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May 6, 2018

The Living Church

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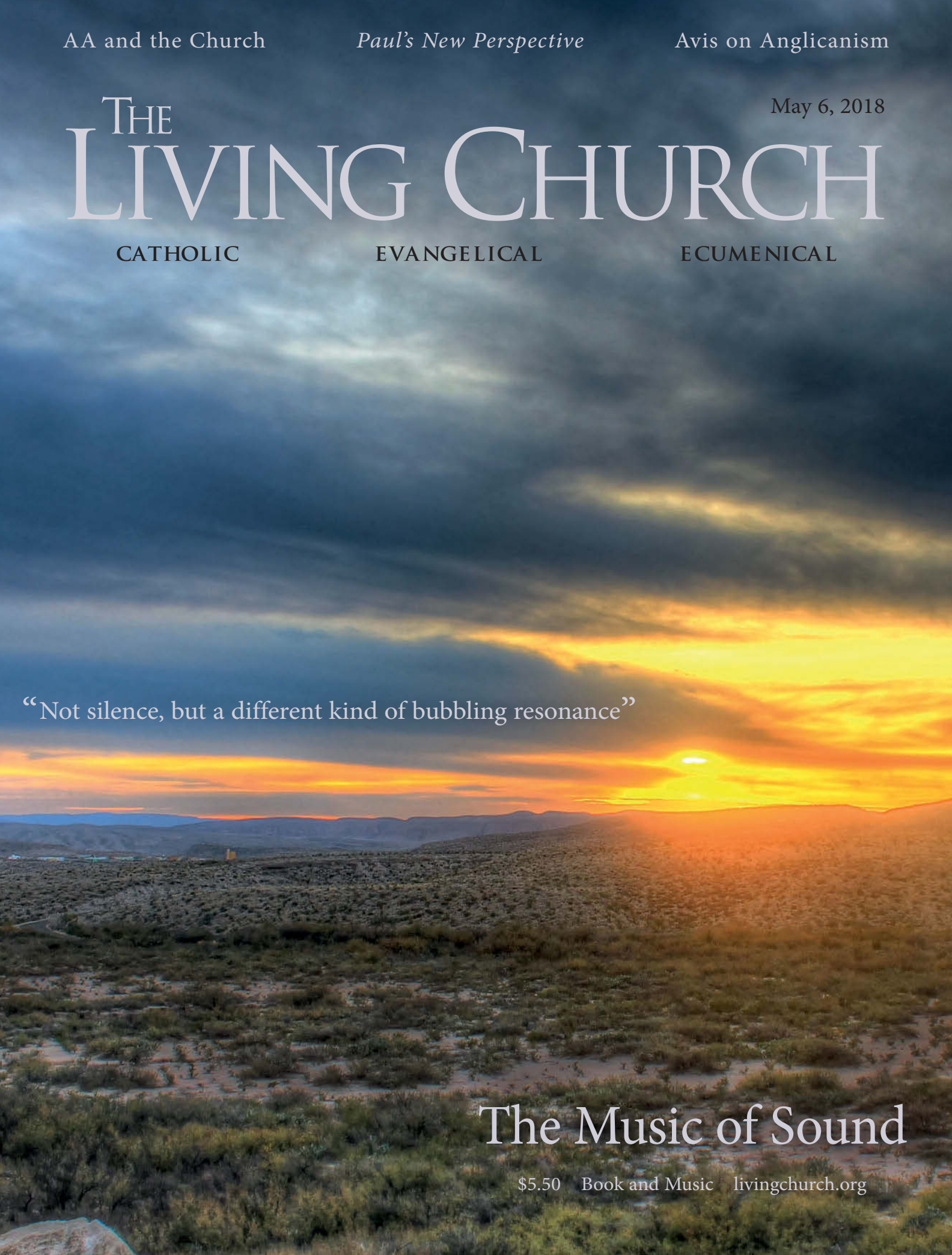

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ON THE COVER

Ephraim Radner: "While it might seem absurd that planets could make a sound in empty space, the ultimate idea was that *God* hears this music, for God has created a world that, in its very being, exists in constant praise of its creator" (see "Silence, Sound, and the Power of God," p. 10).

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The Living Church

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We are grateful to the St. John's Parish Day School, Ellicott City, and the Episcopal Church in Minnesota [p. 32], Truro Anglican Church, Fairfax, and the Diocese of West Virginia [p. 33], the Church of St. John the Divine, Houston [p. 35], and the Diocese of Pennsylvania [p. 36], whose generous support helped make this issue possible.

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.

Fort Worth Episcopalians Win, for Now

A Texas appeals court has ruled largely in favor of the parties affiliated with the Episcopal Church in the Fort Worth property dispute, but the decade-long litigation is far from over.

The competing diocese affiliated with the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) promptly announced plans to appeal to the Texas Supreme Court, which already has considered other aspects of the dispute.

Both entities use the name "Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth," and a decision on which is entitled to that name has been stayed, pending results of the property dispute. Suzanne Gill, director of communications for the ACNA diocese, said it is likely the name will be awarded to whichever party ultimately prevails in the property litigation.

For the time being, nothing has changed. In its 178-page opinion, the Texas Court of Appeals ruled, based on its analysis of All Saints deeds, that the property belongs to the Episcopal Church's diocese. The court remanded consideration of dozens of deeds for other churches to the trial court, for reconsideration based on the principles applied to All Saints.

ACNA-affiliated congregations are still in most of the roughly 50 churches that left the Episcopal Church in 2008. All Saints in Fort Worth is a special case that was addressed separately by the appeals court. All Saints has been occupied continuously by an Episcopal congregation, but a substantial contingent of the congregation has sought to gain control of the property to install an ACNA parish.

Katie Sherrod, director of communications for the Episcopal diocese, said in a written statement: "The Court of Appeals correctly ruled that only the Episcopal Church can decide who may belong to and control an Episcopal Diocese and Episcopal Congregations. In addition, the Episcopal Diocese has federal trademarks for its historic name and seal, which the breakaways cannot use. The federal case has been administratively closed pending the resolution of the state court case."

The ACNA diocese continues to use the name and seal on its website.

Kirk Petersen

Abuse Concerns Expand

The specter of sexual abuse by clergy and church workers has emerged as a concern for Anglican churches in New Zealand and Southern Africa.

The church in New Zealand has asked the government to expand its Royal Commission inquiry into abuse to include the church and its agencies. Archbishops Philip Richardson and Winston Halapua have written to the government on instructions from the national standing committee.

Their letter says the church's primary concern "is for the needs of those whose lives have been impacted by abuse, and we are conscious that abuse has been perpetrated by agencies across our society, including the Church and its agencies."

It would be unhelpful to victims and survivors, the letter said, if the government's investigations are limited only to the state sector.

"We believe that victims, survivors, and the public at large would have greater confidence in the processes and outcomes of the Royal Commission's Inquiry if it was fully inclusive," the archbishops wrote.

"Our Christian faith teaches us the power of truth, justice and reconciliation. We see this Commission of Inquiry as one way we can put that faith into action, and we encourage you to give this request serious consideration, in the hope that this will provide a pathway to healing and wholeness for all concerned."

Meanwhile, the Archbishop of Cape Town has released a letter saying that in recent weeks he has heard from four individuals reporting experiences of sexual abuse in two dioceses in the 1970s and 1980s.

It was clear from these reports "that we are lagging behind in our care for victims of abuse," he said, adding: "I am also urgently consulting more widely on how the Church can not only act more effectively, but be seen to act effectively in cases of sexual abuse. Key to my efforts is to achieve holistic and sustainable healing."

John Martin

St. James the Resurrected

On the second Sunday of Easter 2018 — 145 Sundays after they were locked out of the building where they had set roots as a community — the people of St. James Church hosted a joyous homecoming service in Newport Beach.

The altar party processed toward a rose stained-glass window framed by organ pipes — the same rose window design that on prior Sundays had been projected on the sterile, blank wall of a community room at City Hall.

For nearly three years, the Episcopalians led by the Rev. Canon Cindy Voorhees had worshiped together in borrowed spaces as they hoped and prayed for a return to the massive church complex at 3209 Via Lido. They were granted permission by the bishop and standing committee last month, with certain conditions. One condition was that the church must drop "the Great" from its former name, which the church has done, although signage and logos still read "St. James the Great."

The Rt. Rev. John Taylor, Bishop of Los Angeles, was celebrant and preacher for the homecoming. "I'm the John with an H," he said with a smile at the start of his sermon. It was the only reference he made to his predecessor, the Rt. Rev. J. Jon Bruno, who was suspended from ordained ministry because of his words and actions after he ordered the building padlocked on June 29, 2015.

Taylor made clear he was on a mission of reconciliation in the wake of sustained, bitter conflict between the congregation and the diocese. "We are reclaiming our pastorship this morning," he said of himself and his diocesan colleagues, and stepping out of the role of "mere negotiator."

He introduced some senior members of his diocesan staff, including the Rev. Canon Melissa McCarthy, whom Taylor appointed canon to the ordinary and chief of staff after his installation in December.

McCarthy is responsible for a formal, year-long reconciliation process that will begin April 18 with the first of a series of two-day workshops, with titles like "Healthy Congregations" and "Conflict in the Church." The workshops are led by the Illinois-based Lombard Mennonite Peace Center and are open to anyone in the diocese.

The scope of the reconciliation effort recognizes that the entire diocese suffered as their bishop's career concluded in years of conflict, and that some believe St. James used the disciplinary process improperly in the attempt to reclaim the building.

The sermon served as a reminder of a message Taylor has delivered in the past to the people of St. James: Although much of their ordeal had been beyond their control, they also played a role in the conflict and now must help heal the wounds.

Preaching without notes, Taylor held to the custom of anchoring his sermon to the appointed Scripture readings for the day, which provided plenty of material for the occasion.

The gospel lesson was the Doubting Thomas story from the 20th chapter of John. It begins with the resurrected Jesus appearing to the disciples in the Upper Room, even though the door had been locked.

"When I say to you, 'locked doors,' does that resonate with you?" he asked the congregation.

The text says that the doors were locked "for fear of the Jews," and Taylor explained that when the Gospel of John was written late in the first century, "there was beginning to be conflict in the Jewish community, profound conflict, about whether Jesus is the Messiah."

"We are stigmatizing Jews," he said, and yet everyone in that Upper Room was a Jew. "So the door was locked for fear of people just like them."

Another reading was from 1 John, "where the church is beginning to bicker, they're in conflict with other Christians, they've lost their sense of unity and common purpose," Taylor said. "So here comes First John saying, *if you say you have fellowship because*

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St. James

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you know Jesus wants you to have fellowship … [but] you're bickering, you're fighting … then you lie, says First John."

And then commenting on Acts 4: "If you were giving a sermon today at St. James Episcopal Church, after all it had been through, and you came to this passage in Acts: 'No one claimed private ownership of any possessions' — does that preach?" he asked.

"You reconcile so you can find unity, but you also reconcile so you can better understand what's happening," he said. "We are inviting everyone in our diocese to come home to a new sense of belonging, of being at home with one another in the diocesan family."

Despite the reality that some difficult conversations lie ahead, the service was unambiguously a celebration. When Voorhees opened the announcements with the words "welcome to St. James," more than 150 church members leapt to their feet to applaud, whistle, and shout.

The doors had been unlocked five days earlier, and Voorhees said that on each of those days, 25 to 40 volunteers had been scouring the building, wiping away three years of dust on the pews and grime on the windows.

The service was carried live on the congregation's YouTube channel, and as of April 7 the Save Saint James the Great website referred visitors to stjamesnewport.org.

Kirk Petersen

Concerns for Pakistanis

Religious-freedom activists feel heightening concerns for Pakistan's Christian minority. Recent months have shown a sharp upturn in persecution and an increasing number of blasphemy cases. Now Christians face another imposition after a ruling by Pakistan's High Court that all citizens must declare their religion when applying for identity documents.

Pakistan has strict laws against insulting the Prophet Muhammad, and

these blasphemy cases can attract the death penalty. Even rumors of blasphemy can trigger mob violence, causing severe injury or death to Christians. Moreover, people frequently file blasphemy charges where there are disputes about matters such as property.

"Persecution is double — if you see the persecution rate after New Year 2018 till now you can see double the number of blasphemy cases," said Angela Michael, who leads an anti-slavery project in Pakistan supported by Anglican Aid (Sydney).

The most famous blasphemy case in recent years is that of Asia Bibi, sentenced to hang in 2010. She was accused of insulting the prophet of Islam when she drank water from a well in her village and then offered some to a Muslim woman. A crowd gathered, claiming she had polluted the well by drinking from it and demanded she become a Muslim. She was arrested when she refused to convert, and she remains on death row.

Two men who supported her and campaigned against blasphemy laws — the governor of Punjab, Salmaan Taseer, and Minority Affairs Minister, Shahbaz Bhatti — were assassinated in separate incidents.

The most recent high-profile case involves a 21-year-old street sweeper, Patras Masih, who was accused of having shared an allegedly blasphemous image on a Facebook Messenger group, showing a man standing with his foot placed on the dome of a mosque.

After his cousin, 24-year-old Sajid Masih, was called in for investigation, Sajid said investigators tried to force him to sexually assault Patras; he jumped from the fourth floor of the Federal Investigation Agency's headquarters in Lahore to escape their demands. Friends say he broke almost every bone in his body and remains in critical condition.

Diocese of Sydney

Disappearing Organists

Most Church of England churches own an organ, and most are in working order. Organists, however, are less numerous. *The InHarmony Report* by Richard Hubbard, music development director for the mainly rural Diocese of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich, found that more than half of active organists in the diocese are older than 70. Less than four percent are 30 or younger.

The report found that most of the churches surveyed had an organ in working order, but a third needed to sing to recorded music for lack of an organist.

"A lot of it is to do with the fact that the organ is particularly difficult to learn and requires a lot of commitment; you normally need to have about grade-five piano to start organ lessons," Hubbard told the *Daily Express*.

Another issue was gaining access to an instrument for practicing. Most parish churches are locked and there are few other options for finding an organ.

"In the winter, I know from my own experience that you go to a dark cold country church and practice for as long as you can until your fingers freeze," Hubbard said. "So it requires a lot of dedication and effort for young people to take up the organ."

Hubbard said that singing together with a live musician creates far more community togetherness than following a machine. His study found that organ backing tracks are much less successful for congregational singing than a live accompanist.

"Recorded backing tracks are rarely the best method of accompanying a congregation," the study said. "The quality and production of the tracks varies greatly, as does the quality of church sound systems through which they are played."

John Martin

Texas Diocese Ready for Names

The Diocese of Texas is ready to receive applications for Suffragan Bishop of Texas. May 20 is the deadline to apply. The new bishop will succeed Bishop Dena A. Harrison, will be based at the Austin Diocesan Center, and will oversee churches in the western region of the diocese.

The process differs from nominations in the diocese's history of recent decades, and will allow for online applications without requiring nomination from a third party. After consulting with the Rt. Rev. Todd Ousley, Bishop for the Office of Pastoral Development, the standing committee designed an open process and a wide search.

The diocese has created a webpage (bit.ly/TexasSuff2018) that provides the job description, the timeline, and application forms.

Confessing Anglicans Want Safeguards

The Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans New Zealand has issued a three-page response to Motion 29, a proposal to extend blessing rites to same-sex couples and unmarried couples. The fellowship protests the proposed change, and it voices concerns that Motion 29 makes inadequate provisions for confessing Anglicans.

"We repeat our plea for an Extra

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Confessing Anglicans

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Provincial Diocese to be established. This would allow the two convictions to exist within different structures and would allow that process to be done as patiently, kindly, and generously as possible," fellowship members said.

"Rather than the kind of splits and legal disputes that have occurred in other Anglican provinces that have gone down this road, the creation of an Extra Provincial Diocese, done collaboratively and with goodwill, would endorse the gospel of the Lord Jesus rather than bring it into disrepute. The Report states that in its opinion General Synod does not have the authority or mandate to implement this option. We would contend that we have already seen this kind of imagination and resourcefulness in the establishment of our Three Tikanga church, and we now have the opportunity to offer hope and a way forward not only to Anglicans of our Province but the wider Communion."

Bishop Mallory Dies at 81

The Rt. Rev. Shannon Mallory, the founding bishop of the Diocese of El Camino Real, died of leukemia on April 4.

"Let us hold our stories and memories shared with Shannon, giving thanks for his gifts of leadership and adventurous spirit that helped our diocese to have its founding," said the Rt. Rev. Mary Gray-Reeves, current bishop.

Gray-Reeves shared a message from Mallory's daughter Teresa that described him as a lover of social justice who delighted in the diversity of the world's people, cultures, and religions. "Some of his happiest days were the 18 years spent in Africa. Pastoral ministry was where he shined. He loved home visits, sitting and listening to stories of people and their journeys with God," she said.

Brenda and Tom Ray

Rays Complete Life Together

Brenda and the Rt. Rev. Thomas K. Ray were married for 59 years, they both lived with long-term illness for the past decade, and they died within three days of each other. Both died at home in Northern Michigan, surrounded by their family. Brenda was 81 when she died on Feb. 3, and the bishop was 83 when he died Feb. 6.

Thomas Ray served as Bishop of Northern Michigan from 1982 to 1999. He was an advocate of women's rights, gay rights, and Mutual Ministry, which the bishop once said "pushed back against the hierarchical infantilizing of adult Christians who are considered second-class citizens if they were not ordained."

Brenda helped found the Marquette chapter of Habitat for Humanity; she was a member of two book clubs in town for 25 years, and active in the Episcopal Church. She earned a degree in sociology from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and a teaching degree. She taught in the Evanston, Illinois public school district.

The Rays met when they were both graduate students at the University of Michigan. After he graduated from General Theological Seminary, they were married in Grand Rapids in 1959 and spent their honeymoon in the Upper Peninsula.

The Rays are survived by a daughter, Jennifer; sons Christopher, Tim, and Geoff; and 12 grandchildren.

GTS News

Correction

Several other parishes west of the Mississippi River have a heritage older than Trinity & St. Peter's Church in San Francisco ("Historic Churches: Six Cases" [TLC, Feb. 25]).

The Compline Choir of St. Michael and All Angels sings in St. Alban's Chapel. Richard Hill photo

TLCI Update

Faith Talks: Loneliness

Four panelists discussed "Shaping Christian Community in a Lonely World" March 6 in the second meeting of Faith Talks, the Living Church Institute's teaching and conversation series in Dallas.

The Rev. Matthew Burdette, a curate at Good Shepherd Church, moderated the discussion. Other panelists were Ty Albright, a real-estate broker and board member of the Cohousing Association of the United States; Jill DeTemple, associate professor of religious studies at Southern Methodist University, who spoke about her research on social capital and her experience in Latin American community development; and Abigail Woolley, a doctoral student in Christian ethics at SMU, who reflected on her experience in New Monastic communities.

The discussion ranged broadly. When reflecting on forces that combat the growth of Christian community, Burdette said that church community is often weakened by economic aspirations, as members — including teenagers — devote most of their time to the goal of financial success.

Albright described the effects of cars on urban infrastructure, such that many people rarely see their neighbors or interact with others in public.

Woolley mentioned a cultural emphasis on independence and control, which expands with technological advances.

In discussing possible solutions, DeTemple described contemporary research techniques that aim to make social capital a measure of community development.

Albright discussed cohousing designs that designate certain shared spaces, like yards and larger areas for entertaining, and shared resources like lawnmowers.

Woolley elaborated on New Monasticism, which usually focuses on justice, communal prayer, and hospitality. The group also debated the extent to which declining community may be experienced mostly by affluent residents of the Western and Northern hemispheres.

The evening began with a reception in the foyer of Canterbury House, followed by Compline in St. Alban's Chapel. Jonathan Ryan, music director of St. Michael and All Angels Church, and St. Michael's Compline Choir encircled a candle-lit altar.

The final Faith Talks event of the spring, "Liturgy and the Inside-Out Economy," will feature the Rev. Nathan Jennings, and is scheduled for April 27 in Dallas.

Silence, Sound, and the Power of God

By Ephraim Radner

I had a dinner conversation recently with some Quakers. They were older folk, "convicted," as they called it, who had spent their lives around the world in service of their religious commitments. They wanted to know about how people around the table had come to their faith. We gave our stories. One involved being converted through hearing music in church. Our Quaker friends were fascinated by this. "Yes," they said, "we've heard that can happen." They tried on the idea a bit — music and conversion — but in the end admitted: "That's not what happens among Quakers. For Quakers, silence is the source of everything."

God and music? Or God and silence? Many theologians seem to have come down on the side of silence, for at least two reasons. Both reasons, furthermore, seem confirmed by contemporary cultural realities and assumptions.

The first reason we might tie God's converting power to silence is a moral one: human silence is required in order to listen to God. As human creatures we are always distracted, caught up in an inextricable net of noise, chatter, and blathering self-regard. To hear God, one must hush one's inner — and outer — jabbering, born mostly of a kind of narcissism. That is hard to do, of course. There was a time when it was expected, in some churches, that people would be quiet when they arrived for worship; private prayers would be said in silence before the worship began. Frankly, I've simply stopped coming to church early on Sundays: it's nothing but a marketplace of conversation, busyness, and clatter. To that degree, many of our churches mirror the larger world, whose brutal soundscape overwhelms inner quieting with a vengeance.

But, as Martin Buber said, "we cannot talk to God until nothing more is talking within us." Do we not remember Elijah waiting for the Lord's message? Entire volumes — for instance, by Michel Masson — have been written on the way God speaks only after the wind, earthquake, and fire have passed and the still small voice of the Lord emerges from the secret quiet of his divine heart (1 Kgs. 19:12). To be sure, just this has been a Quaker insistence, as in the classic hymn of Whittier's "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind" (No. 653, Hymnal 1982):

> O Sabbath rest by Galilee!
> O calm of hills above,
> Where Jesus knelt to share with Thee
> The silence of eternity
> Interpreted by love! …
> Breathe through the heats of our desire
> Thy coolness and Thy balm;
> Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
> Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
> O still, small voice of calm.

Whittier's hymn points as well to the second reason theologians have tended to tie God's converting power to silence: silence is more expressive of God than is sound. Silence is the origin of all things, in their divine source, for the eternality and depth of God are perfect calm. There are deep Christian intuitions at play here, captured most explicitly in mystical description. So, Meister Eckhart: "The heavenly Father speaks one Word, and speaks it eternally; and in this Word, He expends all His power."

This notion that God becomes his Word by emptying himself — even, thus, of sound — is suggestive of the nature of divine life. Hence Eckhart continues to have the human heart mirror God's: "The Word lies hidden in the

Sunset behind Boquillas Canyon Wikimedia Commons / Archbob photo

soul, so that one can neither know or hear it unless one is willing to be pierced by it to one's depths. Otherwise, it can never be heard. Indeed, every voice and every sound must disappear; there must be a quiet calm in place — a silence."

Eckhart added that the closest thing to God in the universe *is* silence, and the "language of heaven" is, in human terms, silence. Out of the hidden bosom of the Father comes the Word, and thus, as one spiritual writer noted, we might well translate John 1:14 as "Silence became flesh." This tradition is scripturally rooted: as both Jewish and some Christian (see the Vulgate) translations of Psalm 65:1 put it: "Silence is your praise."

This mystical orientation has been attractive to contemporary culture in a certain perverse way. Modern cosmology and nihilism have reshaped the notion of "divine silence" into a kind of negative spirituality: we come from silence, we go into silence. Space is silent; all things disappear. There is perhaps a certain awe in the face of this entropic dissipation, but it is hardly worthy of the designation *praise*. The silence of Buddhist recognition is not the same as the mystery of God's audibly unfathomable otherness.

While this contemporary appropriation should alert us to a potential problem with the valorization of divine silence, it cannot overturn the power of the Christian tradition in this respect, epitomized in Carthusian hope for an ecstatic union with God *ab silentio*, "out of the silence." The 2005 film *Into Great Silence* — almost three hours long — captures the hope wonderfully in its depiction of life within this voiceless Christian religious monastic order; as does, in another genre, the anonymous classic of Carthusian meditation *Amour et Silence* (*Love and Silence*) from the early 1940s, translated into English as *The Prayer of Love and Silence*. For Carthusians, not only does silence allow us to be "alert to the presence of God" (contemplation); that is the first point. But thereby, God can come to us in his true being, not as a chatterer. The goal of the monk, after all — and is this not the goal of any Christian conversion, ultimately? — is union rather than dialogue.

There is, however a counter-story to the narrative of God as silence: it is the account of creation as intrinsically noisy in the best sense. This is a claim, perhaps anti-contemplative, made not only by some theologians but also by certain modern philosophers, like Michel Serres. When God creates, he creates a teeming multitude of beings, whose very existence is given, from the hand of their creator, in boisterous, even chaotic noise. This is the meaning of "fruitfulness," "multiplication," "filling up," "swarming" that marks the opening verses of Genesis.

It is hard for us, in our time and place, to appreciate the sheer gloriousness of this created din, reverberating through the universe. My son Isaac took time recently to go to Big Bend National Park in Texas and simply record the soundscape of the area, far from the overwhelming and often crushing racket of urban life. What greets one here is not silence, however, but a different kind of bubbling resonance that seems to emerge directly from the world's simple but miraculous existence. Even space, unwrapped from the atmospheric ripples of humanly apprehended sound, must be noisy to the perceptive, filled with waves of every length and stutter. And is not God hyper-perceptive? Where can God go from noise, since he has made it?

That is the key: the creature, in its very existence, sings to God. As Augustine famously remarks, commenting on the Psalms, every part of creation — the earth, the skies — is

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constantly crying out to God, "You made me!" Certainly the Psalms and Isaiah tell us this: meadows, trees, hills, birds, even the seas, the very heavens and depths of the earth make song to their Lord (cf. Pss. 65:13; 96:12; 98:8; 104:12; 69:34; Isa. 44:23). The very act of creation is one upheld by singing: God says to Job: "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding. … When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" (38:4, 7).

Hence, songs of praise — the music of sound — seem to be a part of created being, so that we must rightly say that music precedes even the creation of human beings. The ancient Greeks had the idea that the planets make a music according to the proportions of their orbits. This was taken up by Christian thinkers like Boethius, and most famously by the 17th-century astronomer and mathematician Johannes Kepler. "The music of the spheres," he called it; that harmonious sound of the very universe.

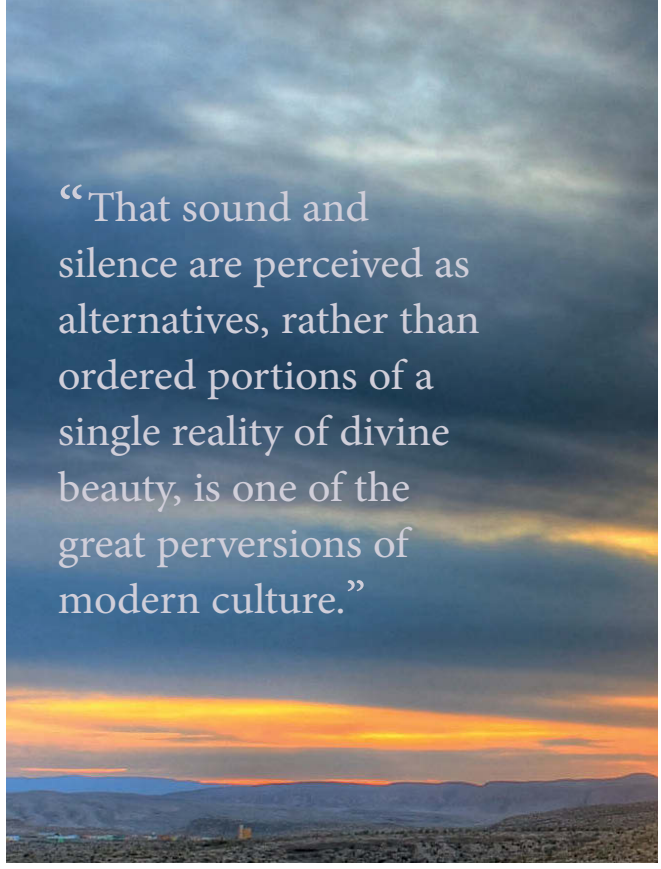
While it might seem absurd that planets could make a sound in empty space, the ultimate idea was that *God* hears this music, for God has created a world that, in its very being, exists in constant praise of its creator. Isaac Newton's notion of space as a divine "sensorium" catches some of this: God *feels,* he hears the sounds of everything he creates. That is in fact what creation *does* in its internal being: it praises God in song. To be alive, to be a creature, is to make a noisome song for God.

Readers of Richard Hooker remember that, on more than one occasion, he noted that when we pray and sing before God together, we do so in "the presence of celestial powers, that there we stand, we pray, we sound forth hymnes unto God having his Angels intermingled as our associates." This is not simply a measure of creaturely limitation, however commendable in relation to God. Creatures, material and spiritual, make music to God because, before the angels themselves open their mouths, *God* has opened his own in song: "The LORD thy God in the midst of thee [is] mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing" (Zeph. 3:17).

Of course this is so! For God's being is a word that creates. In creating, in being creator, God's being laughs, sings, plays instruments of music, and "rejoices" (Prov. 8:30-31). This is a word whose very being orders that created song according to his own. Hence, in Revelation, there are words that go with the songs of the saints and angels — not only humming, however profound and originating or welling up from some mysterious place far from our ears, but the articulate descriptors of God in Christ: Scriptures *sung*.

Who could fail to be converted to God by such a sound? For it is the sound of God "still working" (John 5:17).

In the end, the question of conversion through silence or through music may come down to the proper ordering of



each together, our silences and our sounds as a single reality. After all, such an ordering of silence and sound is what music *is*: not simply noise, however createdly joyous, but the holding together of silence — the contours of our mortal createdness before God — and our praise at once, something that is given its perfection in the fleshly path and utterings of Jesus, who sang on the way to the dark silences of the Cross (Mark 14:26). Surely our deepest conversions must follow such a path of woven sound and silence too.

That sound and silence are perceived as alternatives, rather than ordered portions of a single reality of divine beauty, is one of the great perversions of modern culture. Such an ordering is something one must *learn*, ascetically, as it were, and corporately with others. It is learned as individuals are shaped by the traditional silence of church, out of which a calibrated and ordered singing together, tied to the words of Scripture and their internal human appropriations (hymnody), is enfolded into the prayer of the humble listener. Our disintegrative and busied culture, by contrast, has made us *unlearn* common singing, leaving only human noise in its place; and we, in turn, have transformed the uttered Word into pallid and self-satisfied mumblings, unstructured by the silences of its divine scaffolding.

I was converted in part by the hymn "Come down, O Love divine" — a poem originally written by the medieval wandering ascetic Bianco da Siena, who, with famous Franciscan minstrels like Jacopone da Todi, let go of the world's noise for the sake of God's, and sang it into the empty spaces of hungry hearts.

The Rev. Ephraim Radner is professor of historical theology at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto.

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Hosting recovery support groups is an outreach of love, a sustaining resource for parish families, and a powerhouse of spiritual awakening that works both ways.

Good Book Upstairs, Big Book Downstairs

Recovery groups present opportunities to welcome others into sacred spaces.

By Karyn Zweifel

Most Episcopalians are familiar with their church spaces because they attend Sunday worship. But many Episcopal churches host recovery-related support groups on weekdays. Unfamiliar to the Sunday crowd and arriving by ones and 10s to 50 or more, they are generally a friendly, cheerful bunch. They sip coffee out of Styrofoam cups, sit in (usually) battered chairs, and strive with all their might to achieve a spiritual transformation by diligently, often urgently, working 12 steps.

Building a connection between the people of the church and the folks in the basement starts with the basics of hospitality. The Rev. Jan M. Brown, a deacon at Bruton Parish in Williamsburg, Virginia, is vice president of Recovery Ministries of the Episcopal Church. When churches rent space to community groups like the Boy Scouts, they make a commitment to see the space is safe and welcoming.

"We wouldn't have wine or alcohol out where young kids would have access to it," Brown said. "That wouldn't be safe or hospitable. The same applies to a church hosting an [Alcoholics Anonymous] meeting.

"One of the most important things our churches can do is become more educated about the subject," she said. "We need to learn about addiction and substance-use disorders. Part of that would include learning about what's going on in the basement with 12-step and other support groups."

Deep Connections

In the early 20th century, the Oxford Group was a popular movement for spiritual renewal and evangelism. Its leader in the United States, the Rev. Sam Shoemaker, was rector of Calvary Church in New York City. When Bill W., founder of AA, was first exposed to the Oxford Group's ideas, he did not immediately find sobriety. But he did discover a way of life that was simple

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The calm beauty and familiar, traditional fixtures we find in our sanctuaries undeniably influence our spiritual growth, but they aren't necessary components of a transformative experience.

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yet powerful enough to work remarkable transformations.

Members of the Oxford Group found self-improvement by performing self-inventory, admitting wrongs, making amends, using prayer and meditation, and carrying the message to others. Bill W. continued to attend Oxford Group meetings with Shoemaker, and the relationship was pivotal in developing AA, the first of many support groups with a historical connection to evangelism in the Anglican Communion.

Shoemaker was an influential 20th-century evangelical leader both inside and outside the Episcopal Church as a popular radio preacher and a missionary in China. One of his best-known talks is "What the Church has to Learn from AA."

Shoemaker wrote, "Now perhaps the time has come for the Church to be reawakened and revitalized by those insights and practices found in AA. I think some of you may be a little horrified at this suggestion. I fear you will be saying to yourself, 'What have we, who have always been decent people, to learn from a lot of reconstructed drunks?'"

"As a 12-stepper, I start every day with 'I messed up, I am a sinner, my life is unmanageable,'" said Raymond, an Episcopalian and AA member. "We always come back to step one, we always start by reminding ourselves we're sinners. It's cyclical. I take that in, and something changes in me, and I know I need help, I need surrender, repentance."

In 1955, Shoemaker wrote that the church needed to learn

> the necessity for a real change of heart, a true conversion. As we come Sunday after Sunday, year after year, we are supposed to be in a process of transformation. Are we? The AA's are. At each meeting there are people seeking and in conscious need. Everybody is pulling for the people who speak and looking for more insight and help. They are pushed by their need. They are pulled by the inspiration of others who are growing. They are a society of the "before and after" with a clear line between the old life and the new.

Finding Spiritual Awakenings

Although the calm beauty and familiar, traditional fixtures in Episcopal sanctuaries undeniably influence spiritual growth, the mere presence of stained glass, venerable wood paneling, and all the trappings of our churches is not a necessity.

"In general, sacred spaces are places where covenantal ministries take place," Brown said. In other words, when a group of people decides to agree or promise to behave a certain way, that space becomes sanctified by that covenant. Within our churches we believe that God made a promise to us, and we make a promise back to God, she said.

Raymond believes any space is sacred where he may access the transformative nature of his higher power. "It happens to me in church, but it also happens in AA meetings," he said. "The Holy Spirit touches me, and I am not just connected, I am transformed. It is an emotional response." He is a member of a large cathedral parish, which has been hosting AA meetings for decades. "The meeting space is down in the bowels of the church," he said.

"Bridging the gap is so important, and I've tried all my years to do that," said an anonymous priest who is a member of AA. "There's such a deep spirituality in 12-step programs. I wish recovery people knew the depth of our [Episcopal] traditions, and I wish church people knew the extraordinary, transformative experience of spiritual awakening that happens in recovery."

"I am a Christian, but I found God in AA," said one member of a Southern urban parish. "I don't think that's sacrilegious. It's an extraordinary aha moment. You realize, *I didn't do anything, this happened to me, this is a spiritual awakening!* I feel warm, I feel wrapped up in the arms of God. AA saved me, it brought me dependence on God."

Parish basements are just as sanctified as our sanctuaries, Brown said. "People don't see that they need to go upstairs because they get all they need downstairs.

"In some places what's going on in the basement is better than what's going on in the sanctuary," Brown said. "The people upstairs would like the honesty, the ability to share freely, the sense of

safety that characterizes a 12-step meeting. You can speak without feeling like someone's going to try to step in and fix you. In the meetings people share their experience, strength, and hope."

Twelve-step recovery begins with an admission of powerlessness and promises spiritual awakening to those who work through each step honestly. It involves surrendering, identifying your shortcomings, reconciling, and then repeating it, in an ever-deepening cycle of spiritual growth.

Taking Our Inventory

"We have a problem within the church; our church culture has contributed," Brown said. "Church is not currently a safe place for people in addiction. We need to take internal steps, inventory where we stand, and get clear about our own practices and ideas about alcohol before we can choose to make changes."

Brown serves on the Episcopal Church's Commission on Impairment and Leadership, formed in response to a tragedy involving an impaired bishop and the death of a bicyclist in 2015.

Recovery Ministries of the Episcopal Church was originally known as the National Episcopal Coalition on Alcohol and Drug Abuse. RMEC is now a separate 501(c)(3) organization of clergy and laity, led by an all-volunteer board. It has been instrumental in bringing the issues of addiction and recovery to the attention of General Convention, most recently the 2015 resolutions regarding alcohol use and abuse in church settings.

One recovery resolution passed by General Convention in 2015 seeks to create a new normal in the church's relationship with alcohol. "We aspire to be a place in which conversations about alcohol, substance misuse, or addiction are not simply about treatment but about renewal, justice, wholeness, and healing," it says in part.

Recovery Ministries has much to offer the individuals, families, and parishes within the Episcopal Church. "Many of us are in recovery ourselves," Brown said. "What we all share is a conviction that the church is responsible for offering God's healing to those living with addictions and also for providing their loved ones with strength and guidance. Recovery is not the outcome for every person, so we need to make space for everybody."

That process begins with simple conversations about the nature of the disease of addiction. Talking about it can be difficult, since many people still believe alcoholism and addiction can be overcome by willpower or that drinking and drug use are moral failings. Through the lens of recovery, addiction is a disease affected by multiple factors and can be treated to restore people to fully functioning members of society. An essential piece of treatment, experts agree, is finding communities with new attitudes about substance use and abuse.

"Imagine if, because of your illness, you couldn't participate fully in church," Brown said. "Think about a child with a peanut allergy. When he was invited to go to church camp, nobody panicked and said, *Oh, no, how can we go four days without peanut butter?* There was a conversation, and people offered alternatives, because we want to be in community with that child. So what happens in our parish lives that excludes people in addiction?"

Parish events with abundant alcohol may come to mind. To make a non-drinker or newly sober guest feel welcome would mean offering non-alcoholic refreshments that are just as attractive as any other choices, Brown said. Episcopal churches also should serve food when alcohol is on offer; observe all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding the serving of alcohol; and make sure people who are intoxicated do not continue to drink or enter their cars to drive home.

"Recovery Ministries is not about making everybody quit drinking," Brown said. "We just need to have these conversations. What are the cultural norms and practices that make our brothers and sisters slip or fail?"

Offering attractive, non-alcoholic beverage choices at social events is one way to help people in recovery feel welcome.

"People in the rooms of AA and other 12-step programs have practical, workable experiences in finding spiritual wholeness that not all church people have experienced," said another priest and AA member. A loving God has responded to this disease with power and love, he said — love found as close as your parish hall or Sunday school rooms. For those who find themselves in a meeting, the sound of metal folding chairs being placed into a circle filled with experience, strength, and hope is a beautiful chime of its own, just as inspiring as any of the finest silver Sanctus bells.

Karyn Zweifel is an author and freelance writer in Birmingham, Alabama.

The choir at Wells Cathedral

Seier+Seier/Flickr photo

Thank You for the Music

By Zachary Fletcher

Many Church musicians are happily secular, and for many years I was one of them. If you had asked me several years ago why I did music, I would have said, "Because I love it." If you had asked me why the Church uses music in worship, I could have told you some aspects of its history, but God had nothing to do with it. Religion was nothing more than a nice vessel for music. That the very existence of music is a mystery did not strike me as particularly interesting.

During my train commuting for a chaplaincy internship at a nearby hospital, I often listened to ABBA. One of the many ABBA songs I've come to enjoy is "Thank You for the Music." Its refrain and title thank a nebulous *you* for the gift of musical expression:

> So I say, thank you for the music, the songs I'm singing,
> Thanks for all the joy they're bringing,
> Who can live without it, I ask in all honesty,
> What would life be?
> Without a song or a dance what are we?
> So I say, thank you for the music,
> For giving it to me.

The B-section continues referring to this mysterious "you," in search of just who it is that they're thanking:

> And I've often wondered, how did it all start?
> Who found out that nothing can capture a heart
> Like a melody can?
> Well, whoever it was, I'm a fan.

I'm a fan, too. I was curious to see, in this song's Wikipedia article, a juicy piece of trivia. It turns out that in the Swedish version of this song, "Tack för alla sånger," there's a reference to the Church:

> Vem behöver religioner?
> Dom kan vi va utan.
>
> Or:
>
> Who needs religion?
> We can live without it.

If, as these words suggest, music can replace religion, can music replace God? And if so, who exactly are we thanking? Christianity has something to say about this.

Music is a mystery, and its liturgical presence witnesses to the ultimate mystery: God's revelation as Jesus Christ crucified and risen from the dead. Now that's something many are not prepared to accept. God? Jesus? Resurrection? Can we not just have nice music? And yet Christ is the Mystery of all mysteries, permanently changing the fabric of what we thought was real, revealing instead a reality in which God says, "I am drawing all things to myself" (John 12:32).

Like all aspects of worship, music *points* to something, or actually a *Someone*: God Almighty, the one who gave us music. A classmate once said to me, "Music is the primal form of prayer." He is absolutely right. We do music because we are crying out to God, knowing instinctively that our theological baby talk, however useful, only takes us so far.

Music is a foretaste of God's kingdom, a sign of the joy he desires for each of us, a joy that comes from being conformed into God's image. In Duke theologian Jeremy Begbie's words, "the arts … can show us how things *could* be, even in this world" with all its sin and brokenness.

Perhaps this is why Anglicanism, like many other Christian traditions, understands music as especially suitable for worshiping God "in the best sort of melody and music that may be conveniently devised" (as Queen Elizabeth enjoined upon her church in 1559). I am thankful that Anglicans believe it, whatever the reason. It got me into church as a child, and kept me there through my agnostic teenage and college years, and the longer I was there the more curious I became about just who to thank for all of this beauty, all of this harmony and joy. Both secular and liturgical music, when not properly ordered toward God, can distract equally from the worship of God, just as false religiosity dishonors true religion. We should take a hint from Bach, who signed many of his compositions with "S.D.G.," "soli Deo gloria": glory to God alone. Bach is great, but God is greater.

We should continue inviting talented musicians to sing and play in our churches, whether as professionals or enthusiastic amateurs. Some in our congregations may resent musicians, thinking they do not care about Jesus — they are only there for the pay, right? But this is shortsighted. There will also be new or longtime members of our parishes who are drawn in primarily, or even solely, by the music. Music is part of God's long game of showing love for his children in all aspects of life, but especially in the Church's liturgical life. If it were not for the music I came to love in the Episcopal Church, I would not have become a Christian.

Music led me to God, as it is leading others. If music is part of God's Word, then perhaps we can say, as God declares in Isaiah, that it "shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it" (Isa. 55:11).

Zachary Fletcher is a Master of Divinity candidate at Yale Divinity School, where he is affiliated jointly with Berkeley Divinity School and the Institute of Sacred Music.

Threading the Pauline Needle

Review by Gene Schlesinger

With this volume, New Testament scholar Garwood Anderson of Nashotah House Theological Seminary enters the fray of the New Perspective on Paul. This new perspective has been with us now for 40 years, and has been a source of great consternation, as it overturns many a cherished table in the temple of assumptions about the apostle to the gentiles. Anderson's proposal is straightforward and so intuitively plausible that I could not believe no one had thought of this before: "Contradictory schools of Pauline interpretation are both right, just not at the same time" (p. 379).

The New Perspective on Paul (NPP) and the Traditional Protestant Perspective (TPP) each, more or less, accurately interpret certain Pauline texts, but falter with others. This phenomenon is best accounted for by the thesis that Paul's thought developed over the course of his *oeuvre*, and that the differences between perspectives on Paul really elucidate differences in perspectives held by Paul at various stages of his ministry. In general the NPP gets the earlier Paul right (especially in Galatians), while the TPP gets the later Paul right (Romans and onward).

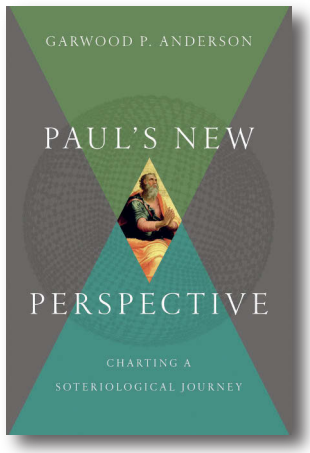
To establish this, Anderson begins, in his three initial chapters, to survey the lay of the land in Pauline studies, beginning with a critical appreciation of the NPP. In four key areas (assessing Paul's Damascus road experience, the soteriology of Second Temple Judaism, the role of Torah observance/works of the law, and the centrality of the covenant), the NPP has led to a more adequate understanding of Pauline theology, though it has often done so at the cost of overstating its case (pp. 15-56). Anderson surveys three key texts, which do not fit neatly within the competing paradigms (pp. 57-91), and then notes ways in which Pauline studies have developed in the wake of the NPP (pp. 92-152).

The heart of Anderson's contribution is a trio of chapters that chart the development of Paul's thought by tracing his use of vocabulary and concepts over the course of the 13 letters attributed to him in the New Testament (pp. 226-378). Anderson's decision to appeal to a broader corpus than the seven undisputed Pauline epistles is bold, yet borne out by a plausible (and modest) case for the authenticity of the disputed letters (pp. 182-225).

If there is a chink in the armor of *Paul's New Perspective*, it is this wider textual basis. If the disputed letters are not authentic, we are left with a very narrow window indeed for Paul's thought to have developed. If they are genuinely Pauline, though, they represent approximately 15 years of a 30-year vocation, rather than five years toward the end of Paul's life and ministry (p. 155).

On the other hand, this is one of the most interesting features of Anderson's argument. Under the assumption that Paul's thought developed, many of the features that lead the majority of New Testament scholars to judge the disputed Paulines as pseudonymous are reconceived; they are to be expected, and they continue trajectories observable in the undisputed letters All this makes Anderson's case for their authenticity more persuasive than others I have encountered, and I hope it leads to a wider consideration by the scholarly guild.

In tracing the Pauline itinerary, Anderson makes several key observations. Paul's protest against "works of the law" in Galatians transitions in Romans to a protest against works, more generically construed, which remains the case thereafter. These phrases are not interchangeable:



Paul's New Perspective
Charting a Soteriological Journey
By **Garwood P. Anderson**
IVP Academic. Pp. 441. $45

"works of the law" refers specifically to "boundary markers" for Israel's ethnic and covenantal identity, and it appears solely in contexts in which Gentile inclusion is at stake. In writing Romans, though, Paul expanded his critique of works of the law to include all human efforts to satisfy God. Similarly, in Galatians grace is a relatively generic term for God's generous gift. In Romans it becomes God's solution to the problem of sin, bearing a specific soteriological freight, and, once more, it remains so thereafter.

In a similar manner, justification appears in earlier letters, and specifically in contexts that have to do with the inclusion of Gentiles, but eventually gives way to a more holistic account of salvation that is cosmic in scope. Anderson is particularly strong on this score. He insists, against more expansive accounts, that justification retain its narrowly forensic sense, while still noting that Pauline soteriology is far broader than this legal metaphor can encompass. It is transformative, cosmic, and eschatological.

Justification is an aspect of this total salvation, and should neither be excluded from the picture nor made to bear the freight of the whole. Here aid and comfort is given to neither Protestant nor Catholic systematic theological construals of justification. Either may be true enough, but neither finds a particularly strong basis in Paul's teaching on justification.

In each case, a similar pattern is discernable: a concept has a specific application to the crisis of Gentile inclusion in Galatians, is then broadened to a more universal scope in Romans, is more synthetically articulated in later Pauline letters, especially Ephesians, and is regarded as a settled conclusion in the Pastoral Epistles. This development does not represent an about-face on the part of the apostle, but is a deepening and broadening of earlier views' implications. Each successive iteration of this dynamic lends greater plausibility to Anderson's overall thesis, as well as to his case for the authenticity of the disputed Pauline letters.

Anderson's proposal is another nail in the coffin of justification as the be-all and end-all of Pauline theology. It is important, particularly in the earlier letters, but hardly the center (pp. 384-90). Rather than another center, Anderson proposes a "red thread": participation in Christ runs throughout Paul's writings, and drives the considerations at every turn and every stage of development. Participation in Christ accounts for salvation's forensic, punctiliar, transformative, and dynamic dimensions (pp. 391-97). This is hardly new territory, but it is well-stated, and on the heels of an argument that bolsters it a good deal.

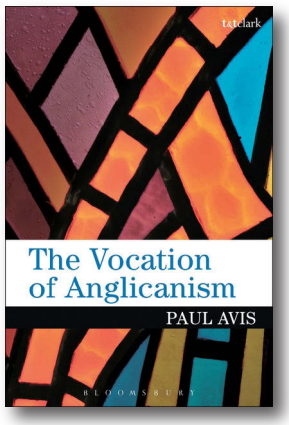
The book is a delight to read: well-written, personal, engaging. Anderson's ability to craft a metaphor or turn a phrase keeps the 400-plus pages from becoming a slog. Anderson's meticulous research gave me a far better grasp of the new perspective than I had before, all while constructing a persuasive argument that moves beyond that perspective's impasse.

Anderson makes bold claims, and while he establishes plausible cases for all of them, I suspect specialists in the field will demur from some of his proposals. Nevertheless, they would do well to give these claims serious consideration; the overall *Gestalt* of Anderson's project reconfigures some of these debates in unique ways. *Paul's New Perspective* deserves a wide readership. Those who are persuaded will have gained a better foothold in their understanding of Pauline theology. Those who disagree will be better for their careful engagement with Anderson's proposals.

Eugene R. Schlesinger holds a PhD in theology from Marquette University. He is the author of Missa Est! A Missional Liturgical Theology.

Covenantal Theology for the Anglican Communion

Review by Wesley Hill



The Vocation of Anglicanism

By **Paul Avis**

Bloomsbury T&T Clark. Pp. 224. $39.95

"Becoming Anglican is trendy," a Lutheran friend once said to me, referring to evangelicals' popular "Canterbury trail" pilgrimages, and it was clear he did not mean it as a compliment. "Anglicanism is a sinking ship," opined a Roman Catholic friend around the same time. "Anglicanism is Protestant," a fellow Episcopalian assured me. Guffaws greeted another friend when he made the same affirmation in a room full of Anglo-Catholics.

"Anglicanism isn't confessional," a Presbyterian friend once told me, obviously feeling sad for what I was missing by not being Reformed. "Anglicanism *is* confessional," said another friend, a staunch low churchman who had memorized the Thirty-nine Articles. "Anglicanism is conservative," another Episcopalian declared to me once. "Anglicanism is progressive," said yet another Episcopalian. Whatever else Anglicanism is, if these reminiscences are any indication, it is a tradition that remains perplexing. Or, as the renowned ecclesiologist Paul Avis puts it in his newest book, *The Vocation of Anglicanism*, "The Anglican Communion is currently in a state of uncertainty, confusion and turbulence."

A few years ago, when I was preparing to be confirmed in the Church of England, having been raised Southern Baptist, a mentor of mine handed me a copy of Avis's *Identity of Anglicanism: Essentials of Anglican Ecclesiology*. It was just what I needed at the time: a lucid, calm, surefooted introduction not just to the *culture* of Anglicanism — which indeed looked (here I had to agree with my critical friends) depressingly divided and confused — but to the *theology* by which Angli-

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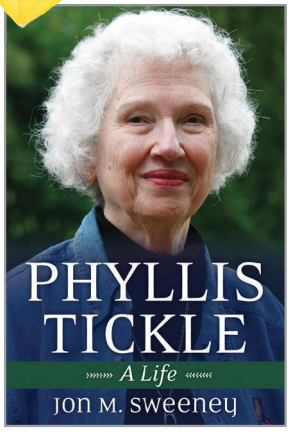

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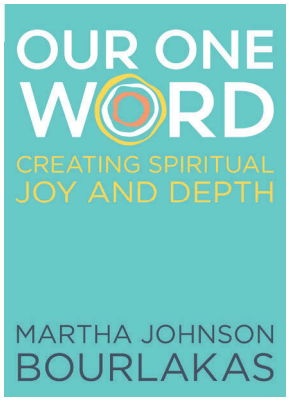

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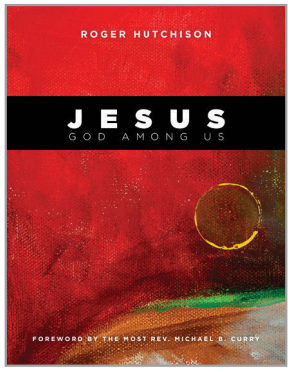

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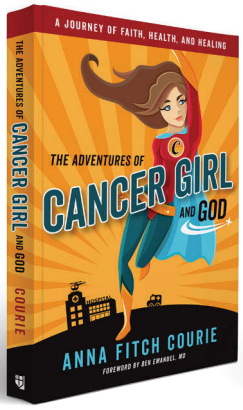

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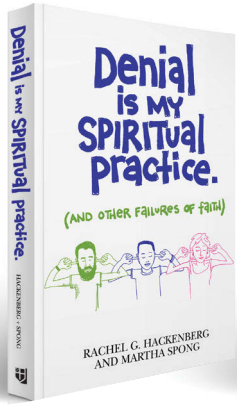

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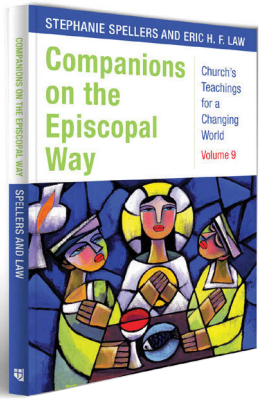

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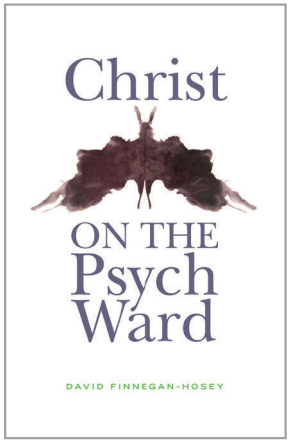

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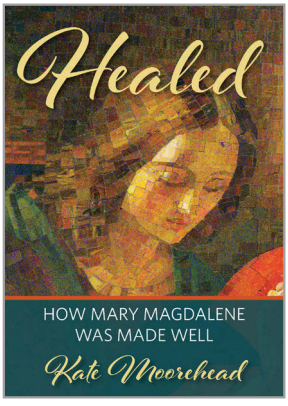

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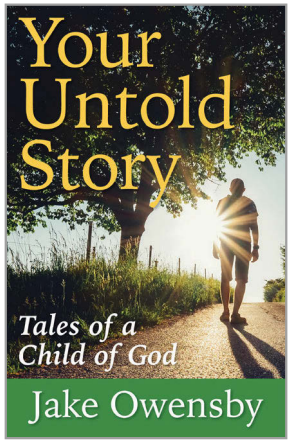

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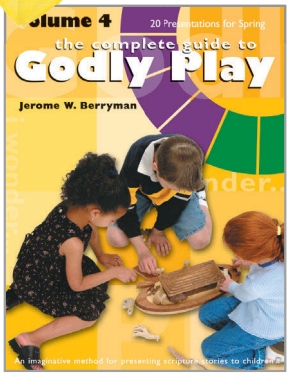

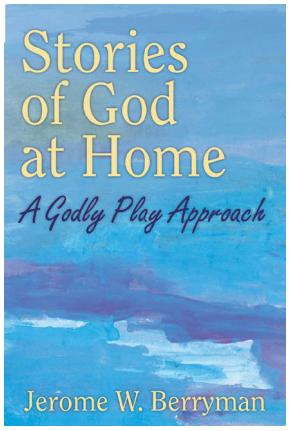

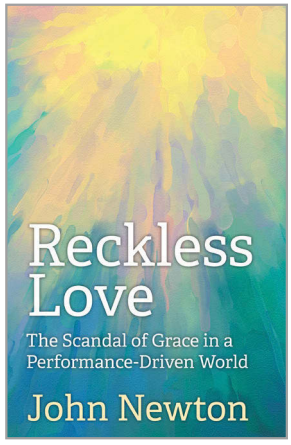

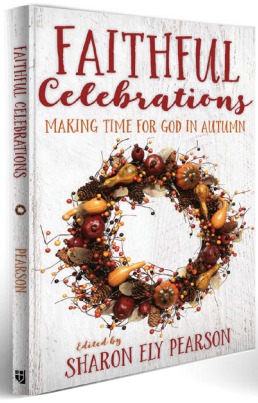

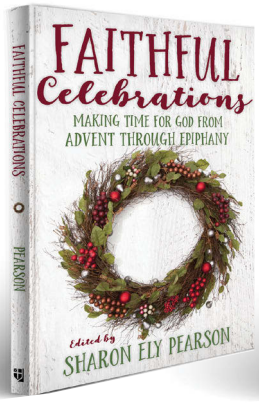

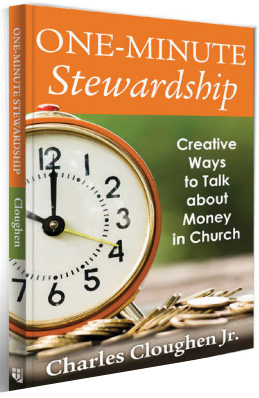

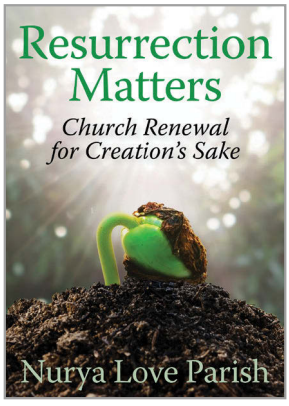

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(Continued from page 19)

canism "understands the nature and mission of the church." For someone like me, questioning whether my attraction to the beauty and mystery of the Anglican liturgy and ethos was more than simply aesthetic, and whether my Presbyterian and Lutheran and Roman Catholic friends were right about Anglicanism's pitiful state, Avis's book was a godsend.

That determination to do Anglican *theology*, rather than mere sociological or historical description, marks *The Vocation of Anglicanism* as well. Those familiar with his work, including his recent *Becoming a Bishop*, will recognize many of Avis's characteristic intuitions and theological habits: his ecumenical spirit, his wide reading and lightness of touch, his particular focus on Anglicanism's charism for the whole church, his delicate limning of the Reformers' relationship to the Tractarians and others, and his posture of humility and even penitence. (Each of the chapters in *The Vocation of Anglicanism* was presented previously as a conference paper or lecture.) What makes this book unique isn't so much its topics but its approachability: Avis writes that it "is intended for an intelligent and informed general audience." If I were getting confirmed this year, I might expect my instructor to hand me *this* volume before any of Avis's other possibilities.

The Anglican calling and charism, as Avis sees it, is to seek to serve and witness to the Church's unity in Christ. We must pray and work "for the healing of the wounds of division," which Avis describes with painful specificity in the book's preface. To this end, he underscores the need "for patience, for consultation [with other parts of the church], for restraint," and, perhaps above all, for *synthesis* (Anglicans must continue to seek to hold together what many have put asunder) and for *communion*. In one of the book's few black-and-white declarations, Avis avers, "[O]ur primary obligation to our fellow Christians is to seek to be — and to remain — in communion with them. Breaking the communion of the Church must be an absolutely last resort, one for which we will have to give an account one day."

It is no surprise, then, that one of the chapters — in a slight departure from the book's goal of being accessible — contains a somewhat inside-baseball discussion of the proposed Anglican Communion Covenant, which, Avis judged at the time of writing (2015), was not a lost cause. Although Avis locates himself "in the middle ground" on matters that are currently dividing churches of the Anglican Communion, he nonetheless does not side with those who view the Covenant as an imposition from "conservatives" onto so-called "progressives" who wish to push ahead in performing same-sex marriages. The Covenant, he believes, "is the only option that has been put forward for the future of the Communion as one body in the face of current difficulties."

The Anglicanism that emerges from this book is one that longs for catholicity.

The richest part of Avis's discussion of the Covenant, though, is not his explication of its content or his plea for it to remain on the table as a viable future for the Communion in its current distress, valuable as those things are. Rather, it is his effort, in the face of biblical exegetes' criticism, to defend the Covenant as a seriously *scriptural* effort at maintaining the unity of Anglicanism. Avis points out that covenantal language in the Old Testament, far from being irrelevant to current Anglican fractures, is fraught with contemporary significance. In the first place, it is communion-oriented: Israel's God enters into covenant with his people so that they may trust his fatherly friendship and loyalty toward them. Furthermore, God's covenantal bond with Israel anchors Israel's internal relationships: "The covenant makes the people to be a people. … They are to live and act as God's covenant people in relation to each other as well as in relation to their God." In these ways and more, the imagery and narratives of the Old Testament offer ample reason for Anglican churches to accept the Covenant.

After finishing this book, I find it is harder to have patience with some of the facile definitions of Anglicanism. I do not mean it is difficult to have patience with *criticisms*: indeed, we Anglicans are usually readier to offer more trenchant, and occasionally savage, judgments and laments for our Communion than anyone else is. But it is difficult to put up with *shallow* critiques when Avis's pages linger in one's memory. The Anglicanism that emerges from this book is one that longs for catholicity, that takes its bearings not only from the Fathers and the Councils but above all from "the biblical gospel of God's free and unmerited grace in Jesus Christ, as it was rediscovered by the Reformers," and that is prepared to shoulder the frequently debilitating burden of "the continual pursuit of truth in company with others." No merely fissiparous and wishy-washy fare, this. But no matter the criticisms: Those who know their vocation — those who are the beneficiaries of divine covenantal fidelity and who seek to embody that same covenantal commitment to one another — may dispense with self-justification, as those who read Avis's book will be helped to remember.

Wesley Hill is associate professor of biblical studies at Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pennsylvania.

A Teacher to the End

Review by Victor Lee Austin

To read this book is to have a low-key, comfortable, extended conversation with an old man who, as it were, just happened to have been pope. The reader will see a generous spirit, as Benedict sidesteps opportunities to make points against his adversaries; a pious spirit, as he says (of difficult problems) that of course one trusts in God; a penetrating spirit, as he deftly parses disputed points of ecclesiology (among much else).

Those of us who long for Christian unity will be particularly interested in Benedict's recounting the process that led him to take the radical step of resigning. No pope had done so for a thousand years, and no pope ever had given a theological rationale for it. It is here in this book. On the one hand, the papacy is not a mere function; "the office enters into your very being." On the other hand, if the capacity is lacking to do the necessary "concrete things," then one must "free up the chair" (pp. 20–21). This distinction, of the office and the capacity to carry out the office, had been established already in the Roman Catholic episcopacy: although one remains a bishop for life, one must resign at age 75. Benedict merely, but boldly, carried through the implications.

Benedict is not a conservative. He is a child of a time in theology that wanted new understandings of old truths. He saw that theology should be renewed, just as Vatican II advanced, by drawing on the Fathers (rather than primarily Aquinas) and above all by rooting itself in and continually drawing nourishment from the Scriptures. Thus, for instance, he admits disappointment with Paul VI's encyclical *Humanae vitae* (which prohibited contraception), not for its conclusion, but for its natural law reasoning. He says that John Paul supplemented this with his more wholistic, or personalist, teaching on human sexuality.

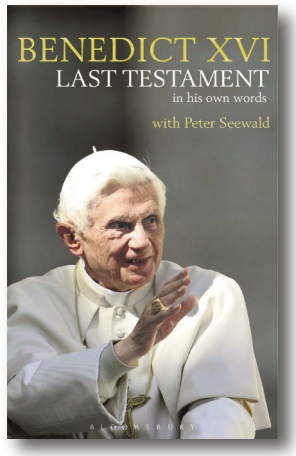
There is here much wisdom for living.

A thinker who is at once traditional and intrepid, Benedict conceived and wrote his three-volume work on Jesus while pope, an unprecedented act. Published without special papal authority, thus not becoming thereby part of the magisterial teaching of the church, it opens a new way for popes to be pope, as leading teachers. And Benedict had the chops to pull it off: it is a work that would command serious scholarly attention and do much to build up the Church, even if its author had been simply a professor.

As an Anglican, I often thought what bliss it was to be alive in the latter half of the first decade of this century. At the head of our communions were Joseph Ratzinger and Rowan Williams, world-class theologians who would be renowned in their own right, apart from any office they held.

Last Testament came to be from edited interviews, Benedict approving the final version. Of the book's three parts, the longest is the middle, which traces his life from boyhood to the papacy. Sandwiching this are reflections on his current life as pope emeritus, on his papacy, and on the end of life.

I wish the book had an index, and I wish that Bloomsbury had done a better job of proofreading the final text; I found a half-dozen errors without even looking for them. Perhaps an index will be added in a second edition.



Last Testament
In His Own Words
By **Benedict XVI**, with **Peter Seewald**
Bloomsbury Continuum. Pp. xx + 257. $24

There is here much wisdom for living. Throughout his life, Benedict has taken walks in the morning and evening. In his office, he always had a sofa: when he needed to think through a problem, he would lie down to do so. He said his prayers and got his sleep, never working late at night.

Benedict now writes nothing but his little Sunday homilies that are preached in private and not published. On the dust jacket of *Last Testament* is something that I've never before seen on a book by a living author: "This is his final book." To know that something is the last one is itself a gift of wisdom. "So teach us to number our days," says the Psalmist, "that we may apply our hearts to wisdom." Even in this Benedict would teach us.

The Rev. Canon Victor Lee Austin is theologian in residence for the Diocese of Dallas and Church of the Incarnation, Dallas.

Theologian of the Fantastic Imagination

By Arabella Milbank

George MacDonald "seemed an elemental figure, a man unconnected with any particular age, a character in one of his own fairy tales, a true mystic to whom the supernatural was natural," G.K. Chesterton wrote in 1901.

Has MacDonald's time come again? These two unveilings of the depth of his imaginative, visionary, and mystical capacities offer a key. MacDonald was the 19th-century magus of spiritual fantasy whose writings precede, form, and indeed radically instigate those of C.S. Lewis and Chesterton. His wider influence includes Charles Dodgson (Lewis Carroll), W.H. Auden, H.G. Wells, Lucy Maud Montgomery, and J.R.R. Tolkien, among many others.

The initial encounters were for Chesterton and Lewis occasions of metanoic transformation. Lewis read MacDonald's *Phantastes* on a station platform as an atheist teenager; it catalyzed the powerful sense of yearning that led eventually to his Christian conversion. Similarly, for Chesterton, *The Princess and the Goblin* was "a book that has made a difference to my old existence" (see the preface to Greville MacDonald, *George MacDonald and His Wife* [1924]).

MacDonald's writings, which cover the second half of the 19th-century, range across a spectrum of realist novels, often set in Scotland, always with a mystical horizon, into adult fantasy (*Phantastes*, *Lilith*) and literary fairy tale, not purely directed at children (*The Golden Key*, *The Light Princess*, *The Princess and the Goblin*, *At the Back of the North Wind*), and directly theological writings in sermon form (*Unspoken Sermons*).

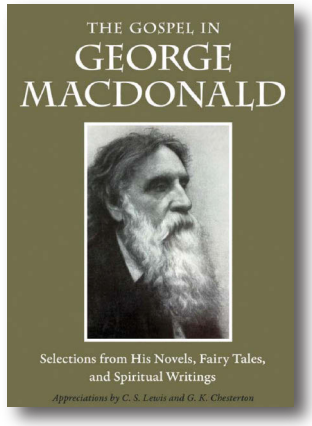
He began life aspiring to preach conventionally but ended it having fulfilled an extraordinary calling as a theologian of the fantastic imagination in whose work the communication of his deep, mystical faith is inseparable from its narrative and mythic forms and characters. MacDonald's visionary faith shows a radical openness in its emphasis on a primary yearning for something more real, something more true, and something more beautiful at the heart and at the end of things.

This could be described as a Christian Platonism, and it is certainly a statement of the human condition with resonance among those in all kinds of relationship to faith. MacDonald described this as the harmony any work has with itself. Precisely because such harmony is impossible without a relation to the ultimate truth, the beautiful is in relation to truth as MacDonald understood it, which will only finally be visible in the grand restoration of all things in the divine plan (see "The Fantastic Imagination," MacDonald's introduction to *The Light Princess and Other Fairy Tales*).

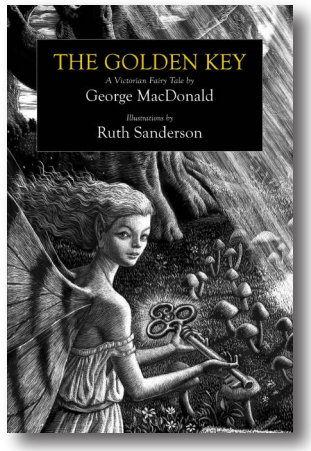
MacDonald's novels and stories, as Marianne Wright remarks in the introduction to her anthology, *The Gospel in George MacDonald* (and Lewis concurs) have invited anthologizing of his direct and indirect sagacity. There might be a danger, one the title slightly risks, of extracting the moral content of an oeuvre of literary narrative and fantasy so as to make MacDonald into a moralizing preacher, by taking only those moments that seem momentously sermonic or didactic outside of the rich weave of his literary imagining.

It is to Wright's credit that this is not what comes through in this beautifully produced collection, a wonderful introduction and further encounter with MacDonald's works. Arranged by themes of initiation and progress in the spiritual life (Seeking, Work, Love, and Marriage), cleverly framing its extracts within their narrative contexts, and allowing certain themes and narratives to recur across categories, it captures something of the narrative spirit of all MacDonald's theology.

One would still want this to be an invitation to read MacDonald's works holistically, so that they may have their fullest purchase. Throughout, the pre-Raphaelite Arthur Hughes's illustrations to MacDonald's works



The Gospel
in George MacDonald
Selections from His Novels, Fairy Tales, and Spiritual Writings
Edited by **Marianne Wright**
Plough. Pp. 358. $18



The Golden Key
A Victorian Fairy Tale
By **George Macdonald**
Illustrations by **Ruth Sanderson**
Eerdmans. Pp. 136. $16

maintain the spirit of the creative imagination. The anthology succeeds in emphasizing how close to the surface is MacDonald's voice in all his works and piquing desire to take it as a key to further unlocking the doors of his novels and stories (which are all available online, although many are more difficult to obtain otherwise).

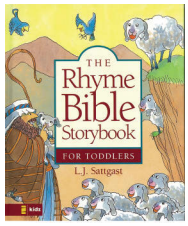
The Golden Key is perhaps the story, "fantasy that hovers between the allegorical and the mythopoeic," that most perfectly illustrates the particularly open invitation MacDonald's mystical imagination can extend. The trajectory of its child protagonists, Mossy and Tangle, will take them through youth and age and back again, and the tale, which begins like a fairy story, expands to the entire duration of their lives and indeed afterlives.

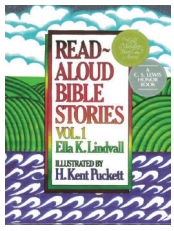
This mirrors what the story has been to many: a philosophical fable with the power to entrance at all ages, forming a lifelong engagement with levels and echoes of meaning, never merely reducible to a single allegorical core; a tale of exertion and refreshment, of faithfulness and reward, of love and purpose, that moves metaphysical and emotional mountains.

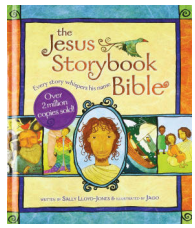
Ruth Sanderson has produced a mesmerizing chiaroscuro rendition, much more than mere illustration. The scratchboard technique she uses yields details seemingly etched from filaments of pure light, and gives a glimmeringly magical texture to the realism of her images — evoking further worlds and narratives beyond Maurice Sendak's 1967 version.

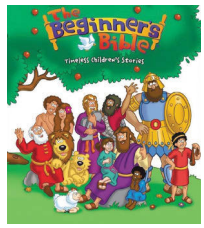
I unreservedly recommend these books, both to those who know MacDonald well and those who have never encountered him before. May they, too, unlock further only guessed-at doors.

Arabella Milbank has just completed her doctorate on fear in medieval literature at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and is training for the priesthood at Westcott House.









What We Learn from Children's Story Bibles

By Susanna Cover

Like most families, we have our little canon of memorized bedtime stories: *Brown Bear Brown Bear, Blueberries for Sal, Officer Buckle*. If it were up to my kids, we would also be reading *Sparkle Fairy Cupcake Pet Parade*, or whatever nonsense multiplies in the glitter bunnies behind the craft cabinet when I am not being vigilant. But of course I hope my children will be most shaped by the really good books, with the Good Book being at the core of our life together. I want the stories and language of the Bible to be just as familiar as our other beloved read-alouds. I polled my Facebook friends for favorite Bible story books, and from their variety of ecclesial backgrounds, here are some great ones to incorporate into your family life.

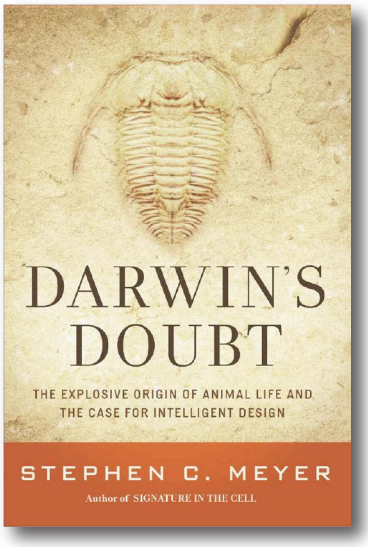
Evangelical pastor friends pointed me toward *The Rhyme Bible Storybook for Toddlers* (ZonderKidz, 1999; it is out of print, but used copies are abundant). At my three-year-old's request, we frequently read it through once a day. It is not great art or poetry, but it holds up to repeated readings without growing annoying. The stories retell 25 Old and New Testament favorites in easy, unforced rhyme, usually just a quatrain on each double page. Although the rhymes often leave out what I consider essential details of the stories, they provide just the right level of substance for my toddler and leave room for a little discussion with my kindergartener.

For the *Read-Aloud Bible Stories* volumes, I have my homeschooling mother to thank for reading them to me and my siblings. Where the *Rhyme Bible* tells playful versions, these conscientiously adhere to the sequence of each story, and yet swell surprisingly with emotion and drama. Bright colors and large, simple figures splash across the pages, almost awkwardly like children's drawings. The reader can feel the terror of the storm-tossed disciples or the yearning of Blind Bartimaeus. Each volume only includes five stories, so get your hands on several to have a range of Bible stories from both testaments.

My oldest daughter's godmother, a priest and church planter, gave us *The Jesus Storybook Bible* several years ago, and our copy is nearly worn out. This book is wildly popular, and for good reason. Sally Lloyd-Jones weaves together individual events of salvation history into a larger narrative of "how God loves his children and comes to rescue them," in a way that is christological, dramatic, conversational, and often really funny. I regularly draw on this book to explain the *why* underlying Bible stories, and I find that kids really grasp the idea of Jesus as rescuer.

Finally, I often find myself using *The Beginner's Bible* to teach Sunday School, because it is a good workhorse children's Bible that hits the basic details of all the usual stories. It does not stir me like the others do, but it still tells the Story. And that is the point, of course: repeating our faith over and over and over, like a favorite bedtime story, when we are home and away, lying down and rising, until it becomes the bedrock of our children's lives, and ours.

Susanna Quaile Cover read intellectual history textbooks at Gordon College and unsolicited manuscripts at Ave Maria Press, and now enjoys picture books in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin.



Darwin's Doubt
The Explosive Origin of Animal Life and the Case for Intelligent Design
By **Stephen C. Meyer**. Harper One. Pp. 540. $19.99

A Few Cheers for Intelligent Design

Review by Daniel Muth

I am fairly certain that there are thoughtful and potentially influential intellectual movements that have been subjected to more shameful and inexcusable misrepresentation and ill treatment than Intelligent Design (ID), but the list is not long (Roman Catholic teaching on artificial birth control comes to mind). To be fair, ID theorists have invited critique in no small part by tending to hold theirs out as a valid area of scientific research while mainly publishing popular books rather than peer-reviewed articles. If their intention was not to be lumped in with creationists, it has not worked.

From the disastrous Dover School Board lawsuit to the propaganda screeds of the New Atheists, ID has managed in a short time to fix itself in the popular consciousness as little but another movement of bellicose anti-scientific crackpots. That is a shame, because the theorists are generally quite thoughtful and reputably credentialed. The stuff they have written is informative, challenging, and worthwhile.

In *Darwin's Doubt*, Stephen Meyer supplies a creditable example of the genre. Meyer is a trained geophysicist and sports a Cambridge PhD in philosophy of science. Here he examines the Cambrian explosion, in which a plethora of phyla, many sporting distinct body plans, popped into being in a relatively short (in evolutionary terms) period of time.

Meyer begins with an exploration of sudden appearances in the fossil record as an issue for certain of Darwin's critics (notably Harvard paleontologist Louis Agassiz) and for Darwin himself, claiming these not to have been settled so much as set aside awaiting fuller scientific explanation. He then recounts the 1917 discovery of the famed Burgess Shale in Canada, which contains a number of previously unknown phyla, constituting, along with the 1984 discoveries at Chengjiang in China, the best examples of preserved Cambrian fossils.

Per Meyer, the Cambrian explosion presents the Darwinian paradigm with four challenges, the first being the sudden appearance of so many novel animal forms. Meyer claims that prior to the Chengjiang discoveries, most paleontologists estimated a 20 million- to 40 million-year window for the novel Cambrian animal forms to develop. Since the early 1990s, this esti-

mate has been revised down to less than ten million years, a relative blink of the geological eye and a direct challenge to the notion that random mutation and natural selection had sufficient time to do their thing.

A second challenge is the absence of transitional fossils connecting from the simpler pre-Cambrian forms. The most popular — and plausible — explanations for this are the various forms of the Artifact theory, that the pre-Cambrian missing links are missing due to size, softness (vertebrates are easier to fossilize than jellyfish), geological change, or what have you. Meyer counters that we have quite a few pre-Cambrian fossils and they are either simple and undifferentiated, and thus too distant from the Cambrian fauna, or complex and developed but taxonomically unconnected to the later Cambrian forms. He claims that attempts to reconstruct a tree of life and fill in the fossil record gaps through DNA studies have yielded results that conflict too much to be helpful.

The third challenge is with the sheer array of novel Cambrian animal forms, many with (Meyer is at pains to emphasize) completely novel body plans. After a quick historical jaunt from Darwin and Mendel through Watson and Crick, he lays out the problem of genetic information, the bread-and-butter concern of the ID movement. Constructing novel organisms requires developing new proteins, which in turn require genetic information provided via long strands of amino acids structured in varying and highly complex ways. These are analogous to sentences and paragraphs in a language in that only certain relatively rare structures actually convey usable information.

Meyer recounts detailed investigations by engineer Douglas Axe (a colleague of Meyer's at the Discovery Institute, though this is not mentioned), who estimates that only one in 10^{74} possible 150-amino-acid-long gene sequences could fold into a stable new protein and of these only one in 1,000 could perform any sort of function. An estimated 10^{40} total gene sequences generated in the history of life, therefore, yields odds of one in 10^{37} that a single new functional protein fold could ever have been produced.

Per Meyer, neo-Darwinists who take up the challenge note the plausibility of the incorporation of functioning genetic strands into existing proteins and have built mathematical models based on known mutation rates, population sizes, and generation times, that predict the likelihood of the dissemination of new traits through a population. In response, Meyer cites experts who claim that genetic material cannot be swapped around like Legos and rejects population genetics as a gross underestimate of the complexity of the changes being made.

The last challenge to neo-Darwinism is a pattern in which radical differences in form appear earlier in the fossil record than more minor changes. Meyer starts with a discussion of body plans (the basic structure that differentiates vertebrates from invertebrates and various types of the latter from one another) as tightly integrated systems that develop in a complex, specific, and highly controlled fashion as an organism moves from embryo to adult. To change a body plan requires the introduction of a radical and beneficial mutation early in development that unfolds coherently as the individual develops and is heritable by offspring. The complex mechanisms that enable this to happen are not strictly tied to DNA and thus are much harder to affect by normal mutational means. Yet the Cambrian explosion involved the sudden appearance of multiple new body plans in a comparatively short time.

In the closing third of the book, Meyer lays out his alternative explanation: that at least some features (not all; evolution is not denied) are the result of actual (vs. merely apparent) design by an intelligent agent (the nature of which agent may or may not be available for further scientific investigation). The intent is to avoid God-of-the-gaps reasoning by providing a means for determining *scientifically* which biological phenomena were designed.

I leave to others the tiresome debate over whether this is a properly scientific endeavor. I am content that, so long as one is using the scientific method, one's desired outcome (naturalism vs. its opposite) is immaterial. The more important question apropos of ID is whether it is *true*. If ID theorists in fact produce a falsifiable theory to explain, say, the Cambrian explosion, and then demonstrate its veracity (a couple of really big ifs), I cannot see how it matters whether ID is science.

Obviously, few if any mainstream biologists or paleontologists have signed on and even the most charitable scientist-reviewers of the book have claimed that Meyer does not accurately represent their field (though to be fair, most such complaints appear to concern marginalia). It is widely accepted that mysteries remain and Meyer has ably elucidated at least a few of them. His proposed answer of ID is generally strongly rejected by mainstream scientists, many of whom, alas, indulge in inexcusable rudeness.

Bigger question: suppose these latter turn out to be wrong and ID is proven true. Would this present any theological problems for the thinking Christian? One might worry that by leaving behind scientifically indisputable evidence of his activity, God has then undercut faith. Even worse, ID would establish God as so inept a creator as to have to make periodic adjustments.

The concerns are reasonable but not, I think, compelling. One thing proof of ID would obviously *not* do is establish the existence of a transcendent God. In their better moments, ID theorists claim only to seek proof of an intelli-

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gent designer, not something beyond that. The belief that God himself is responsible for these interventions would still require faith.

As to the question of divine competence, I should think the matter settled. Regardless of its origins, God has bequeathed to us a willful, dangerous, chaotic, unfinished world. If perfection is the measure of the Creator, then the verdict would be a decidedly negative one and proof of divine tweaking cannot affect the result. Then again, perhaps there's a different yardstick to be applied. From Genesis to Revelation, Scripture bears ample witness to God's love of and relation to his entire creation. An incarnational faith should have no problem with the notion of God carrying on a long-term, hands-on labor of love in relation to his entire created order.

In the end, I doubt ID will amount to much, scientifically. Some of its opponents seem reasonable people and the challenge of positing a falsifiable theory will likely be too daunting. Its chief achievement to this point has been in helping more thoughtful philosophers mount a direct challenge to a fatuous materialism that has received more deference than it deserves. If it can also remind Christians to follow evidence regardless of where it leads and that some mysteries simply cannot be solved in this life, then its legacy would seem an honorable one, regardless of the final scientific verdict.

ID's chief achievement to this point has been in helping more thoughtful philosophers mount a direct challenge to a fatuous materialism that has received more deference than it deserves.

Daniel Muth is a manager of a nuclear utility in the Middle East and a member of the Living Church Foundation.

A Tutor's Guide to Galatians

Review by Michael Angel Martín

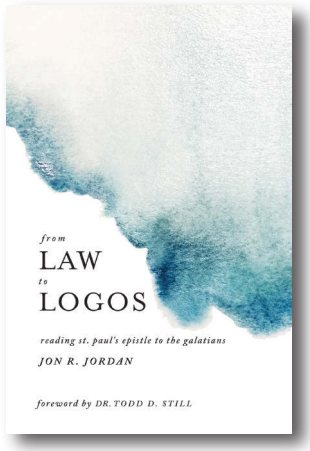
Jon R. Jordan's *From Law to Logos* is a welcome model for the church's ever-wavering efforts to advance biblical literacy among congregants. A theology teacher and dean of students at Coram Deo Academy in Dallas, Jordan developed the contents of this book while leading a young adult Bible study at Church of the Incarnation in Dallas. Jordan knows parish leaders have the overwhelming and urgent task of opening the biblical, theological, or spiritual wellspring of the Church to their flock. But aside from only having recourse to books that are either too technical or too feeble, catechists are often unaware of our varied pedagogical needs.

From Law to Logos reflects the hard-won know-how of a teacher in the trenches of young minds; if he succeeds among our youngest, how much more might Jordan's guidance succeed with the rest of us? In disarming and simple language, Jordan leads us through a rhetorical journey that begins with instructions to read the *entirety* of Galatians in light of new readers' skills obtained after each chapter. Whether to discern purpose, authorship, genre, or occasion, the habit of reading the whole epistle again and again was a welcome challenge. As promised, the repeated call to mark, learn, and inwardly digest the text deepened my understanding of Galatians.

One of the book's primary merits is its focus. Rather than adding to the cumbersome stack of study guides covering the entirety of Scripture, which often required qualifications and supplements to make up for their inevitable missteps, *From Law to Logos* takes a more modest approach. Jordan's book merely teaches us to read a single epistle and does so in fewer than 100 pages. Jordan breathes life into the text — not by advancing a hardline theological position into the epistle's historically controversial verses but by exercising the classical basics of rhetoric to help us read Galatians as, well, a letter. The purpose is to remind readers that the books of the New Testament were not drafted in library carrels. All were written to a specific audience in mind, for specific purposes, on specific occasions, and in specific forms.

From Law to Logos reflects the hard-won know-how of a teacher in the trenches of young minds.

Like any good teacher, Jordan begins with a diagnostic assessment. Before we become entangled in the hermeneutical weeds, the biblically bemused need first simply to understand what a given text *says*: a fair conclusion drawn from Jordan's experience as a teacher and budding pastor and delivered without a note of pedantry. From such a start, Jordan can disabuse the faulty biblical habit among many to cherry-pick without recourse to the whole and confirm their bias, whether for personal or theological reasons. Where another author might take this as a cue to expound on the inevitability of interpretation no matter how literal the reading attempt, Jordan's focus is more practical and exacting. We need first to learn how to read the understandably alien writings of the New Testament as a text with a direct message.



From Law to Logos
Reading St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians
By Jon R. Jordan
Foreword by **Tod D. Still**
Pp. 100. Wipf and Stock. $16

Which is not to say *From Law to Logos* is without firm theological conviction regarding St. Paul's teachings. As Jordan states in the preface, the Bible is about "painting a grand vision of ultimate reality that is centered around the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ," and the entire logic of the book begins with the indisputable occasion of Galatians: that the churches in Galatia are under the spell of teachers who dim the light Christ sheds on Judaic law. Without arguing about what the letter means in post-Reformation terms, Jordan instead describes St. Paul's critical need to rescue Christ's accomplishment on the cross from distortions expressed by particular persons in a particular place and time. St. Paul's primary argumentative drive is to correct those false

(Continued on next page)

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teachers' call to conversion by way of law and remind the Galatians of Christ's universal invitation into God's life through baptism. Few faithful Christians would disagree with that.

From Law to Logos reaches is most fascinating point when Jordan explicates Paul's figurative reading of the Old Testament while gently helping us parse those unruly Pauline sentences. We learn not just the basics of the gospel as pertaining to the law that precedes it, but more about St. Paul, too. When, to the best of our ability, we read the epistle as intended, we learn just how earnest and brave St. Paul was as a thinker and missionary. Beginning with his diplomatic greetings, the exposition of his apostolic authority, his wit, and the precedent he sets for all Christians about understanding the Old Testament in Christ, we become more intimate with the Church's most significant preacher.

It is often difficult to find texts with such broad catechetical benefits. How valuable it would be to see a whole series of books like *From Law to Logos*, books carefully written by formal educators for varied audiences for the simple purpose of teaching us to read the Bible on its own rhetorical terms. Such a series could provide the foundation many in the Church need to deepen their engagement with Scripture and tradition.

Michael Angel Martín lives in Miami, and writes poems and essays for America, Anglican Theological Review, Modern Literature, Dappled Things, *and* Jesus the Imagination.

Crystalline, Precise Reflections

Review by Cole Hartin

David Bentley Hart is brilliant not only because of his sophisticated theological approach, his deep roots in patristic theology and in Eastern Orthodoxy, and the dumbfounding breadth of his reading and literary mastery. What sets Hart still further apart from other important theologians is his breathtaking prose: his crystalline, precise writing that, for all of its flourish, remains incisive and exacting.

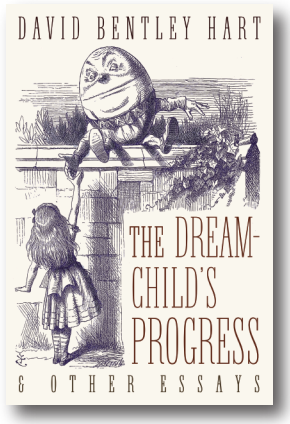
While *The Dream-Child's Progress* does have some serious substance, like the sprint through the otherness of the New Testament in "Christ's Rabble: The First Christians Were Not Like Us," or the critical appraisal of Augustine's reading of Romans in "*Traditio Deformis*," this collection of previously published essays gleams with other beauties as well. "Farewell to a Mountain" is an ode to the beauty of a natural place where Hart enjoyed living with his family for a couple of years. This short piece is an atmospheric, golden-hued remembrance of birdsong and sunrise, pointing to that transcendental longing within every human heart that C.S. Lewis called joy.

"The Dream-Child's Progress," the essay for which this collection is named, is a sunny and appreciative ode to Lewis Carroll, replete with reflections on the glorious childishness of his work, with emphasis also on his place within the Church of England. Hart does not merely write about good books, however. "Brilliant Bad Books" hilariously details his whimsical delight in the atrocious prose of Amanda McKittrick Ros. And, though written to a more serious end, "Believe It or Not: On the Very Disappointing Literature of the New Atheism," is just as much a rollicking ride as "A Person You Feel at Parties," his now infamous essay that imagines Donald Trump as the image of Satan.

What is this book for? I have stolen away for a few moments here and there to cherish the little delights it holds. I do not know if it is *for* anything, except to be savored, enjoyed. It is good to strengthen the heart and bring a smile to the lips.

It is difficult to offer a critical appraisal of Hart — since he is right about everything, and he always has a ruthless rejoinder ready to hand! If there is anything lacking in Hart, it might be a pastoral touch.

I love this book. I would recommend it to anyone ready for meat and drink, with at least a couple of post-secondary degrees (or substantial dictionary on hand). Pastors beware: this book will thrill you, but it may not help you to feed your little lambs with tenderness and grace.



The Dream-Child's Progress
& Other Essays
By **David Bentley Hart**
Angelico. Pp. 346. $24.95

Cole Hartin is a PhD candidate at Wycliffe College, a postulant in the Diocese of Fredericton, and discipleship ministry associate at St. Matthew's, Islington, on the West End of Toronto.

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is pleased to announce the ninth annual

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Essays may address any topic within the classic disciplines of theology (Bible, history, systematics, moral theology, liturgy). We also welcome essays written to fulfill course requirements. We will give special consideration to essays that demonstrate a mastery of one or more of the registers of Christian wisdom and radiate a love of the communion of the Church in Jesus Christ, the Wisdom of God.

1st place: $500 ♦ 2nd place: $250 ♦ 3rd place: $175

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Entries should include the student's full name, postal and email addresses, and the name and address of the student's school.

PEOPLE & PLACES

Appointments

Benge Ambrogi is bishop's assistant for mission initiatives in the Diocese of New Hampshire.

The Rev. **John Badders** is interim rector of St. Luke's, San Antonio.

The Rev. **Ben Badgett** is rector of St. John's, Waynesboro, VA.

The Rev. **Audrey Bailey** is priest-in-charge of St. Francis and St. Martha's, White Plains, NY.

The Very Rev. **Julia Huttar Bailey** is rector of Trinity, Farmington Hills, MI.

The Rev. **Richard Bardusch** is rector of St. Timothy's, Herndon, VA.

The Rev. Canon **John Burruss** is rector of St. Stephen's, Birmingham.

The Rev. **Gae Chalker** is vicar of Christ Memorial, Kilauea, Kauai, HI.

Adam Chapman is director of operations at Camp Hardtner.

The Rev. **Hugh Chapman** is rector of St. Michael and All Angels in Tallahassee, FL.

The Rev. **Annette Chappell** is interim rector of Holy Trinity, Churchville, MD.

The Rev. **Suzanne Colburn** is interim priest-in-charge of Emmanuel Lutheran-Episcopal, Augusta, ME.

The Ven. **Steven James Costa** is archdeacon in the Diocese of Hawaii.

The Rev. **Lou Divis** is priest-in-charge of Epiphany, Clarks Summit, and St. Peter's, Tunkhannock, PA.

The Rev. **Katherine Dunagan** is interim rector of Epiphany, Danville, VA.

The Rev. **Hentzi Elek** is rector of Emmanuel, Baltimore.

Andrea Foote is director of camp and youth ministry in the Diocese of Southern Ohio.

The Rev. **Greg Foraker** is missioner for faith formation in the Episcopal Church in Colorado.

The Rev. **Christopher Garcia** is rector of Christ Church, Port Republic, MD.

The Rev. **Catharine Gibson** is rector of Christ Church Durham Parish, Nanjemoy, MD.

The Rev. **Justin Gibson** is vicar of St. Francis on-the-Hill, El Paso, TX.

The Rev. **Diane Hill** is vicar of Holy Spirit, Gallup, NM.

The Rev. **Heather Hill** is rector of St. Clement, Honolulu.

The Rev. **Marjorie Holm** is interim rector of Emmanuel, Franklin, VA.

The Rev. **Randy Hoover-Dempsey** is priest-in-charge of St. James the Less, Madison, TN.

The Rev. **Kevin Huddleston** is rector of Holy Communion, Lake Geneva, and St. John the Divine, Burlington, WI.

The Rev. **Abi John** is priest-in-charge of Good Shepherd, Savona, NY.

The Rev. **Ann Lovejoy Johnson** is rector of St. Mary's, Manchester, CT.

The Rev. **Christopher A. Johnson** is rector of All Saints, Pontiac, MI.

The Rev. **Lura Kaval** is vicar of Incarnation, Mineral, VA.

Steve Kottmeier is chancellor of the Diocese of El Camino Real.

The Rev. **David Wesley Lemburg** is priest-in-charge of St. Patrick's, Pooler, GA.

The Rt. Rev. **Gary Lillibridge** is interim rector of St. Thomas, San Antonio.

The Rev. **Emily Phillips Lloyd** is rector of St. Peter's, Poolesville, MD.

The Rev. **Beth Magill** is rector of St. Michael's, Arlington, VA.

The Rev. **William Bentley Manning** is rector of Incarnation, Highlands, NC.

The Rev. **Johanna Marcure** is rector of Trinity, North Scituate, RI.

The Rev. **Christa Moore-Levesque** is associate rector of St. Thomas', Rochester, NY

The Rev. Canon **John Newton** is rector of St. Michael's, Austin, TX.

The Rev. **Curt Norman** is rector of St. John's, Saginaw, MI.

The Rev. **Rodger Patience** is vicar of Holy Apostles, WI.

The Rev. **Judith Reese** is interim rector of St. Matthew's, Hillsborough, NC.

The Rev. **Jess Reeves** is priest-in-charge of Messiah, Pulaski, TN.

The Rev. Canon **Robert R. Rhodes** is associate rector of St. Paul's, Seattle.

The Rev. **Tyler Richards** is rector of Transfiguration, Indian River, MI.

The Rev. **Ellen Richardson** is priest-in-charge of Advent, Williamston, NC.

The Rev. **Ann M. Ritonia** is rector of St. John's, Ellicott City, MD.

The Rev. **Kira Schlesinger** is interim rector at St. Ann's, Nashville.

The Rev. **Jos Tharakan** is rector of St. James, Springfield, MO.

The Rev. **Ben Webb** is interim priest at St. John's by the Campus, Ames, and continues serving at All Saints, Indianola, IA.

Ordinations

Deacons

Arkansas — Josh Daniel, **Stephanie Fox**, **Mark Harris**, **Michaelene Miller**, **David Sims**, and **Greg Warren**

Long Island — Leandra Thelma Lisa Lambert

Priests

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Massachusetts — Dan Bell and **Amy Whitcomb Slemmer**

Western Louisiana — André Bordelon and **Madge McClain**

Western North Carolina — Jonathan Leon Stepp

Retirements

The Rev. **Martha Berger**, as rector of St. Francis, Menomonee Falls, WI

The **Rev. Bill Blaine-Wallace**, as rector of All Saints, Skowhegan, ME

The Rev. **Jeremiah Day**, as rector of St. Thomas, Oriental, NC

The Rev. **Jim Parker**, as deacon at St. George's, Savannah, GA

The Rev. **David Robinson**, as rector of Trinity, Saco, ME

The Rev. **Emily Blair Stribling**, as priest-in-charge of Trinity, Castine, ME

Deaths

The Rev. **Maurice Branscomb Jr.**, who introduced street-and-altar ministry in St. Andrew's and Grace Church in Birmingham, AL, died Jan. 13. He was 92. Born in Ohio, he was a graduate of Otterbein University and Virginia Theological Seminary.

Greg Garrison of *The Birmingham News* reported that Branscomb was a decorated combat infantryman during World War II, and that in the last week before his mandatory retirement as rector of Grace Church in Birmingham he washed the feet of a drug addict with AIDS whose disruptive behavior kept him out of homeless shelters. In Birmingham he launched many ministries for the poor, including Community Kitchens, 55th Place Thrift Store, and Interfaith Hospitality House.

Canon **Percia Hutcherson**, a physical therapist and longtime medical missionary in Eldoret, Kenya, died Jan. 9 at her home in Los Angeles. She was 95, and had been in poor health for several years.

She helped found Good Shepherd Homes, an apartment complex for residents with physical disabilities. Bishop Frederick Borsch named her a lay canon of the Diocese of Los Angeles in 1997. Canon Ruth Nicastro told her story in *Every Little Bit: The Remarkable Life of Percia Hutcherson* (Cathedral Center Press, 2003).

The Rev. Canon **David Rike Mosher**, a U.S. Navy veteran of World War II, died Jan. 5 at his home in Asheville, NC. He was 93.

Born in Los Angeles, he was a graduate of the University of Denver and Berkeley Divinity H School at Yale. He was ordained deacon and priest in 1952, and served churches in Colorado, Florida, and North Carolina. He was named canon evangelist of the Cathedral Church of St. Peter, St. Petersburg, in 1979.

The Rev. **Dorothy Nakatsuji**, a nurse before her ordination as a deacon, died Jan. 9. She was 85. Born in Wyoming, she received both an undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Utah. She was ordained deacon in 1983.

She worked as a psychiatric nurse in Utah, an instructor in nursing at the University of Hawaii, program director of Hospice Hawaii, and director of the diaconate training program for the Diocese of Hawaii. She served at the Cathedral of St. Andrew and the Parish of St. Clement.

The Rev. **Anne Richards**, a priest for 30 years and, later in life, the wife of Bishop Richard F. Grein, died Jan. 12. She was 67.

Born in Worcester, Massachusetts, she was a graduate of Smith College, New York University, and General Theological Seminary. She was ordained deacon in 1988 and priest in 1989. She served churches and schools in Connecticut and New York.

The Rev. **Robert A. Shires** died Jan. 8 after being struck by a vehicle just outside the gate of his retirement community in Pompano Beach, FL. He was 73.

Born in Ronceverte, NY, he was a graduate of West Virginia University, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and Princeton Theological Seminary. He was ordained deacon in 2004 and priest in 2005. He celebrated services at St. Joseph's, Boynton Beach, on the weekend before his death.

The Rev. **Pierre M. Wolff**, a native of France, died at home Jan. 31. He was 89.

A family obituary identified Fr. Wolff as an "Episcopal priest and Jesuit priest at heart." Born in Marseilles in 1929, he lived through World War II, served as a Jesuit priest, and taught the order's spiritual exercises during retreats for the Sisters of St. Joseph and lay people. He was married and was received as a priest of the Episcopal Church in 1988. He published numerous self-help books. He donated his body to Quinnipiac University School of Medicine.

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SUNDAY'S READINGS | 6 Easter, May 6

Acts 10:44-48 • Ps. 98 • 1 John 5:1-6; John 15:9-17

Joy to the World

"The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God" (Acts 10:45-46). Amid such evidence, the question arose, "Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" (Acts 10:47). "So [Peter] ordered them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they invited him to stay for several days" (Acts 10:48). This bears repeating. A small enclave of Jews who followed Jesus and lived by the power of his risen Spirit witness his outpouring upon uncircumcised Gentiles; by implication, the entire known world. From the pages of the New Testament, the church is infused with a catholic soul.

Jesus said, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh" (John 6:51). The Rite One Communion Service highlights the universality of Christ's redemptive work on the cross: "Thou … didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world" (BCP, p. 334). The proclamation of Christ's self-oblation for the whole world, when received, appears everywhere as new speech, a new song, and renewed exultation, because the Church is, in Christ, a new being (Ps. 98). Although the vindication of God's people occurs in "the sight of the nations," this does not leave the nations merely as outside observes. Rather, the Spirit of the risen Lord "fell upon" and "poured out" upon the nations. Thus, there is one gospel and one catholic Church. The one Spirit is equally present in every part as in the whole.

The Holy Spirit inspires new speech and exultation, songs and marvels, victory and vindication, joy breaking forth in all the earth. The lyre makes a melody, the trumpet blasts, the horn blows, the seas roar, the hills sing, and yet every sound is an eruption from the deepest silence, the hidden ground of love. "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love" (John 15:9).

A fully developed doctrine of the Trinity is a critical tool for this vital passage. The Father is the everlasting source of all love, and because the Father is God, the Father is perfect love. The perfection of love is self-offering. All that the Father has he gives to the Son, and yet the fullness of the Father remains. The Son is the everlasting and immediate and complete return of Love to the Father.

All that the Father gives to the Son, the Son returns to the Father. The Father's begetting love and the Son's responsive Love are a never-ending exchange, a spiraling affection, an uninterrupted flow that is called the Holy Spirit. To be in Christ is to be in this dynamic love. "Everyone who loves the parent loves the child" (1 John 5:1). We are the children of God by adoption and grace. We are born of the Father, we are grafted into the Son, and we ride upon the wings of Holy Spirit. In this mystery our joy is full, though always new and ever expanding. We live by the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Look It Up

Read John 15:9.

Think About It

The gospel is a love song.

Acts 1:15-17, 21-26 • Ps. 1 • 1 John 5:9-13 • John 17:6-19

For Our Lives

The believers, numbering about 120, met, and under the leadership and urging of Peter resolved to add among their apostolic station "one of the men who [had] accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us" (Acts 1:21). Judas had turned aside, and so one was added to the apostolic band of 12, whose number was a sign of the tribes of Israel and their calling as a blessing to the world. Waiting upon the Lord to choose between Justus and Matthias, they cast lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. It fell on him. He did not ask for it or campaign for it. Providence placed him where he was and let the lot fall where it did. God is not mocked. Matthias is chosen for a reason. He is placed.

The appointment of Matthias as a leader is instructive for every Christian. Every Christian is chosen, called, summoned to a vocation and moment that no other person can fill, though every calling is woven into the complex web of the Church's being. We are members one of another, and yet every member has something, was given something, a pearl of great price hidden from all others. A lot falls upon every baptized person. We do not choose Jesus; he chooses us. He calls us and sets before us good works to walk in, whether in matters grave and small, in risk and danger or love and devotion. He calls us and gives us a life worth living, a life worth fighting for. To be a Christian is to know that an irrevocable lot has fallen, not by the cold hand of fate but by the heat of providential love.

Called by God, a Christian is not taken out of the world God has created and loved. And yet there is a world of evil and death from which a Christian most certainly is called apart and summoned to reject (John 17:15; John 17:6). A Christian knows and feels the testimony of God branded on a broken heart. A Christian knows that "God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son" (1 John 5:11). A Christian knows and feels the mystery of the divine name inscribed upon the forehead with fragrant oil. A Christian knows and feels the communion of brothers and sisters who yearn for eternal life breaking in upon the present moment. A Christian is sanctified in the truth. And what is truth? The truth that sets free is the living and active word of God, risen from the dead and engrafted in bodies and souls for the life of the world. A Christian is united to Christ who broke the bonds of death and hell. A Christian loves life in all its fullness and bears the complete joy of Christ to the world (John 17:13).

Therefore, a Christian rejects Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God. A Christian will not follow the advice of the wicked, will not walk on the path that sinners tread, will not sit with scoffers who have made peace with death and blood money. A Christian will delight in the law and love of God and meditate on it day and night. With love and rage, tenderness and intelligence, humor and tears, a person grafted into the life of Christ will affirm and advocate for a better, safer, more humane world. Sadly, a Christian will and must learn that much of what is broadcast in the name of Christianity has been co-opted by the enemy.

Discerning and living the truth means working for life.

Look It Up

Read Psalm 1:1.

Think About It

Jesus conquered evil. He did not sit with it.

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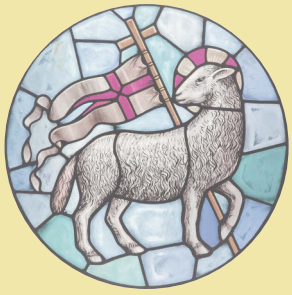

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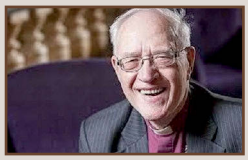

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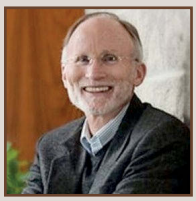

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