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The Holy Family, depicted in the Nativity façade of the Basilica de la Sagrada Familia (see p. 18).

Enfo photo via wikimedia commons



Sewanee Leader Resigns, U.S. Diplomatic Post in the Offing

By Kirk Petersen

The head of Sewanee: The University of the South announced he is resigning after 18 months on the job because President Biden *might* name him ambassador to South Africa.

“Having concluded that I would accept this nomination if it were offered and that it would be unfair to prolong any uncertainty at the University, I have informed the Board of Regents of this decision and tendered my resignation as vice-chancellor effective at the conclusion of this semester, on Dec. 21,” said Reuben E. Brigety II, in a December 1 letter on the university’s website.

SABC News, a South African broadcaster, reported November 17 that “the United States has put forward Dr. Reuben E. Brigety II as its next Ambassador to South Africa and is awaiting Pretoria’s input.” But White House Deputy Press Secretary Chris Meagher told TLC by email: “No nomination has been made for this position yet.”

Through a spokesperson, Brigety declined to comment beyond the announcement. An ambassadorship would need to be confirmed by the United States Senate. It is not clear why Brigety would resign before being nominated, let alone confirmed. “Out of deference to the president’s decision-making process, I do not intend to speak further about these matters,” said Brigety, 48, who previously served as ambassador to the African Union and as deputy assistant secretary of the State Department in the Obama administration.

Brigety also holds the title of president, and is the first Black person to lead Sewanee, which is home to one of the 10 official seminaries of the Episcopal Church. His hiring in 2020 was widely seen as part of the university’s multi-year effort to turn the page on its explicitly racist history.

Sewanee was founded in 1857 by three Episcopal bishops, all of them



Brigety

slaveholders, one of whom became a lieutenant general in the Confederate army, according to the university’s Roberson Project on Slavery, Race, and Reconciliation at the University of the South.

“The University was the only institution of higher education designed from the start to represent, protect, and promote the South’s civilization of bondage; and launched expressly for the slaveholding society of the South,” according to the website of the project, a six-year effort of Sewanee faculty, staff, and students begun in 2017. The Roberson Project has sponsored a series of campus events this fall on reparations for slavery and other racial issues.

Brigety said in March that about 3 percent of the student body is Black. This compares to Black representation of 12 to 13 percent nationally among undergraduates, according to the Postsecondary National Policy Institute.

The university is located on 13,000 wooded acres in Sewanee, Tennessee. In addition to 75 students at the seminary, Sewanee has 1,600 undergraduate students studying a broad range of disciplines. It is owned by 28 Southern dioceses of the Episcopal Church.

The Rt. Rev. Rob Skirving, Bishop of East Carolina, is chancellor of the university and head of its board of trustees. “Vice-Chancellor Reuben Brigety has made a decision that saddens us even as it only increases our respect for him,” Skirving said in a letter written jointly with Reid Funston, chair of the board of regents. “We are grateful to him and hope that he is nominated and, if so, that his confirmation is successful.”

Sewanee has been rocked by racial incidents this year, most dramatically by reports in March that unidentified students shouted racial epithets at members of a visiting lacrosse team. The university announced in June that it had concluded its investigation into the incident, and had not been able to identify the perpetrators.

Early this year, Brigety disclosed that the campus home where he lives with his wife and two teenage sons had been repeatedly vandalized since he joined the university.

Primates’ Meeting Focuses on Pandemic and Climate

By Mark Michael

The Anglican primates gathered online for two days of discussions focusing on the continued fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges of climate change, according to a communique released after the meeting’s conclusion on November 23.

The Primates’ Meeting, which gathers the chief bishops of the Anglican Communion’s 41 provinces, is one of its four instruments of communion, and has generally met every two to three years since its inception in 1979. This year’s gathering fell about a year after the first digital Primates’ Meeting. The last traditional face-to-face meeting was held in Amman, Jordan, in January 2020.

The primates’ discussions focused

on global crises that are also slated to be key themes of next summer's Lambeth Conference. The bishops shared different ways their churches have responded to the widespread suffering caused by the pandemic, and called for a global response to the disparities in the worldwide distribution of life-saving vaccines.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed and deepened fault lines between rich and poor in our world," they wrote. "This is powerfully demonstrated in the unequal distribution of vaccines. We are united in calling for greater vaccine equity, based on a spirit not of charity but of recognizing the common good in resolving the current disparity. We call for generosity from those who have towards those who have not and for a greater acknowledgment of the effect of the pandemic on health and education."

The primates called on the Special Session of the World Health Assembly, which met November 29-December 1, "to be bold and courageous in

its plans for an international agreement and treaty on global health emergency preparedness and response," and to take immediate steps to address vaccine disparities and counter vaccine hesitancy.

They also discussed the effects of climate change on their communities. Archbishop Justin Badi Arama, the primate of South Sudan, said half of his country has at times been underwater from catastrophic floods caused by climate change. Others shared about the effects of devastating wildfires and cyclones, and the existential threat to small island nations posed by rising sea levels.

Noting that the Anglican Communion had sent its first-ever delegation to the recent COP26 summit in Glasgow, the primates said the worldwide response to the climate crisis "has been wholly inadequate."

They added, "We call on the nations and governments of the world to redouble efforts to reduce global temperature rises and to provide a just

finance package to enable and accelerate the transition to a lower-carbon world. We also call on faith actors to advocate for urgent, bold climate action and to transform hearts and minds away from destructive attitudes and behaviors towards responsible care for God's creation."

The primates said they looked forward to next summer's Lambeth Conference, and praised the digital Bishops' Conversations that began last summer as "an important part of the listening phase of the journey to the Lambeth Conference."

The communique indicated that Lambeth is fully expected to be a face-to-face gathering, but "some parts of the conference will be available online" for bishops who may not be able to travel because of continued pandemic-related travel restrictions. They added, "Every effort is being made to bring people together and hear all voices equally."

The primates also celebrated the
(Continued on next page)



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(Continued from previous page)

inauguration of the new provinces of Alexandria (North Africa), and of Angola and Mozambique, welcomed the new chief bishops of these provinces as well as the new leaders of Burundi, Pakistan, and the Philippines, and mourned the death of Archbishop Fereimi Cama of Polynesia.

The next Primates Meeting has been scheduled for March 2022 in Rome.

Anglican Network in Canada Finds Packer College

By Mark Michael

Packer College, a seminary named for Anglican evangelical theologian J.I. Packer, will be launched by the Anglican Network in Canada and Saint John's, Newfoundland, in Fall 2022, according to a report by Sue Careless of *The Anglican Planet*. Packer, who died in 2020, was among the founding members of the Anglican Network in Canada, a diocese of the Anglican Church in North America that includes most of the denomination's Canadian parishes.

Bishop Charlie Masters told delegates to the diocese's synod on November 17 that Packer's widow, Kit, had given permission to honor Packer with "much joy" and "heartily approval." The residential seminary will be housed in

Good Samaritan Church, which relocated to a large new building in the city center of the provincial capital in 2020.

Packer College will aim to represent Anglicanism's Anglo-Catholic, evangelical/reformed, and charismatic traditions and will have a program of spiritual formation focused on daily chapel worship. Its academic program will focus on Scripture study, along with church history and historical theology, and it will have a focus on "church planting, mission, pastoral care and supporting the faith of children and families."

Dr. Gary Graber, who served for nine years as professor and academic dean of Ryle Seminary in Ottawa, worked as a special adviser to Bishop Masters to develop plans for launching the seminary. Founded in 2012, Ryle is also a church-based seminary, hosted by the Church of the Messiah, one of the Anglican Network in Canada's congregations. Though Ryle defines itself as "an evangelical, cross-denominational school," it is named for J.C. Ryle, a Victorian-era Anglican Bishop of Manchester and noted biblical commentator.

According to Careless, in addition to Ryle Seminary, the diocese's ordinands are currently training for ministry at Artizo, an apprenticeship program based at St. John's Anglican Church in Vancouver; at interdenominational evangelical seminaries Christ College and Regent College; and at Wycliffe College, Toronto, North America's largest Anglican seminary, whose principal, the Rt. Rev. Stephen Andrews, is a bishop of the Anglican Church of Canada.

The Anglican Network in Canada began to form in 2007, as a grouping of conservative and mostly evangelical congregations that had left the Anglican Church of Canada. Its 80 churches are mostly in Canada, though it also includes one congregation in Vermont and two in Massachusetts. Dioceses in the Anglican Church in North America often have overlapping geographical boundaries, but the Anglican Network contains nearly all of its Canadian churches.

The day after the seminary launch was announced, the synod elected Archdeacon Dan Gifford, who serves at St. John's, Vancouver, as bishop coadjutor to Masters. Gifford, 56, will become the Anglican Network in Canada's third bishop when Masters retires in a year's time.

Gifford was ordained as a priest of the Anglican Church of Canada. He began serving at St. John's, Shaughnessy, in 1998, and was part of a group of the church's clergy, including Packer, who walked out of the Diocese of New Westminster's synod to protest the approval of same-sex blessings in 2002. In 2008, he was part of a majority of the congregation, which left the Anglican Church of Canada to form the church now known simply as St. John's Vancouver.

Archbishop Welby Retracts Bishop Bell Remarks

By Mark Michael

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby issued a personal statement on November 17 apologizing for his 2018 refusal to exonerate prominent mid-20th-century bishop George Bell, who had been accused of sexual abuse of a child. Welby also resurrected plans for a statue of Bell at Canterbury Cathedral.

"What I say today that is new and should have been said sooner is this: I do not consider there to be a 'significant cloud' over Bishop George Bell's name," Welby said.

"Previously I refused to retract that statement and I was wrong to do so. I took that view because of the importance we rightly place on listening to

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those who come forward with allegations of abuse, and the duty of care we owe to them. But we also owe a duty of care to those who are accused. I apologize for the hurt that my refusal to retract that statement has caused to Bishop Bell's surviving relatives, colleagues and longstanding supporters."

In 1995, a woman alleged that Bell, who died in 1958, had abused her when she was a girl. In 2013, shortly after Welby became archbishop, the woman wrote to him, and he launched an investigation that resulted in a lengthy apology by the Rt. Rev. Martin Warner, Bell's successor as Bishop of Chichester, as well as a £16,800 settlement with the complainant.

Bell, an ethicist and ecumenist famous for his close friendship with Dietrich Bonhoeffer and his controversial condemnation of Allied bombing of German cities in World War II, was viewed by many at the time as one of the most significant Anglican leaders of the 20th century. His supporters strongly criticized the Church of England's investigation into the allegations, and pushed for an independent review.

Prominent lawyer Lord Carlile's 2017 review found that there had been many errors in Bell's case, and that those responsible had "failed to follow a process that was fair and equitable to both sides." At a December 2017 press conference announcing his findings, Carlile said the bishop had been "hung out to dry."

Warner and the Rt. Rev. Peter Hancock, who was then the Church of England's lead safeguarding officer, both apologized for the mistakes made by the reviewers.

"The good deeds that Bishop George Bell did were recognized internationally," Warner said. "They will stand the test of time. In every other respect, we have all been diminished by the case that Lord Carlile has reviewed."

Welby, however, refused to back down, stating that "a significant cloud" remained over Bell's name. He reiterated the claim in 2018, when police decided not to pursue a second allegation against Bell, which was judged a year later by church officials to also be unfounded.

Welby's recent statement praised Bell as "one of the most courageous, distinguished Anglican bishops of the past century, committed to the peace and hope of Jesus Christ in a time of conflict and war." It also announced that a statue of him would be erected on west front of Canterbury Cathedral, alongside other significant figures in English church history. Bell had served as Dean of Canterbury from 1924 to 1929.

Work on the statue, which had been commissioned by the Friends of Canterbury Cathedral in 2015, was stalled due to uncertainty about Bell's legacy, but cathedral officials noted earlier this year that it would be completed. Installation will wait until extensive restoration work on the cathedral's west end is completed, probably in three to four years.

Senior Bishop William Sanders Dies at 101

By Kirk Petersen

The Rt. Rev. William Evan Sanders, the VIII Bishop of Tennessee and the I Bishop of East Tennessee, passed away at home in Nashville in the presence

of his family on November 18, at the age of 101. He would have turned 102 on Christmas Day. At the time of his death he was the senior bishop of the church, in terms of years served.

Shortly before his 98th birthday, Sanders attended, vested, and processed at the consecration of the fifth and current Bishop of East Tennessee, the Rt. Rev. Brian Cole. Cole told *TLC* that "one of the great gifts" and great memories of that day, December 2, 2017, was seeing the reaction of the many people in attendance whom Sanders had baptized, confirmed, or ordained.

"He was not a tall man, but he loomed large in the story of the Episcopal witness in this state and in this region," Cole said. "I think in ways he didn't realize, he has blessed this generation simply by his presence that day."

Sanders's death came four days after the passing of the first Bishop of West Tennessee, the Rt. Rev. Alex Dickson, 95. "The state of Tennessee lost two significant bishops this week," Cole said, both of whom were the first bishops of new dioceses.

Until the 1980s, the Diocese of Tennessee encompassed the entire state. The see city was Memphis, at the southwest tip of the horizontal state — fully 500 miles away from St.

(Continued on next page)



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(Continued from previous page)

Columba's Episcopal Church in Bristol, in the northeast corner. As Bishop of Tennessee from 1977 to 1985, Sanders oversaw the partition into three dioceses in a two-step process, after approval by the 1982 General Convention.

West Tennessee was created in 1983, based in Memphis, leaving Nashville as the see city in the center of the state. When East Tennessee bloomed in 1985, Sanders chose to become the first bishop of the new Knoxville-based diocese, and resigned as bishop of the continuing Diocese of Tennessee. He continued as Bishop of East Tennessee until retiring in 1992 — the year Cole received his master's of divinity degree.

A biography on the East Tennessee website says that Sanders established two major programs during his episcopacy: "The first was Venture in Mission, in which the statewide Diocese of Tennessee gave particular support to church growth, urban ministries, and companionship funding for the [Anglican and Episcopal churches] in Costa Rica, Haiti, and Central Africa. The other was the Opportunity Fund program of the Diocese of East Tennessee, which provided funds for a new diocesan center, congregational development, and social ministry."

Living Church Foundation Elects New Leaders

By Amber Noel

The Living Church Foundation gathered for its annual meeting via Zoom October 28, 2021. Four new board members and eight new members were elected to the Foundation.

New board members include Kathleen Alexander (Potomac, Md.), consultant and former chair of the Board of Trustees for the Washington International School; the Rt. Rev. Christopher Cocksworth (Coventry, U.K.), bishop of Coventry; the Rev. Kino Germaine Lockheart Vitet (New York City), rector of the Church of St. Mark, Brooklyn; and the Rev. Clint Wilson (Harrods Creek, Ky.), rector of St. Francis in the Fields, Louisville.

New Foundation members include the Rt. Rev. Jenny Andison (Toronto), rector of St. Paul's Bloor Street; the Rt. Rev. Daniel Gutiérrez (Norristown, Pa.), bishop of the Diocese of Pennsylvania; Anna McLean (Houston), lay leader and Bible teacher at St. Martin's, Houston; the Rt. Rev. Poulson Reed (Oklahoma City), bishop of the Diocese of Oklahoma; the Rt. Rev. Joey Royal (Iqaluit, Nunavut, Canada), bishop of the Diocese of the Arctic; the Rev. Lt. Jamal Scarlett (St. Louis), military chaplain in the U.S. Coast Guard Eighth District; the Rev. Jacob A. Smith (New York City), rector of the Parish of Calvary-St. George's, New York; and the Rev. Christopher Yoder (Nichols Hills, Okla.), rector of All Souls', Oklahoma City.

Retiring from service to the Foundation are the Most Rev. Dr. Josiah Idowu-Fearon (Kaduna, Nigeria), Secretary General of the Anglican Communion; and Dr. Colin Podmore (London), retired director of Forward in Faith.

The meeting included passing a budget for 2022 and discussing the overall state of TLC's ministry, before turning to a discussion of *synodality* as the most basic form of Christian communion in the Church, understood as "walking together." Four bishop members of the Foundation — the Rt. Rev. Samy Shehata, the Rt. Rev. Joseph Wandera, the Rt. Rev. John Bauerschmidt, and the Rt. Rev. Rowan Williams — gave initial presentations from their own contexts before opening the conversation out to the wider group. (Audio of the discussion will be released in December as a special episode of *The Living Church Podcast*. Subscribe to the podcast now to receive notice when this episode airs.)

The next meeting of the foundation will take place in San Antonio (Diocese of West Texas), Oct. 19-20, 2022.

More on the Living Church Foundation and its members is available at livingchurch.org/foundation.



Andison



Gutiérrez



McLean



Reed



Royal



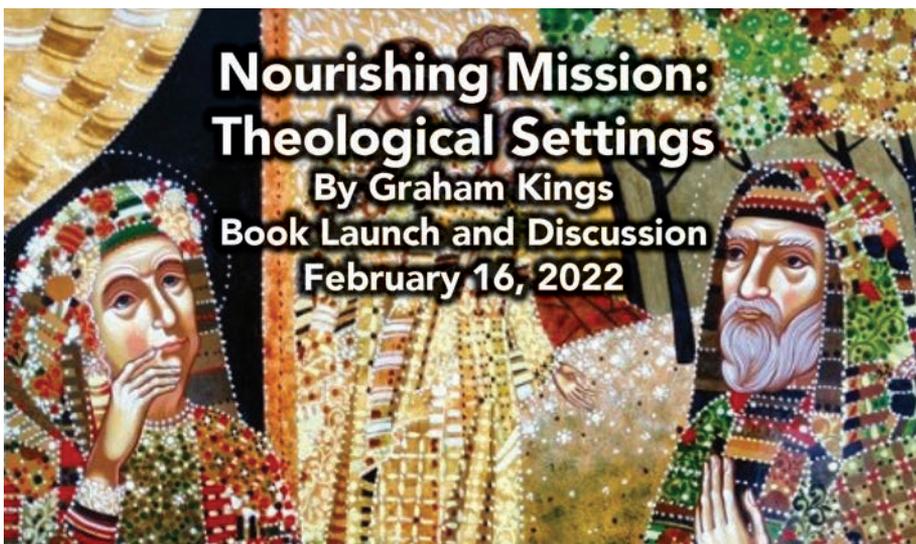
Scarlett



Smith



Yoder



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'Fiercely Contested' Church of England Synod Gathers

By Rosie Dawson

The Church of England's General Synod began its new five-year term in November after the most fiercely contested elections in its 50-year history.

It was the first time since 1970 that the Queen was absent from the opening of a new synod. She was represented by her son Prince Edward, the Duke of Wessex, who read a message from her commending the role played by the church during the height of the COVID pandemic. Her message also expressed the hope that, despite "inevitable disagreement, ... you will be strengthened with the certainty of the love of God as you work together and draw on the church's tradition of unity in fellowship for the tasks ahead."

The immediate tasks for November's meeting were straightforward — mainly the induction of new members. Future meetings will grapple with contested issues such as clergy discipline, parish structure and — most contentious of all — human sexuality.

General Synod meets three times a year and is composed of three houses: Bishops, Clergy, and Laity. The House of Bishops comprises all diocesan bishops and nine elected suffragan bishops. Elections for the house of clergy and laity take place within the 42 dioceses.

A Church of England advertising campaign aimed at attracting new candidates can claim some success: 60 percent of the those gathering at Church House in Westminster were new to General Synod, which is visibly younger and more diverse.

"I'm quite hopeful about this synod," said the Dean of Manchester, the Very Rev. Rogers Govender, who chairs the Church of England's Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns. "We have more people from BAME [Black, Asian, and minority ethnic] backgrounds as a result of a conscious attempt to address their underrepresentation. It's clear that the church is also beginning to address the question of representation among its senior leadership with the recent appointment of two BAME [suffragan] bishops" to

Loughborough and Willesden.

But the increasing number of people wishing to serve on General Synod may owe more to the campaigning of particular interest groups than to advertising from the top. In July a new interest group, Save the Parish, was formed to challenge what it sees as the redirection of finances, power, and authority away from parishes to central church headquarters. Founder Marcus Walker, rector of Great St. Bartholomew's in London, claims at least 150 supporters among the new cohort.

"We will be scrutinizing any revisions to the Mission and Pastoral measure to stop it making it easier to sell church buildings, and we will be asking at every stage whether the church's plans for mission and strategy make life easier for parishioners and priests on the ground," Walker said.

Nevertheless, the defining issue facing this synod will be human sexuality, in particular whether clergy will be authorized to bless same-sex unions or celebrate gay marriages in church. Both Inclusive Church, which advocates change, and the Evangelical Group on General Synod, which affirms traditional church teaching, engaged in unprecedented levels of campaigning during the elections.

The Archbishop of York, the Most Rev. Stephen Cottrell, told the meeting that he found the use of the word *Parliament* to describe synod "unhelpful." Still, synod observers suggest that it is increasingly coming to resemble its secular counterpart, with an adversarial two-party system forming around this issue.

Both parties claim increased representation on synod as a result of the elections. Nic Tall from Inclusive Church says that 131 of its 221 candidates were elected.

"It's healthy that synod has representation from different traditions, but the inclusive representation remains pretty solid," he said. "We're confident we will be able to get our points across."

The Evangelical Group "used to have 100 members on Synod, but 150

people turned up to the dinner this time," said one of its members, the Rev. Ian Paul. "What is really striking is that this growth occurred after the group tightened its definition of *evangelical* to include only those who hold to a traditional view of marriage. So there's a new and demonstrable commitment on synod to preserve the church's teaching and practice in this area."

Living in Love and Faith discussions began in 2017, and the bishops are due to present any proposals to the synod in February 2023. Any changes to church liturgy or doctrine must be passed by a two-thirds majority in all three houses.

"It's already clear that both liberals and conservatives have enough votes to form a blocking minority," says the Rev. Peter Ould, a conservative synod observer and psephologist. "So this means that official liturgies for same-sex blessings, or changes to the canons to alter the understanding of marriage, simply aren't going to get through. Equally, a hardening of liturgy or doctrine isn't going to succeed either."

"We're deluding ourselves if we think people weren't getting themselves on to General Synod without having already made their minds up on this."

"I honestly don't think that is true," said Dr. Helen King, a member of Inclusive Church. "I've spoken to so many people at synod who are somewhere between the two poles — between those for whom only equal marriage will do and those who oppose any change to the church's official position on human sexuality."

"General Synod is designed with aim of achieving broad consensus," says Nic Tall. "So change can take a very long time, but there are more openly LGBT members on synod this time. So when the discussions happen, it does at least mean that members are engaging with the real people who are affected by their decisions, and looking them in the eye."

Rosie Dawson is a freelance religion journalist and audio producer based in Manchester, U.K.



The Rev. Bernie Lindley, vicar of St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in Brookings, Oregon speaks with Laura, a client of the church's homeless ministry.

Machell Carroll photo via Episcopal News Service

Homeless Ministry Sparks Battle in Small Oregon Town

By Neva Rae Fox

In a coastal corner of Oregon, a local municipality has instituted new laws designed to drastically reduce the outreach and ministry of an Episcopal church.

This clash has attracted the attention of the congregation, the diocese, townspeople, and the media, prompted by the small church's ministry, which grew tremendously as a result of expanded needs during the pandemic.

St. Timothy's in Brookings started a

soup kitchen in 2009, working in ecumenical collaboration with other local churches. The food pantry expanded to include other humane services for the homeless: free haircuts during the soup kitchen; availability of restrooms and showers during church office hours.

St. Timothy's is not a large church, with 100 members, "but lately we have far less in attendance because of the pandemic," said the Rev. Bernie Lindley, a bivocational priest serving as part-time vicar. The church's annual

operating budget is \$65,000. The annual cost to operate St. Timothy's feeding ministry is \$7,000.

St. Timothy's also maintained a parking-lot ministry for those living in their vehicles. "We had three cars in the parking lot," Lindley said, quickly adding, "with a permit from the city."

In the summer of 2020, the municipality started to throw roadblocks in the way of St. Timothy's homeless ministry.

Founded in 1951, Brookings, Oregon, is a small town, at 3.8 square miles, located in southern Oregon, six miles

Under the recently approved ordinance, a permit is required to operate a soup kitchen with a limit at two days a week, slashing in half from the original four days.

north of the California state line. The current population is about 6,500, living in approximately 3,200 residential households. Tourism plays a significant role in the town's economy.

Lindley describes strong ties to Brookings and St. Timothy's. He was baptized at the church, grew up in the congregation, and served as an acolyte. Last May, Lindley was honored as grand marshal of a Brookings community parade. Shortly after, troubles began.

What changed? Lindley had trouble finding the words.

A petition objecting to St. Timothy's ministry was presented to the city council in March 2021 with 29 signatures. The petition asked the city to "reconsider allowing vagrants to continue to live and congregate at St. Timothy's Church with no supervision for matters concerning public safety and personal expenses of homeowners living next to the church.

"In the past six months alone, vagrants have caused significant problems in the community including but not limited to, criminal trespassing, theft, harassment, possession of drugs, littering (trash and drug paraphernalia), disorderly conduct, physical altercation, and even child neglect. These types of hostile individuals should not be allowed to camp in a community for concerns of safety and the wellbeing of other citizens."

Lindley has questions about the details of the petition. "We have addressed the issues," he said. "We have homeless members of the church." He believes neighbors "equate homeless with criminals. They don't feel safe."

Accompanying letters presented concerns about nearby Azalea Park. Calling the soup kitchen at St. Timothy's "a free-for-all most of the time," one correspondent wanted to "save our kids and community" from transients.

St. Timothy's was the central discussion at the June 7 city council meeting. A report included various points: in 2009 St. Timothy's opened a health

care and dental clinic in the basement on Tuesdays for four hours; currently the church is operating a COVID vaccination clinic; meals are available to the homeless, working poor, those on fixed incomes, individuals and families, about 60-70 per session; some homeless list St. Timothy's as their address to receive much-needed mail.

The report noted that since the soup kitchen's opening in 2009, there was a "significant increase in calls for service" to the police department dispatch. In 2010 there were eight; ten years later, the number jumped to 154.

While a permit was issued in 2010 for up to three car campers in the church's parking lot, the report noted there were sometimes more than three.

Under the recently approved ordinance, a permit is required to operate a soup kitchen with a limit at two days a week, slashing in half from the original four days.

Bishop Diana Akiyama has visited the church, presented positive reports, and issued supportive messages. The diocesan convention on November 6 approved a motion: "The churches of

the Diocese of Oregon are encouraged to support St. Timothy's Brookings in their efforts to feed the hungry by letter of protest to the City of Brookings, and/or letter of encouragement, financial contribution, or food donation to St. Timothy's Brookings."

Lindley remains perplexed. "Why are they going after our feeding ministry?" he asked. "They want to move the people — out of sight, out of mind."

St. Timothy's continues to abide by the new laws while concurrently striving to feed the hungry and clothe the homeless. Lindley offered an update: "Four churches have applied for the feeding permit, including the Roman Catholic church."

He said *The New York Times* remains interested in the situation at St. Timothy's.

Lindley has concerns about the homeless with wintry weather coming in. He reported that the town was provided, and declined, an opportunity to operate a much-needed homeless shelter. "They said 'no,'" he said. "Now with Christmas coming, there is no room at the inn." □



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Australia Debates Religious Freedom Bill

By Robyn Douglass

Australia's national parliament begins each session with two gestures of faith: an acknowledgment of the nation's traditional owners, and prayers "humbly beseeching" God to "direct and prosper our deliberations to the advancement of thy glory and the true welfare of the people of Australia."

You'd think the nation had a soul.

But while faith is more often a matter of private practice than public discussion, the prime minister has introduced new legislation to protect people from discrimination against religion.

It's the third draft, and the work of some years, issuing from the bitter debates on same-sex marriage and an inquiry that gathered thousands of submissions from people of all faiths and none, as TLC reported in 2018.

Australia protects people from discrimination because of their sex, age, race, or disability, but there is no national protection from discrimination on the basis of people's religion — some states have laws of this nature, some don't.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison makes no secret of his Christian faith. His Pentecostal church would be regarded by many Anglicans as demonstrative to the point of noisy.

Introducing the bill, Morrison spoke from the heart.

"Human beings are more than our physical selves. As human beings, we are also soul and spirit. We are also importantly what we believe," he told the nation.

"The protection of what we choose to believe in a free society is essential to our freedoms."

Describing faith as a matter of personal choice, Morrison said it was "not about the state or the marketplace. In our democracy we rightly divide church from state ... but we do not separate faith from community."

He paid tribute to the countless people of faith who had established

"schools, hospitals, food kitchens, shelters, [and] started services to meet almost every human need you can imagine.

"We need institutions like the Salvos [Salvation Army], Jewish Care, Life-line, Muslim Women Australia, Mission Australia, and countless others

Some Christian schools want to maintain their right not to employ gay staff, who do not conform with what the schools believe is a faithful life.

offering services large and small," he said.

"A Sikh should not be discriminated against because they wear a turban, nor a Maronite because of the cross they wear around their neck, nor a Muslim who keeps a prayer mat in the bottom drawer of their desk at work, nor a Hindu couple who are seeking to rent a property, nor a school seeking to employ someone of their faith ... if it is a policy of the school," he argued.

The last point goes to the nub of the matter. While schools will not be permitted to discriminate against students for their sex or sexuality, some Christian schools want to maintain their right not to employ gay staff, who do not conform with what the schools believe is a faithful life.

Religious leaders, including Sydney's Anglican Archbishop Kanishka Raffel, issued a statement of support for the bill before it had been introduced into parliament.

They were disappointed that the bill does not allow conscience protection for healthcare professionals, and that employers can still insist on codes of conduct that restrict religious speech outside the workplace. In 2019, a professional footballer who made comments on social media about atheists

and gay people going to hell was sacked — and still could be, under the proposed law.

But the faith leaders welcomed the bill "because it will protect people of faith from discrimination on the basis of their religious beliefs, and will allow faith-based organizations to act in accordance with their doctrines, tenets, and beliefs without this being disallowed as religious discrimination."

In a tweet, Archbishop Raffel said he was pleased that there appears to be a "clear recognition from both sides of politics that religious freedom is an important part of our Australian democracy." He urged "respectful debate and bipartisan support" for the bill.

But there are Anglicans who are not impressed with the planned bill.

The Rev. Peter MacLeod-Miller, a priest at St Matthew's Albury, right on the border of New South Wales and Victoria, has been an outspoken supporter of gay Christians. He has also sounded a warning on this legislation, particularly the fact that church schools will be able to discriminate against gay teachers.

"It is prioritising religious institutions over the freedoms of religious individuals," he told *The Living Church*.

Fr MacLeod-Miller said legislation made for the whole community ought to apply to every Australian, and it is worrying that the government seems prepared to have a situation where some are more protected than others.

Social-media frenzies are also responsible for the marginalization that some people of faith feel. "People should not be cancelled or persecuted or vilified because their beliefs are different from someone else's in a free liberal democratic society such as Australia," the prime minister said.

Some feel the Australian government's planned attempts to force social-media companies to identify trolls, bots, and abusers who hide behind the veil of anonymity might ultimately be more effective protection than religious-discrimination laws.

Debate on both bills continues. □



The Rev. Sam Adams
Vicar, St. Augustine's Oak Cliff, Dallas

Want to help your loved ones delight in the wonders right outside their window? Invite them into the wonderful world of birdwatching! A gift basket with a simple feeder (you can make your own; the birds don't care), birdseed (I use a no-mess blend from Wild Birds Unlimited), and a copy of *Birds of* [state your recipient resides in] by Stan Tekiela will set them up nicely, and there's no telling who might show up during migration season!



Liza Anderson
Resident scholar, Collegeville Institute, Minnesota
For the Anglican who has everything (except loyalty to Article XXII), eBay and Etsy are fantastic sources for a wide range of relics. Strictly speaking, of course, relics cannot licitly be bought or sold, so you're technically buying a reliquary that just happens to come with a free relic. Authenticity can be questionable, but the relic trade being a little bit dodgy is a pretty time-honored Christian tradition.

The Rt. Rev. Jenny Andison
Rector, St. Paul's Bloor Street, Toronto
We took our daughters to see the marvelous film *A Hidden Life* on Christmas Eve two years ago, and despite

their initial teen objections, it was a powerful experience for our family. Based on true events, it tells the story of a farmer, Franz Jägerstätter, who lived in a remote Austrian village in the early 1940s. He became a conscientious objector against Nazi conscription, was executed at the age of 36, and beatified in 2007 by Pope Benedict. If you want to mix up your Christmas movie viewing, Terrence Malick's masterpiece, shot in long, flowing camera movements, is worth your time and popcorn.



The Rt. Rev. John Bauerschmidt, Bishop of Tennessee
President of the Living Church Foundation

Studying the night sky was once a natural for me as a science fiction enthusiast.

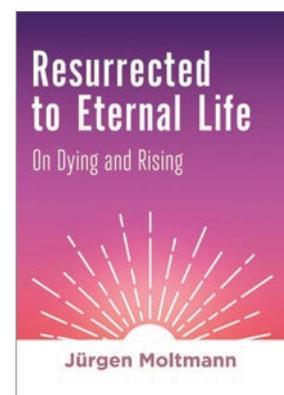
Pandemic times and skyguide, an app by Fifth Star Labs, helped me to reconnect with an avocation that had languished for decades.



"Seek him who made the Pleiades and Orion," the prophet Amos said, and aided by a decent app you too can set out for informal exploration.

The Rev. Michael A. Bird
Vicar, Trinity Church Wall Street
Resurrected to Eternal Life: On Dying and Rising by Jürgen Moltmann (Fortress Press, 2021) is

a quick read. This is pastoral, preparatory, and engaging in this winter season as we wait for the coming of the Light. And if that feels a bit too much like work, our family is giving tickets and gift certificates to concerts in our local smaller venues. Jazz at the Village Vanguard, or your neighborhood version of the same, feels just right.



The Rt. Rev. Dr. Christopher Cocksworth
Bishop of Coventry

One of my favorite sources of Christmas presents for family, friends, and colleagues is olive oil from Palestine. There's nothing



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quite like the oil from the trees that so many Palestinian families depend on for their livelihoods, oil that connects us in a physical way with the life of Jesus. This year I've added almonds, dates, herbs, soap, and even a jute bag to my Christmas order. There are many suppliers, but I use Zaytoun on the recommendation of someone who knows the local situation very well.

The Very Rev. Dr. Michael W. DeLashmutt
Acting dean and president

The General Theological Seminary, New York City

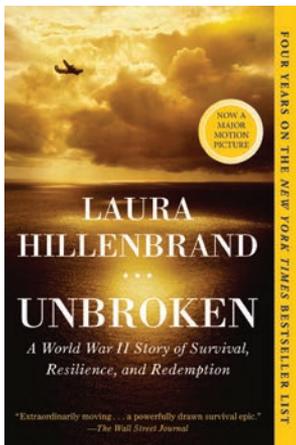
I've become obsessed with the science fiction trilogy



Remembrance of Earth's Past by Cixin Liu. The narrative arc begins with the Chinese Cultural Revolution and extends to a not-so-distant future encounter between humans and an advanced extraterrestrial civilization. While an overtly secular novel, it serves as an illuminating example of the enduring power of the religious imagination and the human struggle for meaning, hope, and community in the face of an uncertain future.

The Rev. Dr. Russ Levenson Jr.
Rector, St. Martin's Episcopal Church, Houston

Run, don't walk, not to see the movie (not recommended), but to read *Unbroken* on the amazing life of former Olympian Louis Zamperini. A nonfiction narrative on the



capture, torture, and survival of a World War II prisoner of war, it is also so much more. When he returned to the United States, Zamperini began a steep slide into self-destruction until, under pressure from his wife, he attended a Billy Graham crusade in 1949. The book is a page-turner, and a story not just about the human spirit, but what happens when God's Spirit breaks the human will and restores it by his grace. Read it, give it away — you will not be able to put it down.



Greg Metzger

Director of sales, New City Press

I was at a retreat recently where built into the time was what they called an "Emmaus Walk." It was a time to walk with a friend and share what God is doing in our lives — the questions and struggles we might be facing — with the expectation that, just as on the Road to Emmaus, Jesus would become present to the conversation. It was a beautiful exercise — physically and spiritually. I recommend it this Christmas season.

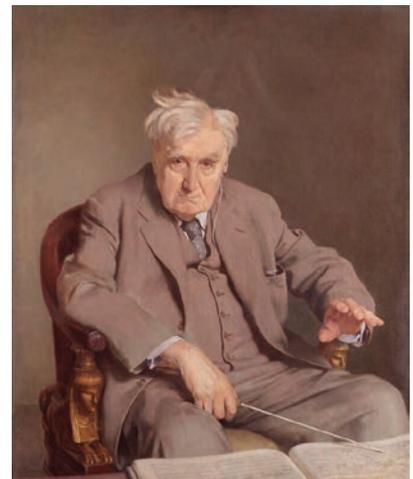
The Rev. Dr. Ephraim Radner
Professor of historical theology
Wycliffe College

I have become enamored of Anton Chekhov's short stories. Long admired as a playwright, his hundreds of stories are now recognized as perhaps the greatest collection of the genre ever written. Profound, funny, tragic, elegant, sublime, disarming, glorious, Chekhov manages to embrace all the world with a questioning compassion that, however challenging, heals. Try the Pevar and Volokhonsky Vintage Classic edition, or, for a smaller sampling, Rosamund Bartlett's *About Love and Other Stories* anthology.



The Rt. Rev. Poulson Reed
Bishop of Oklahoma

"Fantasia on Christmas Carols" by Ralph Vaughan Williams (multiple recordings available) is a 12-minute work from 1912 for chorus, baritone, and orchestra that weaves together English folk carols with other Christmas favorites. At moments solemn, at others jubilant as a movie score, it's the rare medley that both moves and delights. A perfect prelude to his majestic "Hodie."



The Rev. Dr. Chuck Robertson
Canon to the presiding bishop
for ministry beyond the Episcopal Church

To bring a smile and some hope, I recommend:



- a subscription to see *Ted Lasso*, seasons 1-2.
- Ken Follett's classic, *The Pillars of the Earth* (still holds up).
- for Trek fans, a Chateau Picard cheeseboard or wine bottle-holder.
- for Beatles fans, the coffee-table

book *Get Back* (ties in with the new documentary), or Lego Beatles wall art (2,933 pieces).

Or make a difference with a donation in your recipient's name to Episcopal Migration Ministries or Episcopal Relief and Development.



year. Whether it's midnight Mass, or family dinner, or leaving a plate of cookies for Santa, the celebration serves to remind me of a life rich with blessings. Of the many gifts given and received over the years, the most treasured are the handwritten letters sent by family and friends. These missives always bring joy to my heart and, sometimes, a tear to my eye.

Rebecca Terhune
Advertising coordinator, The Living Church

A gift from the heart! That is what our family always enjoys! The Embroidery Project offers items crafted by women located in rural Honduras and Kurdistan. Decorative pillows, gift card bags, small totes, all truly one-of-a-kind pieces of art. Items are limited. Please contact my friend Terry Koehler in the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas (210-824-5387) for more information. Their work makes it possible for women to purchase some of life's necessities, including medicine, clothing, and food.



The Rev. Keith Voets, rector, Episcopal Church of St. Alban the Martyr, St. Albans, Queens, N.Y.

Grandma's Snowball Cookies

- ¾ cup of softened butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 tablespoon of water
- ⅛ teaspoon of salt
- ⅓ cup of sugar
- 2 cups of flour
- 6 ounces of chocolate chips
- 1 cup of chopped pecans
- Powdered sugar



Combine the first five ingredients; blend well. Stir in flour, chocolate chips, and pecans. Bake at 300 degrees for 30 minutes. Once cool, roll cookies in powdered sugar.

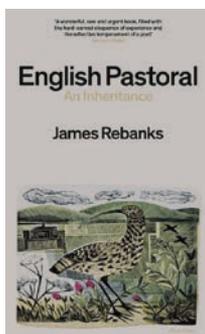


The Rev. Jacob Smith
Rector, Calvary-St. George's Church, New York City

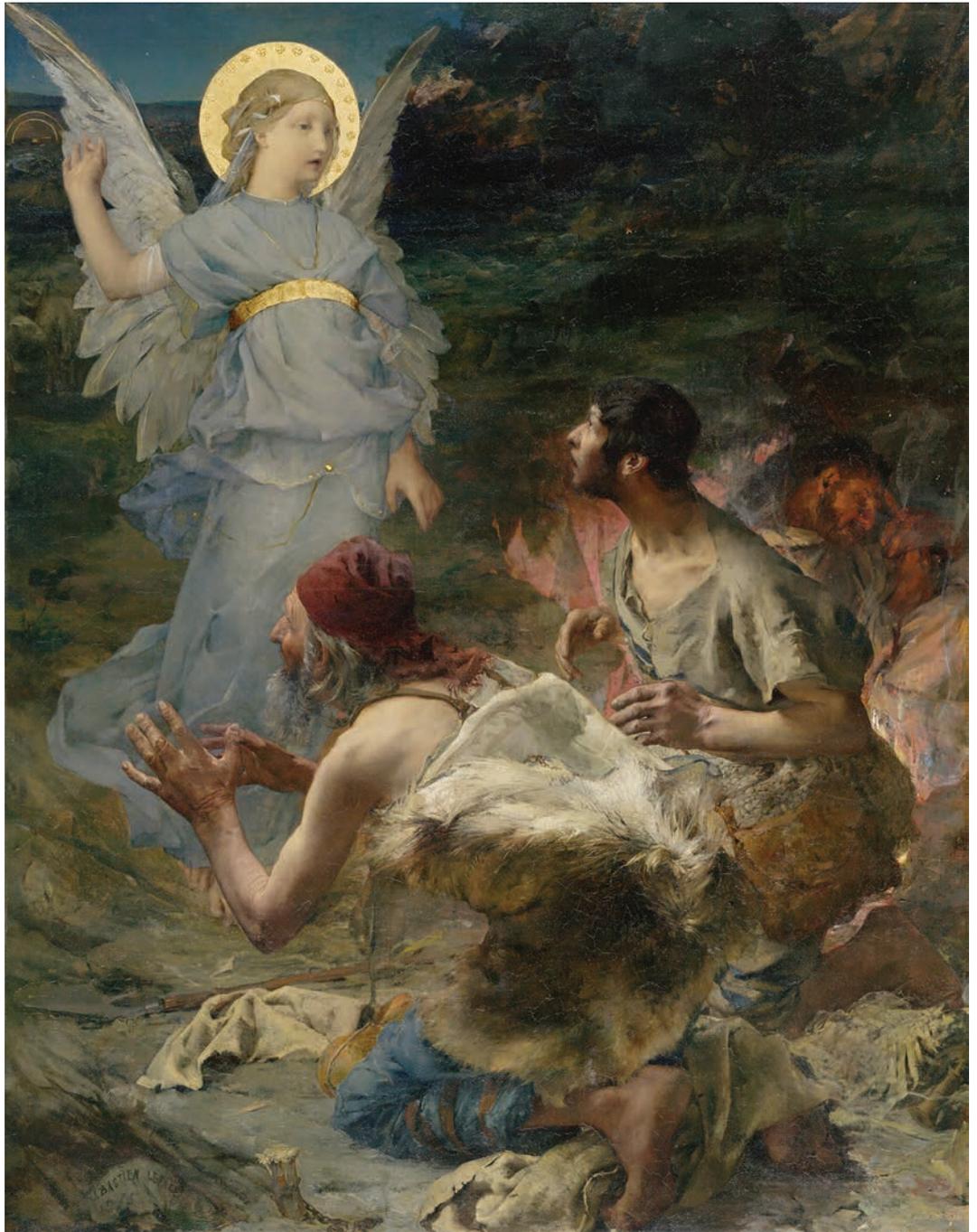
As we approach the new year, many will resolve to lose the pandemic 15 by exercising more. Hence, I am recommending the Theragun Prime as the perfect gift. I have permanently borrowed my friend's, and it is amazing. It has multiple settings and has helped me tremendously with all of my post-run aches, pains, and an issue I have with my sciatic nerve. Only the Holy Spirit is more penetrating.

The Rev. Dr. Stephen Spencer
Director of theological education
in the Anglican Communion

James Rebanks is a farmer in the Lake District of England whose family has been sheep farming for many generations. As a boy he hated school, but later in life came to love reading and writing. His beautifully written book *English Pastoral: An Inheritance* (Penguin, 2021) describes the traditional sheep farming of his grandfather and how it was undermined by more recent industrial farming practices that are degrading the land. Rebanks finds hope through the recovery of the mixed ecology of the past.



Joe Swimmer, executive director, CEEP Network
 Christmas has always been my favorite feast of the Church



*The Annunciation
to the Shepherds*
Jules Bastien-Lepage
(1848-1884)

Wikimedia Commons/
Google Art Project

Salvation Himself

By Wesley Hill

This essay was first published on the Covenant weblog on December 25, 2020.

There's a wonderful bit in Lancelot Andrewes's Christmas Day sermon from 1610 where he meditates on the meaning of the angels' announcement to the shepherds that Christ the Lord, newborn and lying in a manger, is the savior of the world. Perhaps, as the worldwide pandemic death toll continues to grow, we are especially attuned to a message of salvation, of rescue and resultant security, peace, and wholeness. Andrewes captures our attunement memorably:

Sure there is no joy in the world to the joy of a man saved: no joy so great, no newes so welcome, as to one ready to perish, in case of a lost man, to heare of one, that will save him. In danger of perishing; By sicknesse, to heare of one who will make him well again: By sentence of the law, of one with a pardon to save his life: By enemies, of one that will rescue, and set him in safetie. Tell any of these, assure them but of a Saviour, it is the best newes he ever heard in his life (*Sermons*, ed. G.M. Story, 34).

One has only to think of the cheers and tears of relief at the announcement of the beginning of coronavirus vaccine distribution to feel some of the force of that last line.

But Andrewes presses deeper into the meaning of the angels' words (charmingly, he calls their announcement a kind of homily, followed by a choral song — a miniature heavenly Christmas Day church service) by looking ahead to what we now call Candlemas, the time of Jesus' presentation in the temple when the devout old saint Simeon took the Christ child in his arms and exclaimed,

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,
Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;
A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.
(Luke 2:29-32)

Part of the pleasure of reading Andrewes comes from following him in his laborious attention to individual words: his wringing them out for every drop of theological and spiritual insight, his lining them up alongside their verbal neighbors to note their distinctiveness and strangeness, his striking them to hear their resonance with their complements. In St. Simeon's words he spies a subtle but all-important distinction from the angels' announcement to the shepherds: where the heavenly messengers had spoken of Christ as savior, Simeon speaks of Christ as salvation. It's a vital distinction, and even more so since Andrewes made it.

According to Simeon, Andrewes insists, Christ is "not a Saviour onely, but *Salus ipsa in abstracto*, Salvation it selfe, (as Simeon calleth him), of whose fulnesse we all receive." The point of dilating on this verbal nuance is to magnify what Christ achieved — better, what Christ is — for us. We might well imagine a heroic human being fulfilling the role of a savior, at least in some temporal sense; the Old Testament teems with such figures, from Joshua to Samson to Elijah to Nehemiah. But to embody and enact salvation itself, to be identical with the salvation he proffers — this must mean that Christ is more than a mere human being and that is salvation is more than a temporal salve:

To save, may agree to man. To be salvation, can agree to none but to Christ the Lord. To begin, and to end: to save soule and bodie, from bodily and ghostly enemies: from sinne the roote, and miserie the branches: for a time, and for ever; to be a Saviour, and to be Salvation it selfe, Christ the Lord is all this, and can do all this (*Sermons*, 41-42)

Christ, in other words, does not come to offer us a deliverance that is somehow separable from who he is and the life that he lived. That's the misconception many of us operate with, however, whether consciously or not. We tend to think Christ came and offered us some thing — whether a bit of moral insight hitherto unknown, an especially inspiring and galvanizing example that can kick-start our moral self-improvement, or a model for a certain sort of spirituality which it's now up to us to emulate.

But Andrewes's point is entirely different: The salvation Christ brings isn't anything external to who he is and what he has done for us. As my former colleague David Yeago once put it in a sermon, in a line I'll never forget, "Jesus underwent what he underwent so that communion with him might be salvation." Not — note well — that Jesus established communion with us so as to communicate salvation to us; rather, Jesus took us into fellowship with himself through his human life among us, so that that fellowship itself might just be our salvation. The relationship itself is everything.

The difference I'm belaboring is the difference, as the Barthian theologian George Hunsinger has put it, between a so-called "low" Christology, in which Jesus somehow makes possible our self-salvation, and a "high" Christology, in which our salvation is identical with Christ himself and our self-involvement takes the form of hearing, trusting, receiving, and living in obedient gratitude to him:

Jesus Christ is not... the source of a salvation other than himself. He is uniquely and irreplaceably our salvation. His saving significance is not located abstractly in his predicates or in his spirituality, but in the concrete events of his incarnation, death, and resurrection for our sakes. He is inseparable from his saving predicates, because he is finally identical with them. He himself and he alone... is our righteousness and our life [1 Corinthians 1:30]. No one else will ever be God incarnate, nor will anyone else ever die for the sins of the world. Only Jesus Christ is such a person, only he could do such a work, and he in fact has done it. He does not give us his righteousness and life except by giving us himself... We are not saved by reduplicating his spirituality, ... but by the miraculous exchange whereby he has died in our places as sinners so that we might be clothed in his righteousness by grace and live through his body and blood in eternal fellowship with God... [T]he substance of our salvation, and not just the source, is Christ himself and Christ alone. (*Disruptive Grace: Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth*, 284-5).

So, on this holy feast day, let us honor Christ our salvation by feeding on his body and blood. If Christ has become salvation itself, then, as Andrewes said, we keep this joyous feast by holding out the empty hands of faith: "Let us honour this day, with our receiving" (*Sermons*, 48). Or, if for reason of the virus, we're prevented from doing so, let us receive him in our hearts and minds: "Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart" (St. Alphonsus Liguori). Let us, in any case, receive him, "who was himselfe the gift, our Saviour, Christ, the Lord." Amen.

The Rev. Dr. Wesley Hill is associate professor of New Testament at Western Theological Seminary.



A section of the Nativity façade, the Basilica de la Sagrada Família

Masato Andou/Pinterest

The Christmas Story in Stone

This essay was originally published on December 27, 2020, at Covenant, the weblog of The Living Church.

By Zac Koons

Antoni Gaudi's dream was to create a Bible out of stone, a dream that became — actually, is still becoming — the Basilica de la Sagrada Família, the most ambitious piece of Christian architecture in the modern era, the icon of Barcelona, and my single favorite church in the world.

Gaudi began his “Bible” in 1883 and he wanted to start with Christmas; that is, the first piece of his temple would be a grand entrance façade dedicated to the Nativity. This would be one of three entrance façades that, when combined, would preach the basic contours of the gospel to the world — the second being devoted to the Passion and the third to Christ's second coming. Sadly, despite dedicating 42 years of his life to its construction, Gaudi never got to see even

his first façade finished. On a summer morning in 1926, walking to church to make his daily prayers and confession, Gaudi was struck by a streetcar. So ascetic were his habits — eating frugally and wearing worn-out clothes and shoes — that passersby assumed him to be a beggar, and so he did not receive adequate medical care. He died a few days later, having only seen one of the four Nativity bell towers completed.

But Gaudi's Christmas story in stone still contains plenty for us to ponder. His plans and principles were followed fanatically — in both spirit and letter — by subsequent generations of his architectural apostles. And with the Nativity façade now standing in final canonical form, it invites exegesis like unto a scriptural text. And when we dig into it, we discover not just another dime-a-dozen Christmas crèche with sentimentalized sculptural accoutrements, but a shockingly fresh and deeply theological telling of the birth of Christ — one which, through the process of its design and

construction, transformed Gaudi himself from a public celebrity of high society to an obsessively devoted and self-denying disciple.

It is an incarnational telling of the Incarnation in the deepest sense.

And so, at a time when travel remains a great challenge for many, allow me to offer a window of momentary escape to the bright skies of Barcelona. You can even stand with me virtually before the Nativity façade if you like.

The first thing one notices is not the sculptures at all, but rather everything filling the space between them. What looks to be a thousand abstract sandcastles melting into the stone are actually a thousand varieties of fauna and flora. On the whole, they give the façade an organic sort of unity, making one scene melt into another as if to say, “All these different stories are really one story.” Individually, they work both to set geographical context and to make theological argument through symbol, often intentionally blurring the lines between

what is ancient and what is modern, what is biblical and what is Barcelonan.

The portal on the left, for example, where one finds the Holy Family's flight, is decorated in the rich vegetation of Egypt, particularly of the Nile, where ducks and geese (the centerpieces of many a Christmas feast) float amongst riverbank reeds, water lilies, and papyrus; while the portal to the right, where one finds scenes of Jesus' childhood and adolescence, is adorned in the desert climate of Nazareth, hosting spiky century plants and chameleons where gargoyles ought to be. Easter lilies and irises, along with branches from olive, cherry, and peach trees, emerge within the central portal as if planted in the plaster, while the central doors are flanked by two giant Mediterranean palm tree pillars that each rest on the backs of turtles (actually, a tortoise to the left and turtle on the right, meant to distinguish which side of the church is closest to the sea). The central pillar is the beginning of an ascending theological typology, moving from the serpent-wrapped tree of the knowledge of good and evil at the bottom all the way up to the crowning Christmas cypress tree of life, with the Matthean genealogy, a pelican, the Annunciation, and the centerpiece Nativity sculptural group taking up the middle.

Moving to the sculptures themselves, though predictable in content — one sees the Annunciation, Visitation, Presentation, shepherds, magi, a burdened donkey fleeing toward Egypt — their style was determined by Gaudi's theological interests. Instead of molding idealized forms that imitated Greek sculptures or Renaissance paintings, Gaudi insisted on using the normal, working-class people of Barcelona as his models.

He recruited, for example, one of his own construction workers to pose for Joseph and a well-known neighborhood drunk for Judas; while the local military bugle corps, who regularly practiced in a nearby field, were the models for the trumpeting angels. He convinced a menacing giant of a man with six toes known to regulars of a nearby bar to pose as the Roman soldier carrying out Herod's horrid orders. Gaudi took this incarnational logic to obsessive extremes. He borrowed a local peasant's

underfed donkey and chloroformed it so he could then cast the actual living animal in plaster (a process he repeated with all the chickens and geese). Perhaps too incarnationally, the sculptures of the slaughtered innocents are modeled on casts of actual stillborn children Gaudi obtained from a local hospital.

This intensity, even if occasionally overwrought, grew out of a theological commitment. Gaudi did not simply want to transport the people of Barcelona to first-century Bethlehem, he wanted to show them what it would look like for Christ to become incarnate in the Barcelona of his time. Gaudi's Nativity façade is more than a Bible; it is a Bible come to life; it is a richly written Catalonian Nativity pageant.

There is another very subtle trick of incarnational theology hidden in Gaudi's architecture: inverted proportions. That is, not all the sculptured scenes are the same size; instead, they are each intentionally distorted according to where they live on the façade. The higher up on the façade, the larger the sculpture is; the further to the left or right, the more proportionally distorted in the inverse direction. The intent being, all the scenes are oriented towards one viewing spot, one exact instance of latitude and longitude, designed so that, from there, you can take in the entirety of the story at once.

Or to put it more theologically, for Gaudi, the entire complex story of the Incarnation, spanning geographies, genres, and generations, not only has internal cohesion as a single story, but is all a single story pointed at you. It is shaped to and for humanity, in one particular time (modern Barcelona), yet for all times (meant to stand for centuries to come). This, for Gaudi, is about more than just telling the Christmas story with faces Catalonians would recognize; it is told in such a way that each person coming to see this Christmas story in stone actually comes to see themselves as characters in the story. Like Byzantine icons use inverted perspective to draw someone in and through themselves towards God in prayer, Gaudi's façade does the same. Viewers, standing and staring, are themselves a sculpture in the story.

Gaudi has invited you out of the audience and onto the stage.

Finally, Gaudi's theological vision ascends one level higher, revealed when one steps further back and allows one's gaze to float upward. The higher one looks on La Sagrada Familia, the more one leaves the world of the Bible and enters the age of the Church. The four bell towers of the Nativity façade are each devoted to an apostle (which totals 12 towers when including those on the other two façades). Toward the very top of each, curved episcopal shepherd's crooks emerge from squared signet rings, and each are crowned with what look to be bishop's mitres. The sculpted words "Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus" run horizontal across each tower, while "Hosanna" and "Excelsis" fall down vertically. One's viewing experience, as it drifts upward, is transposed from catechesis below to worship on high. Gaudi's intention is clear: when the tower bells ring, it is the apostles themselves inviting you to come inside. Gaudi's church is more than a Bible, it turns out, and more than a pageant too; it is an entire journey of discipleship in stone.

Because of continued COVID-19 challenges across Europe, visits to the Sagrada Familia are still restricted — an appropriate but still tragic reality during, of all times, the Feast of the Nativity. At the same time, some of us may be continuing to implement our own appropriate but still tragic precautions this holiday season — we can't travel to family; family can't travel to us — marring this typically great feast with isolation and discouragement. Still, perhaps Gaudi's Nativity contains a Christmas message of hope that meets this lonely moment like an antidote. Gaudi reminds us that Christmas isn't about us doing the traveling anyway. It is about God traveling to us. All the way to Barcelona even. All the way to wherever we are. All the way to you. Gaudi's Christmas story in stone is not about Christ coming among us then. It is about Christ coming among us now. The Incarnation is pointed at you. Merry Christmas.

The Rev. Zac Koons is rector of St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Austin, Texas.

ETHICS

Drone Warfare Wounds Our Warriors

By Deonna D. Neal

A few years ago the *Journal of Military Ethics* published a lively exchange on whether the use of drones (also known as unmanned aerial vehicles or remotely piloted vehicles) was morally obligatory in warfare. One author argued it was morally obligatory to use drones instead of manned aircraft, if possible, since the lives of the operators are never placed at physical risk in that type of warfare. He believed the government's moral obligation to protect the lives of its service members outweighed the other moral problems associated with drone warfare.

The other author, while acknowledging that protecting the lives of service members was an important moral obligation, argued that the use of drones was deeply problematic. In his view, using drones was tantamount to undertaking “riskless” warfare, which challenges the very nature of the just war tradition itself.

He pointed out that the just war principle of “last resort” exists because any political goal secured through the means of warfare must be so significant that it can justify incurring the

terrible costs of war, including loss of life and limb, destruction of property, and the emotional, social, and psychological injuries suffered by combatants and civilians on all sides. Using drones in warfare, he argued, made the last resort threshold almost irrelevant, and could lead to a state of perpetual warfare. Those comments have proved prescient.

Since the invention of the bow and arrow, the ability to kill an enemy from a distance has been part of warfare, but not without controversy. Since the times of the ancient Greeks and Romans, the concern was that killing an enemy from a distance, without incurring physical risk to oneself, lacked the virtue of physical courage, one of the most distinctive and important virtues associated with being a soldier.

But regardless of how one decides whether killing an enemy at a distance is courageous, the fact remains that the act of killing another human being, even in war and even at a distance, still has a traumatic psychological effect on

those doing the killing. Robert Grossman discusses these effects in his book, *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*.

In the past, as the distance between the warrior and his target increased, he may have been less likely to suffer the psychological trauma of killing, precisely because he did not experience face-to-face combat. For example, the number of people killed by aerial bombs was a statistical number reported at the end of a mission. The pilots or bombardiers did not necessarily experience killing in the same way as their foot-soldier counterparts.

This is not to say those who killed from a distance escaped all trauma, but the intense psychological trauma, on the whole, was not as great as that of their counterparts fighting on the ground. Combat soldiers and medics confront dead bodies, both of their comrades and of the enemy, as well as mutilated corpses and horrific scenes of the destruction modern weapons can have on the human body and physical infrastructure. This continues

to have psychologically devastating effects on warfighters.

But with the advent of drones, the script has been flipped. On the whole, we are now seeing that drone operators and image analysts are suffering from PTSD, moral injury, and other associated psychological trauma at higher rates than some of their foot-soldier counterparts. This is in large part because of the immersive nature of drone warfare. Drone pilots, sensor operators, and image analysts can spend days, weeks,

and sometimes months tracking individual targets. In some cases, they will know how many children their targets have, and where they eat, sleep, and bathe.

We now have a level of knowledge and surveillance of an enemy unprecedented in the history of warfare. Not only are those involved in drone oper-

Drone operators and image analysts are suffering from PTSD, moral injury, and other associated psychological trauma at higher rates than some of their foot-soldier counterparts.

A 21st-Century Anglican Divine

Review by Wesley Hill

Tucked away near the end of *Praying the Stations of the Cross: Finding Hope in a Weary Land* is the Episcopal priest and theologian Katherine Sonderegger's recommendation of Austin Farrer:

Farrer was a twentieth-century Anglican divine, a philosopher, a biblical critic, a pastor and theologian, and a marvelous university preacher. Farrer understood modern worries about the Christian faith; he respected doubters, skeptics, and agnostics; he preached a high and confident Christian faith with eyes wide open.

I've been immersed in Farrer's writing for the last few months and can testify to the accuracy of Sonderegger's description. But it strikes me that her commendation of Farrer could equally serve as a gloss on her work: Sonderegger is currently producing a multi-volume systematic theology that, in retrospect, will be seen as a 21st-century instance of the distinctively Anglican way of doing theology that Farrer represented so powerfully in the 20th.

Like Farrer, Sonderegger is as philosophically sophisticated as she is theologically creative. The second volume of her systematics, subtitled *The Doctrine of the Holy Trinity: Processions and Persons*, treats Descartes and Kant as searchingly and substantively as it does Simone de Beauvoir and Bertrand Russell. Sonderegger's extensive, informed readings of the biblical text have been discussed with appreciation — not least by biblical scholars — since the appearance of her first volume, *The Doctrine of God*. In this second volume on the Trinity, the Book of Leviticus is — counterintuitively — a sustained focus of attention.

And like Farrer, Sonderegger writes as a churchly theologian and a preacher but without any kind of quick dismissal or disdain for those thinkers and skeptics who occupy the Church's margins or exist outside it altogether. No one is simply written off in this systematics: Sonderegger is sympathetic to the concerns of heterodox figures like Paul Tillich and irreligious social critics like Elizabeth Spelman and shows how their concerns find an echo in the questions theology must ponder. A motley choir find their voices in this rich, symphonic, bewildering, homiletical dogmatics.

Near the heart of Sonderegger's project as it has unfolded so far (at least one more volume is planned) is the refrain that not everything in Christian theology can be boiled down to Christology and soteriology. For someone who cut her teeth on the theology of Karl Barth, who was determined to know nothing of God but what could be understood as revealed in the life, death,

ations deeply embedded in the context in which they may end up killing someone from 7,000 miles away, but then they also linger over the images *after* the order to kill has been executed. They not only watch the bodies being blown up, but also see people rushing to respond to the blast.

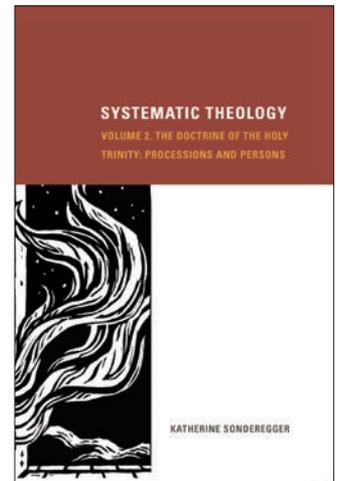
Part of the compounding trauma is that warriors often feel guilty that they are anonymous killers, killing someone from the comfort of an air-conditioned trailer and returning home in a few short hours.

Even within the military, drone operators experience prejudice as not being “real” pilots. There was a Department of Defense debate on whether they should be awarded medals for combat experience or whether their flying hours should count toward combat hours, a designation that affects promotion decisions within the Air Force and carries with it reverence and respect.

Further, the lack of boundaries between “fighting in a war” and being “home” is also unprecedented and complicates how the warrior even experiences herself as a soldier. Is it reasonable to expect our warriors to go from killing someone in the morning and then reading their children a bedtime story eight hours later?

The moral dimension and ethical issues surrounding drones, even from basic military ethics, are immense. One of the very serious issues, often overlooked, is the psychological trauma warriors experience as a result of “encountering” the enemy without any real human encounter. This is, to me, the real *human* and therefore *ethical* problem of using drones in warfare. Warfare is a human activity. But the more we use technology to assist in our wars, and remove us from the act of human encounter, the more we are likely to lose our humanity.

The Rev. Dr. Deonna D. Neal is interim rector at St. John's Episcopal Church in Montgomery, Alabama. She taught ethics for the U.S. Air Force for 10 years at the USAF Academy and Air University at Maxwell AFB. She continues to write on military ethics as an independent scholar.



Systematic Theology, Volume 2

The Doctrine of the Holy
Trinity: Processions
and Persons

By Katherine Sonderegger

Fortress, pp. 416, \$49

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from previous page)

and resurrection of Jesus Christ, Sonderegger appears as a renegade pupil, reaching behind her theological master to retrieve and reimagine insights that Barth seemed to have repudiated.

The prime insight of Sonderegger's dogmatics — what the late John Webster calls its "singular, utterly arresting thought" — is that God is One. More than that, Sonderegger argues that Scripture, not merely the ancient demythologizing philosophy of a Plato or Plotinus, insists on the Lord's unicity: "We do not leave the shores of the Red Sea for the Aegean when we talk about God as Rational, as Good, and as Infinite." The Old Testament, with its vision of a fiery, darkly mysterious Lord encountered in sacrifice and praise, leads Sonderegger to the traditional divine attributes of aseity, simplicity, immutability, and the like.

Christians who were theologically reared, as I was, on the Reformers and post-Barthians like Robert Jenson and William Placher are likely to balk at Sonderegger's project. As Luther's comrade Philip Melancthon wrote, "It is. . . proper that we know Christ in another way than that which the Scholastics have set forth."

Surely we are, as Barth taught, to proselytize pagan hairsplitting over divine impassibility and eternity with the evangelical narrative of the saving events accomplished by and in Jesus of

Nazareth, insisting that Hellenistic God-talk must be Christianized on the anvil of irreducible historical particularity. Surely the goal of Christian theology isn't some detached, serene contemplation of timeless divine perfections but rather the praise of

*The prime insight of
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God for the grace disclosed in the events of Israel's exodus, Christ's cross, and his empty tomb.

Sonderegger's answer to this Christian, albeit distinctively modern (so she argues), objection is that the God we meet in the economy of redemption exists prior to, above, beneath, and beyond (here language fails us, and so we multiply inadequate metaphors) that economy. We are driven by the gospel to consider "God as Actor in that [saving] history . . . [We therefore] press on to hear and to think the Referent who is Present there as the One beyond thought."

Sonderegger affirms that we truly meet God in the human life, death, and risen presence of the human being Jesus Christ; but insofar as it is *God* we meet, we are driven to speak of God's "inner life" in terms that distinguish him from all creatures and make clear that his life is *sui generis*, incomparable,

not of a piece with our fragmentary, transitory histories.

Far from obviating the need — and delight — of metaphysical theology, the "form of New Testament witness to Christ, His free obedience to the Way of the Cross, gives *in that very form* the content of the Divine Son, and in just that way, the Divine Persons and Nature." Evangelical faith and exegetical attention invite or even require us to meditate on the invisible God whose nature is truly disclosed, though not exhausted, by the visible acts of God among us creatures in our history.

Though deeply unfashionable today, Sonderegger's unapologetically metaphysical approach to the doctrine of the Trinity is recognizable as an extension of the legacy of earlier Anglican divines like Farrer. In a seminal essay from 1952, Farrer laid the groundwork for Sonderegger's project by insisting that we must grasp the radical otherness of God if we are to hope to understand what it might mean that God revealed himself within the limits of a finite human life.

The key, Farrer said, was not to "talk about 'divine nature' and 'human nature' as though God's nature were one of the ways of being alongside the human way." Were it so, Christ's human nature would be squeezed out by his divine nature, commandeered by an overweening deity that needed to displace it in order to be fully realized.

Sonderegger's insistence on theological "compatibilism" repeats and updates Farrer's: The God with whom we have to do in Israel's Scriptures and in Jesus Christ is holy fire, immortal splendor, radiant unchangeability. And only insofar as God is thus may we hope that his divine life may prove able to save and purify our humanity.

The Rev. Dr. Wesley Hill is an assisting priest at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, Pittsburgh, and an associate professor of New Testament at Western Theological Seminary in Holland, Michigan.



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Trying to Keep the Sabbath

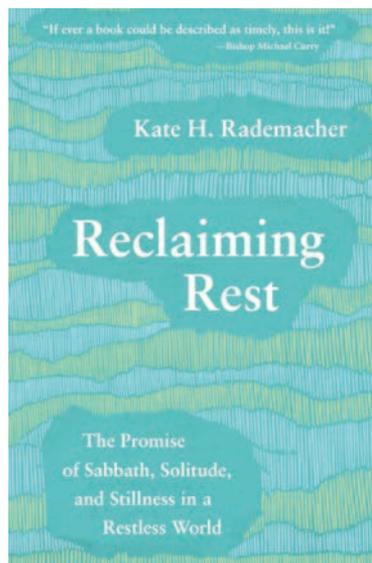
Review by Abigail Woolley Cutter

Kate Rademacher's *Reclaiming Rest* is the latest in a long line of popular books about the Sabbath. What stands out is that Rademacher has arrived at her insights less through research than through dedicated personal experience and intuition.

Her style is chatty and anecdotal, accessible to the most casual small-group readership, but a reader who follows her through the journey will encounter one good question after another. Rademacher's long commitment to finding a Christian Sabbath practice has brought her face to face with some of the most difficult spiritual, practical, and ethical themes on offer. Rather than as an expert with all the answers, she sheds light on them like a wise friend.

The book begins by noting how deeply damaging Americans' busy schedules are, but then goes far beyond the daily stresses of the American middle class. Rademacher finds the Sabbath speaking not only to the problems of anxiety and depression, but also to the struggles of the poor, to the fight against COVID, to global conflict, to the challenge of racial justice, to the experience of "mommy guilt," to the pursuit of sexual intimacy, and to the way our lifestyle choices affect the earth. As she narrates her year-long experiment with Sabbath retreats, she begins each short chapter with an experience from a retreat and then winds her way into a reflection on one of these themes.

In telling about her various attempts to keep the Sabbath — both successes and failures — she raises several questions that any study of the Sabbath today should address. Keeping the Sabbath is one of the Ten Commandments, so why don't Christian churches



seem to care? Doesn't the Sabbath only work economically if we all do it together? What if you don't have a Sabbath community, or even a family who shares your faith? Are Sabbath rules a burden, or a necessary help? Should we keep the Sabbath on Saturday or Sunday — and does it matter? Is keeping a day of rest a way to push for economic justice, or a practice for the privileged that only mocks the poor? How do we make sense of the apparent conflict between our calling to fight for justice and our need to rest in God?

The book is a resource in Christian formation well-suited for laypeople, whether individuals or groups. There are 17 easy chapters, as well as a Quick-Start Guide to Sabbath Keeping for review or as a practical shortcut. Each chapter would serve well as a discussion-starter. Rademacher offers challenges to Christians of both progressive and conservative camps, since she offers invitations to continued conversion to Christ. That she writes as an Episcopalian, and the book features a blurb from Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, makes it particularly well-suited to an Episcopal audience.

I don't recommend the book without

Reclaiming Rest

The Promise of Sabbath, Solitude, and Stillness in a Restless World

By **Kate H. Rademacher**

Broadleaf, pp. 213, \$16.99

reservation. The meandering chapter structure, the short and choppy sentences, and the references almost exclusively to other popular authors might be frustrating for adept readers. That she sees a progressive position on sexuality as a "no-brainer," which should give everyone pause (shouldn't we all hope our views accord with careful thought?), might be alienating to conservatives, who would then miss out on an otherwise helpful resource. Imagery drawn from anecdotes, which she tries to tie in with Sabbatical principles, sometimes seems like a poor fit. And finally, Rademacher seems a bit too enamored with solitude, which plays little to no part in the Sabbaths of the Bible or rabbinic Judaism.

While Rademacher is hardly unique in writing about the Sabbath, her personal confrontation with its challenges, her accessible tone, and her responses to very current events make the book a valuable contribution for our moment, with an audience that could gain more from it than others.

Dr. Abigail Woolley Cutter is visiting scholar at Southwestern College, Winfield, Kansas.

Tackling Joshua

Review by Hannah Armidon

When it comes to preaching or teaching the book of Joshua, most of us blanch and turn aside. Genocide and holy war loom large on the horizon.

Help has arrived. Two theological commentaries have been released this year on Joshua: one by David G. Firth as part of the Evangelical Biblical Theology Commentary series, and the other by Paul R. Hinlicky as part of the Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible series. Both grapple with the difficulties of holy war, destruction, and violence, thus helping the reader understand its cultural and theological concepts. Both also balance these difficult themes with typological explorations of Jesus as the new Joshua and the Church as God's holy people.

As part of the Evangelical Biblical Theology series, Firth's commentary includes much of the historical background that one would typically expect in a commentary, while emphasizing the moral and theological applications of the text.

His theological reflections focus on Deuteronomy in the context of the rest of Scripture. Therefore, his primary understanding of the book stems from its place bridging the gap between the law and the history of Israel. Firth sees the book's primary theme as the tension between the ideal Israel set out in Deuteronomy and the reality of Israel's behavior found in the Book of Judges.

He focuses on the ambiguity found in the text concerning the morality of Israel's actions. Is it God's will, or are Joshua and the Israelites acting on their own? For Firth, the answer is found in the results of Israel's actions. He pulls various themes from the text, some of which are a stretch, including Christian leadership, the relation of the Church to non-Christians, justice, obedience, rest, and many other practical concerns of the Christian life. Each of these provides teaching and preaching points.

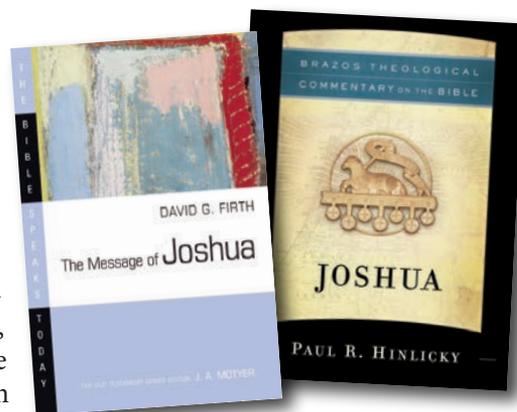
As one would expect of a commen-

tary written by a systematic theologian, Hinlicky's commentary is weighted to theological interpretation. Although he heavily emphasizes his preferred theme of "YHWH fights for us," he nevertheless folds a number of other issues into it, such as items devoted to destruction, the disobedience and obedience of Israel, memorials, etc. Each of these lesser issues is understood within the context of the Lord as divine warrior, protecting his people from human enemies and the idolatry and destruction they bring with them. The Lord is the main character, and everything he does proves his sovereignty over the nations, just as the Exodus did.

The test of true Israelites (or God-fearing Canaanites) is whether they recognize God's work. Thus, Hinlicky is concerned with the character of God as revealed in Joshua, and the theological import of these themes through the Bible and into the theology of the Church. He does not provide the same easy access points that Firth does, but the depth and breadth of his reflections provide fodder for many theological discussions.

Firth's commentary is easy narrative reading; it is arranged in verse-by-verse exegesis. He includes analysis of key linguistic features (a basic knowledge of Hebrew is helpful, though not essential) as well as cultural, geographical, and archeological backgrounds. After having done traditional exegesis on each passage, he draws intertextual connections, expounds on any references to the passage found throughout the Bible, and concludes with a general moral application of the general themes for Christians. This is helpful for finding teaching/preaching points, but does not allow space for him to delve into theological considerations in any depth.

Hinlicky is denser; the introductory section in which he explains his method is slow reading but well worth the effort. He occasionally uses linguistic analysis of key concepts, but mostly focuses on a theological discus-



The Message of Joshua

By David G. Firth

IVP Academic, pp. 144, \$20

Joshua

By Paul R. Hinlicky

Brazos, pp. 320, \$35

sion of each major section, as is the custom in the Brazos commentary series. He draws heavily from Origen's *Homilies* and Calvin's *Commentary* for a historical-theological dialogue. This results in a rich tapestry of interconnected themes and types that run through Scripture and Christian thought and ultimately leave the reader with a sense of awe regarding the God revealed in Joshua.

Ultimately, both commentaries are united in their desire to remain true to the book of Joshua in its context as Old Testament Scripture, while also interpreting it as uniquely Christian Scripture. They both conclude with reflections on Jesus as the new Joshua bringing his people into the Promised Land for salvation.

For a more traditional commentary style that proceeds verse by verse and addresses the cultural and linguistic concerns as well as the theological, consult the Firth commentary. For a deep theological grappling with the difficulties of the themes that the book presents and contemplation on what the book reveals about God and us as his people, choose the Hinlicky commentary. I recommend both in tandem.

The Rev. Hannah Armidon is a priest in the Diocese of Springfield.

PEOPLE & PLACES

Appointments

The Rev. **Jimmy Abbott** is rector of Trinity, Galveston, Texas.

The Rev. **Samuel Adams** is vicar of St. Augustine's, Oak Cliff, Dallas.

The Rev. **Lainie Allen** is rector of St. Matthew's, Eugene, Ore., and chaplain for Episcopal Campus Ministry at the University of Oregon.

The Rev. **Matthew Buterbaugh** is interim rector of St. John the Divine, Burlington, Wis.

The Rev. **Katherine H. Byrd** is rector of St. Paul's, Smithfield, N.C.

The Rev. **Christopher Craun** is the Diocese of Oregon's missionary for thriving congregations.

The Very Rev. **Stephen Crawford** is dean of the Diocese of Louisiana's Southwest Deanery.

The Rev. **Stephen Crippen** is interim rector of Grace, Bainbridge Island, Wash.

The Rev. Dn. **Andrew C. Cropper** is parish deacon of All Hallows', Snow Hill, Md.

The Rev. **Cortney H. Dale** is priest in charge of St. Patrick's, Dublin, Ohio.

The Rev. **Matthew Dallman** is rector of Saint Paul's, New Smyrna Beach, Fla.

The Rev. Dr. **William Daniel** is rector of Ascension, Knoxville, Tenn.

The Rev. Canon **Geoff Evans** is the Diocese of Alabama's canon to the ordinary.

Canon **Jason Evans** is the Diocese of San Diego's canon for mission.

The Rev. **Nathan Farrell** is chaplain at Isa Air Base, Bahrain.

The Rev. **Derrick Fetz** is priest in charge of the Northern Miami Valley Episcopal Cluster, Urbana and Mechanicsburg, Ohio.

The Rev. Canon **Cecily Broderick Guerra** is priest in charge of St. John's, Springfield Gardens, N.Y.

The Rev. **Geoffrey Gwynne** is associate missionary of St. Isidore's, Spring, Texas.

The Rev. Dr. **Michael Hull** is rector of St. Jude's, Wantagh, N.Y.

The Rev. **John Hunt** is priest in charge of St. Thomas', Farmingdale, N.Y.

The Rev. **Elizabeth Ivell** is associate rector of St. Peter's, Morristown, N.J.

The Rev. **Darlene Jackson** is parish deacon at Christ the King, Tabb, Va.

The Rev. **Jonathan Jameson** is associate rector of St. John's, Savannah, Ga.

The Rev. **Neil Kaminski** is rector of St. James', Eufala, Ala.

The Rev. **Celal Kamran** is assistant to the rector of Pohick, Lorton, Va.

The Rev. **Elizabeth Keeler** is rector of Trinity, Washington, Va.

The Rev. Canon **Debra Low-Skinner** is the Diocese of Los Angeles's canon to the ordinary.

The Rev. **Ethan Lowery** is the Diocese of Virginia's young adult missionary for Fredericksburg.

The Rev. **Emily Lukanich** is rector of Christ Church, Riverdale, Bronx, N.Y.

The Rev. **Nancy Malloy** is interim vicar of Intercession, Thornton, Colo.

The Rev. **Martin Malzahn** is clergy in charge of St. Paul's and Incarnation, Jersey City, N.J.

The Rev. **Maggie Nancarrow** is the

Episcopal Church in Minnesota's interim missionary for children, youth, and campus ministry.

The Rev. **Alan Neale** is priest in charge of Zion, Washington, N.C.

The Rev. Dr. **Deonna D. Neal** is interim rector of St. John's, Montgomery, Ala.

The Rev. **Aaron Oliver** is priest in residence at St. Andrew's, Harrington Park, N.J.

The Rev. **Lynn D. Orville** is rector of All Saints', Gastonia, N.C.

The Rev. **Elizabeth Preysner** is assistant chaplain at St. Andrew's School, Middletown, Del.

The Rev. **Darrel Proffitt** is interim rector of Holy Comforter, Spring, Texas.

The Rev. **Bill Queen** is interim rector of St. Stephen's, Petersburg, Va.

The Rev. **Cathy Quinn** is associate rector of Trinity, Southport, Conn.

The Rev. **Sarah Quinney** is associate rector at Our Saviour, Colorado Springs, Colo.

The Rev. **Chip Russell** is priest in charge of St. Paul's, Norfolk, Va.

The Rev. **Meghan Ryan** is associate rector of Christ Church, Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.

The Rev. **Shelley Ryan** is priest in charge of St. Laurence's, Conifer, Colo.

The Rev. **Jason Samuel** is priest in charge of St. John's, Logan, Utah.

The Rev. **Pauline Samuel** is rector of St. Paul's, Atlanta.

The Rev. **Claudia Scheda** is parish priest at St. Simon's, Buffalo, N.Y.

The Rev. **Tanya Scheff** is interim rector of St. Paul's, Quincy, Fla.

The Rev. **Marcia Tremmel** is priest in charge of Resurrection, Largo, Fla.

The Rev. **Sue Troiano** is rector of Holy Name, Boyntonville, N.Y.

The Rev. **Carmen Viola** is priest in charge of Holy Family, Laurel Springs, N.J.

The Rev. **Richard Visconti** is priest in charge of St. Mary's, Tampa, Fla.

The Rev. Canon **Julie Wakelee** is the Diocese of Northern California's interim canon to the ordinary.

Ms. **Laurel Way** is the Diocese of Arizona's director of communications.

Deaths

The Rev. Dr. **Kathleen Dancer**, who served parishes in New York and Michigan, died November 12 at 76.

She was born in Baltimore, and grew up in a military family. She studied zoology at Michigan State University and entomology at Kansas State University before earning a doctorate in ecology at Cornell. In the early 1980s, she perceived a call to ordained ministry, and studied at Bexley Hall before being ordained as a priest in 1984.

Dancer began her ministry at St. James Church in Ithaca, where she founded Loaves and Fishes of Tomkins County, a community kitchen that continues to serve thousands of meals to the hungry each year. She later led a cluster of churches in Schuyler County, New York, before becoming rector of the Church of the Epiphany in Trumansburg in 1986. There she founded the Franciscan Spiritual Renewal Center, an exten-

sion of her involvement in the Franciscan Order of Céli Dé. Her final post was as rector of St. Alban's Church in Muskegon, Michigan.

In retirement, she was active in many online advocacy and support groups and cared for several champion Scottish terriers. Dancer is survived by three children and four grandchildren.

The Rev. Dr. **Dianne Louise Lowe**, a hospital chaplain and parish deacon who had a long ministry of care for those in pain and distress, died November 17 at 72.

Lowe grew up in Livermore, California, and worked as an X-ray technician before pursuing a doctorate in health sciences at Pacific Western University. Alongside her work in medical administration, she sought to develop and use her gifts in a number of different churches before becoming an Episcopalian.

She was ordained to the diaconate in 2012, and deployed to her home parish of St. James in Pullman, where she assisted in various aspects of parish ministry, and began her work on the chaplaincy team at Pullman Regional Hospital and Gritman Medical Center. She taught widely about end-of-life issues and was active in hospice ministry, alongside supporting patients, medical staff and volunteers, especially during the challenges of the pandemic.

Lowe had a longtime devotion to Franciscan spirituality, and became a third-order member of the Il Poverello branch of the Society of St. Francis' Province of the Americas in February 2019. Even as her health failed in recent months, she hosted book studies in her home, continued in teaching the ukulele to neighborhood children, and conducted a marriage ceremony the day before she went into hospice care.

She was preceded in death by her wife, Jerri Pederson, and is survived by her son, John.

Michael Hall Kline, a lay leader who played a key role in the development of DaySpring, the Diocese of Southwest Florida's camp and conference center, died November 17, on his 82nd birthday.

Kline was born in Washington, D.C., and graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University with a degree in business administration. His career was in the insurance industry, and he worked for Church Pension Group for many years, retiring as a vice president in 2001.

Kline was a member of the Church of the Ascension in Clearwater, Florida, for 49 years, served on numerous diocesan committees, and was active in mission work in the Dominican Republic. He was involved in leading initiatives related to DaySpring for 40 years, most recently serving as chair of the Bishop's Cabinet for DaySpring Development, which oversaw the construction of Diocesan House in 2011 and the development of a master plan for the site. He also served as a risk management consultant for the diocese, traveling widely after his retirement in 2011 to conduct safety inspections and educate parish leaders about insurance issues.

He was a national croquet champion and conducted clinics to develop the skills of fellow aficionados. He is survived by Joan, his wife of 59 years, by their two children, and by four grandchildren, and one great-grandson.

Joy

Today marks a significant transition in tone as compared to the last five weeks of the Church's liturgical life. Whereas today breaks forth in exuberant and wondrous and transcendent joy, the weeks prior focused in a variety of ways and with a host of images on what is commonly called "the end of time."

A review of the last few weeks may help highlight the moment at which we have arrived. In St. Mark's Gospel, Jesus said, "When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must first take place, but the end is still to come" (Mark 13:7). From the Revelation to St. John, we heard, "Look! He is coming with the clouds; every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail. So it is to be. Amen" (Rev. 1:7). In Luke's Gospel, John the Baptist says of Jesus, "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire" (Luke 3:16-17). These prophecies and images suggest a universal and, admittedly, disturbing theme: the brevity of life, the inevitability of death, and a final judgment.

In the words of the Nicene Creed, "He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead," or, rather, to align this more closely to both the Greek and Latin version of the Creed, both of which use the future participle instead of the future tense, "He is *about* to come to judge the living and the dead." Thus, both the Scriptures and the Creed call us to live as if Jesus may return at any moment. Indeed, he arrives by the power of the Spirit in every moment of our lives. In the words of the psalmist, "Lord, let me know my end and the number of my days, so that I may know how short life is" (Ps. 39:5). Stay awake, be alert,

stand at the door, do not waste time, but rather serve the Lord and your neighbor with your love and attention. This is good news, but there's no denying that it's bracing news as well.

Today we turn our attention to the Magnificat of Mary: "My soul magnifies the Lord." With these words, set as they are within the larger story of shared joy with Elizabeth and the child she carries in her womb, John the Baptist, we sense an explosive and transcendent joy, the coming of the Son of God into the world as the *joy* of the world. We can almost hear the adult Jesus saying, "I have said these things to you so that *my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete*" (John 15:11). Mary comes to the house of Zechariah and greets Elizabeth. At Mary's greeting, the child in Elizabeth's womb leaps with excitement. Elizabeth is suddenly filled with the Holy Spirit. Mary cries out, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior" (Luke 1:36-37). Joy has come into the world, into the Church, and into every open soul. Something new happened then and is happening now, the entrance into the world of "a deep and imperturbable joy" (David Bentley Hart, *Atheist Delusions*, p. 145). Glad tidings fill this space and time, our lives and souls!

Look It Up

Canticle 15

Think About It

The proud, mighty, and rich may be saved too after being cast down.

True Light, True Christmas

We celebrate the birth of Christ, remembering this: "The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world" (John 1:9). And we almost thrill to hear the beloved line, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). We see perhaps, in our mind's eye, the infant Jesus settled in his crib, surrounded by his parents, acknowledged by shepherds, adored by Magi, praised by a heavenly host. Never mind that stories from different gospels are conflated in how we remember the birth of Jesus; this event is really one event. In Christ, God is here, among us, where we live and breathe, suffer and rejoice, grieve and hope.

"The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world, 'yet the world'" (John 1:10). In three small words, "yet the world," the world's opposition is announced. Already hinted in the line "the light shines in the darkness," a firm and resolute resistance is set up against the Word. "And the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not accept him" (John 1:9-11). Embracing Christmas means embracing the shadow cast over this story.

Because "all things come into being through him," the Word always arrives to "what is his own." Of course, we may hear a particular emphasis on the historical context of Jesus' ministry to the Jews, Israel, the Promised Land, but this interpretation, if pushed too far, risks seeing his rejection as primarily or exclusively by the Jews. Karl Barth sees "his own" and "his people" as "characterizing the human world as a whole," and this is certainly consistent with St. Paul's teaching that "all have

Every Blessing

sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). It is also compatible with what we know of ourselves as Christians who are still sinful people. "We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves" (BCP, p. 360). We have turned away from God and away from the image of Christ in our neighbors.

We are the world, his own, his people, and as such, we stand under judgment. "And this is the judgment, that light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed" (John 3:19-20).

Though we are dead in our sin and lost in our rejection of Christ, Christ continues to pursue us in judgment and mercy. He gives us power to become his children, so we receive him and believe in his name. A real Christmas is, therefore, a breakthrough, a disruption in our routine and narrow tendency to push Christ out of his world. He comes in by his own will and power to make us new. Taking us to himself, he builds a New Jerusalem, gathers exiles, heals the brokenhearted, binds up wounds. He adorns us with garlands and jewels, a crown of beauty and a royal diadem (Ps. 147:2-3; Isa. 61:10-62:3). Jesus Christ is the restoration we need and yet the restoration that, at first, we rejected.

He has not rejected us. "He sends out his command to the earth, and his word runs swiftly" (Ps. 147:16). The Word cannot be stopped. "He whom the Son sets free is free indeed" (John 8:36).

Look It Up

Galatians 4:6; John 1:19

Think About It

The Son is in the heart of the Father, and the Spirit of the Son is in our hearts. Immanence and absolute transcendence have met each other.

"O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature." In the opening line of this Collect, we learn who God is, the one who created and restored the dignity of human nature, and who we are, the ones so created and restored. To know God is an apt form of self-knowledge. To know and love God is to have the right sense of one's dignity and a corresponding self-love.

Christ was born into the world, a world intent upon destroying his life from the beginning (Matt. 2:16). Divinely protected, he grew in stature and grace. At only 12 years old, he sat among teachers in the temple, listening and asking questions. At this young age and before and forever, he was "in my Father's house" (Luke 2:49). Indeed, Jesus lives "in the bosom of the Father" (John 1:18). The Father is the house, heart, and breast where the Son lives. "The Father loves the Son and has placed all things in his hands" (John 3:25).

The Son, though in possession of all that the Father is, humbled himself, became what we are so that we might become what he is. Thus, the dignity and fullness of the Son are shared with all members of the Church. "All who receive him, who believe in his name, he has given power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13). "From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace" (John 1:16).

We have been blessed, in Christ, by all that the Father gives to the Son, which is an inexhaustible treasure. The gifts of grace and adoption and fullness are rooted in God's eternal and inscrutable will. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ in every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to

be holy and blameless before him in love" (Eph. 1:3-4). It bears repeating that we have "every spiritual blessing" and that "we have been chosen in Christ" and this election occurred "before the foundation of the world." In Christ, God has called and enriched the elect beyond all imagining. We will never, therefore, fully know "his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:6).

Because our spiritual blessings are inexhaustible, there is always something to discover, and prayer is one means of doing so. "I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation *as you come to know him*, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the *hope to which he has called you*, what are the *riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints*, and what is the *immeasurable greatness of his power for us* who believe, according to the working of his great power" (Eph. 1:17-18).

Christ, we know, has assumed our human nature. So, he has taken into himself the fullness of human history and experience, transforming it, moment by moment, into the image of a new humanity. He gathers people from the farthest places, the blind and lame, those with child and those in labor, a great mass of humanity who weep and yet feel consolation. He refreshes with brooks of water, grain, wine, and oil. He calls for music and dancing, joy and comfort, and gladness (Jer. 31:8-14).

Feel and know your worth and beauty in the new being.

Look It Up

Ephesians 1:3

Think About It

Every spiritual blessing

Universal

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The Feast of the Epiphany, the Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles, is just three days past, occurring as it always does on January 6. We continue with that theme, holding before our mind's eye and in all the affections of our hearts the miracle of our inclusion in the universal mission of Christ. Christ came to his own. He lived for all, died for all, rose for all, and ascended into heaven bearing our human nature in the unity of his divine person. In the very first days of the Church, however, this was not fully known. The first Christians were all Jews.

We associate the extension of the Church's mission beyond Judaism with St. Paul. Even before Paul, however, there were indications that the resurrected Christ would be known throughout the world. "Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and James to join them" (Acts 8:14). Samaria, home to the Samaritans who practiced what the Jews considered a corrupted form of Judaism and for which the Jews despised them, accepted the Word of God. Peter and James found that the Samaritans were baptized in the name of Jesus but had not yet received the Holy Spirit. Laying hands upon them and praying for them, Peter and James conferred the Holy Spirit upon them, affirming this *new* extension of the gospel. The Good News of the resurrected Christ would not be contained.

The prophet Isaiah promises that Jews dispersed among foreign nations will return to Jerusalem, and thus gives a proleptic picture of the new humanity. "He who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you ... I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine" (Isa. 43:1). We hear Christ speaking in these words. "You are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you ... I am with you; I will bring your offspring from

the east, and from the west I will gather you; I will say to the north, 'Give them up,' and to the south, 'Do not withhold; bring my sons from far away and my daughters from the ends of the earth — everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made'" (Isa. 43:4-7).

Living in Christ, we sense the presence of beauty and power. "Ascribe to the Lord, you gods, ascribe to the Lord the glory due his Name; *worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness*" (Ps. 29:1-2). Beauty is vested with joy. "He makes Lebanon *skip like a calf* and Mount Hermon *like a young wild ox*" (Ps. 29:6). Power resounds in the voice of the Lord. The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar trees, splits the flames of fire, makes the oak trees writhe, and strips the forest bare. The voice of the Lord is powerful, seemingly destructive, because something new is coming into being. And yet "The Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace" (Ps. 29:11). Gathered into Christ, we are a part of what is astoundingly beautiful and joyful, powerful and imbued with peace.

What then are we to say about the *unquenchable fire*? John the Baptist says of Jesus, "His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire" (Luke 3:17). Fear, and fear not. We are not one or the other but both. We must be purified for beauty, joy, power, and peace. "When you walk through fire, you will not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you" (Isa. 43:2).

Look It Up
Galatians 3:27-28

Think About It
One in Christ Jesus

New Wine

The preface to the Marriage Rite mentions the first miracle of Jesus recorded in St. John's Gospel. "The bond and covenant of marriage was established by God in creation, and our Lord Jesus Christ adorned this manner of life by his presence and first miracle at a wedding in Cana of Galilee" (BCP, p. 423). Several previous prayer books rather touchingly say, "which holy estate he *adorned and beautified* with his presence and first miracle" (1928, 1892, and 1662). Indeed, to adorn is to beautify and add luster. The presence of Christ at the wedding is "a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God" (Isa. 61:3). More beautiful than the bride and groom, Jesus "shines out like the dawn," gives light "like a burning torch," though in a manner at first hidden because he is merely one of many guests. He blends in, standing with his mother and his disciples.

The wine runs out, something the mother of Jesus notices, and she mentions this to her son. Jesus seems to rebuff her request, though without any lack of respect, as many commentators are quick to point out. It simply is not, Jesus says, "my hour," which may allude, as it often does, to his passion, suggesting perhaps the greater miracle of transforming wine into his blood and the outpouring of his blood for the salvation of the world. "My hour" may also suggest that it is not the right moment, though it would seem the right moment arrives just minutes later. In any case, Jesus will do what he will do in his time, and he is subject to no necessity.

Mary "has pondered all these things in her heart" for many years, and so she may sense that something new is about to happen through her son. She trusts him and says to the servant, "Do whatever he tells you," giving an encapsulated statement of all Christian discipleship. Indeed, Jesus speaks to the Church today, saying, "Those who love

me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them . . . and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me" (John 14:23-24). The word of Jesus, being the very word of the Father, is given in the form of a command to the servants at the feast. Like the calling of the fisherman, Jesus calls out to those at work. He finds people in the world as they live their daily lives. He speaks not to those at rest and ease but to those who labor and are heavy laden.

Speaking to the servants, telling them to fill water jars, commanding that they draw out the water-become-wine and take it to the steward: Jesus is at work in human lives and upon the substance of creation. Of the miracle, we are told "the servants knew," indicating at least the possibility of their conversion. Do we not find ourselves in these servants? Jesus addresses us in the imperative; he tells us, "Follow me." We respond to his call because we know him, and he knows us.

And, to strengthen our faith, he gives a sign, the changing of water into wine at a wedding in Cana of Galilee. What is this other than a miracle of abundance and joy? And, as with the Eucharist, a change is effected in us through Christ's command and omnipotent power. We partake of new and better wine, and so, to quote Richard Hooker, "there ensueth a kind of transubstantiation in us, a true change both of body and soul, an alteration from death to life."

The new wine is Christ himself at work in our lives!

Look It Up

Psalm 36:8

Think About It

Drink from the river of your delights.

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