Pilgrimage to Bemerton | Edith Humphrey on Liturgy | *Cæli enarrant*

February 17, 2013

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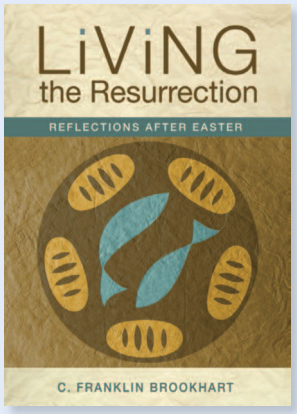

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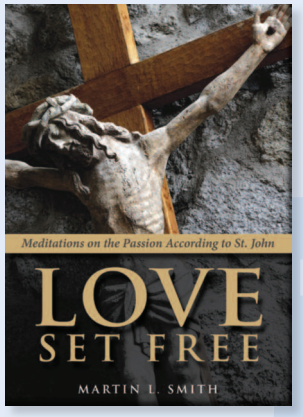

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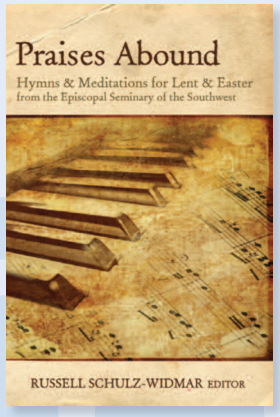

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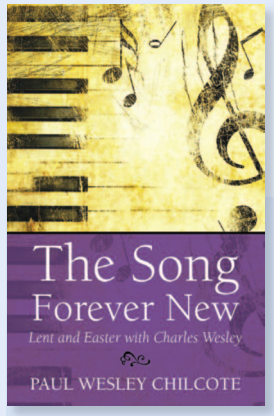

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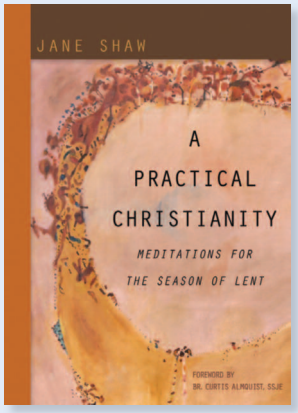

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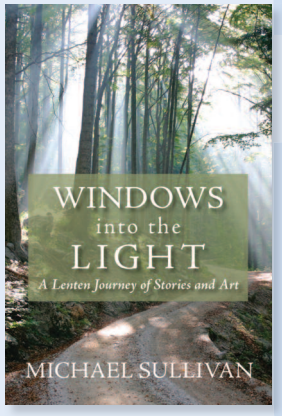

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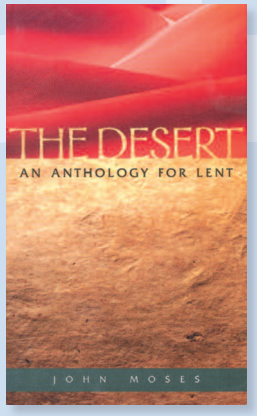

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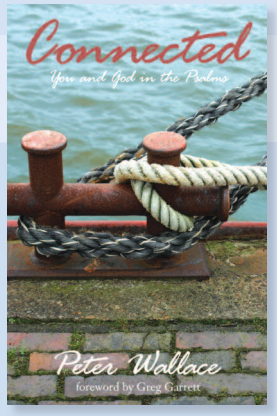

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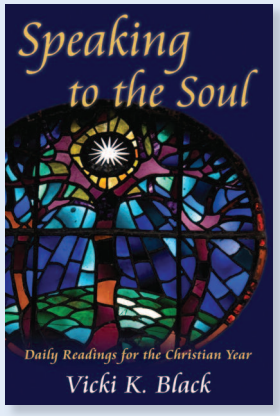

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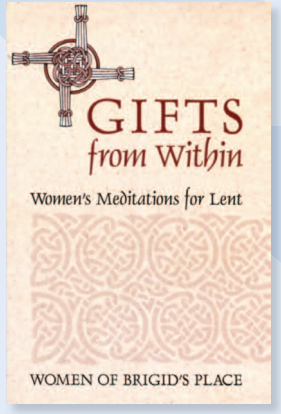

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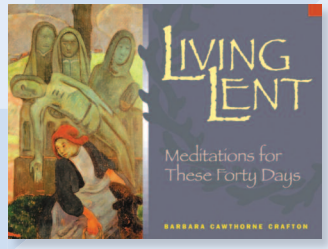

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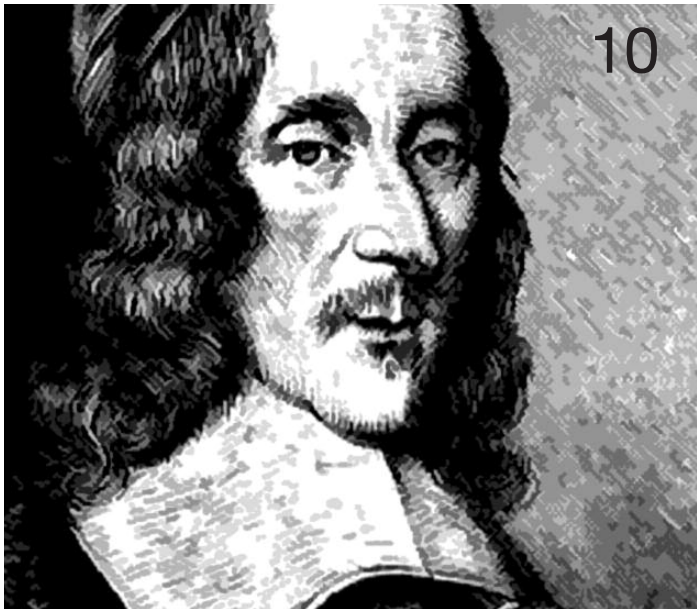
ON THE COVER

"Surely we ought to be able to bridge biblical scholarship to address the practical life of the Church and formative needs of her clergy and members. But here the picture complicates, for it turns out that the task of producing such resources is more difficult than might be supposed" (see "Luke for More of Us," p. 12).



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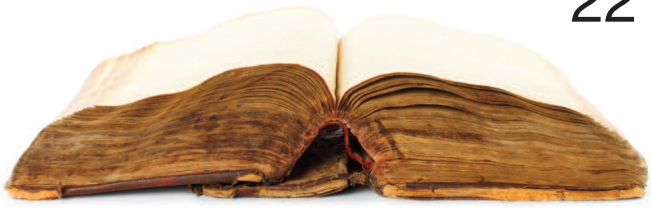

The Living Church

THIS ISSUE | February 17, 2013

NEWS

FEATURES

REVIEWS

OTHER DEPARTMENTS

The Living Church is published by the Living Church Foundation. Our historic mission in the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion is to seek and serve the Catholic and evangelical faith of the one Church, to the end of visible Christian unity throughout the world.

South Carolina Law Favors Plaintiffs

Plaintiffs who sued the Episcopal Church in January for control of South Carolina church properties could ride to victory on the coattails of a 2009 decision involving a breakaway parish, according to two attorneys experienced in church property cases.

Both Lloyd Lunceford of Baton Rouge and Martin Nussbaum of Colorado Springs cite the All Saints Church at Pawleys Island case, in which the South Carolina Supreme Court ruled in favor of a breakaway parish.

Parameters established in that case could now help a larger group of plaintiffs prevail in a South Carolina Circuit Court, the lawyers said. But Nussbaum cautions that any plaintiff victory might be short-lived since the U.S. Supreme Court would likely overturn it if the case were to go that far.

The suit, brought by congregations representing about 22,000 former Episcopalians, stems from the Diocese of South Carolina's decision in September to leave the Episcopal Church. Exiting congregations are now suing to keep the Episcopal Church from gaining control of the diocese's identity, as well as its property and that of its parishes.

"It's possible that the secessionists will have some success for some time, as long as they're in the South Carolina courts," says Nussbaum, an attorney with Rothberger Johnson & Lyons. "If it goes over to the federal courts … they'll lose."

A makeshift sign outside Grace Episcopal Church reflects a prohibition against the group using the diocesan seal.

In most property cases, courts have said congregations departing from a hierarchical church, such as the Episcopal Church, may not retain usage of local properties since they're effectively held in trust for the wider church.

But that legal principle of assigning "deference" to the higher entity did not guide the decision in the All Saints case. Instead, justices ruled church property matters should be decided by "neutral principles" of law, which bring other areas to bear, such as state trust law, as justices sort out who owns what.

This "neutral principles" approach gives local bodies a chance to

Presiding Bishop Preaches in Charleston

Plaintiffs won a first-round victory Jan. 23 when South Carolina Circuit Judge Diane S. Goodstein issued a temporary restraining order that said, in part: "No individual, organization, association or entity, whether incorporated or not, may use, assume, or adopt in any way, directly or indirectly, the registered names and the seal or mark of The Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina."

On Jan. 26 Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori convened a convention of those who remain loyal to the Episcopal Church, meeting under the name of the Episcopal Church in South Carolina.

In a sermon at Grace Episcopal Church in Charleston, Jefferts Schori told a story of a pilot arrested and detained for flying over a nuclear plant, which police said was a no-fly zone.

"Local districts do not have jurisdiction over air space," she said to applause and laughter.

"I tell you that story because it's indicative of attitudes we've seen here and in many other places. Somebody decides he knows the law, and oversteps whatever authority he may have to dictate the fate of others who may in fact be obeying the law, and often a law for which this local tyrant is not the judge. It's not too far from that kind of attitude to citizens' militias deciding to patrol their towns or the Mexican border for unwelcome visitors. It's not terribly far from the state of mind evidenced in school shootings, or in those who want to arm school children, or the terrorism that takes oil workers hostage."

Acting on the Presiding Bishop's recommendation, the convention elected the Rt. Rev. Charles vonRosenberg, former Bishop of East Tennessee, as provisional bishop of the diocese in formation.

Douglas LeBlanc


vonRosenberg

Mary Frances Schoenberg/ENS photos

succeed, Lunceford said, if they can show properties were not in fact held in trust for a denomination.

"When neutral principles of law are applied … local churches often win," says Lunceford, author of *A Guide to Church Property Law* and an attorney with Taylor Porter. "The outcomes vary. It depends on the facts. … The national denomination would like to be able to produce any potential writing by the diocese that would acknowledge they are holding parish property on behalf of the denomination."

Nussbaum agrees that plaintiffs might have a better chance in South Carolina than they would in at least 10 other states where deference principles have held sway. But, he says, the Episcopal Church would almost certainly ask the U.S. Supreme Court to review any defeat that might come out of South Carolina.

"It's difficult to imagine that they would permit a secessionist group to run roughshod over their constitution and canon law in the way that will attempt to be done here," Nussbaum says.

G. Jeffrey MacDonald
TLC Correspondent

Diocese Halts Joint Eucharists

Liturgical changes are coming soon to the only U.S. congregation that blends Episcopalians and Roman Catholics. Exactly what those changes will entail for Church of the Holy Apostles in Virginia Beach, Va., and what they will mean for the community's ecumenical witness, remains to be seen.

The parish's co-pastors received new instructions in December from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Richmond. The directive called for eucharistic prayers to no longer be celebrated jointly, says the Rev. Michael B. Ferguson, Episcopal co-pastor of Holy Apostles.


Holy Apostles in Virginia Beach, Va.

The new policy portends a shift for the 35-year-old congregation, where Roman Catholics and Episcopalians worship side-by-side for nearly the entire worship service. They're apart for only a few minutes while receiving their respective sacraments

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at different sides of the nave.

Exactly what the congregation must now do to comply with new codes will require interpretation, Ferguson says. He notes that the church is consulting with a Roman Catholic liturgist to help translate the order into practice.

"It's like a flower that's unfolding its petals slowly," Ferguson says. Roman Catholic authorities "love what we do ecumenically. It's just that they don't like what we're doing with the liturgy of Word and Sacrament. So that's what we're trying to figure out."

Since inception in 1977, Church of the Holy Apostles has had both theological and practical goals for its ecumenical mission. In the mid-1970s, leaders from both communions were seeking land in the Virginia Beach area for new houses of worship. In the collaborative spirit of Vatican II, they joined forces, built a structure together and embodied ecumenism while saving money for both groups.

The collaborative effort now allows for ministry to families that might otherwise go to separate churches on Sunday mornings. Children of mixed marriages study a Roman Catholic curriculum in Sunday school.

Because Roman Catholics and Episcopalians do not share the Eucharist, those gathered at Church of the Holy Apostles have always been clear not to share elements, Ferguson explains. Instead, they partake only of elements consecrated by their respective priests.

Now it's uncertain whether they will need to move into separate rooms for eucharistic prayers, or whether homilies from Episcopal clergy will still be acceptable in the joint assembly. Amid these unknown factors, Ferguson hopes for the best.

"As we've discussed this with the congregation," Ferguson says, "some of the cooler heads have said, 'We might learn some things from this.' This has been a congregation that's very willing to learn."

G. Jeffrey MacDonald
TLC Correspondent

Mark Clavier to Teach at Cardiff University

The Rev. Mark Clavier is the new dean of residential training at St Michael's College, Cardiff, and will teach both at the college and at Cardiff University. He will start after Easter. Fr. Clavier, 42, spent 12 years serving parishes in Maryland and North Carolina before moving to England nearly five years ago.

He joins the college having spent three years as a "house for duty priest" in former mining villages in County Durham and a year as priest-in-charge of three churches at Steeple Aston, North Aston and Tackley in the diocese of Oxford.

Fr. Clavier, who enjoys dual citizenship, has family in South Wales. As a history undergraduate in the United States, he wrote a thesis on the prince Llywelyn ap Gruffydd. His first book, on church life in a consumer culture, will be published by SPCK this year. He is married to Diane, who is an accountant, and they have a son, Paul.

He is a regular contributor to The Living Church and to TLC's weblog, Covenant.

North Carolina Elects Suffragan


Hodges-Copple

The Diocese of North Carolina elected the Rev. Anne Hodges-Copple as bishop suffragan Jan. 25. Hodges-Copple, rector of St. Luke's Church, Durham, was elected on the fourth ballot.

The other nominees were the Rev. Susan Buchanan of New Hampshire, the Rev. Canon Amy Real Coultas of Kentucky, the Rev. Lisa Fischbeck of North Carolina and the Rev. Matthew Heyd of New York.

Bishop Shaw Calls for Coadjutor

The Rt. Rev. M. Thomas Shaw, SSJE, Bishop of Massachusetts for 19 years, has asked his diocese to elect a bishop coadjutor.

"I will be turning 68 this year," Shaw wrote in a letter to diocesan leaders. "From my prayer and conversation with my community, friends and family, I have decided to call for the election of my successor, a bishop coadjutor. The election will take place at a special convention proposed for April 5, 2014."

New Jersey's Six Nominees

The Diocese of New Jersey has announced three men and three women as nominees in the search for its 12th bishop. The nominees are:

• The Rev. David Anderson, rector, St. Luke's Church, Darien, Connecticut: "I often pray in the sacristy — just as the altar party is ready to go — that we would all be hidden behind the cross of Christ. The point of liturgy is, it's the work of the people. And if you're leading it, your role is, paradoxically, to lead and be very visible, and yet to disappear."

• The Rev. Joan Beilstein, rector, Church of the Ascension, Silver Spring, Maryland: "I have prepared Ascension for the blessing of same-gender committed relationships in many ways. My spouse and I serve as a healthy role model. By reaching out and forming positive relationships with others, many have moved from opposition, to tolerance, to acceptance."

• The Rev. Allen F. Robinson, rector, St. James' Church, Baltimore: "I am deeply in love with Jesus Christ and am passionate about the transformative preaching and proclamation of the Gospel. The times in

(Continued on page 9)

The graveyard of Halla Church, about 90 miles southwest of Stockholm. Gary G. Yerkey photo

Eyewitness

Church of Sweden's Nonbelievers

Late last year, during the Christmas holidays, a Swedish friend invited me to a dinner party in central Stockholm. It was dark and snowy as I walked to her apartment, past droves of shoppers out collecting their last-minute Christmas gifts, dazzled by the bright decorations filling store windows.

My friend's apartment, too, was bright, with candles lit and a magnificent Christmas tree in the corner decked out for the season.

During a lull in our dinner conversation, I asked the dozen or so guests how many belonged to the Church of Sweden, which until 2000 was the state church and is still the largest Lutheran church in the world. All but two people raised their hands. How many of you, I asked, believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God? No one volunteered.

So what's going on here? How is it that dues-paying members of a Christian church do not believe in Jesus Christ?

What's going on is that, like the overwhelming majority of citizens of other Scandinavian countries, most Swedes see the church as a useful and praiseworthy institution. But praising God in church is not something they choose to do.

A recent survey by the Church of Sweden found that about two-thirds of the country's 9.4 million people belong to the church. Yet only 15 percent of church members say they believe in Jesus Christ. An equal percentage of Swedes call themselves atheists. And only about 400,000 of the roughly 6.6 million members of the church say they attend services at least once a month.

The survey, conducted by Jonas Bromander, chief analyst of the Church of Sweden, also found that membership continues to decline (at an accelerating pace), from about 95 percent of the population 40 years ago to the historically low 68.8 percent today.

Church membership in other Scandinavian countries has also fallen. The Church of Norway, for example, has seen its membership decline from 86.6 percent of the population in 2001 to 76.9 percent in 2011. Similarly, in Denmark, membership has dipped from roughly 85 percent to about 80

(Continued on page 24)

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which we live demand visionary leaders with strong leadership skills who are not afraid to proclaim the liberating power of God's love in an increasingly expanding, secular culture."

• The Rev. Canon Melissa M. Skelton, rector, St. Paul's Church, Seattle, and Canon for Congregational Development and Leadership, Diocese of Olympia: "I'm a person who is grounded in prayer, who thrives on relationship and who, after listening to myself, to God, and to others, is not afraid to act."

• The Rev. Canon William Stokes, rector, St. Paul's Church, Delray Beach, Florida: "I encourage entrepreneurial and collaborative endeavors in ministry rather than using a 'top-down' style, and believe this approach is the best way for the episcopate and the Church to operate in today's challenging climate."

• The Rev. Martha Sylvia Ovalle Vásquez, rector, St. Paul's Church, Walnut Creek, California: "I am gifted in rallying people to come together to get things done. I'm much more concerned about building strong bonds of community than I am about protecting structures. I am deeply committed to a collaborative process of decision-making when collaboration doesn't diminish our ability to be the best we can be."

Trinity Expands Online

Trinity School for Ministry will offer a master of arts degree in religion entirely online for students who prefer distance learning to a residential program.

"We are meeting a need for a huge number of people who are called to ministry," said Geoffrey Mackey, director of distance learning. "Very often these students are already actively engaged in ministry, and for financial, family, work, or vocational related reasons are simply unable to come to campus."

The master of arts in religion imparts a sound knowledge of theology to prepare the student for lay ministry or further study. Students may choose from three foci: biblical studies, Christian history and theology, or Christian ministry and missiology. Some students use this degree to prepare for further graduate study, and others use it to provide a Christian foundation for the work they do in the marketplace and in their places of worship.

FEAST OF GEORGE HERBERT, FEB. 27

Pilgrimage to Bemerton

By Dana Greene

Whatever the discontinuities between poetry and prayer, in the person and life of George Herbert they are conjoined. In that conjoining the presence of God is encountered even after almost four centuries. Herbert, who was well-born and with a promising future, gave up academic and political influence to minister to a small congregation in the village of Bemerton outside of Salisbury. In this self-chosen obscurity he wrote some of the most beautiful poetry in the English language, ensuring his place in literary history. But for him, poetry was a form of prayer. Directed to God, his poems dissolved the thin membrane between these two forms of primary speech.

To find George Herbert one must leave behind both Cambridge, where in the early 17th century he was the university's public orator and a Fellow of Trinity College, and London, where for a time he served as a Member of Parliament. The journey to Herbert, the poet and man of prayer, is first through the flat green landscape of Wiltshire to the cathedral city of Salisbury. Built in the 13th century in English Gothic style and memorialized by the paintings of John Constable, Salisbury's cathedral looms out from the surrounding plain and can be seen clearly from a distance. It is the tallest of English cathedrals. It was here that Herbert was ordained a priest. It was here that he would come each week to sing in the choir at Evensong, walking from his rectory in Bemerton through the water meadows of the Nadder and Avon rivers and guided by the cathedral's filigreed stone spire. Today he is honored by a stained-glass window and a statue in a niche in the cathedral's façade. But it is not in this city but in his village church, St. Andrew's, a mile and a half from the bustle of the cathedral close, that one encounters Herbert in full intensity and devotion. By paying attention and walking in pilgrimage one discovers a poet and a man given to God.

There are two routes to Bemerton: the one traversed by Herbert through the water meadows, and another along the Lower Road past the Churchfield Industrial Estate, the sure route for the contemporary pilgrim. Here in Bemerton at age 37 Her-

bert took up his ministry to a rural congregation in a small stone church. It is true that his health was frail, that he suffered from melancholy, and that the times were tumultuous. The Stuart kings reigned, and political turmoil would soon erupt into civil war. But to Herbert's family and friends his decision, and choice of obscurity, wasted his great potential.

Herbert's life was hidden in Bemerton. As vicar he cared for his flock, preached, restored the church which had been in disrepair, wrote *The Country Parson*, a treatise on rural ministry, and poured out in poetry his thanksgiving to God for life itself. In his poems one discovers some inkling of Herbert's vocational decision and his interior life.

Familiar from David Charles Walker's hymn setting, Herbert wrote in the second of his "Praise" poems:

Sev'n whole days, not one in seven,
I will praise thee.
In my heart, though not in heaven,
I can raise thee….
Small it is, in this poor sort
To enrol thee:
Ev'n eternity is too short
To extol thee. (*Hymnal 1982*, #382)

Herbert's gratitude expressed itself in self-consecration.

In "The Call," immortalized in Ralph Vaughan Williams's setting of the same name, Herbert wrote:

Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life:
Such a Way, as gives us breath:
Such a Truth, as ends all strife:
And such a Life, as killeth death. (*Hymnal 1982*, #487)

If his poetry reflects his desire for God, Herbert wanted nothing more than to reflect God's light in his own life:

Teach me thy love to know;
That this new light, which now I see,
May both the work and workman show:
Then by a sun-beam I will climb to thee. ("Mattins")

For Herbert, the poem was a prayer of praise and gratitude but also a way of laying bare his soul: "Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back, / Guilty of dust and sin" ("Love 3").

Haunted by melancholy, he lived to praise God and serve others. But this praise and service were short-lived. After three years in Bemerton, shortly before his 40th year, Herbert died of consumption, leaving behind 70 poems which might have been lost to posterity except for their posthumous publication by his friend, Nicholas Ferrar of Little Gidding. Herbert's poetry would come to influence Henry Vaughan, who called him "the most glorious true saint," Richard Cranshaw, and latterly Gerard Manly Hopkins, Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot and Emily Dickinson.

If his poetry reflects his desire for God, Herbert wanted nothing more than to reflect God's light in his own life.

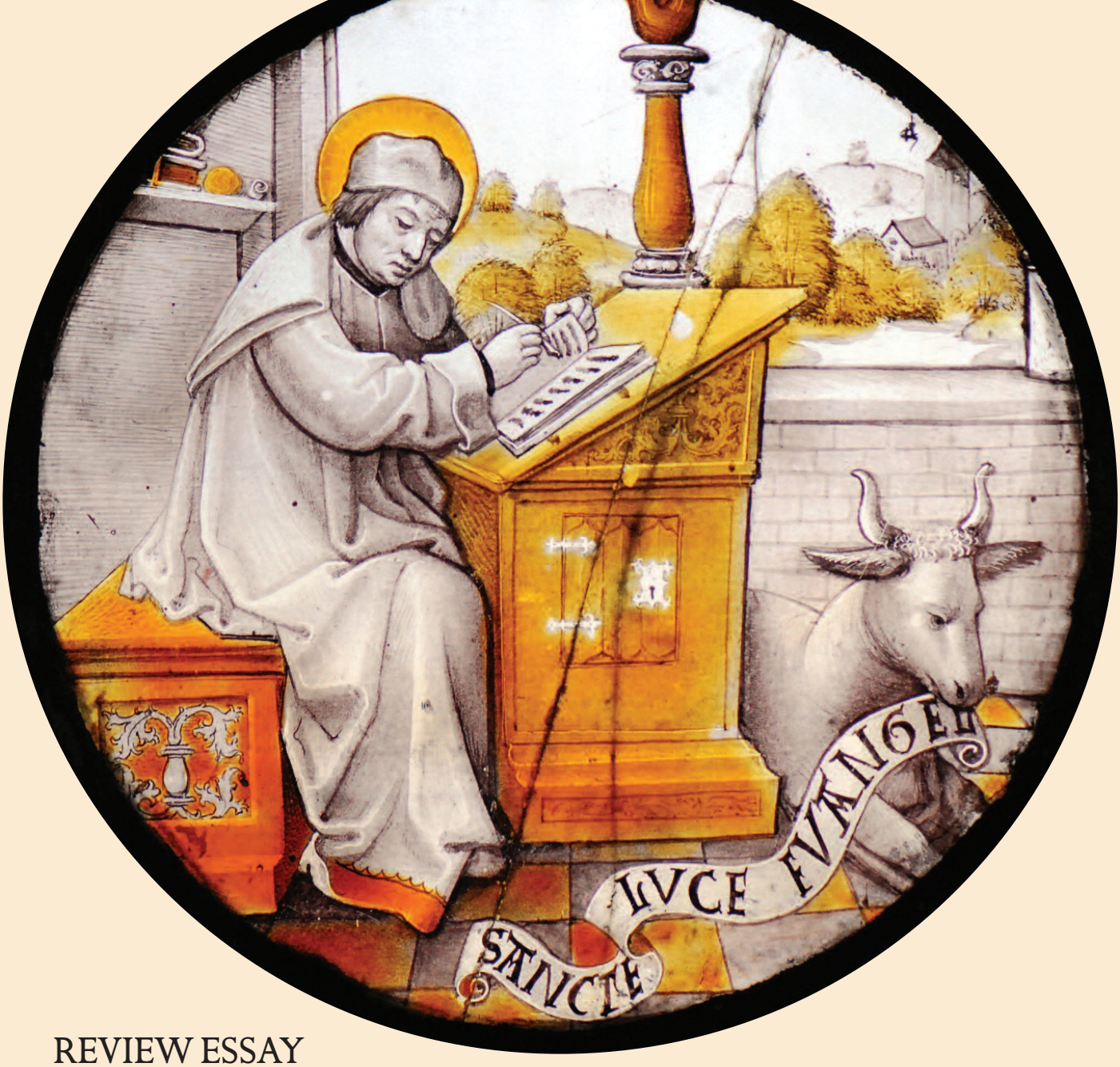
In the small stone church of St. Andrew, founded 700 years ago, both the intensity and hiddenness of Herbert's life is made palpable. Today a congregation of two dozen people continues to gather monthly to sing and psalm in this chapel with its stone floor and wooden-beamed ceiling where Herbert is reputed to be buried beneath its chancel. Only a small plaque inscribed with "G.H. 1632" marks his obscure presence. As Herbert himself wrote: "My life is hid in Him that is my treasure."

Herbert strove to make his life a prayer, and as poet he grasped for metaphors to describe that primal speech:

Prayer the Church's banquet, Angels' age,
God's breath in man returning to his birth,
The soul in paraphrase, heart in pilgrimage…;
Softness, and peace, and joy, and love, and bliss,
Exalted Manna, gladness of the best,
Heaven in ordinary, man well drest,
The milky way, the bird of Paradise,
Church-bells beyond the stars heard, the soul's blood,
The land of spices; something understood.
("Prayer 1")

Herbert's gratefulness poured out in the Ur languages of poetry and prayer, and in his writing the two are united. His poetry may still be savored on the page, but the landscapes of his life, his obscure dedication, and his clarity of purpose are best revealed in a pilgrimage to Bemerton. The bell he tolled to call his congregants to worship is still rung, seekers enter through the low-beamed door to kneel in the church's illumined interior, and music, so dear to Herbert, is still offered as praise. Here after centuries one can still discover the presence of George Herbert, poet and pray-er. ■

Dana Greene is dean emerita of Oxford College of Emory University and author of biographies of Evelyn Underhill, Maisie Ward, and Denise Levertov.



REVIEW ESSAY

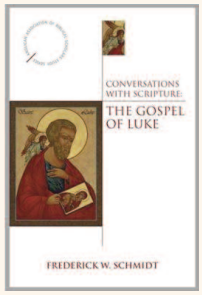
Luke for More of Us

Review by Garwood P. Anderson

Among the very few things on which our diverse church can agree is the sorry state of biblical literacy. The complaint comes, not unexpectedly from biblicist precincts, that lay people lack sufficient familiarity, and clergy sufficient facility, with the Bible's narratives and precepts. Meanwhile, on the "left" comes the rejoinder, not without basis, that the self-styled advocates of scriptural authority construe its contents selectively and self-interestedly, and especially that biblical cries for justice go unheard in favor of a too tidy account of "orthodoxy" and an unreflective fortification of the status quo. And from the academy comes the more recent observation that the standard academic approaches to Scripture are so mired in historical and comparative questions that the results are scarcely useful to the Church at all.

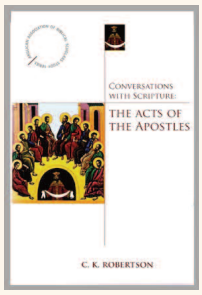
That there is not only a problem but even a crisis is agreed by most. And that there need to be resources to reinvigorate the Church's engagement with Scripture is a matter of common sense. Surely we ought to be able to bridge biblical scholarship to address the practical life of the Church and formative needs of her clergy and members. But here the picture complicates, for it turns out that the task of producing such resources is more difficult than might be supposed. If, as some allege, biblical scholars are not carrying out an agenda useful to the Church, then it will do little good to translate their results into a more accessible form. But "amateur" reflections too often perpetuate interpretive "urban myths," for good reason long abandoned in the guild. With the deceptive difficulty of the task in mind, here we sample some recent, diverse offerings on the Lukan corpus which seek and succeed to various degrees to fill the gap between biblical scholarship and the Church.

Credit is due the Anglican Association of Biblical Scholars and Morehouse Publishing for launching a series, Conversations with Scripture, which aims to bring the fruit of biblical studies to persons "who have little or no experience in reading the Bible." The two entries reviewed here —*The Gospel of Luke* by Frederick W. Schmidt and *The Acts of the Apostles* by C.K. Robertson — illustrate both the difficulty and the promise of the task. Within about 100 pages, these guides offer an orienting introduction and sweeping commentary of the texts at hand, to which is added a concluding discussion guide. Schmidt chooses to engage the Gospel thematically, while Robertson surveys the story of Acts in order. In this case, the latter proves more successful.



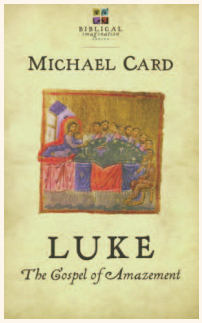
The Gospel of Luke

By **Frederick W. Schmidt**.
Morehouse. Pp. xvi + 124. $18



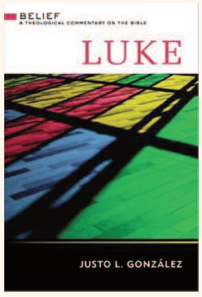
The Acts of the Apostles

By **C.K. Robertson**. Morehouse.
Pp. xiv + 113. $18



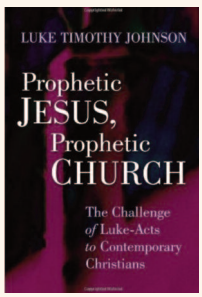
Luke
The Gospel of Amazement

By **Michael Card**. InterVarsity Press.
Pp. 269. $18



Luke

By **Justo L. González**.
Westminster John Knox. Pp. 308. $35



Prophetic Jesus, Prophetic Church
The Challenge of Luke-Acts to Contemporary Christians

By **Luke Timothy Johnson**.
Eerdmans. Pp. 198. $23

While Schmidt's thematic choices — belonging, tradition, authority, eschatology and ethics — are at least defensible, one does not get the sense that the gospel is entirely well accounted for under these headings; a criticism, I suppose, that could attach to any such attempt. What makes Schmidt's approach unique is his instinct to build a spiritual formation edifice upon an implicitly redaction critical platform, and I experience some disease in the combination of behind-the-text problematizing (reading Luke for its *Sitz im Leben*) with in-front-of-the-text praxis (reading the text for Christian spirituality), without a sufficient or obvious bridge between the two.

Perhaps because it is the less adventuresome, Robertson's treatment of Acts is the more satisfying of the two. This concise volume is a serviceable companion to the text, in places deft in its observations and summaries. For example, in commenting on the breakup of Paul and Barnabas, Robertson gives a sympathetic read of both

(Continued on next page)

Luke for More of Us

(Continued from previous page)

characters, noting that the regrettable disagreement is nonetheless redeemed for the mission: "It was the end of an era, but certainly not the end of the story" (p. 68).

Neither volume, however, quite strikes me as a "conversation" with Scripture. Rather, the diminutive guides read more like broad introductions with a hope that a conversation might follow. But the reader is not frequently encouraged to make something of the text herself, or to puzzle, or to dialogue. True, this is the explicit intent of the concluding study guide, but even there the engagement is primarily with oneself rather than with the scriptural text or even the foregoing interpretation. And regrettably, both texts, but Schmidt's especially, are riddled with dubious, if not even mistaken, assertions and surmises and not infrequent typographical errors (the transliteration of Greek words is consistently idiosyncratic and almost never correct), the cumulative effect of which is an unfortunate dilution of reader confidence.

By way of contrast, one might consider a surprising entry from Michael Card, *Luke: The Gospel of Amazement* from the new Biblical Imagination Series by InterVarsity Press. Card will be better known to many as one of the more thoughtful artists of the contemporary Christian music scene. Known for some time as a biblical "hobbyist," Card was a protégé of the late evangelical New Testament scholar William Lane. So, while lacking the scholarly pedigree of Schmidt or Robertson (both holding a Ph.D.), Card still shows himself competent and informed as an interpreter of Luke. True, there is nothing here for New Testament scholars; nor, I think, should preachers look here for primary guidance. But in its straightforwardness and simplicity of presentation — the running biblical text followed by an exposition of modest length — Card's exposition provides an uncomplicated guide to this gospel that well serves the novice reader. And, more importantly, both the format and the commentary keep the text at the center. Unsophisticated, and sometimes not entirely convincing, the book is still wholesome in its overall effect and represents a model of the sort of thing that would serve newly inquisitive readers.

In his recent addition to Westminster John Knox's Belief: A Theological Commentary on the Bible series, noted church historian Justo González offers an accessible commentary with deeper scholarly roots. The "theological commentary" is a post-critical genre in the making, with either biblical scholars stretching past exegesis to theology (e.g., Eerdmans, Two Horizons) or theologians reclaiming the art of exegesis (e.g., Brazos Theological Commentary and the Belief series). The results so far are mixed — or at least the evaluation of them in the eyes of various beholders — and it remains to be seen whether these more theological engagements with Scripture will commend themselves as something more than alternatives to traditional historical-critical counterparts.

The "theological" in González's case comes in punctuation by interesting asides regarding the history of interpretation or the reception history of the text (or its parallels). Many pages display an illustrative or provocative boxed text quoting an interpreter or theologian, ranging from Church fathers to recent feminist or liberationist interpreters, which may or may not have much to do with González's own train of thought. Not new to the commentary genre, the accomplished Church historian shows himself a steady hand with the biblical text. Luke is a fruitful vineyard for González, as themes of justice, eschatological reversal, and honor of the marginalized — thoroughgoing Lukan themes — rightly find emphasis in the commentary. In this case, the history of interpretation and reception provides useful ballast for a treatment that could otherwise skew orthopragmatic and insufficiently Christological. In the end, I think it best to see this as a (recommended) supplement to the more substantial exegetical offerings of Joseph Fitzmyer (Anchor/Yale), John Nolland (Word), and Luke Timothy Johnson (Sacra Pagina), which will serve preachers and teachers of the gospel with illustrative material, food for thought, and an assurance that Luke's social vision will not be obscured.

Johnson's most recent foray into Luke-Acts is not a commentary, but rather an orientation to the Lukan corpus with the goal of enlivening its function in the contemporary Church. Johnson musters his considerable Luke-Acts expertise to make a scholarly but non-technical argument that both the Christology and ecclesiology of Luke-Acts are "prophetic." Luke casts Jesus consistently in prophetic terms — especially as the prophet like unto Moses (Deut. 18), but also as heir of Elijah and Elisha and as one carrying the prophetic mantle in word and deed. The argument is not new (one thinks of David Moessner, *Lord of the Banquet* [2nd edn., 1998]), but convincing nonetheless.

Luke (Christology) and Acts (ecclesiology) being joined inseparably, it follows that what Jesus is the Church is as well, and of the Church's prophetic prototypes and function in Acts there can be little doubt. Moreover, again as is often noted, the structure of Luke-Acts depends upon a promise-fulfillment scheme, both in relation to the Old Testament and internal to the two-volume narrative itself. But these non-controversial observations hardly exhaust Johnson's point. He wants to say that under the rubric "prophetic" falls not only the function of promise or prediction but a way of life, an embodied alterity which in word, deed, and being calls

the world to account. In particular, this Lukan Church will embody a prophetic spirit of shared wealth, itinerancy, prayer, and servant leadership: themes abundantly attested in both Luke and Acts. While I find myself quibbling just a bit with the convenience of this flexible definition of "prophetic," the vision offered here is salutary and decidedly true to Luke-Acts. Indeed, precisely because it comes from this committed Roman Catholic scholar, the dynamic and quietly subversive picture of a Church as alternative *koinōnia* in self-conscious continuity with the Prophet, Jesus Christ, is a word in season.

Garwood P. Anderson is professor of New Testament and Greek at Nashotah House Theological Seminary.

For Further Reading

Don't sell your Fitzmyer! And add at least J. Nolland or L.T. Johnson, or perhaps Joel Green (New International Commentary on the New Testament, Eerdmans, 1997). Read Johnson's *Prophetic Jesus, Prophetic Church*, especially the later chapters, and sit with it, asking what a Spirit-endowed, Lukan-shaped church might look like. Let J. González enrich and supplement the week-by-week with reflections on the Church's history and vocation. For expert guidance through the many Lukan parables, get K. Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent* (Eerdmans, 2008; see TLC, Oct. 12, 2008). A useful companion to Snodgrass's exegesis will be Eugene Peterson's *Tell It Slant: A Conversation on the Language of Jesus in His Stories and Prayers* (Eerdmans, 2008), now in its second (and I think *improved*) edition and worth picking up and pondering if you missed it the first time. Inhabiting his characteristic pastoral wisdom just might inspire more of the artful truth-telling for which he is justly famous.

God Sets the Table

Review by Daniel Muth

Enter His gates with thanksgiving,
And His courts with praise!
Give thanks to Him, bless His name!
Psalm 100:3
(Phillips translation)

Some years ago, the "worship wars" in the Episcopal Church brought forth an instructive spat over the revised wording of the Nicene Creed in the Book of Common Prayer (1979). In lieu of "all things visible and invisible," Rite II worshipers now express their belief in "all things seen and unseen." Those taking issue with the new wording object that it constitutes a triumph of the subjective (the new version references the viewer's perception or lack thereof) over the objective (the former wording referred to inherent traits of the objects of belief).

To the extent that this objection is valid (it might, after all, be noted in rebuttal that a confession of faith is inherently subjective: *I believe*), it reflects a concern with a broader, more troubling pattern of self-reference and self-concern, at times bordering on narcissism, that dominates latter-day Christian worship in the West. It can scarce be denied that, when compared to that of previous eras, late 20th-century Western hymnody, homiletics, hermeneutics, liturgics, and personal piety display a markedly greater tendency toward individualism and subjectivity. We worship God not as he knows himself to be but as he is perceived, often wishfully.

Traditionally, only God truly knows each individual, and through God each comes to know himself. God is the fully transcendent, self-revealing Ultimate Object of worship, devotion, and praise. Mysterious, yes (no one will fully plumb his depths this side of eternity) but knowable, self-revealed, and hence known. Being transcendent, God does not — indeed cannot — change, for to do so would violate the definition of transcendence. He does not *become*; he *is*, hence the divinely revealed Name. Christians can only properly worship the God who is, not the god they wish was there. It is the givenness of this Divine Presence before whom worshipers come that infuses traditional Christian worship with its peculiar character and depth.

Grand Entrance
Worship on Earth as in Heaven
By Edith M. Humphrey.
Brazos Press. Pp. 244. $22.99

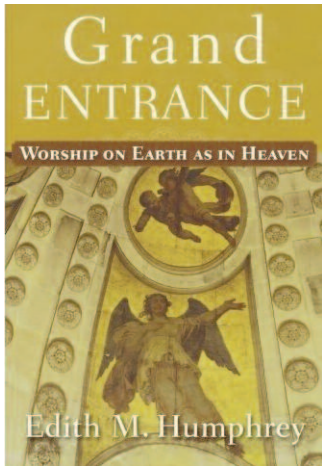
In this graceful and inspiring volume, Edith Humphrey, William F. Orr Professor of New Testament at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, celebrates the central theme of liturgical worship throughout Christian history: entrance into the presence of God. This entrance is at God's invitation and involves our corporate coming before something not of our making: "The worship into which we have been invited, the company into which we have been welcomed, and the holy place that has been opened to us are indeed grand — things beyond our unaided sight, hearing, or imagining, that 'God has prepared for those who love him' (1 Cor. 2:9)."

The author begins, along the lines of the foregoing, by contrasting the modern expectation of individuality in isolation with more traditional understandings of the worshiping individual only known as such in community: "*I* was glad when they said to me, Let *us* go into the house of the Lord" (Ps. 122:1, emphasis added). Christian worship being most properly a corporate activity, she questions the popular practice of worshiping with closed eyes, a practice that focuses attention on the self. The lion's share of the first chapter consists of a brief but meaty tour of biblical texts illustrating the point that worship is properly corporate (even private prayer serves public ministry) and defining worship as "responding to God's own invitation, that we should see more and more clearly who God is, hear more and more clearly what he is saying, be more and more thankful about his mighty actions, and *enter* more deeply into his communion with us and his care for the world."

The next several chapters evaluate the theme of worship as entrance in the Old Testament, New Testament, and traditional liturgies of the Eastern and Western Church. In the first, attention is drawn to Isaiah's theophany in which the prophet is whisked into God's presence, the awe-inspiring weight of which causes the sinful man to feel undone (money quotation from Brevard Childs: "Isaiah … is not concerned with reimagining God"). Purgation is accomplished via a live, burning coal in order that the worshiper "may respond to the Voice about to speak." The reader is then treated to a feast of Old Testament divinity in all his wild, severely merciful, exuberant, ascendant luminosity. We are reminded of the purpose of the Exodus: freedom is for worship.

The New Testament discussion opens with contemplation of the Transfiguration, a deepening of Isaiah's temple vision in which the human urge to be creative ("Let us build three booths") is rendered superfluous. In Christ, we are drawn into a temple not

made with human hands, but of his people. A carefully limned discussion of Acts 2:42 notes the particularity of the bread being broken and prayers being said (both refer specifically to the Holy Eucharist) and their unambiguous connection to the fellowship and teaching of the Apostles. In the Catholic Church, Word and Sacrament are inseparable. We also receive in this chapter the great treat of a serious theological contemplation of Paul's discussion of head-covering in 1 Corinthians 11, in which woman covers her head as a reenactment of the cherubim covering their faces in Isaiah, and man uncovers as a reminder that Christ has sundered the veil. With respect to modern objections, she responds: "Worship is not for the establishing of human rights but honoring God."



The Eastern liturgies considered include the very Jewish Didache (remembered by Episcopalians via the hymn, "Father, we thank thee who hast planted") with its themes of gathering, bread, vine, and holiness; the Anaphora (lifting up) of Addai and Mari, which dramatizes how human prayer may be lifted up because Christ's prayer has been passed down via the Great Tradition; the Liturgy of St. James (known in the West primarily through the hymn "Let all mortal flesh keep silence"), which is possibly the oldest complete liturgy in the Church; and the Liturgies of St. John Chrysostom and St. Basil, which are the primary liturgies still in use in Eastern churches. Humphrey recently migrated to Eastern Orthodoxy from Anglicanism and her delight in her newfound ecclesial home shines forth in the rich and evocative tour of the liturgies on which she conducts the faithful reader. This is perhaps the best part of a very fine book.

After noting the similarities between Eastern and Western liturgies, she reviews the liturgical references in 1 Clement in which reconciliation of divided brethren is a "gate of righteousness" enabling entry into Christ the High Priest's presence where the Church may worship, along with Justin Martyr's apologetics, which include a description of Holy Eucharist as entry into a kind of worship given the Church by holy tradition and divine revelation. This entry has been made possible because the whole world has become God's temple. Continued development of the Western liturgical tradition is traced via the *Apostolic Tradition* attributed to St. Hippolytus, the Bobbio and Sarum Missals, and the Tridentine Mass. Western rites are noted to be generally similar to those of the East, with the former marked by greater thematic variability with prayers attuned to the Church year and feast/fast of the day. Humphrey continues to draw attention to the theme of liturgy as entrance into the presence of God, expressed in varying ways, as she details the worshiper's passage through each rite.

Modern worship is then evaluated by means of detailed thematic descriptions of American and Canadian liturgies Humphrey attended: a Roman Catholic parish on a Saturday evening, an Orthodox celebration of the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos, a Canadian Anglican Service of the Word (similar to American Evensong), a Presbyterian Confessing Church during Lent, Salvationists at Christmas, and a non-denominational emergent church service. The last is compared to two services — one Catholic, one Protestant — Humphrey attended during an earlier visit to China.

In light of this data, she ends the book evaluating a series of potential pitfalls for Christian worship. She notes that the modern worship-as-meal focus (both Word and Sacrament are spoken of as bread) can incline in a consumerist direction and that either overdoing politics (confessing "social sins," for instance) or otherwise drawing attention to worshipers detracts from the One whom worship is about. Botching the pedagogical purposes of the liturgy, whether by attempting to simplify or correct traditional words or via poor preaching serves to separate worshipers from God, as do piecemeal approaches to the liturgy. Finally, she warns that liturgy must never, ever be used for any purpose (e.g., congregational unity or, worse yet, marketing) other than worship of the living God.

This is not a book for the holder of the mythical "black belt in liturgics" (joke: what's the difference between a liturgist and a terrorist? You can negotiate with the terrorist — ba-dum-bum), but for the thoughtful and devout cleric or layman who delights in worshiping the Lord "in the beauty of holiness." Clearly, Humphrey does. Her love of the liturgy, of the Church, and of the God of Israel, expressed in erudite, elegant diction, suffuses every page. This is a book to be savored.

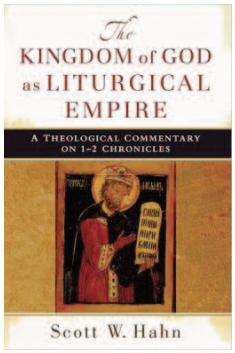
The Episcopal Church has by now endured many years of painful internecine strife — some of it necessary, much of it pointless, all of it demoralizing — in a culture maniacally seeking to drown its considerable sorrows in the heady but unsatisfactory brew of narcissism. Here is refreshment for a weary church in a weary world. Take and read. ■

Daniel Muth, an Episcopal layman in St. Leonard, Maryland, is secretary of the Living Church Foundation's board of directors.

Recovering from Julius Wellhausen

Review by Edith M. Humphrey

In this volume, Scott Hahn offers a readable but not superficial commentary upon 1 and 2 Chronicles. His commentary is unconventional both in format, since it is organized by sections and not verse-by-verse, and in approach, since it emphasizes theological rather than merely historical-critical questions. It is a welcome and thorough addition to a growing body of monographs that focus upon this neglected part of the corpus, and that approach the books in terms of usefulness to the faithful community. Hahn's volume is prefaced by an overview of the Chronicler's worldview, typological approach, and "twofold pattern" (royal and priestly concerns). It then proceeds, while attending to detail in the text, to pull out the major themes discerned in each section: the scope of "all divine history" (1 Chr. 1-9); David "highly exalted" for the sake of the people (1 Chr. 10-16); the throne "established forever" (1 Chr. 17); God's "rest" for his people (1 Chr. 18-29); "liturgy and empire" (2 Chr. 1-9); the ongoing "rebellion" (2 Chr. 10-28); and "exile and return" (2 Chr. 29-36). In every case, sections close with a discussion of Christian implications.



The Kingdom of God as Liturgical Empire

A Theological Commentary on 1-2 Chronicles

By **Scott W. Hahn**. Baker Academic. Pp. 240. $24.99

The book's greatest strength is its exploration of the Chronicler's deft use of typology as not merely a literary technique but a theological reading of salvation history. Compelling insights are offered, as in the Chronicler's recasting of Exodus language for a "Pharaohesque" handling of Rehoboam's hubris and Jeroboam's rebellion (pp. 146-49). Also key is the emphasis upon liturgy coupled with covenant, as well as an apologia for the primacy of worship among God's people — an important corrective to the Wellhausenian hangover of those who fear that Chronicles simply imposes a pious "cloud of incense" over the crisper accounts of 1 and 2 Samuel (p. 58). The significance of the Chronicler's work for the Church is made clear, especially its "rich possibilities for Christian understanding of the economy of salvation and the divine pedagogy" (p. 42). However, at times the commentator's forays into the New Testament are too compressed to be convincing, as in his connection of the Ark with both the desert woman and holy Mary in Revelation 11-12: this is a well-known Catholic move, but not self-evident to Orthodox Christians (who embrace Marian Ark typology, but typically read the woman of Rev. 12 as the Church) or Protestants (to whom such typology will appear fanciful).

Again, a clear description of his method would have been helpful. The analysis of the Hebrew text, for example, is frequently conducted in the light of later rabbinic writings, begging questions of appropriateness, at least in terms of chronology. Again, a few remarks are made concerning the indebtedness of the New Testament (especially Matthew) to the Septuagint rendering of Chronicles, but little is actually done with this: that is, there is no line of development drawn from the Hebrew text through the Septuagint to the Christian interpretation, as might be warranted in the case of the reception of Chronicles. There are some special points where attention to the Septuagint might be helpful, as in the treatment of David's numbering of the people (1 Chr. 21), where the Septuagint uses the title "devil" ("the Accuser") rather than what appears in the Masoretic Text to be, in this case, the name "Satan."

Further as regards that strange episode, Hahn's attention to intertextuality is remarkable here. Unfortunately, he underplays the obvious problem that the Chronicler appears to correct 2 Samuel 24's identification of the tempter as the LORD, by fastening upon Satan/the devil as the agent. Hahn seems so keen to get on to positive value in the text (which he demonstrates in a delightful way) that he all but sidesteps what will remain a puzzle to many. This is unfortunate, for in hitting this head-on, he might have included a "Christian interpretation" of this passage that reads 2 Samuel 24, 1 Chronicles 1 and James 1:13-15 synoptically, offering a canonical and balanced theology of God's sovereignty, temptation, the temporary role of the Accuser who has been "cast down to earth" (Rev. 12:12), and human responsibility.

It is not fair, however, to fault a book for not doing what the reviewer would have done, especially a reviewer for whom the Septuagint is more important liturgically. This is a well-conceived volume, rich in detail and insight, delightful in turn of phrase, thought-provoking, and invaluable for those who read the Bible in the context of faith, but not merely devotionally. It deserves to be well received in academic and ecclesial circles alike. ■

Edith M. Humphrey is William F. Orr Professor of New Testament at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

Faith Meets Physics

Testing Scripture
A Scientist Explores the Bible
By **John Polkinghorne**. Brazos. Pp. 128. $17.99

Review by Celia Deane-Drummond

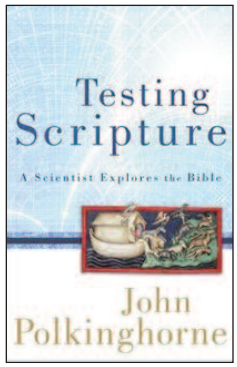
In this lucid and engaging book John Polkinghorne displays his skill as a priest and pastor, but one whose training in physics shapes his approach to life. As he deals with the big challenges facing the interpretation of Scripture, we find a mixture of clear-sighted common sense and a determination not to water down the radical gospel message. He therefore is as keen to show how he appreciates the literary beauty of the Bible as to dismiss those who want to reduce it to symbolic systems in the name of science.

Christian interpretation of the Bible as rooted in God's acts of self-disclosure is therefore non-negotiable, but that does not mean a Christian is obliged to literalism. Of course, Polkinghorne is as aware as any professional theologian that in so ancient a text discerning what might be cultural influence and what might be an enduring message of the revealed Word is not always easy. But at heart the Word uttered is based on that disclosed in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, and that takes pressure off attempts to find eternal truth in every phrase of the biblical record. At the same time Polkinghorne wants to see the multilayered richness of interpretation that is possible, though he only mentions somewhat in passing a more meditative approach through *lectio divina*.

Polkinghorne therefore begins with difficult questions such as why God is sometimes portrayed in violent terms in the Hebrew Scriptures. His solution of *development* works to some extent. However, it devolves to his prior commitment to a philosophy of "progress" in religious terms that betrays, perhaps unsurprisingly, a modernist understanding of history. He is also, sensibly in my view, content to leave the variety of scriptural accounts in the Gospels intact, rather than trying to force conformity. But for him, the underlying message is consistent.

Many readers will find Polkinghorne's treatment of the Genesis accounts particularly apt, but his impatient treatment of creationist views may not persuade those who are already inclined in this direction, however unconvincing for a scientist trained in a U.K. context. His solution to the century-old debate on the meaning of the image of God is to stress God's love and awareness of the divine presence. The Fall, on the other hand, is a resistance to acknowledge creaturely dependence. This I would broadly agree with, but it is a shame perhaps that nothing of the recent debates in psychology or the evolution of religion features here. Nonetheless, his welcome inclusion of wisdom writings as those first "natural theologians" in his portrayal of how God acts as Creator will open his readers to areas of Scripture that are too often marginalized. In Job, for example, the whole of creation becomes a theophany, a profound revelation of the Creator that then takes on even deeper significance in christological hymns to creation in Colossians 1.

Polkinghorne's insight as a scientist also encourages him to see the Bible through the experience of ambiguity. Just as creation itself is hard to fathom in its strangeness, so the ways of God with the world as portrayed in Scripture are often hard to understand. Why, for example, did Abraham have to offer Isaac? Why did Jacob have to swindle Esau? Why, on his deathbed, did king David request that Shimei is killed? And so on. But Polkinghorne uses his wit to distinguish between miracles that might be explained by "natural" occurrences and those such as the resurrection that are still grounded in history but cannot be explained by or reduced to scientific terms. As Polkinghorne moves to engage with specific accounts in the Gospels, he enacts the principles he established in the first part of the book. But he wisely carries this narrative through by a focus on the person of Jesus, getting behind the way Jesus dealt with controversy and the particular experiences of his life and ministry.



This sets the scene for his discussion of the cross and resurrection, which is one of the most enjoyable parts of this book. Polkinghorne has, of course, written on this topic elsewhere, and his prior scholarship pays dividends. The resurrection is a triple vindication: for God, in terms of his promises, for Jesus, as one whose life did not deserve death, and for a deep-seated human intuition that death is not the end. We can be grateful therefore that Polkinghorne reinforces this Christian message of hope, one that is as needed now as it was when the Gospels were first composed. His treatment of Paul is also compressed, but sensibly takes the christological thread further. The final chapter takes up two christological readings and one that focuses on future hope for creation in the Romans text. These profound passages take us deeper into the heart of the power of Scripture to speak into our lives.

We can be thankful for Polkinghorne's slim volume. It deserves to be read widely. ■

Celia Deane-Drummond is professor of theology at the University of Notre Dame.

Mixed Meal

Review by Kathryn Greene-McCreight

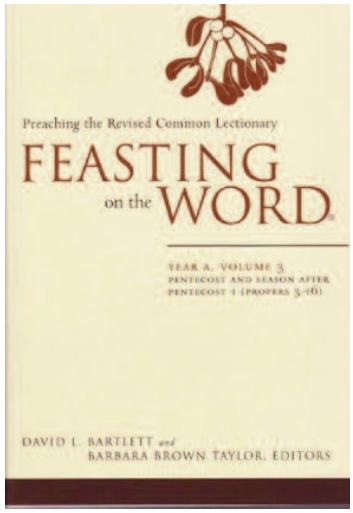
Many of us have bemoaned the disconnect between the disciplines of theology, Bible, and pastoral formation in our seminaries. How can we attempt to prepare priests for service in the Church without teaching them to read and teach the Bible as Scripture of the Church? *Feasting on the Word* sets out to address this disconnect in very practical terms. It attempts specifically to assist the preacher in the task of sermon preparation. For every Sunday of each liturgical year, scholars comment on all the biblical texts of the Revised Common Lectionary. The brief essays are laid out in four parallel columns along the page, labeled Theological Perspective, Pastoral Perspective, Exegetical Perspective, and Homiletical Perspective.

As is to be expected in such a series, the contributions are spotty. The more successful pieces move beyond their own corner of inquiry and blur the lines between the disciplines, which seems to be a general goal of the series. For example, in her essay on Psalm 65 for Proper 10 in the Theological Perspective column, Jo Bailey Wells helps the reader discern the distinctions between the first and second half of the psalm. She links the psalm theologically with that week's lessons from the Old Testament and the Gospel. Her theological reflections, even within a restricted word count, are profound. She offers deep pastoral and homiletical insights, holding together classical doctrinal claims of Creation theology which are trivialized in much contemporary Christian thought.

Other contributions are theologically confused and confusing. One such example is the essay on the Genesis lesson for Trinity Sunday. The writer opens: "Scripture is theocentric not christocentric." The exposition goes downhill from there. I imagine this statement to have been a well-intended attempt to allow the theological witness of the Hebrew Bible to stand on its own and not be entirely subsumed under the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. Bravo. However, classical Christian confession has treated the distinction between theology and Christology in a far more nuanced manner. The claim that Scripture relates intimately the theocentric and the Christocentric is at the heart of both the Christology of Chalcedon and the trinitarian theology of Nicea. If the contributor wants us to consider making a strict demarcation between Scripture's theocentricity and Christocentricity, he should admit to offering a theological innovation to the Christian tradition. I can only imagine that this contributor is exactly the kind of preacher whom *Feasting on the Word* wants to help.

Despite *Feasting on the Word*, the very unfortunate biblical-theological-pastoral disconnect in Christian seminary training will no doubt remain. Many preachers are simply not equipped to prepare sermons without aid of some kind. This is not likely to change soon. While *Feasting on the Word* will not cure this malady, it can provide a stopgap measure. However, one can't help but think that the well-trained priest will not need *Feasting on the Word*; indeed, it may only be a hindrance to her. The poorly trained priest would be better served by further study rather than by a modern-day *Glossa*.

That said, *Feasting on the Word* will be a must for divinity libraries as an example of how the preacher can approach the task of sermon preparation in comprehensive terms. Let us hope that *Feasting on the Word* will foster the preparation of profound and challenging exposition of Scripture that our parishioners so badly need. ■

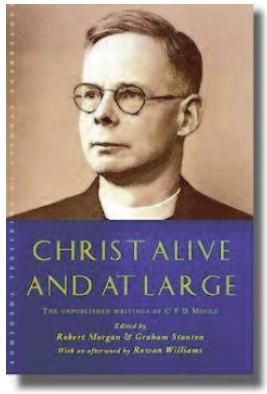


Feasting on the Word

Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary
Year A, Volume 3
Pentecost and Season after Pentecost 1 (Propers 3-16)
Edited by **David Bartlett** and **Barbara Brown Taylor**.
Westminster John Knox. Pp. 408. $40

The Rev. Kathryn Greene-McCreight is the author of Darkness Is My Only Companion: A Christian Response to Mental Illness *and* Feminist Reconstructions of Christian Doctrine: Narrative Analysis and Appraisal.

Insightful to the End



Review by Christopher R. Seitz

It would be nice to have more books like this. Here a wise and professionally recognized scholar, teacher, and churchman shares with us papers and letters and brief essays, all written in first-person informality and with a candor that comes when one is not seeking the usual professional scrutiny and approbation. Patrick Moule collected the bulk of this material from his father's last years of life and transcribed them for possible publication. C.F.D. ("Charlie") Moule was Lady Margaret's Professor of New Testament at Cambridge for 25 years (1951-76) and before that vice principal at Ridley Hall and dean of Clare College. These essays, however, come from a lengthy retirement period spent in Pevensy in East Sussex (1981-2002) and later from his final years in a care home near his sons in Dorset (2003-07).

Encouraged by the rector of his parish church he took up his pen to answer questions, respond to newspapers, and generally reflect theologically on matters that took his interest. Unsurprisingly many of these concerned death and resurrection and eternal life. But equally, we have typically brief and frank reflections on the tricky topics that often concern the wider public (Judas Iscariot; exorcism; sacrifice and propitiation; Christianity among world religions; petitionary prayer; Mary the mother of Jesus Christ; anti-Semitism and the New Testament). The treatments are refreshingly to-the-point, compact, and clear.

As Patrick Moule puts it, they represent "the simply expressed manifestations of the wisdom and knowledge of great age." One essay, on "Life After Death," was written in the late summer of 2007, two months before Moule's death at 98. Fittingly, the book opens with the sermon preached at the Thanksgiving service for his life and work, at Great St. Mary's Cambridge, by Rowan Williams.

Patrick Moule and the Rev. Robert Morgan of Oxford have arranged the collected writings under the rubrics "Biblical Theology" and "Christian Faith and Practice." In addition there is a serial work of Holy Week reflections, "The Energy of God: The Meaning of Holy Week," consisting of six mediations. Like the essays, these are first-person addresses with excellent illustrations and popular connections of various kinds.

The book concludes with seven sermons from these same retirement years, including one sent to be preached in Clare College Chapel at the commemoration of his 60 years as a Fellow of the College (Oct. 28, 2004). A concluding "Salute to the White Doves" comes from his observing the antics of the beautiful birds from his study where most of the essays were composed. It ends with the line: "I salute those who look after you, as I salute the kind friends who patiently look after me."

Morgan does the service of providing a thorough introduction to the book, "The Spirituality and New Testament Theology of Charlie Moule," which will locate Moule for the general reader who may not know the details of his life, beginning with his birth in the Church Missionary Society compound in Hangchow (Hangzhou) China, south of Shanghai. This same house was the birthplace of his father and his grandfather George Evans Moule (1828-1912) who served as the Bishop of Mid-China. Morgan's introduction runs for 80 pages of engaging prose. It is a personal and informative look at Moule's life and times, and a primer to his thought and published work.

Populating the account are Max Warren, F.W. Dillistone, E.C. Hoskyns, Michael Ramsey, Adolph von Harnack, F.L. Cross, John Robinson, C.K. Barrett, C.H. Dodd, Alan Richardson, Gregory Dix, Donald MacKinnon, Oscar Cullmann, John Hick, Geoffrey Lampe, Rudolph Bultmann, Willi Marxen, T.W. Manson, Joachim Jeremias, and Karl Barth (for whose 1922 commentary on Romans "Charlie had no enthusiasm"). He lived to see much of his line of thought carried through by N.T. Wright in *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (2003), a book we are told "he greatly admired."

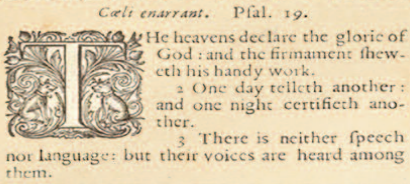
Morgan has done a valuable service in walking us through a remarkably fertile period in Anglo-Saxon and continental New Testament scholarship, punctuated by the themes of Eucharist and sacrifice, New Testament theology, the "Historical Jesus" quest, and Christian scholarship — indeed, of the kind Moule sought to embody as a clergyman and teacher. In the obituary written by William Horbury for the British Academy, Moule is reckoned "probably the most influential British New Testament scholar of his time." This volume demonstrates why that verdict remains true. ■

The Rev. Christopher R. Seitz is senior research professor of biblical interpretation at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto.

Christ Alive and at Large

Unpublished Writings of C.F.D. Moule

Edited and introduced by **Robert Morgan** and **Patrick Moule**. Canterbury Press Norwich. Pp. 192. $29.99


Cœli enarrant. Psal. 19.

THE heavens declare the glorie of God: and the firmament sheweth his handy work.
2 One day telleth another: and one night certifieth another.
3 There is neither speech nor language: but their voices are heard among them.

Christ, Friend, Word

Revision of a presentation on the theme "A Passion for Jesus," made at the convention of the Diocese of Central Florida, January 26.

I experienced a mature conversion to Christianity at college. I grew up in a churchgoing, evangelical and catholic family and professed at age 16 before my congregation a conscious commitment to the Christian faith (a Protestant analogue to confirmation). But I found myself unprepared to present a defense of my faith on leaving home and, confronted by the searchings and strivings for justice and truth in modern America, I rather accidentally adopted the theory that the world amounts to a series of power plays by the good guys and the bad guys, the just and the unjust. On this view, the goal of life is to be a good guy, and so deploy power justly.

It didn't work, though, primarily in my own heart: fear, anxiety, frustration persisted, and I *knew* myself to be not wholly good, to be in need of help. With St. Paul I knew myself to "not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate" (Rom. 7:15).

Happily, I sensed the goodness of a higher power, a creator perhaps, identified — as by Hilary of Poitiers, I later learned, on the road to his own conversion — with the reliable regularity, warmth, and comfort of the sun in the sky. On the strength of this I began to admit a certain powerlessness and felt an immediate relief.

All of which served as milk in advance of a richer fare, borne in my case by great books at a Christian liberal arts college, where I discovered what struck me as an astoundingly bold and courageous, as well as sophisticated, assertion at the heart of Christian thought: that the human longing for truth will be fulfilled not by self-assertion, much less by self-justification, still less by competition with or confrontation of one another, but by *confession*: Confession of our own sin to God; confession of my powerlessness to save myself. Luther, Pascal, Dostoevsky, T.S. Eliot: brothers in Christ.

It seemed then to me, and still seems true, that *only* Christians can speak honestly and non-defensively about the reality of sin, feeling no need to foist it off on others (thus resisting Manichaeism), because forgiveness is available to all in Jesus Christ, the God-man, and no one is "good" apart from him (cf. Mark 10:18).

Liberated by God in Christ from trying to save ourselves by good works, our mind and spirit are freed for the first time. For "it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal. 2:20)! Our striving and falling short are transfigured, just as our loneliness, disappointment, and betrayal of one another are accounted for and redeemed.

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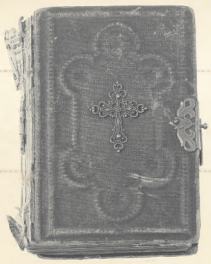

Having made a turn to Christianity intellectually, I had to learn to pray. A daily devotional discipline, incorporating Scripture,

took some years, and only followed after a progressive return to the institutional Church. Two dear Roman Catholic friends were instrumental. One, having already attended Mass on Sunday morning at his own parish, would wake me up and drag me to the Episcopal Church, for which I was most grateful, not least for the camaraderie. The other, several years later, gently urged me to recall that *every* Sunday is a holy day of obligation, and I was cut to the heart. *Thank you, Lord, for forming us through our friends*. "I have called you friends" (John 15:15).

And the third person of the Trinity struck as well, through a physical sensation of peace in direct response to prayer. The apologetic can only be: "Taste and see that the LORD is good; happy are they who trust in him!" (Ps. 34:8). I cried out to the Lord, saying, "Come, Lord Jesus. Please take away my fear and anxiety. Touch me now and give me your peace." And behold, it was so! A deep sense of the love and forgiveness of God *for me*, in Christ: who wants our hearts, offered as sacrifices to be formed and given back in turn, re-formed. *Thy* will be done.

Finally, especially through the habit of Morning Prayer according to our BCP, unaltered and unamended, day by day, month by month, year by year, the reality of Jesus Christ as *Word* of the Father, hence as *Wisdom*, dawned on me. God would form our minds by conforming them to the pattern of his own thoughts, perfectly begotten from eternity in the bond of Love, uttered as creative and redemptive discourse in the person of his Son who took up a human nature.

Following this incarnate Word requires learning to understand and speak his divinely revealed language, which purifies our minds and tongues, making them his servants. We internalize Scripture till it becomes our depth grammar and true religion. We hunger and thirst for righteousness *first* by loving and obeying his commandments, statutes, and decrees, which are themselves delightful, more than "all manner of riches" (Ps. 119:14). And in this is the Lord's "loving-kindness" *and* "salvation," according to his promise (119:41). Here is the text, subtext, and thesis of Scripture, and the soil for cultivating a spiritual life: obedience and praise, each issuing from and leading back to the other in an endless exchange, yielding a harvest of human holiness.

In this way, Christian prayer subsists in the joyful address of God in Christ through the Spirit, joining the orderly chorus of all creation. "The *heavens declare* the glory of God"; "One day tells its tale to another"! The sun bursts forth "like a bridegroom out of his chamber," rejoicing "like a champion to run its course." Just so: *May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, our strength and our redeemer* (Ps. 19).

Christopher Wells

Christian prayer subsists in the joyful address of God in Christ through the Spirit, joining the orderly chorus of all creation.

(**SWEDEN** from page 8)

percent in the same period. And in Finland, the comparable numbers are 85 percent and 77 percent.

That the decline has not been even more dramatic is perhaps surprising given the remarkable and sustained secularization of Nordic society in the past few decades. But experts argue that Scandinavians choose to belong to the church even today because it provides a convenient and historically important meeting place, as it were, for family occasions such as weddings and funerals.

Ninety percent of all Swedes are still buried with a church service, according to the Church of Sweden. It also serves as a refuge in times of national crisis such as the sinking of the ferry Estonia in 1994, in which 800 people died, most of them Swedes, or the murder of Foreign Minister Anna Lindh in 2003.

Björn Vikström, bishop of the Swedish-speaking Diocese of Porvoo, said recently that, while membership in the Finnish church has fallen, most Finns still choose to baptize their children and bury their loved ones in the church. They also believe that schools should celebrate Christmas and other Christian holidays by reading the Bible and singing psalms, he said.

"It seems like Finns today have a love-hate relationship with Christian traditions," Vikstrom said in a *Helsinki Times* article in December. "On the one hand, people want to mark their freedom from them. On the other hand, they miss the sense of fellowship and continuity that the traditions help create."

Sven Björkborg, a pastor who serves several parishes southwest of Stockholm, says that Swedes, too, support the church because it guards important national values and traditions and does good work, such as helping the poor and the elderly and comforting the lonely. He says he believes in Jesus Christ, which is not a requirement for Church of Sweden clergy. (Affirming women's ordination to the priesthood is required.)

A December poll by the Swedish opinion research organization Sifo found that 83 percent of Swedes believe that Christmas should be about family, compared to a good meal (55%), attending church (12%) and celebrating the birth of Jesus (10%).

Others say that the decline in church membership in Sweden can also be attributed to the scrapping in 1996 of a law making children automatic members at birth, provided that one or more of their parents belonged. Today only children who are baptized into the church become members.

Financial support for the Church of Sweden, valued at about 36 billion kronor (about $5.5 billion), comes mainly from a tax paid by all members of the church. The amount of the tax, collected by the state, varies from parish to parish but averages about $250 a year.

Anders Thorendal, the church treasurer and its chief investment officer, has said it costs about 19 billion kronor (about $3 billion) a year to run the church. Decisions on how to use the church tax are made at the local level, he said, and a separate "buffer" fund for emergencies of about 5 billion kronor ($800 million) is managed at the national level.

Some analysts have argued that for the church to survive financially, it will have to cut expenditures drastically or increase the church tax, which could be unpopular.

H.B. Hammar, former dean of Skara Cathedral, said that of the 3,384 churches in Sweden only 500 or so are used at most once a month.

"With fewer and fewer paying members, you have to review your options," he wrote in the national daily newspaper *Svenska Dagbladet*, "and do it before it is too late."

Hammar said that hundreds of churches need immediate renovation, costing billions. They could also be sold to private individuals and used for housing, cafés, offices or light industry. But doing that, he said, would trigger a wave of public protest, which oddly enough would be greater "in our heavily secularized Sweden" than it was in the United Kingdom, where a similar proposal was floated a few decades ago.

The former dean argued that in Sweden today the church has become a kind of medical center,

providing support in times of crises. But to perform that function "there is no need for church buildings." Ideally, he said, "blow them up!"

Freedom of religion, meanwhile, remains a pillar of the Swedish constitution, and all public schools are required to teach students at least the basic tenets of the world's major religions.

But every year, the government has felt the need to remind pastors and public school principals the law requires the separation of church and state.

"The law stipulates that Swedish schools are non-confessional," the Swedish National Agency for Education, for example, said in an op-ed piece in the daily national newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* in November, "[which means] that there can't be any religious elements such as prayer, blessings or declarations of faith in education. Students should not have to be subjected to religious influence in school."

While the Church of Sweden continues to lose members, a religious awakening of sorts has been occurring in the country thanks to the gradual influx of hundreds of thousands of immigrants, or "new Swedes," in recent decades.

Today, roughly 15 percent of the population is foreign-born. There are now 92,000 Roman Catholics and 100,000 Eastern Orthodox Christians living in Sweden. The Pew Research Center recently reported that there are also about 40,000 Buddhists, 20,000 Hindus and 10,000 Jews. But it also said that Sweden today has a significant Muslim population: some 430,000. Some analysts have predicted that the Muslim minority in Sweden will increase from about 5 percent today to 10 percent by 2030.

As for Bromander, the chief analyst at the Church of Sweden, he has sought to put a positive face on the continuing fall in church membership, saying that times change and so do organizations.

"Large numbers of members isn't a goal in itself," he said. "The church can still be a relevant arena for a lot of Swedes, and I'm sure it will be so."

Gary G. Yerkey

THE LIVING CHURCH
VOLUME 246 • NUMBER 4

EDITORIAL AND BUSINESS OFFICES
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P.O. Box 514036,
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THE LIVING CHURCH is published biweekly, dated Sunday, by the Living Church Foundation, Inc., at 816 E. Juneau Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53202. Periodicals postage paid at Milwaukee, WI, and at additional mailing offices.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: $45 for one year; $79 for two years. Canadian postage an additional $10 per year; Mexico and all other foreign, an additional $63 per year.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE LIVING CHURCH, P.O. Box 514036, Milwaukee, WI 53203-3436. Subscribers, when submitting address changes, should please allow 3-4 weeks for change to take effect.

THE LIVING CHURCH (ISSN 0024-5240) is published by THE LIVING CHURCH FOUNDATION, INC., a non-profit organization serving the Church. All gifts to the Foundation are tax-deductible.

MANUSCRIPTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS: THE LIVING CHURCH cannot assume responsibility for the return of photos or manuscripts.

SUNDAY'S READINGS | First Sunday in Lent, February 17

Deut. 26:1-11 • Ps. 91:1-2, 9-16 • Rom. 10:8b-13 • Luke 4:1-13

Until the End

The first fruits are gathered in full knowledge that this is "the bounty of the Lord," and thus a return is required. Only in giving back through oblation and recitation of the old story do the people affirm their utter dependency upon God. Their labor in the fields accrues to them not a mere speck of human merit, for this is "the land that the Lord your God is giving you" (Deut. 26:2).

At the moment of offering, a creed is recited, a testament sealing an inner knowledge. "I am not merely I," implies the creed. "A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt," where the Egyptians "treated us harshly and afflicted us," and the LORD "brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand" (Deut. 26:5-8). Let the rejoicing begin. "Let Christ be bread to us, faith our drink; happily let us imbibe the sober inebriation of Spirit" (*Liturgia Horarum*, v.iii, p. 676, Latin Hymn, my translation). True joy is the bread of the crucified, a cup of sorrow.

Our creed may be contracted to the holy name of Jesus. The Word is near us, on our lips and in our hearts. Believing that God has raised him from the dead, believing that by adoption and grace we are drawn into the mystery of his life, and knowing that our believing itself is a gift of God, we are startled to this truth. We are safe in him. Our safety is a matter of naked trust, for the Word meets us in the world. The Word reveals the "tribulation and promise of life," Karl Barth wrote on Romans. The Word is a piercing honesty, insisting that "we should make ourselves aware of the actual course of the world and of our lives, simply and soberly, critically, and stripping ourselves of every illusion." The Word is an invitation to reality; it is there, without illusion, that we meet "the Lord who is generous to all" (Rom. 10:12).

The Word rises wet from the Jordan dripping in Spirit. By the same Spirit he is led into the wilderness for a time of testing, and we, with sympathy and imagination, go with him. His trial and triple victory is our own if only we stay near him. Hungering, he is tempted to make bread of stone. His vocation hangs midair by the devil's *if*: *If you are the Son of God*. Jesus escapes by feasting on something else, the Word which he is. The devil shows him the kingdoms of the world, yet even the devil knows that they appear only for *an instant*. Jesus knows that the worship of God and the call to serve him is all-expansive and ever enduring. The devil suggests religious tricks, extreme measures, drama. Jesus holds his ground, he himself the hidden ground of love. He has no need to put the Lord to the test. And yet this is a real struggle pulling at every fiber of his being; the recapitulation of our humanity is a costly work.

Jesus must find, moment by moment, as we must too, cause to endure and struggle and go on. His perfect victory is not something we can grasp. Rather, in our weakness and need, we may receive from him grace upon grace. And let us recall the glory of our goal. "What, I ask, is more wonderful than divine beauty? What thought more gracious and sweet than God's magnificence? What desire more vehement and strong than the one planted by God in a soul that is purified of sin and cries out with true affection?" (St. Basil, Resp. 2,1: PG 31, 908-10).

Look It Up

Read Romans 10:8b-13. The Word is where you are.

Think About It

Love is fidelity, and fidelity is work.

SUNDAY'S READINGS | Lent 2, February 24

Gen. 15:1-12; 17-18 • Ps. 27 • Phil. 3:17-4:1 • Luke 13:31-35

Upward

The summons to "lift up your hearts" is a clear admission that without such invocations we are apt to fall back upon our failures, limitations, nothingness, loss, and despair. If the fall is great and deep, it may show itself as boredom and indifference, an ancient disease called *acedia*. "An old man said that a brother was goaded by his thoughts for nine years to despair of his salvation" (*Sayings of the Fathers*). We may all despair at times. The pressures of life and the apparent delay of God's coming to our help can leave us listless and hopeless.

Our morning cry is: "Oh God make speed to save us. O Lord make haste to help us." At Genesis 15:2 our ancient father Abram prays through his suffering: "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless?" A painful waiting has called the promise into question. Did God call? Is this an illusion? Only an upward thrust of the Spirit will restore his hope. "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them" (Gen. 15:5). Looking, he sees first the brightest stars. Then, adjusting his vision, he beholds deeper space as the stars multiply coming into being, a heavenly host. "So shall your descendants be." The promise is restored, but shrouded still in mystery: a sacrifice, deep sleep, a smoking pot and a flaming torch. A poetic promise will always require faith.

"Brothers and sisters," St. Paul says, "join in imitating me" (Phil. 3:17). The Christ-form is so vivid in Paul and his companions that they can commend themselves as formed in Christ. They incarnate a pattern of believing and living rooted in the conviction that "our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. 3:20). This is not worldly rejection, but transformation. "He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory" (Phil. 3:21). The entire thrust is upward and yet anchored to reality. Falsity consists in having the belly for a god, mere and unrestrained appetite. "Their end is destruction." Stand firm and look where you live; your life is hid with God in Christ.

We meet Jesus doing his work, casting out demons and performing cures. He works a triduum: today, tomorrow, and the next day. He is in motion and he is in sorrow. He looks over Jerusalem and cries, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it" (Luke 13:34). His gaze over our cities and into our lives penetrates our violence and rejection. He wants us with the deepest desire but his grace will not destroy a free nature. We may stand in opposition. In love and sorrow, and even with respect, he says, "See, your house is left to you" (Luke 13:35). There is no better definition of hell.

Though we are left to our own destruction for a time, God comes. The residents of the city may yet say, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord" (Luke 13:35). Hope lives. Abram looks to the night sky. Paul preaches a place-of-being in the heavens. Jesus would gather up his hens. "And when I am lifted up I will draw everything and everyone to myself" (John 12:32). It is all heaven bent in a cycle that is first downward in self-emptying; then, flowing out to history and creation, everything is transformed to the body of his glory. It is happening in the mystery of prayer and the flowing out of grace in concrete action. "The image unfolds *into* the one contemplating it, and it opens out its consequences in his life" (Hans Urs von Balthasar).

Look It Up

Read 1 Peter 5:6-10. It will lift you.

Think About It

Leave not yourself to your own small designs. Be the body you are in Christ.

Appointments

The Rev. **Timothy H. Graham** is rector of Trinity Church, 1130 First Ave., Columbus, GA 31901.

The Very Rev. **John C. Horn** is dean of Trinity Cathedral, 121 W. 12th St., Davenport, Iowa 52803.

The Rev. **Robert M. Ross** is rector of Emmanuel Church, 285 Lyons Plain Road, Weston, CT 06883.

Retirements

The Rev. **Guido F. Verbeck III**, as rector of St. Paul's, Shreveport, LA; add: 4741 Crescent Dr., Shreveport, LA 71106.

Deaths

The Rev. **George C. Bedell II,** a religion scholar and 27-year veteran of Florida's state university system, died Nov. 28 in Gainesville. He was 84.

Born in Jacksonville, he was a graduate of the University of the South, Virginia Theological Seminary, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He completed a Ph.D. in religion at Duke University. He was ordained deacon in 1953 and priest in 1954.

He served as priest-in-charge at St. James's Church, Lake City, and St. Bartholomew's Church, High Springs, 1953-56; and rector, St. Andrew's Church, Panama City, 1956-62. In 1967 he joined the faculty of Florida State University in Tallahassee and was tenured. He was author of *Kierkegaard and Faulkner: Modalities of Existence* (LSU Press, 1972) and coauthor of *Religion in America* (Macmillan, 1975, 1982).

He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth Reed Bedell, of Gainesville; sons George C. Bedell of Tampa, Frank M. Bedell, of Orlando, and Nathan G. Bedell, of Birmingham, AL; a brother, Donald H. Bedell, of Jacksonville; a sister, Martha Bedell Alexander, Charlotte, NC; and grandchildren Chester, John, Nate, Emily and Walton Bedell.

The Rev. **John Lane Denson III**, a Navy aviator in World War II and a nominee for Bishop of Tennessee in 1985, died Nov. 21. He was 89.

Born in Temple, TX, he was a graduate of the University of Texas and Seminary of the Southwest, where he was in the founding class. He was ordained deacon in 1954 and priest in 1955. He served in Tennessee for all of his ministry. He served as dean of Christ Church Cathedral, Nashville, 1965-70; rector, St. John's Church, Old Hickory, 1980-87; interim, St. Augustine's Chapel, Vanderbilt University, 1987-88, and assisting priest there, 1995-2000; and supply priest, Calvary Church, Cumberland Furnace, until his death. He also served as interim rector of St. Mark's Church, Antioch, and priest associate at St. Ann's Church, Nashville.

Fr. Denson was a deputy to General Convention in 1985 and 1988 and, as editor of *The Covenant Journal*, reported on the conventions of 2000, 2003, and 2006. He was a lifelong trumpet player and a founding member of the Establishment, a Nashville 1940s-style jazz band, and of the Monday Night Jazz Band.

He is survived by his wife, Caroline Stark; daughter, Ann Milstead; sons John Lane Denson IV and Scott Thomas Denson; and grandchildren, Megan, Sarah, Molly, Claire, Thomas and William Denson. He was preceded in death by a son, William Brewster Denson; a grandson, John Lane Denson V; and his brother, Thomas Charles Denson.

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SAINT JOHN'S CATHEDRAL

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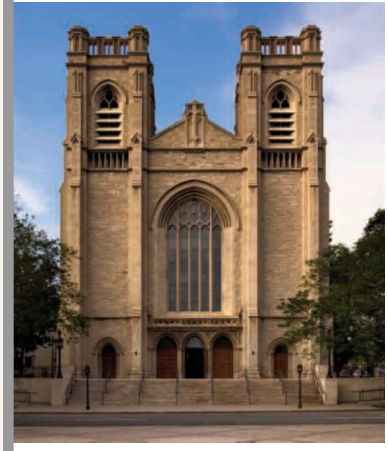
CATHEDRAL CANON

The Dean of Saint John's Cathedral, Denver, Colorado, intends to appoint a second Cathedral Canon to the staff as soon as possible. The new Canon will join a clergy staff of five and other senior lay staff colleagues in the ministry of a large urban cathedral that draws its congregation from a wide geographical area. This position is suitable for an energetic priest with 3-5 years experience who shows promise of significant leadership.



This Canon will share fully with the Dean, two other clergy Canons, and a curate in the full liturgical ministry of the Cathedral; youth, young adult and adult formation; community life, pastoral care, outreach, and administration; and will exercise creative oversight over areas of our ministry that are assigned from time to time. A deep and articulate faith, a commitment to the daily community of prayer at the Cathedral, imagination, and an ability to take initiative while working collaboratively with staff and congregational leadership are essential. Saint John's Cathedral strives to be a lively, progressive congregation in the Anglican Catholic tradition, and lives fully the riches of our liturgical, spiritual, and theological heritage in witness and service to our wider community. We are called to be the heart of the city in the heart of the city, as those who know Christ and making Christ known.

If you believe that you might be suited to this position, you are invited to send a cover letter, resume, and OTM profile to the **Dean, the Very Reverend Peter Eaton, Saint John's Cathedral, 1350 Washington Street, Denver, CO 80203**, or via email to **michelle@sjcathedral.org**.

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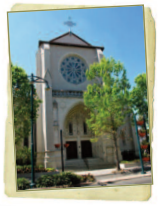

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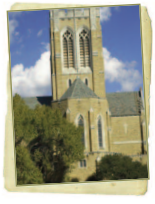

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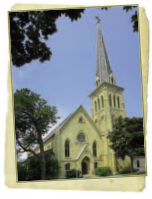

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