

**Blackness in the Afterlife:  
Earthquakes, Black Religion(s),  
and the Search for Identity**



**Tuesday, November 9, 2021  
7:00 p.m., Becker Auditorium  
(Live Streaming will be Provided)**

***Professor Leonard McKinnis II***

will be joining us from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. Professor McKinnis holds a joint position in the department of African American Studies and religion. His research and writing explore the intersections of race, religion, and identity, as well as black liberation theology and the theology of Martin Luther King, Jr. His most recent book is called *Divine Blackness: Race, Religion, and Imagination among Black Coptic Believers* (NYU Press, 2022).

His lecture at EC will build on main ideas from the book. Employing the metaphor of “earthquakes” to describe life alerting events that lead to the loss of identity, this talk considers the ways in which Religion has been a vehicle for the [re]construction of Black identity in the aftermath of social crises. Paying special attention to the materialization of New Religious Movements in Chicago during the Great Migration – more precisely a community of Black Coptic believers – this lecture contemplates how religious performance contributes to the process of self-fashioning as individuals pursue to re-build and imagine otherwise possibilities in the afterlife.

***Questions?***

Contact Dr. Joe Cunningham at [jcunningham@eureka.edu](mailto:jcunningham@eureka.edu) or call 309-467-6331.

