

# Reformation Notes

NEWS FOR PARTNERS OF THE RICHARD C. KESSLER REFORMATION COLLECTION • SUMMER 2021 • NUMBER 56



This woodcut image depicts Abraham welcoming three strangers into his home (Genesis 18). For Martin Luther (1483–1546), this act of hospitality for strangers was required of all Christians. He noted later in his Lectures on Genesis, “If we want to be Christians, let our homes be open to exiles, and let us assist and refresh them.” This image, designed by the artist Lucas Cranach the Elder (1472–1553), appeared in a 1523 Basel printing of Luther’s translation of the Pentateuch (1523 BIBL B).

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## LUTHER AND THE OTHER

Richard Manly Adams Jr.

Margaret A. Pitts Assistant Professor in the Practice of Theological Bibliography and Director of Pitts Theology Library

*“God does not need your works. . . you should direct your works in such a way that they benefit your neighbor.”*—MARTIN LUTHER

We are accustomed to thinking about Martin Luther and the movement he began as defining itself over against Catholicism. But the world of the 16<sup>th</sup> century was not so simple. Rather, Luther thought, wrote, and spoke in a world of multiple cultures, races, and religions. And often times the higher ideals of Luther, such as an emphasis on hospitality, grace, and love, come into conflict with personal prejudices and fears. The result is a complex figure and a mixed literary record. Luther at times offers us high ideals to embrace, a message of receiving the stranger and welcoming all as God has welcomed us. At other times, Luther’s teaching is shockingly harsh, couched in violent terms against those who do not look, speak, or worship as he does.

The Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection exists not merely to tell the story of the formation of a tradition we call “Lutheranism.” Rather, it exists also to paint a picture of the social, cultural, and religious world out of which that tradition formed, the ways in which this remarkable figure and the movement he started interacted with those around it, and how today’s communities might learn something about our own interactions. To this end, this year we take



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*Luther and the Other (continued)*



as our theme “Luther and the Other.” Through a series of online events, we will ask how Martin Luther and his followers spoke about those who were different. As we all come to appreciate and embrace the diverse worlds that we occupy, we ask what these 500-year-old texts may teach us, as both positive and negative lessons, how we can embrace Luther’s words to “let our homes be open to exiles, and let us assist and refresh them.”



We will approach this topic in earnest through three Kessler Conversations with scholars who have thought and written much about Luther and the other. First, on October 6, we will speak with Dr. Anthony Bateza, Associate Professor of Religion at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota. A specialist in Martin Luther, moral theology, and Christian ethics, Dr. Bateza’s research examines Luther’s understanding of human agency and his relationship with the virtue tradition. He will speak to us on the topic of “At Least Germans Are Honest? Martin Luther’s Appeals to Ethnic Identity and Implications for Social Justice.” Dr. Bateza will explore the logic of Luther’s views of his European neighbors. He will place



*Professor Anthony Bateza, Professor David D. Grafton, Professor Dean P. Bell*

them within the context of Luther’s approach to moral formation and political action, suggesting valuable insights and important lessons for those of us seeking to critically engage the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Next, we’ll consider Luther’s interactions with Islam with Rev. Dr. David D. Grafton, Academic Dean and Professor of Islamic Studies and Muslim-Christian Relations at Hartford Seminary. Dr. Grafton’s academic interests focus on the history of Christian-Muslim relationships, Lutheranism and Islam, Christian theological perspectives on Islam, the history of Christianity in the Middle East, American Christian perspectives of religion and society in the Middle East. By looking at Luther’s direct and indirect writings about Islam and “the Turk” (his common term for a Muslim), Dr. Grafton will invite us to consider what lessons can we learn about Christian-Muslim relations from Luther today.

Finally, on November 10<sup>th</sup> we will consider Luther’s writings on Judaism and the problematic reception of these works. Joining us will be Dr. Dean W. Bell, the 9<sup>th</sup> President & CEO and Professor of Jewish History at the Spertus Institute

for Jewish Learning and Leadership in Chicago. A leading voice for the advancement of Jewish higher education, Dr. Bell has authored or edited 10 books and dozens of articles in the areas of Medieval and Early Modern Jewish history. Dr. Bell will rehearse Luther’s thoughts on Jews and Judaism, comparing it with other reformers of the period. He will help us think about how we think about other religions and engage in interreligious discussions.

I am thrilled with this panel of accomplished scholars who will help us take on topics that may be uncomfortable at times, but are increasingly important as we live, learn, and work with those who may think, look, and worship in ways different than we do. We are excited to show that this collection of books from 5 centuries ago still has much to teach us about how to live with and love our neighbors.

Unfortunately, the lingering pandemic will limit our programming this Fall to virtual spaces, but I am confident that our work this Fall will leave you convinced anew that the Kessler Collection is maximizing the impact its incredible resources can have on contemporary communities. ■



## Kessler in 4K: Help Us Do Something Big!

**The Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection is quickly nearing its 4,000<sup>th</sup> item! After only 34 years of collecting, this is an astonishing accomplishment, and we want your help in acknowledging it by raising funds to make the 4,000<sup>th</sup> item truly significant. Starting on October 1, we are launching a focused fundraising campaign to fund a major acquisition to be the 4,000<sup>th</sup>: “Kessler in 4K.” Please visit <http://pitts.emory.edu/kessler4k> to learn more and make your donation. Please also invite your friends and colleagues to participate. Let’s add something major to mark this milestone for this world-renowned collection!**

# Uncovering Hidden Identities

## USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO IDENTIFY COUNTERFEIT PRINTERS

Drew B. Thomas, PhD • Kessler  
Collection Research Fellow, 2020–2021

The Protestant Reformer Martin Luther was the most published author of the sixteenth century. Due to his popularity, many printers across the Holy Roman Empire counterfeited his books, pretending the products of their presses were actually published in Luther's hometown of Wittenberg. The Kessler Collection holds many examples, which have been the source of my research this past year as a Kessler Research Fellow.

In 1522, Luther wrote a pamphlet arguing that Christian doctrines that had no basis in the Bible, such as celibacy or fasting, were illegitimate. In 2013, the Kessler Collection acquired a copy of this pamphlet, *Von Menschenlehre zu meiden* (1522 LUTH JJJJ). The title page of the pamphlet is decorated with an ornate architectural frame surrounding the title, Luther's name, the year, and the supposed place of publication: "Wittenberg." My research demonstrates that the Kessler copy was not, in fact, printed in Wittenberg, but is a counterfeit.

The key to identifying this as a counterfeit is paying close attention to the illustrations. The name of the printer of this pamphlet is not listed on the title page. However, by using modern technology to analyze the decorative elements of the book, we can identify the publisher. Books in this period were printed on the press developed in the middle of the fifteenth century by Johannes Gutenberg. To produce a book, a printer had to carefully arrange metal type to form the words on each page, ink the type, and then press the

type to paper. If a printer wanted to add decoration, such as illustrations, he would hire an artist to carve a design into a piece of wood, known as a woodcut, which would be inserted on the press alongside the type. Because these woodcuts were expensive, printers often reused them for multiple books.

The multiple woodcuts in the Kessler Collection copy of the pamphlet help us identify the printer. Knowing how books were produced, a printer could be identified if one could find another book that uses the same woodcuts but also lists the printer's name. In my research I do this through the use of artificial intelligence and machine learning technology. Powerful computers can compare woodcuts of scanned books to a database of thousands of others to identify and match woodcuts from this period. In the Kessler copy of *Von Menschenlehre zu meiden*, I use three woodcuts to make an identification: a title page border and two ornate letters, an initial letter 'T' and an initial letter 'D'. All three woodcuts appear in books published just north of Munich in Augsburg, one of the most important cities in the German-speaking world at the time.

The title page border had been used the year before, in 1521, by the workshop of Erhard Oeglin in printing a short pamphlet by Ulrich Bossler, of which the Kessler Collection also holds a copy. But the border was also used in 1523 by a different Augsburg printer, Philipp Ulhart. Which printer published the Kessler pamphlet?



The title page of the Kessler Collection's copy of *Von Menschenlehre zu meiden* (1522 LUTH JJJJ)

Both of the initial letters also trace to the Oeglin workshop. The calligraphic 'D' was used four times by the Oeglin workshop and then more than three dozen times by Ulhart's workshop. However, the capital 'T' woodblock was only used by the Oeglin workshop. In 1512, Oeglin used it in a four-part songbook that clearly lists his name in the colophon. This information makes clear that the Kessler pamphlet was printed by Oeglin's workshop in Augsburg in 1522, with his printing material passing to Ulhart the following year.

The Augsburg origins of this pamphlet were documented when it was acquired by the Kessler Collection, but the counterfeit had fooled readers for centuries after it came off the press. The modern binding of the pamphlet has the title embossed in gold, along with the false place of printing: "Wittenberg, 1522." Clearly, a previous owner who had the book rebound thought it was an original from Wittenberg. This book provides a great example of the practices undertaken by printers during the Reformation period. ■



Initial letter 'T'



Initial letter 'D'



The title stamp on the modern binding, indicating (falsely) that the book was printed in Wittenberg.

# Highlighting New Aquisitions



## A Drunken, Red-Headed Monk in Magdeburg: Local Religious Conflict and Polemic

Armin Siedlecki PhD • Rare Book Cataloger, Pitts Theology Library

Polemical pamphlets can provide important information about the impact and reception of the Reformation in popular culture, outside the academic debates at the universities or the political dealings at the courts. A recent acquisition by the Kessler Collection is a mocking ballad that parodies a local news report about an intoxicated Carmelite monk that runs afoul of the people of Magdeburg and the city's mayor: *Neue zeyttung, Wie zu Magdenburg ein Carmeliten Münch ...* (Nuremberg: Georg Wachter, 1542;

1542 NEWE). The work, which shows a woodcut image of a monk on its title page, consists of 152 rhymed lines over four quarto sized leaves. It was printed in Nuremberg by Georg Wachter, who also published many of the ballads by the Nuremberg cobbler and poet Hans Sachs. Only one other copy of this pamphlet is known to exist, held at the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel, Germany.

The story begins with a Carmelite monk by the name of *Roth-Kopf* (red-head), who is described as possessed by the devil and so full of beer and wine that he appeared raving mad. He comes to the city of Magdeburg during the time of Easter, just as the people were gathering in an infirmary outside the city to hear a sermon by a popular and presumably Lutheran preacher. The monk interrupts the preacher as he

proclaims that all are justified by Christ alone, calling him a liar. The people, who recognize the monk as having

received food and hospitality from them earlier, react with violence, beating him nearly to death, stopped only by the pastor's intervention and reminder that the monk should be judged by the proper authorities and not by a righteous congregation. The monk is then escorted to the pastor's house, where he waits until the city council and the mayor arrive, who also exhort the people to keep the peace while the drunk Carmelite is thrown into prison to await judgment by the executioner and the ultimate judgment of God. The story concludes with a warning to the citizens to keep their dignity, not to give in to anger, and

to avoid the company of monks, whose trickery and deceit is more venomous than any basilisk.

Although this story is not attested anywhere else, the pamphlet, whose title *Neue Zeyttung* can be freely translated as "breaking news," may relate a true story, albeit somewhat sensationalized, as some of the names point to real historical persons and places. The city's mayor is identified by name as Dr. Schiring, almost certainly referring to Johann Scheiring, who served as mayor of Magdeburg in 1539 and 1542, the year this pamphlet was published. The monk himself is only called *Roth-Kopf* (redhead), which may refer to a monk with red hair, but more likely identifies Valentin Rothkopf, a Carmelite monk who was active in Saxony at the time and who was an outspoken opponent of the Lutheran Reformation. We also know that the Carmelites had a monastery in Suderburg, then a suburb outside of Magdeburg and now a district within the city, which was then in decline. Archbishop Albrecht of Magdeburg, author of the indulgence that first angered Luther in 1517, had sent the prior of the monastery away in 1535 in an attempt to restore the community. Apparently the prior had sold many of the monastery's possessions to support his gluttony and beer consumption. By 1545, however, the monastery was abandoned altogether. It is possible that the author of this pamphlet had the old prior and his indulgent lifestyle in mind when he implicated Valentin Rothkopf with his polemic. In any case, the pamphlet is an interesting testimony to how stories about local religious conflicts were passed on and appropriated for polemical, but also moralizing purposes.

The "red headed" monk is shown on the title page of *Neue Zeyttung*.

## One Acquisition, Two Great Traditions at Pitts

*Richard Manly Adams Jr. • Margaret A. Pitts Assistant Professor in the Practice of Theological Bibliography and Director of Pitts Theology Library*

Many of the most loyal supporters of the Kessler Collection know us best through the web, through our Digital Image Archive (<http://pitts.emory.edu/dia>). This online, open-access resource includes over 65,000 images digitized from the Pitts Rare Book collections, and the majority of these are wood-cut images from works in the Kessler Collection.

We are excited to add over 90 new images, thanks to an incredible acquisition made this year in honor of a retiring Candler faculty member. In the Spring, Pitts was approached by a New York art dealer who had quite the offer on his hands. He was looking for a new home for a near complete set of Biblical engravings by the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century German artist Augustin Hirschvogel, and he thought the Kessler Collection was perfect. We agreed!

Hirschvogel (1503–1553) is the most well-known of a prominent German family of artists from Nuremberg. He was trained as a stained-glass painter in the workshop of his father, but when his hometown accepted the Reformation, the workshop lost its commissions to create stained glass for churches. Hirschvogel pivoted in his career and started to design maps, views of the city, and fortification plans. During the final decade of his life, he created beautiful land-



scapes and copper etchings of Biblical scenes. In 1550, he published a set of etchings of scenes from the Old and New Testament, accompanying verse “translations” composed by Hungarian Peter Perényi (1502–48), published as a single work. The collection acquired by the Kessler Collection is a set of individual leaves that were removed from the original publication, including a total of 92 etchings, 88 which come from the original 1550 folio.

These Hirschvogel Biblical images are rare in institutions, and this set in the Kessler collection is now amongst the largest documented collections of Hirschvogel’s works in North America. The set has been fully digitized, and we are thrilled to continue the tradition of making the images of the Reformation available to students and researchers around the world.

This acquisition helps us continue another of the great traditions at Pitts: honoring our colleagues and supporters on the occasion of retirement.

Since 2018, we have made a significant acquisition, often within the Kessler Collection, to honor a retiring faculty member’s work. You can learn more about the retirement acquisitions by visiting <http://pitts.emory.edu/retirements>. Dr. David Pacini retired in May, 2021, as Professor of Historical and Philosophical Theology at Candler School of Theology, after 41 years of service to the school. Professor Pacini has been one of the strongest supporters of the Kessler Collection amongst Candler faculty members, beginning with his close friendship with Dr. Channing Jeschke, Pitts Director from 1971 to 1994. One hallmark of Professor Pacini’s teaching and writing has been the incorporation of art to open students’ minds to the complex ideas of the theologies he studies. It was altogether fitting, therefore, that Pitts add this landmark of Reformation art to the Kessler Collection in Professor Pacini’s honor.

*Clockwise from top left: The drowning of the Egyptian army (Exodus 14)*

*Jonah being spit out by the whale (Jonah 2)*

*The resurrection of Jesus (Matthew 27)*

*The escape to Egypt (Matthew 2)*

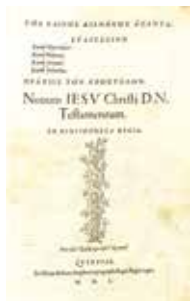


*Dr. David Pacini, Professor of Historical and Philosophical Theology*

# Inflation Is Here!

## COLLECTING SUCCESS DESPITE RISING PRICES IN THE PANDEMIC

*Richard Manly Adams Jr. • Margaret A. Pitts Assistant Professor in the Practice of Theological Bibliography and Director of Pitts Theology Library*



The title page of the Kessler Collection's copy of Robert Estienne's 1550 Greek New Testament, "The Royal Edition" (1550 BIBL)

Opposite, top to bottom:

Title page of the 1519 collection of speeches from the Leipzig Debate

The hymn damning Luther

The 15th century manuscript leaf, written in "bastarda" script, recording a prayer asking God to accept the sacrifice of the mass

You may have read headlines portending inflationary forces in the market. While I am not an economist, I can tell you that in the rare book market, inflation is here! As has been the case with many other commodities, such as cars, wine, art, and real estate, prices of rare books have skyrocketed during the pandemic. National headlines like "Retail Might Be Struggling, But the Rich Are Buying Rare Books" (Bloomberg, November 9, 2020) and "Rare Book Collecting Booms in Lockdown" (MoneyWeek, November 27, 2020) confirm globally what we have witnessed locally. With interest rates low and the stock market at all-time highs, investors are looking for new places to park cash, and many have found rare books, including books of the 16<sup>th</sup> century! The influx of new money has had a deep impact on the acquisitions strategy of the Kessler Collection.

An example may prove illustrative. It is, of course, impossible to compare responsibly sale prices of a single work, even a single edition. With rare books, the slightest difference in binding, provenance, or condition can have a dramatic impact on sale price. However, a few recent sales may help document a general trend. Consider Robert Estienne's 1550 Greek New Testament, a work typically referred to as the "Royal Edition" (The Kessler Collection includes a beautiful copy of this work, 1550 BIBL). This edition, an important documentation of changes in Bible production and typography,

sold at a Christie's auction in 2006 for \$21,600. In a 2021 auction, also hosted by Christie's, a Royal Edition sold for £47,500 (\$67,332)! Or consider the Hebrew Bible Estienne produced between 1544 and 1546, a 5-volume work known as the *Quinque libri legis*. A set sold at Sotheby's in 1990 for £605 (\$836); a set sold at Hartung and Hartung in 2003 for €4,700 (\$5,551); and a set sold at Forum in 2021 for £6,875 (\$9,506)!

This increase in prices, of course, makes it more difficult to add Kessler items. Pitts has had to pass on some major acquisitions this year. For example, a book I have been hunting for 8 years came up for sale this year. It is Robert Estienne's 1551 Greek New Testament, the first ever produced that included the verse numbering system that remains today. The auction catalog advertised an estimated sales price between £2,000 and £3,000 (\$2,750-\$4,145). I had set a Pitts budget of \$10,000 for the book (it's a very significant gap in our collection). The Greek New Testament ended up selling for £11,875 (\$14,020)!

Beyond our missing out on major acquisitions (I will continue the search for this Bible!), the real tragedy of rising prices is the force driving the increase: private collectors. While Pitts is fortunate to have generous endowments and strong financial support from foundations and individuals, many institutions have had to cut back on rare book expenditures. The rise in prices is being driven, instead, by private collectors, who have money to spend but often little research interest in these items. While we do not know against whom we are bidding for acquisitions, books we lose most likely become part of private collections, which are inaccessible to researchers

and the general public. The rise of on-line auctions with little barrier to entry has only facilitated private buying over the past few years.

These dynamics highlight just how important the Kessler acquisitions program is. We collect not simply to hold historic works in theology that increase in value, but we collect so that others, be they subject matter experts like our Kessler Research Fellows or members of the general public, have access to and can learn from these rare treasures. While we have been busy updating our insurance reporting to reflect rising values of the collection, we have also been aggressive in making acquisitions where we find good deals that fit within our scope. And despite a general trend of rising prices, I am proud of our collection development during the pandemic, and I am reminded of how fortunate we are to have supporters that enable us to acquire important works and make them accessible to students around the world. Consider just a few of our big "wins" this past year and how they fit our strategic priorities.

First, we filled a major hole in our Luther holdings. As you know, the core of the Kessler Collection is Martin Luther. The Kessler Collection holds over 1,000 works by Luther, a number surpassed only by 3 German and 2 British libraries, and one no American library comes close to. This year, we closed a major gap by adding a major, early collection of works by Luther, his comrade Andreas Karlstadt, and his opponent Johannes Eck. The collection, printed in Erfurt in 1519, presents the speeches given during three debates held in June and July of 1519, known collectively as the "Leipzig Debate." One of our Kessler Research Fellows, Dr. Alyssa Evans, is currently building a Kessler digital exhibition focused on



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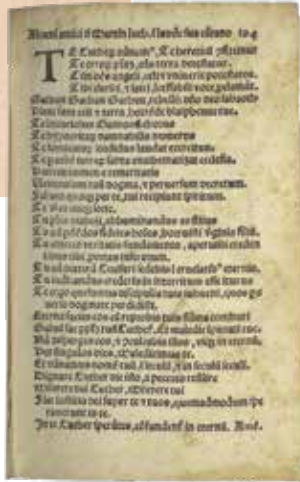
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This year, we added a late 15<sup>th</sup> century manuscript leaf with a prayer for use in the celebration of the mass.

The two-part prayer asks God to accept the sacrifice of the mass for the benefit of the living (*Memento vivorum*), including the supplicant and the church, and as a memory for the souls of the departed (*Memento mortuorum*), including parents, brothers and sisters. The text is written in blackletter “bastarda” script, used in France and Germany at the time and has rubricated initials,



common in medieval manuscripts, as well as headers in red ink. This item provides some context for the practices of indulgences that Luther so vehemently opposed in the second decade of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

We are responsible stewards of the funds entrusted to us, but we continue to aggressively fulfill our mission of building this collection. Rising prices are just another reminder to stay focused on our mission! ■

the Leipzig Debate and Karlstadt, and this acquisition will stand at the center of her work.

Second, we continue to tell both sides of the Reformation debates. One of my favorite acquisitions of the year is a curious (and controversial) song that appears at the end of a work written against Luther. The work, published in 1532 as *Jesus Maria. Opera Utilissima vulgare co[n]tra le p[er]nitiosissime heresie Lutherane per li simplici*, was written by Giovanni Pili da Fano (1469–1539), and it is the first known vernacular Italian attack against Luther. Fano, a member of the Observant Franciscans, presents Luther as violently anti-Roman and a threat to all tradition. The spine title on the Pitts copy reads “*Contro gli Ebrei / Contro Luther*” suggesting that the work was received not only as a refutation of Luther, but also of Jews and non-Catholic Christians in general. The work concludes with the verses of a satirical song written in Latin, presented as Luthers’ friends mockingly praising him. The song, which begins *Te Lutherum damnamus* (playing off the Christian hymn *Te Deum Laudamus*), is a series of condemnations against Luther.

Finally, we acquire unique items that researchers cannot see elsewhere.

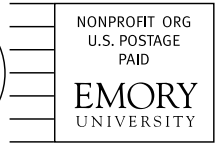




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The Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection is a repository of rare and valuable documents produced in connection with the Protestant Reformation. The collection now contains more than 3,900 pieces written by Martin Luther, his colleagues, and his opponents, and printed during their lifetimes.

Supported by the vision and resources of Lutheran laypeople Richard and Martha Kessler and partners throughout the Southeast, the collection is housed in the Pitts Theology Library of Candler School of Theology. It provides a rich resource for scholars of the Reformation and for clergy and laity who seek to understand the history of the Christian faith.

For more information about the collection, contact:  
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Collection photography provided by Ann McShane, Pitts Theology Library

# Celebrate the Kessler Reformation Collection Throughout the Fall

<http://pitts.emory.edu/kessler2021>

This year we are spreading the celebration of and learning from the Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection throughout the Fall. There are a number of ways to join us. All events will stream live and will be archived and available online afterwards at <http://pitts.emory.edu/kessler2021>.

## Kessler Conversations, Fall 2021 (Online)

**Wednesday, October 6<sup>th</sup>, Noon Eastern**

*Dr. Anthony Bateza, Assistant Professor of Religion, St. Olaf College*

“At Least Germans Are Honest? Martin Luther’s Appeals to Ethnic Identity and Implications for Social Justice”

**Wednesday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, Noon Eastern**

*Dr. David D. Grafton, Academic Dean and Professor of Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations, Hartford Seminary*

“Luther and Islam”

**Wednesday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, Noon Eastern**

*Dr. Dean P. Bell, President and CEO, Professor of Jewish History, Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership*

“Luther, Jews, and Judaism: Possibilities for Rethinking Interreligious Engagement”

## Reformation Day Worship Service (In-Person)

**Thursday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 11:30am–12:15pm**

Emory University’s Cannon Chapel

