-Time Wisdom and Dark Optimism

11 AM - Lecture 2: Limits 101: Energy, Ecology, and Human Nature

Lunch available for purchase on site

AFTER LUNCH Homily/Discussion: ProFuture Faith: The Death and Resurrection of Religion?

Adjourn at 2:00 PM

DESCRIPTION: A science-based, deep-time big picture is vital for staying sane and sober in chaotic and contracting times. An evidential “dark optimism” can help us accept what is inevitable, avoid what is futile, and be a blessing to friends, family, and neighbors in a difficult and uncertain world.

The techno-fetish religion of growth everlasting was never sustainable. We tolerated it is because religion has been asleep at the wheel for centuries owing to idolatry of the written word, idolatry of the otherworldly, and idolatry of beliefs.

Anthropocentrism led us to defile primary reality — the climate, forests, soils, seas, and life upon which we depend. And now we are in the early stages of the Great Reckoning. The good news is that this may also be the Great Homecoming — the prodigal species coming home to Reality. By shifting from human-centered to life-centered measures of progress and success we can, once again, become integral members of the community of life.

By honoring the evolutionary significance of religion and the religious significance of science, we experience a deep and profound love of life, trust in death, and passion for posterity. At the intersection of science, inspiration, and sustainability we find that ‘reality is divine’ and ‘ecology must be the heart of theology.’ Such a pro-future sacred realism clarifies our predicament and our way forward.

This series of two dynamic, multi-media presentations followed by a boxed lunch and short homily will showcase the lessons of history and the Grace Limits of ecology, economics, and human nature. It will also highlight how global collective intelligence, interpreted meaningfully, can help green religion and empower all of us be “faithful to the future.”

About Rev. Michael Dowd:

Rev. Michael Dowd is a bestselling eco-theologian and pro-science ‘evangelist’ whose work has been featured in The New York Times, LA Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, Newsweek, Discover, and on television nationally. His book, [Thank God for Evolution](#), was [endorsed](#)

by 6 Nobel Prize-winning scientists, noted skeptics, and by religious leaders across the spectrum. Michael and his science writer, evolutionary educator, and fellow climate activist wife,

[Connie Barlow](#)

, have spoken to some 2,500 religious and secular groups across North America since 2002.

Michael has delivered

[two TEDx talks and a program at the United Nations](#)

. He has also conducted two acclaimed online conversation series:

[“The Advent of Evolutionary Christianity”](#)

and

[“The Future Is Calling Us to Greatness.”](#)

Michael’s message, grounded in an ecological interpretation of Big History, always centers on fidelity to the future and how to stay sane, sober, and inspired to act locally and become ever more resilient in chaotic and contracting times. Recent sermons can be found

[here](#)

and

[here](#)

, longer programs

[here](#)

. His main volunteer work is recording

[“deep sustainability scripture”](#)

.