

DIVINITY

DUKE UNIVERSITY | SPRING 2013



DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU ARE READING?

A Formation of Scriptural Imagination

BY C. KAVIN ROWE

Preaching with Your Mouth Shut

BY LUKE A. POWERY

Imagining Death—and Dying Well

BY ALLEN VERHEY



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ON THE COVER

information to come...

FEATURES

4

"DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU ARE READING?" A FORMATION OF SCRIPTURAL IMAGINATION

Scriptural imagination is a way of being in the world in which all of life is shaped by the habits of reading Scripture

By C. Kavin Rowe

10

A PLAYGROUND FOR THE FORMATION OF SCRIPTURAL IMAGINATION: LESSONS FROM CHURCH HISTORY

Church history can instruct us in the parameters as well as the flexibility of a scriptural imagination

By G. Sujin Pak

14

IMAGINING DEATH—AND DYING WELL

A scriptural imagination will shape our view of death through remembering the death and resurrection of Jesus

By Allen Verhey

18

PREACHING WITH YOUR MOUTH SHUT

Sometimes the best sermons are the ones that don't say a word out loud

By Luke A. Powery

22

"WHY MUST I GO ABOUT MOURNING?" THE PSALMS OF LAMENT FOR A PEOPLE IN GRIEF

Reclaiming the psalms of lament gives the church a vocabulary for times of suffering

By Jacob Onyumba

26

A HEALTHY SCRIPTURAL IMAGINATION: A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH

Forming and re-forming a healthy scriptural imagination requires us to be readers of the world, not just the text

By Willie James Jennings

28

THE FORMATION OF SCRIPTURAL IMAGINATION AND THE RENEWAL OF THE CHURCH

A panel discussion between Dean Richard Hays, Ellen Davis, and Stanley Hauerwas

DEPARTMENTS

3 The Dean's Perspective

32 New Books from Duke Divinity Faculty

34 Faculty and Staff Notes

38 Gifts

39 New Members of the Board of Visitors

40 Class Notes

42 Deaths

44 Meditation

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Forming Scriptural Imagination

BY RICHARD B. HAYS

SCRIPTURAL IMAGINATION is the faculty that enables us to see the world through the lenses of the Bible's images and stories—and to be transformed by what we see. To exercise scriptural imagination does not mean living in a fantasy world where we ignore the daily realities around us; rather, it is to have our eyes opened to recognize that the story Scripture tells is the *true* story of the world. To look at the world through scriptural lenses is to have our vision corrected so that our illusions are stripped away and we see the world as it really is: created by a loving God but fallen into disobedience and alienation. Through the lenses of Scripture, we also see this real world redeemed and transformed by Jesus Christ's death and resurrection. With our vision thus corrected, we can join Paul in discerning "that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us" (Romans 8:18).

Additionally, scriptural imagination enables us to inhabit the story that Scripture tells. We read the Bible not just to find devotional tidbits, "illustrations" of something we already knew on other grounds, or general principles to shape our lives. Instead, we read it to learn the unfolding story in which we too are characters, and to understand the role we are called to play in it.

That is what Paul does when he addresses his fledgling converts who were Gentiles in Corinth about the problem of whether they should eat meat offered to pagan idols. He does not just give them a ruling on the question. He retells a biblical story: "I don't want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ" (1 Corinthians 10:1–4). Remarkably, the ancient Israelites in the wilderness now become "our ancestors" to the Gentile Corinthians. Paul is narrating them into the story, inviting them to reread it imaginatively so that the events of

the exodus from Egypt become typological foreshadowing of the Christian experience of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Once the Corinthians understand themselves as characters in the continuation of this same story, they will grasp that they—like their Israelite ancestors—should "flee from the worship of idols" (1 Corinthians 10:14). Seeing the world through the lens of this story will enable the Corinthians to discern a faithful response to the immediate problem they face in their own time.

That is scriptural imagination at work for pastoral purposes, forming the imagination of the church. That same sort of formation is at the heart of the mission of the theological education offered by Duke Divinity School. Kavin Rowe explores this in more depth in his article in this issue of *DIVINITY*. This issue also offers several perspectives on the ways in which scriptural imagination can be formed or malformed, and how it can empower the work of the church. Sujin Pak presents lessons from church history for envisioning the parameters and context of

scriptural imagination, and Willie Jennings describes how Christian leaders and institutions form healthy scriptural imaginations. Scriptural imagination is far from abstract, however. Allen Verhey explores the way it shapes our conceptions of death and dying, and Th.D. student Jacob Onyumbé articulates the importance of a scriptural imagination shaped by the psalms of lament for a community of believers who are suffering. The new Dean of Duke Chapel, Luke Powery, demonstrates the way that a scriptural imagination infuses our discipline and ministry of writing sermons and preaching.

As you reflect on these essays, may you be moved to see your own ministry and your community freshly through the lenses of Scripture. May we inhabit this true story and be formed in ways to see how God is working to transform the world. ■

RICHARD HAYS is the Dean and George Washington Ivey Professor of New Testament at Duke Divinity School.

We read Scripture to learn the unfolding story in which we too are characters, and to understand the role we are called to play in it.

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“DO YOU
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reading?”

THE FORMATION OF A
SCRIPTURAL IMAGINATION

BY C. KAVIN ROWE

Uttering a word is like striking a note on the keyboard of the imagination.

Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 6.

One of the most important and distinctive emphases of Duke Divinity School is our commitment to developing a scriptural imagination in those whom we train. Our hope is that Scripture becomes the keyboard of the imagination, the ordering structure of all the various notes we play in our lives. It is common to hear that order can only be imposed from without, that it is inherently oppressive to the originally free self, that true human freedom is to be unconstrained by order, and that the best ethic is one in which we refrain from claims to know the right or healing order of life. But order is in fact inescapably fundamental to Christian understanding. Chaos is neither the rule of God’s creation at its heart nor of new creation in Christ, as Christians ought to know from Genesis and the letters of Paul. No more could an entirely disordered keyboard yield beautiful music than chaos could lead to freedom and a well-lived life. The imagination that works freely and creatively is the one that has been ordered scripturally—a keyboard of virtually endless combinations and beautiful configurations that are the patterns of Christian life. Since speaking of a “scriptural imagination” is not necessarily a common way to talk, however, it makes good sense to explain what we mean.

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By imagination we do not mean so much the capacity for certain kinds of play that we have in abundance as a child and often lose as we age, or a distinct area or activity of the brain that corresponds to creativity, fantasy, and the like. Imagination, rather, means more the way the total person is involved in interpreting and being in the world—the part we actively play in constructing a vision of life for ourselves and for others. Imagination in this sense is thus not something that exists only in our heads or is used only for particular activities such as artistic depiction; it is also practically dense, or lived. The shape of our lives both testifies to and influences the way we imagine the world and, conversely, our imagination helps to structure the concrete patterns of daily, lived existence.

A Scriptural Imagination and Reading Well

To speak, then, of a *scriptural* imagination is to speak about the scriptural shape of a whole life, a way of being in the world that evidences a life-long process of transformation by the power of holy Scripture. The language of a “way of being in the world” emphasizes the point that a scriptural imagination is not simply a matter of “thinking”; nor is it only a “doing.” Such dichotomies between thought and practice, in fact, hinder our ability to be scripturally shaped precisely because they teach us to conceive of our lives as divisible things. But human lives are not divisible; insofar as they are human lives, they are unified by the thing that is the human being through time. All of our thought takes place within the

lives that we live, and our practices are inseparably intertwined with the thinking that makes the practices intelligible. Scripture aims at the formation of the total pattern that is the way we are in the world, thought and practice together in one life.

Perhaps it goes without saying, but such a view presupposes the necessity of learning about Scripture—not only what is in it, of course, but also how to read it. As it turns out, however, reading the Bible well is not something that we naturally do with some ease, like learning to swim or cut our food correctly with a knife and fork. We need, instead, to learn how to read it well.

Learning how to read Scripture well implies, of course, some sort of corresponding instruction. A remarkable passage from the Acts of the Apostles illustrates the need for guidance in the way of reading. In Acts 8, the deacon/evangelist Philip is traveling along a road that ran from Jerusalem west over to Gaza and overhears an Ethiopian eunuch (a court official of the Queen of Ethiopia) reading aloud from the book of Isaiah: “Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth” (Acts 8:32–33, citing Isaiah 53:7–8.). Prompted by the Holy Spirit, Philip runs to join the chariot and asks the eunuch, “Do you understand what you are reading?” The eunuch’s surprising reply goes to the heart of scriptural interpretation: “how can I unless I have someone to instruct me?” He then invites Philip

into the chariot with him and asks, “About whom does the prophet [Isaiah] say this, about himself or about someone else?” Philip of course is eager to teach. “Then,” Acts continues, “Philip began to speak, and, starting with this Scripture, he proclaimed to [the eunuch] the good news about Jesus” (8:26–40). Philip the evangelist becomes Philip the exegete.

In its immediate literary context, the emphasis of the passage is largely on the necessary conditions for understanding Jesus of Nazareth as the one of whom the Old Testament speaks (as well as the result of such understanding—baptism and the welcome into Christian fellowship). The eunuch, that is, does not know about Jesus and must be shown by Philip how Isaiah speaks of him. Two millennia after the Christian interpretation of Isaiah, the fact that the figure spoken of in Isaiah 53 can be read as a prefiguration of Jesus’ suffering and death is unsurprising. But in the first century, no such interpretation was available. Isaiah 53 spoke of one who was to suffer, to be sure, but that this one was Jesus of Nazareth was entirely unknown until the Christians developed their exegesis of the passage. That Isaiah spoke of Jesus in particular, in other words, was something that needed to be discovered and learned.

The larger interpretative point of the scene with the eunuch and Philip in Acts cannot be missed: we can read all day long—even the right passages—and, without instruction in how to understand what we’re reading, miss what we most need to see. Or, to put it more positively, training in how to read Scripture well is a *sine qua non* of good reading itself.



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Tools for Reading Well

Saying this is the easy part. The challenge lies in knowing how to do it. Particular pedagogical practices will inevitably have some differences, but almost all instruction geared toward Christian training will focus on the acquisition of tools and the development of habits. By tools we principally mean learning such things as the languages in which the majority of Scripture was written (Hebrew and Greek), the most salient features of the cultures in which the various scriptural texts were composed (ancient

Palestine, Babylon, or the Roman Empire, for example), the basic facts about the individual biblical books (who wrote them and when, what their most prominent concerns or arguments are, and so forth), and the manifold ways that contemporary questions relate to ancient ones. Strictly speaking, such tools are not prerequisites for encountering God's word through Scripture—as if God's freedom to speak is constrained by our ability or opportunity to learn Greek. But these tools are a necessary part of a serious education into Scripture's depth and complexity. Reading the New Testament in Greek, for example, not only slows one down and forces one to pay attention to every textual nook and cranny, it also opens a range of scriptural meaning that is often otherwise unavailable. The "Greek tool" does not create the meaning; Scripture is inexhaustibly meaningful, after all. But knowing Greek does allow a further and potentially more patient exploration of Scripture's inexhaustibility. Acquiring these tools and the ability to use them takes an enormous amount of time and effort, study and memory, writing and testing. It is far from easy.

The Habits of Reading Well

Forming good habits for reading Scripture is considerably more difficult. This is so not only because habits are hard to form (or reform) but also because many of the habits needed to

read Scripture well run counter to much of the way we do daily life. Though there are many candidates for mention, four in particular stand out today.

First, reading Scripture well requires us to be slow and patient rather than fast and immediate. Scripture's patterns and treasures are often seen only with the slowest, most patient engagement with the text. If we read the Bible as we read our email or daily news, we almost guarantee a shallow and impoverished reading. Skimming email is fine in its own way, but this manner of reading will never lead to a scriptural imagination. Of the things we do to combat our speed, perhaps nothing is so basic as study. The French thinker and mystic Simon Weil once argued that study helps us to pray inasmuch as it helps us to learn how to concentrate our attention (an indisputable necessity—see the next point). It is no less true that study requires us to take time with the material we are to learn, and to read slowly, carefully, and with considerable patience.

Second, and inseparable from the first habit, is the need to nourish the habit of paying concentrated and prolonged attention. The riches of Scripture cannot be found, let alone mined, with scattered attention ("multitasking") or a short attention span (such as commercials or sound-bites both depend upon and reinforce). The entire Gospel of John, for example, presupposes and requires a reader who can mull over complex images and their

various dimensions of christological significance. John 10, for example, is long, reflective monologue in which Jesus turns the figure of sheep over and over and meditates on its christological significance: first, it is to the shepherd that the door of the sheepfold is opened. The sheep hear the shepherd's voice, know his voice, and will follow him. (10:1–6). Next, Jesus becomes the door of the sheepfold; only those who enter by this door (i.e., through him) can be saved (10:7–10). Then Jesus is the “good shepherd” who “lays down his life for the sheep” and says, “I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the

sheep” (10:11–15). He adds that there are “sheep that do not belong to this fold” and that he will bring these, too, “so there will be one flock, one shepherd” (10:16). Finally, Jesus concludes by saying Father loves him because he lays down his life, and that he lays it down of his own accord and has power to take it up again (10:17–18).

Reading John 10 well is simply impossible to do quickly. Despite the continuity in image (sheep/shepherd), the image is not simple. Rather it requires the reader to ponder different dimensions of Jesus' significance. Indeed, the metaphors are comprehensible only on christological premises and an understanding of the church's

mission. In John 10 Jesus is both the way in (door)—which is also to say the mediator between the Father and the believers—and the leader of his followers (shepherd). His language about the shepherd's willing sacrifice and power to rise again refers, of course, to his resurrection, but such a reference is only obvious after the event itself (i.e., later in the story world of John). So, too, only after the mission to the church has begun does it become evident who the sheep are that are “not of this fold”; they are those whom the church seeks to bring in. In short, John presupposes Christian readers who can concentrate and train their attention on the connections between what they already know of Jesus and the church and what the Gospel is trying to teach them through its imagery.

Third, we need to cultivate the habit of reading in community. The emphasis upon reading in community (or communion) has received much attention of late, but for many understandable reasons the habit of reading alone is hard to break. By reading alone, I do not mean as much the simple act of reading a book silently by oneself as much as I do the more damaging notion that reading is what occurs between a text and an individual—an individual who encounters the text and makes of it what he will in and through his individual judgments, mind, or life. We read alone when we think that Scripture is a matter of the text and I. Scripture, however, was written both to and for Christian communities, and the theological logic of the texts presupposes



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a community of readers. The church is the place where reading all the different biblical texts together as one book makes interpretative sense. Anytime we read something called “the New Testament” or “the Old Testament” or “the Christian Bible,” that is, we are already reading inside the community that has made the theological judgment about the unity of these various texts and passed down this judgment in the form of the Bible itself. Not only is it historically the case that we have the texts that form the Bible because the church has transmitted these texts through time, it is also the case that the Bible makes sense as one book only in one hermeneutical place, the Church that has received it as its Scripture. In

Christian thinking, this community includes not only those whom we now know but also the dead (“the communion of the saints”).

Finally, then, reading Scripture well requires us to remember the past—habitually. With some exceptions, ours is not a culture in which historically deep memory is developed. But we are not the first to read the Bible; indeed, it has reached us only because it has been handed down from generation to generation. Habitually attending to the past is thus not only a way to read with those whose lives have been formed by Scripture, it is also a way to understand how Scripture has shaped—or failed to shape—it readers. Habitual remembrance teaches us, in other words, how

Scripture looks when it is lived powerfully and well.

The intersection between habits and tools makes the education at Duke an education in scriptural imagination—a patient training in how to read Scripture and, thus, how to be in the world in a scriptural way. But, in truth, exactly because a scriptural imagination is not a “thing” we possess—as if our diplomas could tell us that we now have it—but a whole life, Duke is only one part of a much larger trajectory of transformation. Yet is a crucial part: a sustained induction into the lifelong practice of reading Scripture well is indispensable for those who serve the church and, we believe, a gift to a world that desperately needs it. ■



A PLAYGROUND

for the Formation of a
Scriptural Imagination:
LESSONS FROM CHURCH HISTORY

BY G. SUJIN PAK

John Calvin stated, “God has never so blessed God’s servants that they each possessed full and perfect knowledge of every part of their subject. God’s purpose in limiting our knowledge was first that we should be kept humble and also that we should continue to have dealings with our fellow brothers [and sisters]” (Dedication, Romans commentary). Calvin’s emphasis on both humility and community provides a corrective to the way that some modern scholars and readers approach Scripture today, especially the tendencies toward arrogance and individualism. It also calls us to embrace conversations about Scripture with Christian brothers and sisters across time and place.

Christian church history—especially pre-modern church history—can shed helpful light upon what it means to form a Christian scriptural imagination and its practices. This may require a reexamination of some basic assumptions in our modern context. For example, the disciplines of history, Bible, theology, and ministerial practice have been separated and professionalized in the majority of divinity schools and seminaries today. The study of the Bible is viewed as a separate academic subject, distinct from the branches of theology, history, and ministry. Yet the pre-modern Christian world did not assume that these disciplines should be separated. Scripture profoundly shaped Christian theology and ministerial practices as well as understandings of Christian history so that all of these disciplines worked cooperatively together with Scripture as their chief guide.

It follows, then, that the formation of a scriptural imagination is not necessarily the sole province of biblical studies; it requires interdisciplinary conversations with theologians, church historians, and ministerial practitioners. As a church historian, I want to focus on three central lessons from pre-modern church history that assist in defining scriptural imagination and its practice. To begin, we might imagine scriptural imagination as a large, beautiful playground. There are different play areas and an array of different equipment. Boundaries identify the limits of the playground, but there is plenty of room to run and play. In a similar way, we can learn from church history the appropriate boundaries for forming scriptural imagination, and within those boundaries see

possibilities for faithful flexibility. This is not a “playground” filled with narrow, rigid strictures, nor is it characterized by unbounded imagination. The goal is faithfulness, and church history helps us to understand and identify the boundaries, practices, and contexts for forming a faithful scriptural imagination.

BOUNDARIES FOR A CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURAL IMAGINATION

A study of the history of how Christian leaders have interpreted Scripture across time and the ways in which Christian churches have discerned faithful interpretation reveals at least five important boundary lines for the “playground”—the formation of a Christian scriptural imagination. To be clear, how one exactly defines and applies each of these boundaries may have variations (and even some degree of disagreement), but an overall commitment to these tenets is readily discernible in Christian history. Furthermore, it is important to note that ultimately the affirmation of these boundaries is an act of faith rather than a proposition to be proven (or disproven). It is a faith commitment advocated by Christians as part of understanding the Bible as *Scripture*—namely, as the sacred text of a particular faith community.

① *A commitment to the authority of Scripture for the Christian life.* The first boundary addresses the key issue of what Christians actually believe Scripture to be. Note that this statement does not advocate a particular vision of how Scripture is authoritative. Throughout Christian history, Christians have affirmed this tenet in a variety of ways. But to assert the

importance of scriptural imagination requires the assertion (and understanding) of Scripture’s authority for Christian life. For many—and certainly for most pre-modern Christian thinkers—this included an assertion of the divine character of Scripture. Church leaders such as Origen, Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, John Wesley, and Karl Barth maintained the necessity of affirming the possibility of divine revelation and, specifically, the importance of affirming Scripture as God’s revelation.

② *Scripture has a trinitarian scope and character.* Each of these boundaries is built into the others and reinforces the others. Hence, the commitment to Scripture’s authority is bound in some way to the recognition that the primary goal of Scripture—as a sacred text of the Christian community—is to reveal God. More specifically, for Christians the Triune God is revealed in Scripture—Scripture has a trinitarian shape, character, and scope. Origen, in his treatise *On First Principles* (IV.2.7), stated that all right reading of Scripture is “chiefly the doctrine about God, that is, about the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.” Even with a commitment to the trinitarian shape of Scripture, there is room (and need) for further conversations about various understandings of God as Trinity and the specific language used for the Trinity.

③ *The central purpose of Scripture is to edify the church.* This boundary recognizes that Scripture as a sacred text is deeply tied to a faith community. Scripture should be read in, with, and for the faith community. In Christian history, the assertion is that the interpretation of Scripture should

edify the church. This commitment to edification includes the understanding that Scripture not only reveals the Triune God; it is also the vehicle given by God by which Christians might journey toward God so that they might increasingly embody God's righteousness. Augustine wrote, "The end of all sacred Scriptures is the love of a being who is to be enjoyed and of a being who can share that enjoyment with us. . . . Whoever, therefore, thinks that he understands the divine Scriptures or any part of them so that it does not build the double love of God and of our neighbors does not understand it at all" (*De doctrina*, I.35.39). The claim that Scripture should edify the church entails the assertion that readings should promote ethical conduct and character. Such readings should produce the fruits of the Spirit. Edifying the church also includes elements of accountability, comfort, strengthening, and correction.

4 **Scripture has a christological center.** The Christian church across the centuries has recognized the deep tie between the incarnation of Christ and the material and divine aspects of Scripture. One biblical passage often invoked is John 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God." This parallel between Christ and Scripture includes the dual assertion that God reveals God's self in Christ, and God reveals God's self in Scripture—and that these are deeply bound together. Thus when Origen and Augustine described Scripture as a vehicle of salvation (leading to knowledge of God and righteousness), they also connected this to the vision of Christ as the way, the path of salvation. The basic commit-

ment is this: all of Scripture ultimately points to Christ. Yet there is also flexibility built into this assertion, for Christians over the centuries express a number—and sometimes divergent—ways of practicing christological exegesis of Scripture.

5 **Scripture has a narrative scope that entails a commitment to the unity of the two testaments.** The affirmations of Scripture's trinitarian and christological character are deeply connected to a commitment to the unity of the Old and New Testaments. Christian scholars have identified this as a commitment to the canonical reading of Scripture: that Christians accept and employ the canon handed down by faith communities, read Scripture in conversation with itself across the testaments (Scripture interpreting Scripture), and operate with a meta-narrative that prioritizes the convictions of Scripture's trinitarian and christological character. Again, flexibility within this boundary is evident. Christians have identified this unifying narrative in different ways, while still retaining these commitments to its trinitarian and christological character. For example, Martin Luther identified the unifying narrative of the testaments as the saving events of Christ's life (incarnation, passion, resurrection, ascension). Consequently, he interpreted many Old Testament passages as prophecies of Christ. The unifying narrative of the testaments for John Calvin, however, is the story of divine providence—God's great faithfulness and beneficence toward God's people across time. In this way, Calvin's christological readings were equally *ecclesial* readings, pointing to God's faithful activity with the church (Christ's body) across the testaments.

THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURAL IMAGINATION IN PRACTICE

Christian history provides several depictions of what scriptural imagination looks like in practice. This includes models of a variety of Christian exegetical methods and techniques, as well as ways Scripture has shaped Christian preaching, ethics, worship, theology and history.

Practically speaking, the playground of scriptural imagination, with both its boundaries and flexibility, affirms that Scripture does not have only one correct interpretation. Multiple faithful readings of Scripture are possible. The pre-modern church expressed this most clearly in describing the four senses of Scripture. Scripture has a historical (or plain) sense and a spiritual sense. This spiritual sense was further divided according to the three cardinal virtues: an allegorical sense (faith), a tropological sense (love), and an anagogical sense (hope). Pre-modern readings of Scripture yielded at least four potentially different meanings of any given passage: (1) what it means historically or in its plain sense, (2) what it teaches a Christian to believe (allegorical), (3) what it teaches a Christian to do to live ethically (tropological), and (4) what it teaches a Christian to hope—that is, the *telos* toward which a Christian should journey (anagogical). A variety of faithful exegetical methods are possible, but the possibilities are not unbounded. They are 'disciplined' by certain faith commitments, such as the five boundaries previously discussed.

Christian history has numerous examples of an openness to the various exegetical tools provided in different contexts and historical eras. Any tool may be useful, but it also is disciplined



by the boundaries of a scriptural imagination. Scripture is the locus of authority, not the tool itself; therefore, no tool should limit the possible interpretations of Scripture. A commitment to the authority of Scripture entailed for most pre-modern Christians an understanding of Scripture as self-interpreting and self-authenticating. In practice, the subject matter and authority of Scripture is set by Scripture itself and not by any external tool or body of knowledge (e.g., historical facts or moral philosophy).

Much more could be written about the ways that Scripture has shaped the practices of Christian churches across time. Briefly, the formation of a Christian scriptural imagination means that Scripture deeply shapes and informs the central practices of the Christian life, such as worship, liturgy, preaching, doctrine, ethics, and polity. Scripture provides a language and a grammar for these practices. Scripture provides their vision and character.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CONTEXT

Finally, understanding the formation of a scriptural imagination in the light of Christian history enables a deeper understanding of the role of context—that each Christian’s particular location

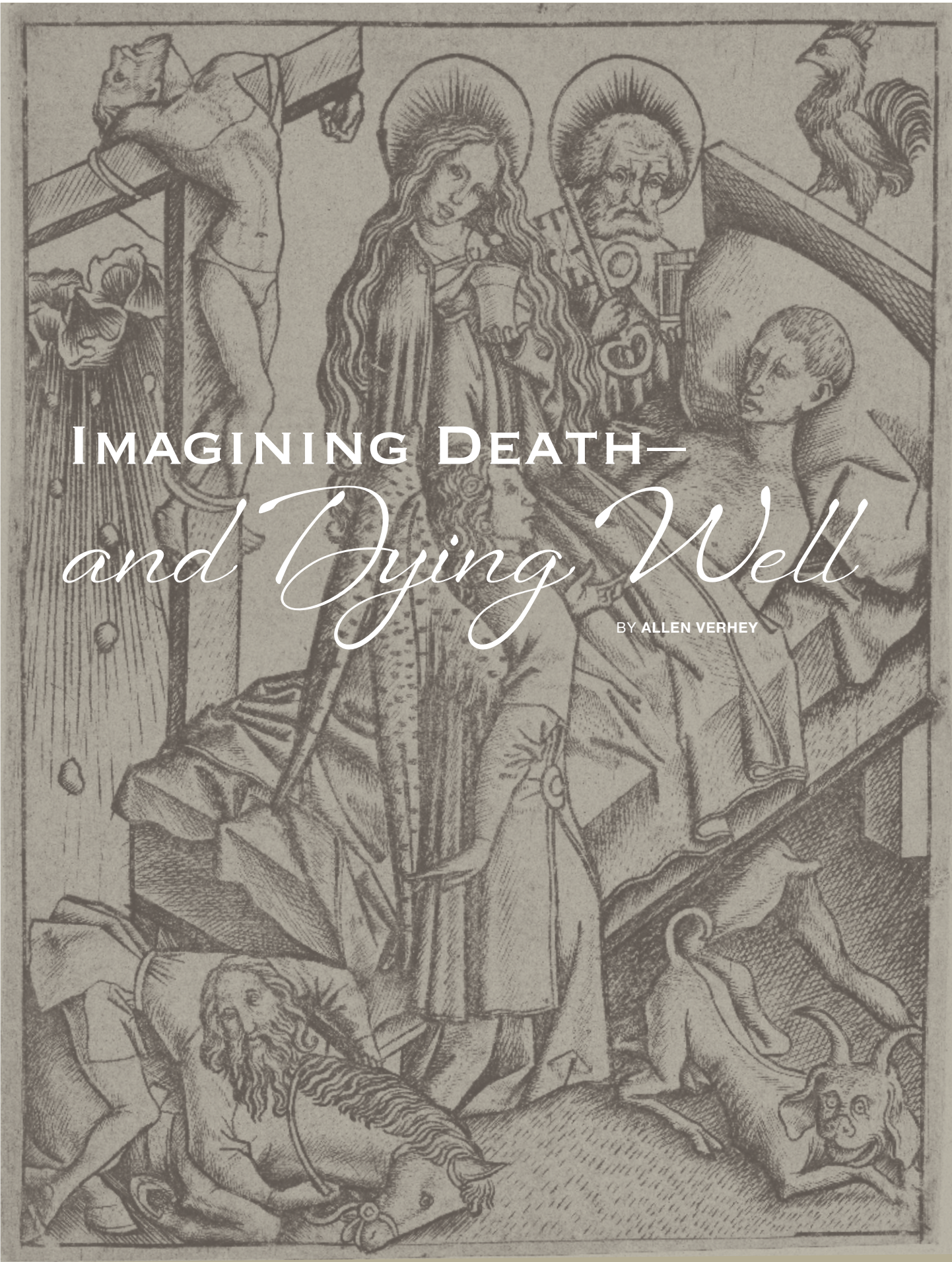
(historical, cultural, ethnic, philosophical, theological, political) has always carried particular implications for the formation and practices of a scriptural imagination that cannot be ignored, but also cannot become an end in itself.

Every interpreter reads Scripture from a particular location. Indeed, this is potentially a good thing. It calls Christians to recognize that acknowledgment of one’s own particular location is part of faithfulness, just as attending to other voices and contexts is also part of faithfulness. It affirms the possibilities of faithful readings in various locations, while also calling Christians to guard against making their own perspective or location an idol. Acknowledging our own locatedness and the differing location of fellow Christians helps Christians to recognize better what God may be doing in us, beyond us, and even in spite of us.

This means that Christians need not fear readings that are explicit about their locatedness, such as feminist, womanist, African-American, African, Asian, or liberationist readings of Scripture. Rather, these are all possible faithful readings of Scripture that are not to be constrained by another particular perspective that deems itself determinative—such as

when, say, African readings are judged (and rejected) on the basis of North American or European criteria. The situation of global Christianity today is much like the situation faced by the Jewish Christian church in the book of Acts concerning the question of Gentile inclusion. The Jewish Christians thought their views and practices were the defining perspective for this Christian church. But God had other plans that required a process of faithful communal discernment so that they could participate in God’s actions among the Gentiles. Likewise, though North American and European views have strongly shaped understandings of Christianity for several centuries, God again has other plans with and beyond us, for the places where Christianity is thriving most in our world today is in the Global South (Latin American, Africa, and Asia).

Faithful boundaries are necessary on the playground of scriptural imagination lest our individual perspectives and contexts become self-serving and idols unto themselves. They ‘discipline’ our particular, located readings of Scripture and understandings of Christianity. But in addition to boundaries, this playground includes great flexibility and recognizes the importance of particular location and perspective. The hope is that we might gain some shared sense of what it means to be Christian, while acknowledging that no one of us can fully grasp God’s truth. Church history can provide a portrait of Christian scriptural imagination while affirming that God, the Creator of all, may speak through Scripture in many diverse, even surprising, ways. ■



IMAGINING DEATH—
and Dying Well

BY ALLEN VERHEY

DYING WELL IN AMERICA IS HARD WORK. IT'S A FAMILIAR COMPLAINT AMONG THE CRITICS OF THE MEDICALIZATION OF DEATH. WE DIE BADLY, THEY SAY, WHEN WE DIE A LINGERING DEATH, NOT AT HOME BUT IN A HOSPITAL, SURROUNDED BY TECHNOLOGY RATHER THAN BY FAMILY AND FRIENDS, UNDER THE CONTROL OF MEDICAL EXPERTS. THIS IS ALL THE RESULT, THEY SAY, OF THE MEDICALIZATION OF DEATH IN THE MIDDLE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY; IT WAS THEN THAT DEATH BECAME A MEDICAL EVENT RATHER THAN A HUMAN EVENT, AN EVENT GOVERNED BY MEDICINE RATHER THAN BY THE DYING PERSON AND HER COMMUNITY. BIOETHICISTS WHO MADE SUCH A COMPLAINT FREQUENTLY URGED THAT PROCEDURES BE ADOPTED TO PROTECT THE PATIENT'S RIGHT TO REFUSE TREATMENT; IN THAT WAY CONTROL OVER DYING COULD BE WRESTLED AWAY FROM THE MEDICAL EXPERTS AND RETURNED TO PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES. THE DEATH AWARENESS MOVEMENT ALSO COMPLAINED ABOUT THE MEDICALIZATION OF DEATH AND PROPOSED TO REMEDY IT BY LEARNING TO REGARD DEATH AS "NATURAL" AND BY UNLEARNING OUR DENIAL OF DEATH. BUT IN SPITE OF SUCH PROPOSALS, DYING WELL IN AMERICA REMAINS HARD WORK. DYING WELL REQUIRES NOT JUST ATTENTION TO THE RIGHTS OF PATIENTS, NOT JUST AN END TO OUR DEATH-DENIAL, NOT JUST EVEN HARD WORK; I AM CONVINCED THAT IT ALSO TAKES A GOOD IMAGINATION, AN IMAGINATION FORMED AND RE-FORMED BY THE BIBLICAL NARRATIVE.



The commanding image of death in "medicalized" dying is that death is the enemy to be defeated by the greater powers of science and medicine. This imagination can be traced to the dawn of modernity. In the 17th century Francis Bacon expressed his confidence that empirical knowledge could provide mastery over nature and rescue the human condition from its mortality and vulnerability to suffering. Bacon traced his project to the biblical creation story and to the mandate of "dominion" over

nature (Genesis 1:26, 28). Confident in the human capacity for dominion through empirical knowledge, Bacon rejected the ancient observation of medicine that some patients are simply "overmastered by their diseases."

In the 17th century, when doctors were still as likely to kill someone as to save them, this imagination must have seemed simply fanciful to many, but with the great successes of medicine in the mid-20th century, Bacon's vision gained a firm hold on the

culture's imagination. We should all be grateful for the successes of medicine, of course, but those successes also resulted in failures that were soon on display in the medicalization of dying. The imagination formed by the propositions of Francis Bacon prompted a denial of death. It would not allow us to think anyone was "overmastered by their disease," or even that anyone was dying. The ancient "dying role" with its practices and responsibilities disappeared; the "sick role" with its passivity before the doctor took its place on the stage. This imagination fueled only one fundamental goal: avoiding death. To preserve life, so Bacon said, was "the most noble" end of medicine.

One obvious failure of this perspective was that people still died, in spite of Bacon, but another was that they died sometimes lingering deaths. Dying became a medical event. The body of the dying person became the battlefield where heroic doctors and nurses wage their war against death. The lab reports and the body scans provide surveillance and dictate strategy, but the doctors remain in charge, even in the face of almost certain defeat. A "medicalized" dying is death in a hospital, in a sterile environment, in the company of technology, and under the control of those who know how to use it. The medicalization of death has made dying well difficult.

It is easy to blame physicians when people do not die well, but it is not their responsibility to teach people how to die well. The problem is not their skill but our imagination. There have been, as we have seen, complaints about medicalization and powerful challenges to it. Standard bioethics proposed “patient autonomy” as a way to allow dying patients to wrestle control over their dying away from the doctors. But the emphasis on “patient autonomy” failed to nurture an alternative imagination. In fact, patients themselves and their families frequently have an imagination formed by Francis Bacon’s vision and the medicalization of death.

The death awareness movement promised that, if we would stop our silence and denial and learn to regard death as “natural,” then we could avoid a medicalized death. To regard death as “natural” does suggest an alternative imagination, but it is an alternative that has problems of its own.

Churches have been largely silent on the issue, content to surrender death to medicine. But the church can and should resist the medicalization of death, not by relying on the bioethics movement or the death awareness movement, but by faithfully and creatively retrieving its own resources for the re-forming of our imagination.

One resource is the tradition of *Ars Moriendi*. These ancient instructions about how to die well were governed by its imagination concerning death, and they were usually prefaced by a commendation of death. *Crafte and Knowledge For to Dye Well*, written in 1490, offered this commendation: “Death is nothing else than the release



CHURCHES HAVE BEEN LARGELY SILENT ON THE ISSUE, CONTENT TO SURRENDER DEATH TO MEDICINE. BUT THE CHURCH CAN AND SHOULD RESIST THE MEDICALIZATION OF DEATH, NOT BY RELYING ON THE BIOETHICS MOVEMENT OR THE DEATH AWARENESS MOVEMENT, BUT BY FAITHFULLY AND CREATIVELY RETRIEVING ITS OWN RESOURCES FOR THE RE-FORMING OF OUR IMAGINATION.

from prison and the ending of exile ... the entrance into bliss and joy.” One should welcome death as a “well-beloved and trusted friend.” The image for death is defended by citing biblical texts—but they are usually taken out of context. For instance, “Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his faithful ones,” (Psalm 116:15) is a favorite of the tradition. But in this Psalm of Thanksgiving for healing it is life, not death, which God cherishes. That death is “precious” is not said to commend death but to insist that God regards death as something costly, as the loss of someone or something dear.

From such a commendation of death, the *Ars Moriendi* tradition typically moved to an account of the deathbed temptations of the dying person—temptations to faithlessness, despair, impatience, pride, and avarice—and to instruction concerning the virtues necessary to meet those temptations—faith, hope, the patience of love, humility, and the ascetic surrender of worldly attachments. Then the following elements would be included: a little catechism for the dying, an instruction to the dying that they

should look to the cross and find in Christ a paradigm for their own dying, advice to those who keep company with the dying, and prayers.

There is wisdom here. There is no silence or denial. The death awareness movement might applaud. The dying person has decisions to make, and the doctors cannot make them for him. The bioethics advocates would be pleased. The dying person’s integrity, if not his autonomy, is of crucial concern. Attention is given to the virtues necessary for dying well. And most important of all, I think, is the instruction to find in the story of Jesus’ death a paradigm for a Christian’s dying.

But there are also problems. And the problems begin at the beginning, with its image of death and its commendation of death. It echoes Plato more than Christian Scripture. That Platonic dualism at the beginning runs like a virus through the whole, corrupting even its reading of the biblical text, its account of the virtues, and its attention to Christ as paradigmatic for a Christian’s dying.

Its account of hope, for example, becomes the longing of an individual

soul for heavenly bliss. Its account of patience leaves no place for lament. Its call to humility is attentive to our sins but not to our finitude. And its call for an ascetic detachment from “carnal” attachments disparages relationships with family and friends. It is curiously inattentive to the place of lament in Christ’s dying, to his simple thirst, and to his concern for his mother and friend.

The *Ars Moriendi* tradition formed the imagination of the Christian community for centuries, and it still does. Christians frequently go limping between the two imaginations which govern *Ars Moriendi* and medicalized death. When a loved one is sick—but not quite dead—we look to medicine as the faithful savior. And then—when a loved one dies, we sometimes mouth Platonic platitudes as if they provided genuine comfort.

We need a new imagination concerning death, a biblical imagination concerning death. It agrees with the instruction of *Ars Moriendi* to remember Jesus. But a biblical imagination begins with the story of his resurrection and with a celebration of embodied and communal life, not with commendation of death.

The story of Jesus’ resurrection and the hope for our own is fundamental to our comfort and our courage while we are dying, to our compassion in keeping company with the dying, to our patience and our hope. The memory and hope of resurrection can form an imagination in which death is neither the great enemy to be defeated by the greater powers of medicine (as in medicalization) nor the trustworthy friend that liberates us from the body and its “carnal attachments” (as in *Ars*

Moriendi), but as the enemy already defeated and to be defeated by the great power and love of God.

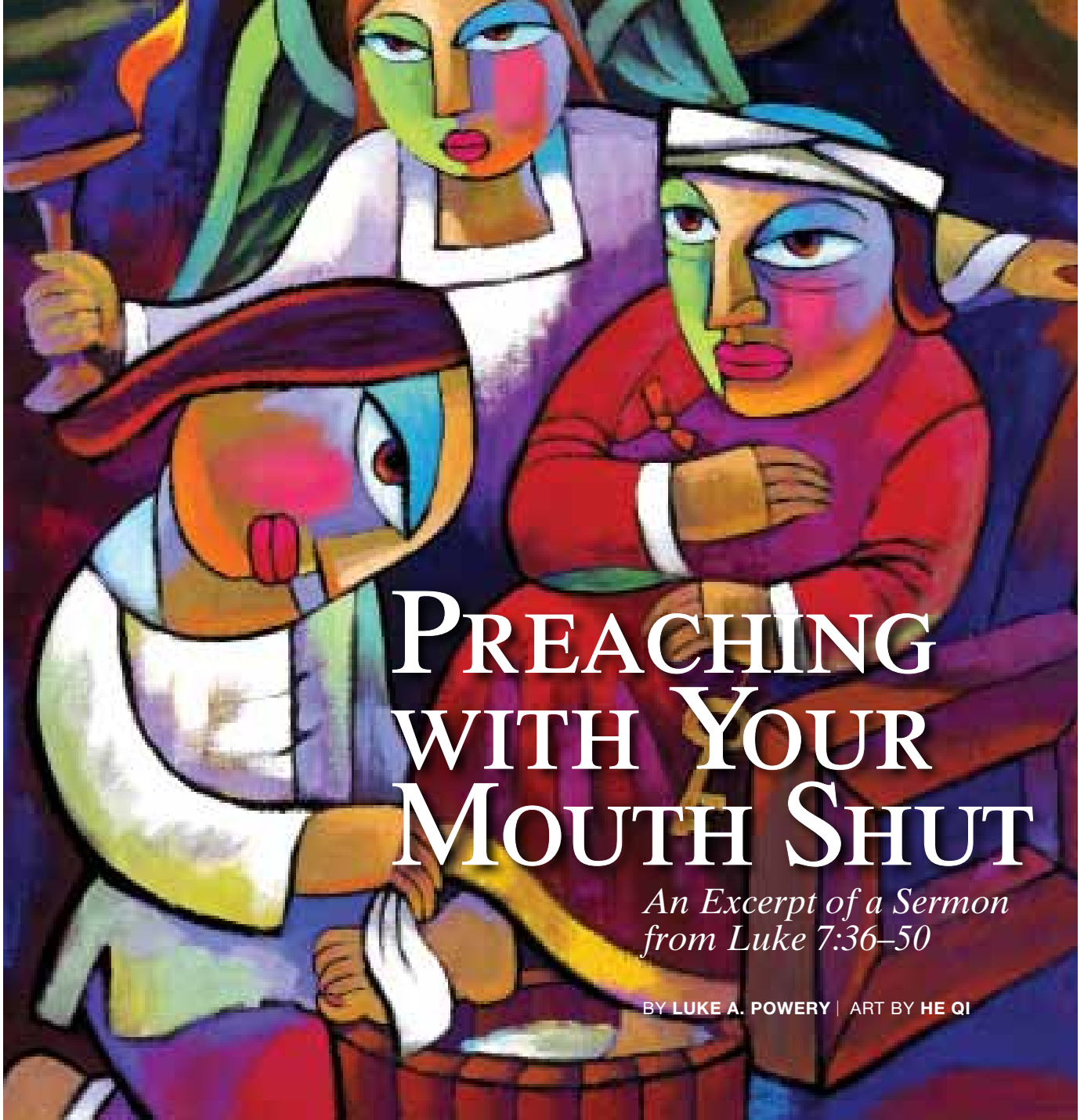
The memory and hope of resurrection also provides a remedy for the dualism of much of the *Ars Moriendi* literature and the problems that attend that dualism. The resurrection calls for attention to a cosmic hope that resists a narrow vision of an otherworldly hope reduced to the soul’s eternal bliss. Because that future is still sadly “not yet,” lament is called for; but because that future is already established by God, and because both the living and the dead have some mysterious foretaste of it, we need not fear death. The resurrection calls for attention to the self as “carnal”—embodied and communal—and it can form our care for the dying to be attentive to (rather than dismissive of) the “carnal attachments” of those with whom we keep company.

The death of Jesus was hardly what we think of when we think of dying well. He died young and violently, the victim of a judicial murder. He died—according to the Gospel of Mark, at least—abandoned by friends and followers. He died an excruciatingly painful death. Even so, the story of Jesus is the story Christians remember, the story that is determinative for our Christian imagination and discernment, the story that provides the paradigm for faithful living and dying. The words from the cross join lament and confidence in God; they enact forgiveness of enemies and make provision for the care for family and friends; they attend to the embodied and communal (the “carnal”) needs and comforts of the dying; and they attend to God as the one who can be trusted and into whose

hands we can let ourselves go. They can form and reform the virtues for dying well that were so important to *Ars Moriendi*. The story of Jesus provides, I think, a corrective both to the *Ars Moriendi* tradition and to the medicalization of dying.

Each of these three—medicalization, the *Ars Moriendi*, and the faithful dying and caring for the dying that I have briefly sketched, is governed by a particular imagination. Medicalization imagines that death is the great enemy to be defeated by the greater powers of medicine. That imagination has shaped both medicine and our culture, both our ways of dying and our ways of caring for the dying. The *Ars Moriendi* of the 15th century imagined that death is a friend to be welcomed, a friend who liberates us from our bodies and ushers our souls into eternal bliss. It insists on remembering Jesus, but its imagination is deeply flawed by its dualistic and Platonic assumptions. We need a third imagination: an imagination formed and re-formed in memory of Jesus, whose story is told in Scripture. We need to remember that God won a great victory over death when God raised Jesus from the dead. We need to allow that victory to form an imagination that acknowledges that death is an enemy, to be sure, but an enemy that has been already—and will in the end be completely—defeated by the greater power of God, by a love that is stronger than death. ■

ALLEN VERHEY explores this topic in more depth in his book, *The Christian Art of Dying: Learning from Jesus* (Eerdmans, 2011).



PREACHING WITH YOUR MOUTH SHUT

*An Excerpt of a Sermon
from Luke 7:36–50*

BY LUKE A. POWERY | ART BY HE QI

In the Gospel of Luke, the woman gets into trouble because of the script she writes with her body. She's born as a woman into a society where women are viewed as second-class citizens. She can't get the same type of job as a man, though she has the same skills. Or if she does get the same job as a man, she won't get the same pay. She

can barely survive with the amount of money she's making. I guess that's why she starts this new job. She's desperate for money and you know people will do almost anything for more money. She tries to hide her new occupation, but her nosy neighbors soon find out, because it's hard to hide what your body says. She no longer wears a head covering and her hair is down and unbound and you know what that means. She's a "hip hip ho." If you

aren't down with the hip hop homiletical talk, let's just say she's making a living on the streets with her body. A living—when she's actually killing herself. She's working to put bread on the table but her tears are her food day and night.

Word travels around town about her new "hobby." She loses her friends and family and finds more foes. No one calls her for the girl's night out. No one calls her for the family get-togethers.

They only call her names. She's a call girl. It's as if she's not even human anymore. They strip her of her identity. Now, she's only known as the "sinner woman." If it wasn't bad enough to be a woman in her town, imagine what it's like to have your last name become "woman" and your first name "sinner." She becomes untouchable. No handshakes, no hugs, no pat-on-the-backs, no passing of the peace, no high fives, no one to wipe her weeping eyes. She's dirty. A no-body. An outcast in her own backyard.

No one offers advice to help her. No one shows her another way to live or another way to love. Actually, she thinks she has no reason to live any longer. A lack of peace will make you think lots of crazy things. She has no peace. She has no name. In fact, she has no voice. She doesn't say a word in this passage. Only the men speak. But this mute will soon teach us through her body talk. This outsider, still not allowed to be ordained in many churches, will give a homiletical lesson we'll never forget.

Some of the best sermons don't even use words. This peace-less woman thinks no one accepts her, forgives her, or loves her until the rumor-mill begins turning about Jesus being in town and eating at the Pharisee Simon's house. Jesus is her last hope. The one who causes the blind to see and the lame to walk and lepers to be cleansed and the deaf to hear and the dead to be raised is also known to break bread with tax collectors and sinners, so maybe he'll accept her too. Jesus is her last hope. If he is the Son of God, the Prince of Peace, as some are saying, she wants to be with him because she knows that he can stop the chaos in her life.

He can give her peace. If Jesus can't help her, no one else can. If Jesus can't straighten out her crooked situation, no one else can. So she puts on her fanciest dress, finest jewelry, fixes her hair, pours priceless oil in a jar, and carries some hope in the chest of her heart and sets out to go to a Pharisee's house, knowing full well that the Pharisee will not welcome her presence. But people will do whatever they have to do in order to get peace.

She arrives at Simon's house and takes advantage of the social custom that allows needy people to visit such a meal to receive leftovers. But she's not interested in breadcrumbs because all she had eaten up to this point are her sorrows. What would be one more day without bread? She just wants to meet Jesus. There is something different about his presence, his table posture, his body talk, and his piercing eyes that see right through her chaotic soul. She rushes towards him, stands behind him, weeping before him, bathes his feet with her tears, dries them with her hair, kisses his feet and anoints them with refreshing oil. She doesn't speak a word, but she preaches. She doesn't speak a word, but her body talks. She preaches with her mouth shut. Words cannot capture what he was about to do for her. Sometimes words aren't enough. She doesn't care what the others think because she senses the difference in him. It's as if when with him, God is with her.

Her tears reveal her remorse, but Jesus doesn't say a word. He doesn't have to, because as she kisses his feet, she senses his love for her. She just wants to love somebody and have somebody love her in return because nobody ever does.

I'm sure you know that not all true sermons will be received gladly. People will even hear what they want to hear even if you never said it. This woman's sermon is no different. Some sermons may be received with a loud, "amen!" while others may be received with an "oh my!" Some sermons will be received with a round of applause. But other sermons will be received with flying objects thrown at the preacher—and not in affirmation! Simon the Pharisee throws fighting words at the woman's embodied sermon delivered to Jesus. "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him—that she is a sinner." Look at who's touching him! That ole sinner woman. Look at who's touching him, that crackhead. Look at who's touching him, that man who beat his wife. Look at who's touching him, that mother who abused her children. Look at who's touching him, that person who hasn't been in Sunday school for months. Look at who's touching him, that atheist neighbor. Look at who's touching him, that Divinity School professor. Simon has a problem, not just with her body talk but with her touching Jesus.

And today that's how we act many times, too timid to look at each other face-to-face, body-to-body in the flesh, perhaps because of all of the child abuse scandals and sexual harassment lawsuits in the church. It seems easier to send an email or a text message. That way you don't have to look at anybody. But let me say that you can't do incarnational ministry without a touch. You can't physically touch someone in a hospital through Facebook or Skype. I know there are

things written about intimacy over the Internet, but we don't serve a virtual Jesus. He came in a historical body. This unchurched woman preacher shows Simon the way through her body talk. She preaches with her mouth shut. Simon didn't get it the first time, so Jesus adds his two cents. He tells Simon that the one for whom the creditor cancels the greater debt loves the creditor more than the other. Jesus tells Simon that he's been a rude host and the sinner woman is the respectful host. The irony is that Simon was the one who invited Jesus and yet shows no hospitality. His hospitality was hostile. All of the footwashing, anointing,

and kissing were the usual customs of hospitality—and it's the sinner woman who does it.

Jesus receives her hospitality but most importantly, he receives her for who she is. She has no idea why she treats him the way she does, but when he tells her "your sins are forgiven" she realizes that she showers him with love because he pours forgiveness over her life. Simon thought she was the one touching Jesus, but in fact he had already touched her so much so that her heart was singing. Her physical action is a response to his love. With every tearful wipe of her hair on his feet, he wipes her sinful

slate clean. Bathing his feet with her tears does not compare with how he bathes her with the salvific baptismal waters of the Spirit. Her past becomes the past in an instant. She no longer suffers shame and guilt over who she is or what she did. She's no longer a no-body, because he makes her a some-body. She thinks she welcomes him, but he actually welcomes her that day into the kingdom of God. Jesus is the real host. Words can't express what he's done for her. Words can't express what he's done for us.

But he doesn't stop there. He knows that her life has been chaotic up to this point so he decides to live up to his name as a storm-stiller. Not only does he forgive her, but he bestows the best benediction one can say over a person—"Go in peace." Three words we all need to hear. Go in peace. That is his blessing over her life: go in peace, go in shalom, go in prosperity, go in wholeness, and go in goodness. Three words you need to hear when you have a badly broken body. Three words essential to effective ministry: "Go in peace." We're not told where to go, therefore anywhere and everywhere you go, go in peace. He didn't say go and create a new fancy website for your congregation, he didn't say go and bring in all the big-name preachers to hold a revival, he didn't say to go and jump on the megachurch bandwagon, he just says "go in peace." And isn't that what people really want? Not more church programs but peace? Go in peace. It's body movement and action, not another church meeting to talk about the last church meeting where we talked about the last church meeting. I know we like to use words in the Protestant tradition but sometimes you can't just talk the faith, you have to walk the faith, move and groove in the

LUKE POWERY was installed as the dean of Duke Chapel in September 2012. He was also appointed associate professor of the practice of homiletics at Duke Divinity School. He had previously taught at Princeton Theological Seminary; he received his B.A. from Stanford University, his M.Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary, and his Th.D. from Emmanuel College, University of Toronto.



He is the author of *Spirit Speech: Lament and Celebration in Preaching* (Abingdon Press, 2009). His most recent book, *Dem Dry Bones: Preaching, Death, and Hope*, on the spirituals as a resource for preaching, was published by Fortress Press in 2012.

Powery's teaching and research interests include the Holy Spirit and preaching; lament, loss and Christian hope; African American preaching and worship; and worship's relationship to social justice. Seeking to spread the gospel through both the spoken word and song, he has recorded on albums representing musical forms as diverse as Christian hip hop and children's nursery rhymes. He was raised in the Holiness-Pentecostal tradition and ordained by the Progressive National Baptist Convention.

"I am deeply grateful, overjoyed, humbled, and honored to be entering the living tradition of Duke Chapel's ministry in word and deed to its various constituencies," Powery said. "I look forward to continue, as the Chapel motto says, 'keeping the heart of the University listening to the heart of God,' which beats with love for the world." ■



faith, preach with your mouth shut and realize as St. Augustine reminds us that your life can be an eloquent sermon.

The best sermon one may ever hear or the best sermon you might ever preach may actually be spoken by your body, by your life. So go in peace. Jesus gives the woman his very self because he is our peace. And he says to us, “Go in peace, go in me, walk in me. Clothe yourself in me. Let your body do the talking.”

One of my students told a story about his father who died when he

was very young. But one of the things he remembers about his father, a preacher, is this: when preparing for church, his father would iron his money because he didn’t want to give God any wrinkled money. Some of the best sermons don’t even use words.

I know this because Christ’s body tells me so. He preached a sermon that changed the course of history and he didn’t even use words. Jesus’ body spoke when Jesus’ body broke. When he was wounded for our transgressions, his body was talking. When he was

bruised for our iniquities, his body was talking. When he was hung high and stretched wide, his body was talking. When he was oppressed and afflicted, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent so he did not open his mouth, his body was talking. He preached with his mouth shut because his body was talking. A performance of the body we’ll never forget. His body says all that needs to be said to us. But if you need a translation, here it is: This is my body broken for you. This is the cup of my blood shed for you. ■



WHY MUST I GO ABOUT MOURNING?

The Psalms of Lament for a People in Grief

BY JACOB ONYUMBE | PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL KAMBER

short line here identifying that this is Anna Mburano

“Grandsons,” yelled Anna Mburano, “get off me.”

A decade ago the name of Anna Mburano would not have meant much to most people (it might still mean nothing to many people even today). But the name of that 80-year-old woman from the village of Luvungi in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo harvested unfortunate fame after she was gang-raped by a group of rebels who could have been the age of her own grandsons. In the past decade, cases like that of Anna Mburano have become so frequent in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo that her story is no longer unique.

Since the beginning of the so-called “wars of liberation” in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1996, more than six million people have perished and the end of the ordeal does not seem to be in sight. Sixteen years ago, I was in still high school when those wars began. After spending two weeks suffering from hunger and lack of clean water in the woods with my fellow students and the faculty of the boarding school that I was attending, it did not occur to me that 16 years later people would continue to be killed, women raped, and fields or savannas teeming with corpses and human bones. But here I am, 16 years later, studying the Bible

at Duke Divinity School, still hearing many victims of violence crying out for peace, justice, and life.

The recurring question in discussions about conflicts in Central Africa (Burundi, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Rwanda) and the African Great Lakes region (Burundi, Rwanda, northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda and northwestern Kenya and Tanzania) has been, “What can be done to stop violence?” I have to admit that I am no expert in peace studies and I do not have the slightest idea about what can be done to stop a war once it has begun. Other people are believed to qualify for that task, and we have to

pray that their efforts will bear fruit. What, to my judgment, should occupy our imagination is finding a way of living in the midst of that chaos, even as we—the Christian community—look forward to the complete renewal of creation by Christ at the end of time.

I want to suggest that the Christian community in Central Africa and the African Great Lakes should recover the millennia-old tradition of praying, especially praying in a way that does not deny the reality of pain and suffering endured by that community. Without ignoring the importance of other forms of prayers that the church has been using for many years, I would like to emphasize the importance of lamenting and mourning properly within a context of suffering and violence. The Christian community needs to study the psalms of lament and use them as the prayers of the church in the midst of suffering and pain.

The psalms of lament are a collection of biblical psalms in which the pray-er expresses his anguish and rage to God. Examples of such psalms are Psalms 13, 22, 39, and 88. Biblical scholars posit that these psalms could have arisen from situations of anger, rage, doubt, despair, bewilderment, or confusion. In them, the psalmists speak without considering whether their cries will offend God and human beings. They speak, to use the words of one of the biblical poets, “in the bitterness of [their] soul” (Job 10:1).

The reader of these psalms might wonder if the psalmists ever knew what politically correct language was. If they did, they certainly did not use it in the psalms of lament. Consider the following verses:

“How long, Lord, Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?”

(PSALM 13:1).

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?”

(PSALM 22:1, NIV).

“Remove your scourge from me; I am overcome by the blow of your hand”

(PSALM 39:10, NIV).

“Look away from me, that I may enjoy life again before I depart and am no more”

(PSALM 39:13, NIV).

“You have taken from me my closest friends and have made me repulsive to them. I am confined and cannot escape; my eyes are dim with grief”

(PSALM 88:8-9, NIV).



Anna Mburano caption to go here?

I suspect that many Christians will recognize the first line of Psalm 22 because of its use in the New Testament and in Passion liturgies but be startled by the rest of these verses, for they sound like blasphemy. The psalmists do not seem to woo God or humans; on the contrary, there are even times when they go as far as to want God to “look away” from them. Might this be the reason why the psalms of lament are not the most popular poems in the life of the church?

Like any verse of the Bible, the psalms of lament can be dangerous texts when used carelessly. Instead of offering a suffering community a way to approach God through God’s own words, an uncritical use of these psalms could lead to the escalation of hatred, retaliation, resentment, or withdrawal from the community. Yet the study of the psalms of lament is so urgent for the Christian communities in Central African and the African Great Lakes, because the psalms of lament offer believers a distinctive perspective on both God and their circumstances.

TO POINT OUT THAT THINGS ARE NOT RIGHT

Good pastors would seem to be those who offer words of consolation to believers. They are supposed to wipe the tears of those who cry and tell them that everything will be fine. But there are communities where believers are not even aware that they are in a situation where they need to weep. In a society where killing and raping have become widespread, it is possible to believe that violence and atrocities are the norm for daily life. One can get used to pain and suffering and believe that there is no better way of living. Even when it becomes obvious that the situation in which the community lives is improper, the victims might try to deny the reality

of pain and give the impression of living in a perfect community.

The psalms of lament teach people how to weep, to mourn, to cry or cry out. And when the members of a community cry or complain, it is a sign that something is wrong in that community. A community where some members complain is hardly perfect. The psalms of lament tell the community that denial does not heal a community. As Jesus points out, consolation can be offered only to those who are in need of it and express it, to those who weep (Matthew 5: 4). And that consolation can come both from God and from the community. For both communities as well as individuals, the psalms of lament bring to light our shortcomings and somehow urge us to reimagine our lives and not to accept things the way they are, since they are not acceptable.

BREAKING THE SILENCE

Language can often be taken for granted by those who are relatively stable, physically as well as psychologically. But when trauma, disaster, abuse, or violence happens, they are likely to become unable to speak. The story of Anna Mburano is exceptional for she, at least, was able to protest against her rape by those she called her “grandsons.” In other cases, the victims of suffering become unable to utter a word. It is true that teaching the psalms of lament will not heal the victims from the inability to speak after trauma. What the psalms of lament can do in that context is to provide the believer with words that she can use in protest.

TURNING ANGER TOWARD GOD

One of the interesting features of the psalms of lament is that majority of them speak to God, not often to

the human offenders. The psalms of lament can shape the imagination of the believers in a way that their anger and frustration do not become causes for further violence and suffering. They offer the victims of offenses the opportunity to consider their hurt beyond confrontation with the offender. Without ignoring the offender as the cause of pain and suffering, the victim realizes that it is to God that he should direct the plea. In the psalms of lament, the psalmist accuses God instead of accusing just human beings. Enemies do not happen to be just there! God is accused of having something to do with the presence of enemies in the life of the victim. Therefore, it is God’s obligation to change things from bad to good.

SPEAKING TO GOD IN GOD’S WORD.

In *Verbum Domini*, Pope Benedict XVI says that in the book of Psalms, “God gives us words to speak to him, to place our lives before him, and thus to make life itself a path to God” (# 24). This means that even when the pray-er accuses God of betraying her, the pray-er is on the right path, for it is God himself who gives her the word to speak to him. Unlike personal prayers where the individual is often hampered by personal inability to speak to God from the depth of their frustration, the psalms of lament provide the believer with words to use and how to use them. The psalms of lament tell the believer, “it is OK to yell at God and to express your anger to God, and here is how you can do it.”

LETTING OTHERS HEAR OUR PAIN

Sometimes when we pray the psalms of lament, we realize that instead of being victims we have actually been offenders. These psalms give us the opportunity to hear the cries of victims, which might prod our conscience



THE PSALMS OF LAMENT BRING TO LIGHT OUR SHORTCOMINGS AND SOMEHOW URGE US TO REIMAGINE OUR LIVES AND NOT TO ACCEPT THINGS THE WAY THEY ARE, SINCE THEY ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE.

Anna Mburano caption to go here?

and convict our hearts. Praying and studying a psalm in which the ugliness of human evil is spelled out without compromise can challenge both individuals and communities to think more critically about themselves, their actions, and their relationships with one another.

A friend once told me, “I know you like the psalms of lament . . .” I confess that I do not like the psalms of lament in the sense that I enjoy praying them. Like many people, I do not like to cry

or to hear someone else cry. The psalms of lament speak about suffering, ugliness, and pain, and so we do not have to like them. Nonetheless, the psalms of lament are the prayer of God’s people; they are what God gives us to use when we are hurting. They remind us that there is something wrong in the hatred, the violence, and the evil that encompass most of our world, so that condoning such acts or remaining silent about them makes us unfaithful to God.

These psalms open for us new possibilities. Almost all the psalms of lament (except Psalm 39 and 88) end with hope and trust in God. We can be assured that after our cries, there is possibility of breaking into song. Lamenting is not driving into a dead end; it is the expression of our desire to begin anew, to build a new community where “There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away” (Revelation 21:4, NIV). ■



A HEALTHY SCRIPTURAL IMAGINATION: LEARNING TO READ IN THE WORLD

BY WILLIE JAMES JENNINGS



A central work of churches and Christian leaders is to help people discern the difference between a scriptural imagination that is healthy and one that is diseased. Christians have imagined themselves carrying out biblically warranted actions in ways that have been stunningly beautiful, like caring for the poor and sick—and grotesquely brutal, like supporting segregation or oppressing women.

A healthy scriptural imagination builds from that great insight we find in Calvin's *Institutes* that the Scriptures are the spectacles through which we see God's world. The Bible pulls us into

a strange new world in which we are captured by a God who knows us and is transforming us into the image of God's Son. A healthy scriptural imagination attunes us to this work of the Holy Spirit. And in order for this imagination to be healthy, Christian institutions must cultivate Christian readers, people who read the world *as Christians*.

The goal is not to cultivate a Christian reading *of* the world, but Christian readers *in* the world. Why not a Christian reading *of* the world? Because any time Christians have claimed to have *the* Christian reading of the world, we stop seeing the world—especially the world God has never ceased to love. The claim to have *the* Christian reading of the

world inevitably draws us toward seeing the world simply in need of correction and Christians as those who can do the correcting, rather than seeing the world as the site of overwhelming divine desire. A healthy scriptural imagination creates people who read knowing they are creatures who stand in need of their Creator at every moment. These are readers who believe in the Holy Spirit and the resurrected Lord, and because they believe they move through this world in faith, love, and hope. Indeed, faith, love, and hope mark the lives of Christian readers in the world, and they can be cultivated by Christian leaders who commit themselves to three crucial tasks.

First, we must help people learn to read only Scripture as Scripture.

People read all manner of texts as though they were scripture. The question for Christians is not whether we have a high or low view of Scripture, but whether we have a disciplined view of Scripture. The U.S. Constitution is not scripture, but many people treat it as such. The policies and protocols of the financial markets as well as the business plans of corporations are not scripture, but many have made them unquestioned guides for public life. Only the word of God stands forever, and a sound Christian reader spies out the counterfeits, those textual authorities that claim an unexamined permanence in our lives. Christian readers are not antinomians or anarchists, but they understand the grave dangers of the legalist habit of mind.

The legalist habit of mind lives inside the constant refrain, “It says it here . . . and we must obey.” It quickly esteems official pronouncements and documents of those in power even when they create or increase suffering and destruction. It does not discern when others are exploiting biblical language. When laws or amendments are written to sound like Scripture without the life-giving effect of Scripture, Christian readers must call them out for what they are: signatures of the anti-Christ, not the Christ. To learn to read only Scripture as Scripture is to learn that all laws, policies, and procedures of every institution must be judged in the redemptive light of Jesus and when necessary challenged and/or changed. Learning to read only Scripture as Scripture means cultivating that critical eye of faith that will not misplace faith. It is faith always turned toward love.

Second, we must help people learn that they are readers together with other readers. We follow others who

struggled to understand what they read. We read alongside other readers, together all of us struggling to understand what we read. We are being followed by readers who are watching us in our struggles to understand what we read. When we are reading Scripture, we never read alone, and the struggles of *any* reader are the struggles of *every* reader.

This shared sense of being readers together often goes missing in the obsessions over biblical interpretation in Christian communities. If it is cultivated, then we might realize that what is most important is not finding consensus on interpretation of texts but sharing in each other’s struggles over reading. Those struggles join all of us to women readers around the world who suffer in societies and cultures that have woven the words of the Bible into patriarchal systems of oppression. We are joined to suffering readers who have been baptized with a hermeneutics of despair, believing that the word of God seems to always to agree with the words of the powerful.

Our Savior stood among the readers of his day and reminded them that they were creatures straining to understand a God and a world more mysterious than they could imagine. This straining toward knowledge and understanding marks the journey of life that God has ordained. This is a grand work of love, and it is the calling of Christian leaders to help God’s people imagine themselves as loving readers. We should invite people into the joy of seeking knowledge together, and not simply gaining knowledge as a commodity. We should equip the saints to defuse the wars of biblical and cultural interpretation by pointing them toward a dream of communities of readers who read together in hope.

Third, we must help people see things as they should be, not as they are.

Here the words of Scripture capture this aspect of a healthy scriptural imagination. Christian readers are disciplined by hope. One of the lessons that all Christians must deepen in their lives is that hope is always active, never passive. The Holy Spirit prods and pushes us to think creatively toward new possibilities. We are often tempted to read the world through a hermeneutics of decline, morbidly anticipating when things will fall apart. That way of reading the world is turned toward death, not life. But the life and craft of Christian leaders must be marked by belief that God brings life out of death. Christians schooled in the ways of the life-giving Spirit are attuned to and anticipate the surprising ways God can bring life out of death, and they invite others to see a world that God has pulled and is pulling from death’s power.

We must draw people to this question: how might my life, work, passion, and vocation bear witness to God’s victory over death? This pivotal question can be posed and answered only by readers who can analyze the agents of death that seek to destroy the creation. We want to cultivate and invite readers to yield the soil of their lives to the seeds of hope planted by the Holy Spirit. Imagine forming Christians who can look out on their worlds, and where others see the end, they see beginnings. Imagine followers of Jesus who can look into the nothingness and, moved by the Spirit, create what had been seen only by the eyes of faith. The world is in great need of such people with a healthy scriptural imagination. ■

This essay is adapted from a presentation in response to a paper by Mark Noll on the occasion of the inauguration of the president of Calvin College.



The Formation of Scriptural Imagination and the Renewal of the Church

A Panel Discussion with Richard Hays, Ellen Davis, and Stanley Hauerwas

MODERATED BY GREG JONES

JONES: Richard, since this is a theme that you have made a signature focus for your deanship, what do you mean by scriptural imagination and what do you think it has to do with renewing the church?

HAYS: Scriptural imagination is the capacity to see the world through lenses given to us in Scripture—but when we see the world through such lenses, it doesn't just change the way we see the contemporary world but it

also changes the way we see Scripture. There's a hermeneutical circle that goes on between the reading of the text and the reading of the world in which we find ourselves. Scriptural imagination is the capacity to have our imaginations transformed by the encounter with Scripture in such a way that we see the world in light of God's revelation, fundamentally through God's revelation in the election and call of Israel and the death and resurrection of Jesus as redemptive events for the world.

Now that's a formal description. I think this is a crucial skill for Christians to imagine in this way because our imaginations are constantly being bombarded and shaped by other kinds of stories that we encounter through the popular media, through the circles of society that we happen to move in or the culture we happen to move in. Scripture can interrogate those stories that we're told and cause us to think differently.

I think it will be most helpful if I just give you an example of what I'm

talking about. T. S. Eliot wrote *Four Quartets* from 1936 to 1943, and particularly the later ones were influenced by his experience of living through the bombing of London during World War II. Near the end of the *Four Quartets* Eliot writes these lines: “The dove descending breaks the air with flame of incandescent terror of which the tongues declare the only discharge from sin and error. The only hope, or else despair, lies in the choice of pyre or pyre, to be redeemed by fire by fire.” That’s a complex example but let me unpack it. He’s taking this experience of London being bombed by planes diving out of the sky and casting fire on the city and he’s reading it in conjunction with the story of Pentecost in Acts 2, “the dove descending breaks the air with fame of incandescent terror.”

He interprets the experience of suffering and destruction that his city and culture are experiencing as possibly a kind of purgation that can have a cleansing or transforming effect in light of the Pentecost imagery, but he’s also rereading the Pentecost imagery so that we understand that the coming of the Holy Spirit is not just a nice, happy event where we have children dance around the sanctuary waving banners. There’s a terror. The language of Acts 2 uses the language of violence. There was the coming of flames and like a violent wind filling the room. Eliot has juxtaposed those images in a way that causes us both to read the Acts 2 story freshly but also to rethink the bombing of London at the same time.

That’s an example of the kind of thing I mean by scriptural imagination. I think if we in the church could recover a greater capacity to think

“The purpose of this conversation is to talk a little bit about scriptural imagination. I believe the mission of Duke Divinity School is the formation of scriptural imagination for the sake of renewal of the church. In order to grasp more fully what that might mean in particular terms it would be useful to have an open panel discussion with several members of our faculty.”

—Richard Hays, Dean of Duke Divinity School

with that kind of imagination, it would enrich our preaching, it would inform our practice in ways that would cause Scripture to permeate our life together so that we’re not blown about by every wind of polltakers who come to us and ask, “Are you liberal or conservative?” We’re thinking in light of a different set of images and categories.

JONES: Ellen, you’ve spent a lot of time in the last several years in South Sudan, a rather different context from here, a place where they’re rebuilding educational institutions. How does scriptural imagination as an image and the renewal of the church come to life for you as you’ve taught Scripture in a context like South Sudan?

DAVIS: In 1996, the person who is now the Archbishop of the Episcopal Church of Sudan, Daniel Deng Bul, was my student at Virginia Theological Seminary. I found that lecturing to one bishop who then became the Archbishop of Rwanda following the genocide and to another bishop whose country was in the middle of genocidal warfare really forced me to think what I wanted to bring out of these texts that makes a difference. I

am impressed that the Christians with whom I am working in East Africa have a very strong sense that they are participants in the biblical story, and I don’t mean that in any way that is naïve that we might identify as literalist or fundamentalist. As Archbishop Daniel said to me, “We live in the Old Testament. My people need to know this story.” I understood what that meant only when I went to what was then Sudan in 2004. Not only that there is a cultural similarity—an agrarian, village-based society, the importance of kinship, a Semitic language—but more importantly the faith was formed and firmed in a crucible of suffering. The Sudanese understand that suffering is part of the witness of faith. It’s part of the life of faith and it is not a threat to faith. That they should be suffering is that’s just part of the deal. That’s what they’ve read about in Scripture. If one can speak of a “canon within a canon,” the Old Testament and the Passion narratives are the core of their faith in many ways.

HAYS: I heard you tell a story once, Ellen, about your experience of working with a group of young mothers with regard to care of newborn infants and

the way in which you were helping them think about that in light of the story of Moses. Could you recount that story?

DAVIS: I was doing a lot of teaching that year in several different places and I was traveling with my colleague, Dr. Peter Morris, who is a graduate of Duke Divinity School but also was at that time the Chief Medical Officer of Wake County. He's been coming with me to Sudan since 2007 as a public health doctor and a pediatrician. On that particular occasion, he had been speaking to a group of both men and women at a theological college in Renk in what was about to be South Sudan. As you can imagine or perhaps know, there probably is not a higher rate of infant mortality and maternal mortality in the world than there is in South Sudan, so he was giving the sort of public health lecture about this situation to a group of theological students because they are the opinion leaders in their culture. Their faces were absolutely impassive to what he was saying. Afterwards we went back to the guesthouse and did an overview of the day and I said, "How do you think it went?" And he said, "Not very well!" I said, "We're going to a new town tomorrow. Let's try a different approach there."

We opened the next day by looking at the first two chapters of Exodus and asking two questions: first, what does it take to keep the baby Moses alive; and second, what does it take to birth the people of Israel? It completely changed the conversation because suddenly they were in charge. We were having this conversation about a half a mile from the Nile and these are people who were very familiar with having baskets with babies on their heads taken off their heads by soldiers

and if it was a boy baby bayoneted and thrown into the Nile. This was familiar territory to them. What does it take to keep the baby Moses alive? It takes midwives. It takes the cooperation of a community. It takes people adopting children they did not birth. They could just instantly get there and then it wasn't hard to extrapolate from there to what we would call public health practices to support those things. In terms of birthing the new nation, it takes leaders who are willing to take responsibility for the wellbeing of that people, and for them Scripture is the key to how they take responsibility for their nation. As one bishop said on that occasion, "We have lost everything." The infrastructure was destroyed in 50 years of civil and genocidal war. "We have lost everything. If we don't have Scripture, then everyone will do"—and he put out his index finger—"everyone will do the one thing that seems right to them just now." I cited to him, "And there was no king in Israel and everyone did what was right in their own eyes," and he said, "Exactly. That's where we are."

JONES: Stanley, you've spent a lifetime reflecting and writing among other things about how Christians are formed, sometimes malformed and how they ought to be formed. As a theologian, what does the term scriptural imagination suggest to you and why do you think it's important both for forming Christians and shaping people who will be pastors leading Christians?

HAUERWAS: You think you learn Scripture here from Richard and Ellen, but when you go into theology, you no longer are dealing with fundamentally a scriptural discipline. But

theology within the tradition of the church has always been fundamentally an exegetical task. I've always thought that fundamentally what I do is teach speech and I hope the speech that I teach is shaped by Scripture. I want to read a quote from David Hart's *Atheist Delusions*: "Every true historical evolution is a conceptual revolution. First in the magnitude of any large revision of the condition are premises of human life to say nothing of the time required for it to bear historical fruit is determined by the magnitude of that prior spiritual achievement. Consider thus, the rise of Christianity was surely an upheaval of unprecedented and still unequalled immensity."

I call attention to Hart's statement about concepts because I think it helps resist appeals to the imagination that associate the imagination fundamentally with the mind and fantasy. Imagination is a material reality as concrete as the words we are forced to learn through the habituation of the tongue and, therefore, it has absolutely not just thinking. It has to do with the placement of where you are in the world that forces you to read the Scripture with the radicality that Hart suggests. Just think about when every time you tell people that you've been convinced by nonviolence by reading John Howard Yoder and they say, "How about Romans 13?" Never forget what it meant to be a German in 1933 reading Romans 13. Never forget and how that makes a difference for how the concept is to be used.

The revolution that Hart suggests is at the heart of the Christian presumption about time. Christians are shaped by the biblical imaginative logic, to use Hart's phrase, to believe in history. Think about what a strange phrase that

is, to believe in history. That is time, history, has a narrative form in which the disjunction and revolutions move toward an end quite different from the beginning. That's what it means to be shaped by an eschatological imagination. Think, for example, what it means to have the word creation and how one of the things that is so tempting in our times is to substitute the word nature for creation and how hard it is to maintain what you mean by, "In the beginning, God created."

Scripture shapes our imagination and by the very language that we use an imagination so shaped makes possible, indeed demands, the testing of our imagination by Scripture. That is what Richard was suggesting—it is always a dialectic. It is a never-ending process that done well you will never tire of, because one of the things I assume that you will discover through your ministries of engagement with Scripture to preach every Sunday is the absolute inexhaustibility of the text. It's never finished.

Therefore, we dare not forget that Scripture is not a dead text out of which we must force meaning. The very idea that you've got to come up with the meaning is already a deep mistake. Rather as John Webster puts it, "A dogmatic account of the creaturely activity of reading Holy Scripture does not entail the suspension or retirement of language about divine action but rather its furtherance." Put differently, the ontology of the text, its nature as creaturely servant of revelation presupposes the Holy Trinity and its condition of the act of reading. When you're reading Scripture, you're reading God's engagement with yourself and with the community; it is not like somehow we have to make sense out of these historically conditioned texts that we no longer

can understand but rather as the church itself is about the formation of a people through the Holy Spirit. We cannot live without having that spirit talk to us through the texts. That's what it means to engage in scriptural imagination.

JONES: If people are convinced that cultivating a scriptural imagination for the renewal of the church matters, what one discipline or practice would you suggest would be a way to help to do that beyond the courses that they're taking and the overall formation that occurs here in the school?

HAUERWAS: Come to morning prayer.

DAVIS: Hear or read Scripture in the context of prayer.

HAYS: If you do read *The Art of Reading Scripture*, there are nine theses in the beginning of the text that offer

some practical tips and one of them is this: faithful interpretation of Scripture invites and presupposes participation in the community brought into being by God's redemptive action. That is the church. I think that reinforces what Ellen and Stanley have said—that the most important thing we can do to promote the kind of imaginative reading of Scripture we're talking about is to read it in community, to read it in dialogue with friends, colleagues, brothers, sisters who are also engaged with you in the task of wrestling with this question of how Scripture addresses their lives.

Now that community that we read in dialogue with is not just the people you happen to know now but it's also the communion of saints. We also read it in dialogue with the long history of faithful Christian interpretation that gives us patterns and examples of what faithful reading looks like. ■



TO SEE THE VIDEO OF THE FULL DISCUSSION, VISIT
www.divinity.duke.edu/news-media/news/20130215scripturalimagination

Art, Imagination and Christian Hope: Patterns of Promise

Edited by Jeremy Begbie, Thomas A. Langford Research Professor of Theology and Director of Duke Initiatives in Theology and the Arts, Trevor Hart, and Gavin Hopps

Ashgate Publishing Company, 2012

193 pages, Hardcover, \$99.95



IN HOPE, Christian faith reconfigures the shape of what is familiar in order to pattern the contours of God's promised future. In this process, the present is continuously re-shaped by ventures of hopeful and expectant living. In art, this same poetic interplay between past, present, and future takes specific concrete forms, furnishing vital resources for sustaining an imaginative ecology of hope. This volume (part of the Ashgate Studies in Theology, Imagination and the Arts) attends to the contributions that architecture, drama, literature, music and painting can make. It explores how artists trace patterns of promise, resist the finality of modernity's despairing visions, and generate hopeful living in a present which, although marked by sin and death, is grasped imaginatively as already pregnant with future.

Stations of the Heart: Parting with a Son

By Richard Lischer, James T. and Alice Mead Cleland Professor of Preaching, Knopf, 2013

272 pages, Hardcover, \$25.00



THIS POIGNANT love story of a father for his son is at once funny, heart-breaking, and hopeful. In it a young man teaches his entire family "a new way to die" with wit, candor, and, always, remarkable grace. This emotionally riveting account probes the heart without sentimentality or self-pity. As the book opens, Richard Lischer's son, Adam, calls to tell his father that his cancer has returned. Adam is a smart, charismatic young man with a promising law career and an unlikely candidate for tragedy. That his young wife is pregnant with their first child makes the disease's return all the more devastating. Despite the crushing magnitude of his diagnosis and the cruel course of the illness, Adam's growing weakness evokes in him an unexpected strength. This is

the story of one last summer and the young man who lived it as honestly and faithfully as possible. We meet Adam in many phases of his growing up, but always through the narrow lens of his undying hope, when in the final season of his life he becomes his family's (and his father's) spiritual leader. Honest in its every dimension, *Stations of the Heart* is an unforgettable book about life and death and the terrible blessing of saying good-bye.

Preaching Fools: The Gospel as a Rhetoric of Folly

By Charles L. Campbell, professor of homiletics, and Johan H. Cilliers
Baylor University Press, 2012, 272 pages, Hardcover, \$39.95



THE COURT JESTERS, clowns, foolish ones: all images of the comic, sometimes tragic, fool. Across national and cultural borders, the archetype of the fool has played a significant role in how communities

interpret and ascribe identity. As Charles Campbell and Johan Cilliers remind us, the Christian preacher, tasked with delivering a paradoxical gospel, is also a fool. In a delicate exploration with enlightening results, *Preaching Fools* uses a diverse representation of fools and foolish actions to show how modern preaching is inseparable from the folly of the cross. Campbell and Cilliers walk the fine line between the ugliness and beauty of the gospel and challenge readers toward a deeper engagement with its unsettling message.

The Eloquence of Grace: Joseph Sittler and the Preaching Life

Edited by Richard Lischer, James T. and Alice Mead Cleland Professor of Preaching, and James M. Childs Jr.
Cascade, 2012, 340 pages, Paperback, \$40.00

JOSEPH A. SITTLER (1904-1987) was one of the most influential theologians of the 20th century, distinguished for his pioneering work in ecology



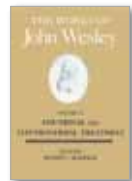
and for his preeminence as a preacher. He gave both the Beecher Lectures at Yale and the Noble Lectures at Harvard. As the “preacher’s theologian,” Sittler approached the interpretation of Scripture with a clear understanding of current critical scholarship, but also in the freedom of the gospel at the center of Scripture and with the humility of a theologian of the cross. In following the trajectory of the text into the preaching situation he gave a lively, timeless, and eloquent expression to the fact that the interpretation of texts is in the service of proclamation. This collection of readings from Sittler’s rich legacy contains a great many presentations and sermons that have never before appeared in print. Theologically serious preaching, close attention to language, engagement with the best of sacred and secular culture, and a deep respect for the text, all characteristics of Sittler’s work, are the sort of features that continue to edify. They remain as benchmarks for good preaching even as styles and contexts evolve.

The Works of John Wesley Volume 12: Doctrinal and Controversial Treatises I

Edited by Randy L. Maddox, William Kellon Quick Professor of Wesleyan and Methodist Studies
Abingdon Press, 2012
504 pages, Hardcover, \$58.00

THE FIRST OF three theological volumes and part of *The Bicentennial Edition of the Words of John Wesley*, this volume is devoted to four of John Wesley’s foundational treatises on

soteriology. These treatises include, first, Wesley’s extract from the Homilies of the Church of England, which he published to convince his fellow Anglican clergy that the “evangelical” emphasis on believers experiencing a conscious assurance of God’s pardoning love was consistent with this standard of Anglican doctrine. Next is Wesley’s extract of Richard Baxter’s *Aphorisms of Justification*,



aimed more at those who shared his evangelical emphasis, invoking this honored moderate Puritan to challenge anti-nomian conceptions of the doctrine of justification by faith. This is followed by Wesley’s abridgement of the Shorter Catechism issued by the Westminster Assembly in his Christian Library, where he affirms broad areas of agreement with this standard of Reformed doctrine—while quietly removing items with which he disagreed. The fourth item is Wesley’s extended response to the Dissenter John Taylor on the doctrine of original sin, which highlights differences within the broad “Arminian” camp, with Wesley resisting a drift toward naively optimistic views of human nature that he discerned in Taylor.

Incorporation

By Will Willimon, professor of the practice of Christian ministry
Cascade, 2012, 266 pages,
Paperback, \$29.00



THIS NOVEL features Hope Church—its clergy and its people—an unforgettable cast of saints and sinners. While serving a

heavenly realm, they also have their feet plainly planted in the muck and mire of the real world. Here is an Easter story of ordinary folk caught in the gracious grasp of an extraordinary God. In this rollicking, hilarious, sometimes pathetic, fast-paced, and always entertaining journey through a month of Sundays at Hope Church, we meet a wild cast of characters in church people surprised to be the body of Christ. Sex, violence, greed, grunge, lust, and lies—all in church! Saints and sinners all, caught within the embrace of a God who refuses to make proper distinctions.

Thank God It’s Thursday: At the Table with Jesus

By William H. Willimon, professor of the practice of Christian ministry
Abingdon Press, 2013



120 pages, Paperback,
\$13.99

THIS PREQUEL to *Thank God It’s Friday* follows the Gospel of John to focus on Jesus’

teaching of his disciples prior to his own death but also before their own hour of decision. The climax of the Gospel is when Jesus pours out his life on the cross—surely an enactment and demonstration of the power of God’s self-sacrificial love. To sustain and fortify his followers for the difficulties ahead, Jesus prepares them by teaching and offering sacraments of self-giving, through which they (and we) experience the grace and presence of the risen Lord. This book can equip Christians to face their hardships as they humbly serve with the promise of God’s abiding presence already made good by his outpouring of sacrificial love. ■

DAVID ARCUS performed recitals in October at White Rock Baptist Church in Durham, N.C., and Church of the Epiphany in Danville, Va. He collaborated with Olukola Owolabi in a presentation on the pipe organ and its literature to music students of Onondaga Community College at Crouse Hall (Syracuse University) in December. In January he presented his annual program in Duke Chapel, which featured a performance of the rarely heard chorale fantasia on *An Wasserflüssen Babylon* by Johann Adam Reincken. In March he participated in the Bach Birthday 328 Festival at First Lutheran Church, Boston, Mass.

JEREMY BEGBIE's essay "Natural Theology and Music" was published in The Oxford Handbook of Natural Theology, and his review of Tim Dowley's *Christian Music: A Global History* appeared in the March issue of the new online journal *Marginalia*. He was keynote speaker at the San Diego National Worship Leaders' Conference and the Telemachus Conference in Florida, and he addressed the topic of sharing faith in a postmodern world at a conference organized by the Mission and Discipleship Council of the Church of Scotland. In November he spoke on "The Mixed Potential of Music" at an international conference on "Mediating Peace: Reconciliation through Art, Music & Film" in Jerusalem and delivered a lecture-performance on the theme of lament as part of the World Christian Lecture Series at Hope College (Mich.). He joined with Duke University's Ciompi Quartet to perform *At the Still Point*, a new commissioned work for piano and



string quartet by American composer Christopher Theofanidis. The concert was part of *Engaging Eliot*, a multimedia exploration and art exhibition in Duke Chapel of T. S. Eliot's literary masterwork, *Four Quartets*. Begbie's essay "Keeping in Time: Music and Four Quartets" was incorporated into the QU4RTETS project catalog, which accompanied the exhibition.

KATE BOWLER received a Lilly Theological Research Grant for 2012–13 to study immigrant megachurches in Canada and the United States. She is participating in the Wabash Teaching and Learning Workshop for pre-tenure theological school faculty.



LUKE BRETHERTON published "The Political Populism of Saul Alinsky and Broad-Based Organizing" in *The Good Society Journal* (21.2, 2012) and "Coming to Judgment: Methodological Reflections on the Relationship Between Ecclesiology, Ethnography and Political Theory" in *Modern Theology* (28.2, 2012). His book *Christianity and Contemporary Politics: The Conditions and Possibilities of Faithful Witness* (Wiley-Blackwell) is one of four books shortlisted for the Michael Ramsey Prize for theological writing. At the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting in Chicago in November, he was part of two panels, one responding to Jeffrey Stout's book *Blessed Are the Organized*, and the other discussing "Ecclesiology and Ethnography." He delivered the keynote address "Pentecostalism and Political Witness" at the European Research Network on Global Pentecostalism, held February 1–2 at

Heidelberg University in Germany. **CHARLES CAMPBELL** attended the annual meeting of the advisory council for the journal *Interpretation* in Richmond, Va. (Oct. 12–13); the first annual lecture series sponsored by the Justo Gonzalez Center for Latino/a Ministries in Orlando, Fla. (Oct. 19–20); and the annual meeting of the Academy of Homiletics in Chicago, Ill. (Nov. 15–18). He preached at Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, on Oct. 11 and at Hudson Memorial Presbyterian Church in Raleigh, N.C., on Jan. 27. He hosted scholars from Germany and Denmark for a consultation on homiletics at Duke Divinity School held March 14–25.

DOUGLAS CAMPBELL published "Is Tom Right?: An Extended Review of N. T. Wright's *Justification: God's Plan and Paul's Vision*" in *Scottish Journal of Theology* (65.3, 2012), and "Christ and the Church in Paul: A 'Post-New Perspective' Account" in *Four Views on the Apostle Paul*, edited by Michael F. Bird (Zondervan). In November he participated in "Beyond Old and New Perspectives on Paul," an interdisciplinary conference on his book *The Deliverance of God* (Eerdmans) held at Duke Divinity School. He also co-chaired the Restorative Justice Studio, which partnered participants at Duke with Durham-based community leaders and practitioners of restorative justice.

STEPHEN CHAPMAN published "Modernity's Canonical Crisis: Historiography and Theology in Collision" in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, Vol. III.1: The Nineteenth Century*, edited by Magne Sæbø (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht). During



Convocation & Pastors' School in October, he offered the course "Really Bad Leaders in the Bible." He taught and preached at Duke's Chapel UMC in Durham, N.C.; Genesis UMC in Cary, N.C.; First Baptist Church in Raleigh, N.C.; Duke Chapel; and the Duke Wesley Fellowship.

MARK CHAVES published



"Serendipity in the Study of Religion and Society" in *Studying Religion and Society*, edited by

Titus Hjelm and Phil Zuckerman (Routledge). He delivered several lectures: "Why Megachurches?" and "Continuity and Change in American Religion," at Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Springfield, Mo., Nov. 15; "The Sociology of Clergy Compensation," for the Triangle-Alamance United Church of Christ Clergy Group, Hillsborough, N.C., in December; and "Continuity and Change in American Religion," the plenary lecture for the annual meeting of the Association of Theological Schools' Chief Academic Officers Society, San Antonio, Texas, March 21.

JEFFREY CONKLIN-MILLER

presented "Formation for Holiness Between Church and World" at the Theology Symposium, a joint session of the Wesleyan Theological Society and the Society for Pentecostal Studies meeting held at Seattle Pacific University in March. He also led a seminar at Convocation and Pastor's School in October, "Shaping Youth for Mission: Formation for Holiness," and co-led a small-group study of N. T. Wright's book *Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense*, at Duke Memorial United Methodist Church in Durham, N.C.

JAMES CRENSHAW published "The Journey from Voluntary to Obligatory Silence (Reflections on Psalm 39 and Qoheleth)" in *Focusing Biblical Studies: The Crucial Nature of the Persian and Hellenistic Periods; Essays in Honor of Douglas A. Knight*, edited by Jon L. Berquist and Alice Hunt (T&T Clark); "Divine Discipline in Job 5:17-18, Proverbs 3:11-12, Deuteronomy 32:39, and Beyond" in *Reading Job Intertextually*, edited by Katharine Dell and Will Kynes (T&T Clark); and a review of Psalms 3 by F. L. Hossfeld and Eric Zenger in *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* (74.4, 2012). He presented the paper "Divine Vulnerability: Reflections on Genesis 22" at a Nov. 15-16 conference at Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. He also taught six-week classes on Qoheleth and on the Psalms at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Vanderbilt University this past fall.

MARY MCCLINTOCK FULKERSON

published "Receiving From the Other: Theology and Grass-Roots Organizing" in *International Journal of Public Theology* (6.4, 2012) and in *Yours the Power: Faith-Based Organizing in the U.S.A.*, edited by Katie Day, Esther McIntosh, and William Storrar (Brill). At the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting in Chicago in November she presented "Interpreting a Situation: When is 'Empirical' also 'Theological'?" at the Ecclesiological Investigations Group panel on "Ecclesiology and Ethnography" and also responded to Anna Bialak's "Vulnerability Empty and Realized: Susceptibility and Submission in Sarah Coakley's Kenotic Christology" at the Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection Group panel on "Feminist

Theory on Disability, Trauma and Vulnerability." She delivered "The Gendered/Racialized Social Imagination as Structural Violence" at the conference New Approaches to Peacemaking and Nonviolence for the 21st Century, held Jan. 18-20 in Montreat, N.C. Last fall, she was nominated and elected to the national Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

AMY LAURA HALL presented a



keynote lecture, written with Kara Slade, at the Society for the Study of Christian Ethics, in

Cambridge, England, which was later published as "The Single Individual in Ordinary Time: Theological Engagements with Sociobiology" in *Studies in Christian Ethics* (26.1, 2013). She is the co-editor (with Daniel Arnold) of the Spring 2013 issue of *Muslim World* and the author of an essay for that volume, "TV and Torture." In February she attended the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C.

RICHARD HAYS published "The Paulinism of Acts, Intertextually Reconsidered" in Paul and the *Heritage of Israel: Paul's Claim upon Israel's Legacy in Luke and Acts in the Light of the Pauline Letters*, edited by David P. Moessner, Daniel Marguerat, Mikeal C. Parsons, and Michael Wolter (T&T Clark). He was a respondent at the 2012 Society of Biblical Literature book-review session for *Revelation and the Politics of Apocalyptic Interpretation*, which he co-edited with Stefan Alkier (Baylor University Press), and a panelist at "A Morning with the Apostle Paul and Friends," a confer-

ence held Nov. 9 in celebration of the inauguration of Dr. Michael Gorman as the Raymond E. Brown Professor at St. Mary's Seminary & University in Baltimore, Md. On April 10 he gave the Roland E. Murphy Lecture at the School of Theology and Religious Studies at Catholic University of America in Washington D.C.

WARREN KINGHORN published "Combat Trauma and Moral Fragmentation: A Theological Account of Moral Injury" in *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* (32.2, 2012), and his op-ed "PTSD: The Moral Dimensions" appeared in the Nov. 12 edition of *USA Today*. He presented "Positive Psychology and the End of Virtue" at the Society of Christian Psychology Academic Conference in Virginia Beach on Oct. 18 and "I Am Still With You: A Theological Account of Dementia" at Pilgrim United Church of Christ, Durham, N.C., on Feb. 3.

RICHARD LISCHER co-edited (with James M. Childs Jr.) *The Eloquence of Grace: Joseph Sittler and the Preaching Life* (Cascade).

He published *Stations of the Heart: Parting with a Son* (Knopf). He gave a talk on religious autobiography for the Association of Theological Schools, in Pittsburgh, Pa., and with Luke Powery and Will Willimon presented the Morgan Lectures at Lutheran Southern Theological Seminary in Columbia, S.C. He delivered the lecture "1968: Showdown for Nonviolence" at Croasdaile Village in Durham, N.C., and in January offered "'The Lord Brought Us Out': Martin Luther King's Exodus Faith" during a Shabbat service at Beth El Synagogue

in Durham, N.C. In February he gave the inaugural Bracke Lecture, "Beginning to Lead," at Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis, Mo.

RANDY L. MADDOX published



Doctrinal and Controversial Treatises I, volume 12 of the bicentennial edition of *The Works of John Wesley* (Abingdon), as well as three essays: "John Wesley – 'A Man of One Book'" in *Wesley, Wesleyans, and Reading Bible as Scripture*, edited by Joel B. Green and David F. Watson (Baylor University Press); "Digging Deep into the Mine": Charles Wesley and the Bible," Proceedings of the Charles Wesley Society 15 (2011); and "Correspondence between James Erskine and John and Charles Wesley," Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society 58 (Oct. 2012).

G. SUJIN PAK presented

"Interpretations and Practices of Prophecy in Argula von Grumbach, Katharina Schütz Zell, and Marie Dentièrre" at the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference, held Oct. 25–28 in Cincinnati, Ohio. She also served as a commentator for a panel on the history of the exegesis of the book of Job at the winter meeting of the American Society of Church History in January. Last fall she preached in Duke Chapel and gave a talk about the history of denominationalism in the context of the Protestant Reformation at a Graduate InterVarsity Fellowship meeting.

CHRIS RICE participated in a consultation in October for a book project on approaches to conflict transformation involving scholars and practitioners from across the United States. On behalf of the Center


for Reconciliation, he convened a three-day December consultation, "Northeast Asia, Christian Leadership, and God's Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation." In January he co-facilitated the seventh annual event for the East Africa Great Lakes Initiative, a six-day leadership institute focused on "Christian Leadership for Reconciliation in Contexts of Chronic Conflict."

RUSSELL E. RICHEY published *American Methodism: A Compact History*, with Kenneth E. Rowe and Jean Miller Schmidt (Abingdon), and "Religious Organization in the New Nation" in *The Cambridge History of Religions in America*, edited by Stephen J. Stein. He was presented with a Festschrift, *The Renewal of United Methodism: Mission, Ministry and Connectionalism; Essays in Honor of Russell E. Richey*, edited by Rex D. Matthews (General Board of Higher Education and Ministry). He serves as one of two general editors of the peer-reviewed online journal *Methodist Review*, co-chair for the 2013 Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies, co-director for 2013 of Asbury Theological Seminary's Wesleyan Studies Summer Seminar, and member of the Scholarly Advisory Board of the American Methodism Project. He has been nominated to the presidency of the Historical Society of the United Methodist Church for a 2013–17 term.

LESTER RUTH served as president for the annual meeting of the Charles Wesley Society in Nashville, Tenn., Oct. 18–20, and in November delivered the paper "Trinitarian Similarities and Differences in Evangelical Song: Old and New" as part of the Biblical



Worship section at the Evangelical Theological Society Annual Meeting in Milwaukee, Wis. He traveled to El Salvador in early December to teach a weeklong course on worship, and on Jan. 24 participated in a panel discussion on “The Shape of Discipleship in the Contemporary Worship Movement” at the Winter Symposium of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship. In April he lectured on the Trinity and the economy of salvation in evangelical hymnody at LeTourneau University in Longview, Texas.


BETH M. SHEPPARD published  “Resource Use Patterns in a Distance Doctor of Ministry Population” in *Journal of Religious and Theological Information* (11.3/4, 2012). She gave the paper “Optimus Princeps: Character and Virtues in Pliny’s Panegyricus and the Fourth Gospel” on Nov. 17 at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in Chicago, Ill.

GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT delivered Baylor University’s Parchman Lectures in October under the title “Faith, Hope, and Love: The Ecumenical Trio of Virtues.”

LACEYE WARNER’s book *Grace to Lead: Practicing Leadership in the Wesleyan Tradition*, co-authored with Bishop Kenneth Carder (United Methodist General Board of Higher Education & Ministry), was translated into Swahili. She published “Scripture and Evangelism” in *Wesley, Wesleyans, and Reading Bible as Scripture*, edited by Joel Green and David Watson (Baylor University Press), and “Sarah and Angelina Grimke” in *Handbook of Women Interpreters of the Bible*, edited

by Marion Ann Taylor and Agnes Choi (Baker Academic). She was elected to the University Senate and appointed to the Council of Bishops’ Ministry Commission, both of the United Methodist Church, for the coming quadrennium. She delivered the keynote address, “Saving Women: Retrieving Christian Leadership for the 21st Century,” at the Durham Women’s Club annual prayer breakfast in October.

WILL WILLIMON published his first novel, *Incorporation* (Cascade), and *Thank God It’s Thursday: At the Table with Jesus* (Abingdon). He delivered lectures at Hope College, Western Seminary, and pastors’ schools in Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Canada. He also conducted seminars on his recent book *Bishop: The Art of Questioning Authority by an Authority in Question* (Abingdon), meeting with national leaders of the African Methodist Episcopal, Salvation Army, Wesleyan, and African Methodist Episcopal Zion churches.

BRITTANY WILSON published essays  on the history of interpretation of Mary the mother of Jesus and of Mary Magdalene in the *Women’s Bible Commentary*, 3rd ed. (Westminster John Knox), and was invited to speak on a panel honoring the commentary’s 20th anniversary at a Society of Biblical Literature regional meeting in Greenville, S.C., in March. In the fall she delivered a response to Douglas Campbell’s “Rereading Romans 1–3” at the conference “Beyond Old and New Perspectives on Paul” held at Duke Divinity School in November and also lectured on Mary at Coker United Methodist Church in San Antonio, Texas.

NORMAN WIRZBA published “Agrarian Ecotheology” in *Theology* (116.1, 2013) and “The Art of Creaturely Life: A Question of Human Propriety” in *Pro Ecclesia* (22.1, 2013). He led retreats on food and faith in Asheville, N.C. (Oct. 13); at Watts Street Baptist Church in Durham, N.C. (Nov. 10); and at Laity lodge in Kerrville, Texas (Nov. 15–18). He was the Praxis Speaker at Houghton College on Jan. 25 and presented “Dramas of Love and Dirt: Soil and the Salvation of the World” at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., on Feb. 19. He delivered keynote addresses at the annual Rural Ministry Conference at Wartburg Theological Seminary on March 4 and on both days of the Food Ethics Conference hosted by Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (March 15–16). Following talks at the Duke Endowment (March 21) and Furman University (March 22), he presented at the “From Unsettling to Resettling” conference hosted by the Berry Center in Kentucky. On April 13 he spoke at the Veritas Forum at N.C. State University, and April 17–18 he presented “Idolizing Nature” and “Seeing Creation” — under the title “The Human Place in the World” — as the annual Jellema Lectures at Calvin College. ■

DUKE / FORWARD: Partnering for the Future and the Divinity School

IN LATE SEPTEMBER 2012 Duke University formally launched a \$3.25 billion fundraising campaign following two years of preparation and the gathering of leadership gifts. The Divinity School is seeking at least \$80 million for scholarships, professorships, and broad program support (including the Clergy Health Initiative) during the campaign which will continue into 2017. Complete details and current progress may be seen for both the University and the Divinity School at <http://dukeforward.duke.edu/>.

Recent gift commitments from generous graduates and friends of the Divinity School include \$150,000 from James L. Matheson T'51, D'54 of Wardsville, W.Va., to be added to the **JAMES L. MATHESON SCHOLARSHIP**; \$125,000 from Barnes and Cammie Robinson (T'78) Hauptfuhrer of Charlotte, N.C., to establish the **HAUPTFUHRER FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP**; \$116,000 from the estate of Estelle L. Delo to establish the **JAMES AND ESTELLE LEONARD SCHOLARSHIP**; \$100,000 from Calvin and Janet Hill of Great Falls, Va., to be added to the **CALVIN HILL SCHOLARSHIP**; \$58,000 from the estate of James L. McClung D'72 to be added to the **ALDERSGATE ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP FUND**; \$50,000 from Ron (D'12) and Kasey (D'12) Beaton of Appleton City, Mo. and \$50,000 from Douglas (G'63) and Barbara Lawson of Dallas, Texas, both gifts intended to generate **SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT**; \$50,000 from Paul (T'98) and Courtney (T'99) Amos of Columbus, Ga., for the **CENTER FOR RECONCILIATION**; \$49,000 from Vann and Ann York of High Point, N.C., for the **YORK FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP**; \$25,000 from Morris (T'62, G'63) and Ruth (WC'63) Williams of Gladwyne, Pa., for the **TECH4CHURCH PROGRAM** in the Divinity School Library; \$25,000 from Greg (D'85, G'88) and Susan

Pendleton (D'83) Jones of Chapel Hill, N.C., for **FRIENDSHIP HOUSE**; \$12,600 from Patricia Garland/Estes Express Lines for field education programs in Southside, Va.; \$10,000 from Elwood Shaulis of Whispering Pines, N.C., for the **FREIDA BENNETT SHAULIS SCHOLARSHIP FUND**; \$10,000 from Bill (D'58) and Mary Quick of Detroit, Mich. for the **WILLIAM KELLON QUICK SCHOLARSHIP**; \$10,000 from Will and Patsy Willimon of Durham, N.C., for the **PATRICIA PARKER AND WILLIAM H. WILLIMON SCHOLARSHIP**; and \$10,000 from John and Bobbi Augustine of Minneapolis, Minn., for **DUKE INITIATIVES IN THEOLOGY AND THE ARTS**.

Many of these individuals and hundreds of others have contributed to the **DIVINITY SCHOOL ANNUAL FUND** which is part of the Duke/Forward Campaign. As of March 1, \$462,403 has been contributed during the fiscal year, and a new record level for dollars and participation rate is encouraged by June 30, 2013. Our goal is \$660,000.

Foundation support for the Divinity School continues to be strong. In addition to grants from The Duke Endowment, Charlotte, N.C. for **FIELD EDUCATION** and,

the Clergy Health Initiative, and Thriving Rural Communities. The Henry Luce Foundation, New York, N.Y., is providing \$150,000 for programs of the **CENTER FOR RECONCILIATION**. A grant of \$110,000 received through the Houston Jewish Community Foundation, Houston, Texas, will provide ongoing support for the **WISE WOMEN PROJECT IN SOUTH SUDAN**. The Cal Turner Family Foundation in Nashville, Tenn., has committed \$50,000 toward a new scholarship endowment to be announced soon. The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation is giving \$20,000 for **DUKE INITIATIVES IN THEOLOGY AND THE ARTS**. The Lucile and Edward Giles Foundation in Charlotte, N.C., has given \$20,000 for the **D.MIN. SCHOLARSHIP FUND**; and a gift of \$10,000 from the C. M. Herndon Foundation of Durham, N.C., has been added to the **CLAIR M. AND MARY D. HERNDON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**. ■



DUKE
/ forward

THE BOARD OF VISITORS provides vital counsel and support for the leadership, mission, and programs of the Divinity School. This group of 36 individuals from across the United States represents the broad constituencies of the School. Terri Dean, a retired senior vice president with Verizon and a Baptist laywoman from Philadelphia, Pa., chairs the Board whose members are appointed by Duke University President Richard Brodhead. Six new members were named to begin service in 2012–2013.

JOHN H. AUGUSTINE of



Minneapolis, Minn, is an investment banker with Barclays in New York and London. He is a managing director and leads the Higher Education Finance Group. A former Fulbright Scholar at Oxford University, he holds a B.A. from Wheaton College (Ill.), a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota, an M.Div. from Yale Divinity School, and an MBA in finance from Yale. John, his wife, Bobbi, and their high-school age son, John, are members of Wooddale Church in Eden Prairie, Minn.

MARK F. C. BERNER of New York,



N.Y., is an attorney, social entrepreneur, and consultant to foundations and nonprofits. He was educated at Yale (B.A.), Oxford (M.A. in philosophy and theology), and Villanova (J.D.). He is the CEO of Telos, a forum for Christian leaders of international stature from all fields committed to renewing public culture. Mark was also a senior manager of a hedge fund at Credit Suisse First Boston and a partner in a New York law firm. He has served on a number of corporate and charitable boards and is a former trustee of the John Templeton Foundation. Mark and his wife, Ashley, who is a fellow of the Institute for Advanced Studies at the University of Virginia, are the parents of two teen-aged daughters.

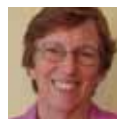
The Berners serve and worship with All Angels' Episcopal Church in New York, N.Y.

DAN G. BLAZER, M.D. of Durham,



N.C., is the J. P. Gibbons Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and vice chair for academic (faculty) affairs at Duke University Medical Center. He earned the B.A. at Vanderbilt, M.D. at the University of Tennessee, and M.P.H. and Ph.D. degrees at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is the author or editor of 34 books and hundreds of abstracts, articles, and book chapters, on topics including depression, epidemiology, consultation liaison psychiatry, the interface between religion and psychiatry, and the epidemiology of substance-use disorders. He is a former medical missionary to the United Republic of Cameroon. He and his wife, Sherrill, a teacher, are parents to Trey, a surgical oncologist at Duke, and Natasha, a social worker at Freedom House in Chapel Hill. Dan and Sherrill attend Lifepointe Church.

LISA GRABAREK of Raleigh, N.C.,



is a high school teacher of humanities and social sciences at St. Mary's School, an Episcopal day and boarding school for girls. Born in Washington, D.C., she was educated at Vassar College (A.B.),

Yale Divinity School (M.Div.), and Yale Graduate School (M.A.). She is an ordained minister and a member at Pullen Memorial Baptist Church, where she currently teaches an adult Sunday school class and is a member of the personnel committee. She has received "Teacher of the Year" on multiple occasions, and was recognized as a "Presidential Scholars Teacher" in 2007. Lisa has three adult children: two daughters and one son, who is a Duke alumnus.

BRIDGET J. HAYES of New York,



N.Y., is a senior manager at the Cancer Institute at Mt. Sinai Hospital and a global healthcare consultant with the United Methodist Church. A native of High Point, N.C., she earned a B.A. in behavioral neuroscience psychology at Yale, the Master in Health Administration from Hofstra University, and the M.P.H. in Global Leadership from New York University. Bridget holds memberships in the American College of Healthcare Executives and the Global Health Council as well as the NY Urban League of Young Professionals. She and her husband, Richard Hayes (D'06), who is an associate professor in the Zarb School of Business at Hofstra University, are the parents of a young son, Issa. They are active at Metropolitan Community United Methodist Church in Harlem where Richard serves as the senior pastor.

40s

CHARLES H. MERCER D'43, a retired United Methodist pastor and recipient of the 2003 Duke Divinity School Alumni Association Distinguished Alumnus Award, continues to preach, teach, and mentor. He and his wife, **FLORRIE SMYTHE MERCER N'42**, are residents of Croasdaile Village in Durham, N.C.

60s

S T KIMBROUGH JR. D'62, research fellow with the Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition at Duke Divinity School and founder of The Charles Wesley Society, has written *Radical Grace: Justice for the Poor and Marginalized—Charles Wesley's Views for the Twenty-First Century* (Cascade, 2013).

EDGAR H. "ED" ELLIS D'67, a United Methodist minister now retired in Columbia, S.C., has been elected for service on the National Alumni Council of Duke Divinity School.

J. CHRISTIAN WILSON T'67, D'70, D'72, G'77, is a new member of the Divinity School's National Alumni Council. Now a resident of Chapel Hill, N.C., he is retired from United Methodist parish ministry in the Western North Carolina Conference and a career in college chaplaincy and teaching.

70s

STEPHEN C. GRAY D'72 and his wife, Lennie, have retired to Brunswick, Maine. He served for the past 12 years as conference minister for the Indiana-Kentucky Conference of the United Church of Christ.

VERGEL L. LATTIMORE III D'77 presented the Alfred E. White Endowed Heritage Lecture Series, "Living Pastoral Theology: New Dimensions and Interpretation" in February at Hood Theological Seminary in Salisbury, N.C., where he now serves as vice president of academic affairs and professor of pastoral psychology.

80s

D. STEPHEN LONG D'87, G'90, professor of systematic theology at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wis., has published Hebrews in the series *Belief: A Theological Commentary on the Bible* (Westminster John Knox, 2011).

SHELLEY A. WILSON D'88, founder and pastor of High Country United Church of Christ in Vilas, N.C., was featured in a Watauga Democrat article Sept. 4, 2012, about the 10th anniversary of the socially engaged church congregation.

WILLIAM J. BARBER II D'89, president of the North Carolina chapter of the NAACP, is the 2013 recipient of the "Friend of Education Award" presented by the North Carolina Association of Educators (NCAE). He is the senior pastor at Greenleaf Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Goldsboro, N.C., and chairman of Rebuilding Broken Places Community Development Corporation.

90s

KEITH GAMMONS D'93 has been named publisher at Smyth & Helwys Publishing, an ecumenical publisher of church curricula, books for pastors and scholars, and digital resources. He came to Smyth & Helwys in 2001 as book editor and began serving as director of editorial and design in 2007. He and his family live in Macon, Ga.

JOHN P. CLEVELAND D'94 recently accepted a position at NYU-Polytechnic located in Brooklyn, N.Y., as director of the tutoring center. He was employed previously at Pace University in a similar capacity.

KERRY HALBERT D'94 of Chase City, Va., has written *Understanding the Pastorate* (Tate, 2012).

CARL H. KING D'95 and his wife, Dr. Stacy King, announce the birth of their daughter, Amalia Noel, born Sep. 27, 2012. Carl is senior minister at University United Methodist Church, Chapel Hill, N.C.

DARRYL I. OWENS D'98 is president elect of the Association of Professional Chaplains, a national organization with over 4,300 members. He will assume the presidency in 2014. He is a chaplain at the University of North Carolina Hospitals in Chapel Hill, N.C., where he is the Women's Services chaplain and grief counselor.

00s

FRED BAHNSON D'00 is the new director of the "Food, Faith, & Religious Leadership Initiative" at Wake Forest School of Divinity. He is co-author of *Making Peace with the Land* (InterVarsity Press, 2012) and was the co-founder of Anathoth Community Garden in 2005, a church-supported agriculture ministry in Cedar Grove, N.C., which he then directed until 2009. Fred and his wife, **ELIZABETH BAHNSON D'08**, and three sons live in Transylvania County, N.C.

T. JUDSON DUNLAP D'01 and his wife, **LAURA A. DUNLAP D'05**, along with their daughter, Grace Elizabeth, welcome their second daughter, Kennedy Brooke, born Dec. 26, 2012. Judson and Laura are Elders in Full Connection with the North Carolina Conference, currently serving in the Gateway & Fairway Districts. They reside in Aberdeen, N.C.

L. ROGER OWENS D'01, G'06 is co-pastor with his wife, **GINGER THOMAS D'01**, of Duke Memorial United Methodist Church in Durham, N.C. He has written *Abba, Give Me a Word: The Path of Spiritual Direction* (Paraclete, 2012).

ANNA KATE ELLERMAN SHURLEY D'01, D'06 completed the Ph.D. in pastoral theology at Princeton Theological Seminary in May 2012. She and her husband, Will—a Presbyterian pastor—are the parents of Virginia, age 2, and Oliver, who was born Dec. 26, 2012. She had worked for three years as a chaplain with people with developmental disabilities. They live in Titusville, N.J.

THOMAS C. BROOM JR. D'02 is a chaplain on active duty with the New Mexico National Guard in the Northern Sinai with a multi-national peacekeeping force. His father, Thomas C. Broom Sr. D'90, is pastor of Center United Methodist Church in Tucumcari, N.M.

ERIC M. SAPP D'02, S'02 and his wife, Julie, announce the birth of Beckett Owen Nov. 12, 2012. Eric is a founding partner of the Eleison Group and executive director of American Values Network. They reside in Great Falls, Va.

KEN WALDEN D'02 has authored *Challenges Faced by Iraq War Reservists and Their Families: A Soul Care Approach for Chaplains and Pastors* (Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2012). He is the university chaplain and assistant professor of philosophy and religion at Claflin University in Orangeburg, S.C.

SUMMER KINARD D'03, D'05 anticipates publication this summer of her first novel, *Can't Buy Me Love: A Tale of Love, Friendship, and Lucha Libre*, (Light Messages, 2013). She is a resident of Durham, N.C.

SHARON HODDE MILLER T'03, D'07 and her husband, **ISAAC "IKE" F. MILLER D'10**, announce the birth of Isaac Xavier on Aug. 28, 2012. The Millers reside in Hawthorn Woods, Ill., and Sharon and Ike are pursuing doctoral degrees at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Ill. Sharon continues to write her blog—"She Worships: Theology for Women."

DANIEL P. RHODES D'03 and his wife, Elizabeth, announce the Oct. 9, 2012 birth of Rachel Elizabeth. They live in Raleigh, N.C.

CANDICE RYALS PROVEY T'04, D'10 has been named associate chaplain of Yale University Church, New Haven, Conn. She had previously worked with Duke Engage, as minister to young adults for First Presbyterian Church, Durham, N.C., and with the Peace Corps in Malawi.

AILSÁ GUARDIOLA GONZALEZ D'05 has been installed as pastor of First

Christian Church in Tucson, Ariz. She previously served a parish in Wilmington, N.C., and did mission work in Honduras and El Salvador. She and her husband Marco are the parents of a daughter, Kryisia.

MANDY E. MCMICHAEL D'05, D'06 has been awarded a dissertation fellowship from the Louisville Institute as she completes her book, *Religion, Miss America, and the Construction of Southern Womanhood*. She and her husband, **CHAD EGGLESTON D'03, G'09**, serve on the faculty at Huntingdon College in Montgomery, Ala.

BRITTANY E. WILSON D'05 was awarded the Ph.D. degree in May 2012 from Princeton Theological Seminary. She is currently a visiting assistant professor of New Testament at Duke Divinity School.

SCOTT CHROSTEK D'06 has published a book about the missional life entitled *Pursuit: Living Fully in Search of God's Presence* (Beacon Hill Press, 2013). He and his wife, **WENDY LYONS CHROSTEK D'06**, are currently serving on the staff of the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Kansas City, Mo. Scott is also on the Divinity School's National Alumni Council.

SARAH S. HOWELL T'08, D'12 was the winner of a competition for new music for a traditional text in the national competition "New Songs and Hymns for Renewal" at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio. She used the text, "behold the savior of mankind." She serves as associate minister for worship and young adults at Centenary United Methodist Church in Winston-Salem, N.C. and blogs at "Both/And."

ANNA LAYMAN KNOX D'08 is the new pastor at Hawley United Methodist Church in Hawley, Pa. following four years of service with a Methodist congregation in Durban, South Africa, where she met and married her husband, Simon Knox.

STEPHANIE LIND D'08 and **MATTHEW SCHLIMM D'02, G'08**

were married June 16, 2012, at Alamo Heights United Methodist Church in San Antonio, Texas, by senior pastor David McNitzky D'80. The minister to older adults at Alamo Heights is Harold Burkhardt D'50. Matt and Stephanie live in Dubuque, Iowa, where he is assistant professor of Old Testament at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary and she is pastor of Epworth United Methodist Church.

KATIE ROBERTS D'09 and Andy Lee Lineberger were married July 14, 2012. She is the associate pastor at Aldersgate United Methodist Church in Shelby, N.C., and he is an M.Div. student at Union Presbyterian Seminary in Charlotte, N.C.

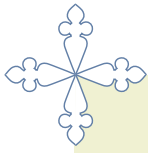
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LAUREN DURR EMERY D'11 and her husband, **MATTHEW EMERY T'07**, are now living in Winston-Salem, N.C. She is the interim assistant chaplain at Elon University.

REBEKAH A. EKLUND D'12 has been awarded a dissertation fellowship from the Louisville Institute as she completes her book, *Lord, Teach Us How to Grieve: Jesus' Laments and Christian Hope*. She lives in Baltimore, Md., where she teaches in the Department of Theology at Loyola University Maryland.

GOT NEWS? STAY IN TOUCH!

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MACK B. STOKES D'35 of Perdido Key, Fla., died Nov. 21, 2012. He was a United Methodist bishop, elected in 1972, who served the Jackson, Miss. Episcopal Area until his retirement in 1980. Before he was elected to the episcopacy, he taught systematic theology for 31 years at Candler School of Theology at Emory University, where he also served in administrative roles. He continued to teach and write for many years during retirement. He was born in 1911 in Korea, where his parents were missionaries. Two of his brothers, **J. LEMACKS STOKES II D'32**, and **JAMES C. STOKES D'34**, now deceased, were also graduates of the Duke University School of Religion/Divinity School. Two sons, seven grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren survive him.

JULIAN A. LINDSEY D'39 of Winston-Salem, N.C., died Feb. 15, 2013. He was an Army Air Force chaplain in the European Theater of World War II and later a parish minister and superintendent for over 42 years with churches across the Western North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church. Two sons, **BRYANT LINDSEY T'63** and **STUART LINDSEY D'34**, and two daughters, along with seven grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren, survive him.

ROLAND W. RAINWATER D'43 of Columbia, S.C., died Feb. 23, 2013. He was a U.S. Navy chaplain during World War II in the Pacific Theater, including Iwo Jima and Okinawa. Later he served Methodist and Presbyterian churches from the Outer Banks of North Carolina to California, Texas, and Tennessee. In 1975, his ministry shifted from chaplaincy in mental health settings, including the William S. Hall Psychiatric Institute in Columbia, S.C., from which he retired in 1993.

His wife, Zillah Merritt Rainwater WC'43, preceded him in death, and he is survived by their daughter, **SANDRA RAINWATER-BROTT T'75**.

WALTER "MAC" N. MCDONALD T'44, D'48 of Louisburg, N.C., died Aug. 28, 2012. As a United Methodist pastor he served churches in Ohio and North Carolina, but his primary work was 31 years of leadership with the faculty and administration of Louisburg College where he was a professor of religion and education and dean of students. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Joyce B. McDonald, two daughters, three sons, nine grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

GLYNN A. OGLESBY D'46 of Orange Park, Fla., died Feb. 28, 2013. He served for 23 years as a United Methodist U.S. Navy chaplain. In 1967 he founded the chaplaincy program at Duval (now Shands) Medical Center in Jacksonville, Fla. He is survived by his wife, Patricia, along with three sons, a daughter, and five grandchildren.

DOUGLAS J. TOEPEL D'47 of Lincoln, Neb., died Nov. 6, 2012. He was a Lutheran pastor who served parishes in California, Pennsylvania and Nebraska. He also taught for six years at Midland Lutheran College in Fremont, Neb. His wife, two children, three grandchildren, four step-grandchildren and five step-great-grandchildren survive him.

KENNETH E. BEANE D'51 of Fayetteville, N.C., died July 4, 2012. He was an Army Air Corps veteran of World War II, a United Methodist pastor in the North Carolina Conference, and a longtime chaplain with the U.S. Air Force with meritorious service in six foreign countries and across the nation.

He is survived by four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

GEORGE G. HENLEY D'51 of Aylett, Va., died Sept. 25, 2012. He was a Navy veteran of World War II and a United Methodist pastor serving parishes in Virginia for 40 years before retiring in 1987. His father and two brothers were also United Methodist ministers. He is survived by a son.

LAWRENCE H. "LARRY" GREENWOOD JR. D'56 of Shelby, N.C., died July 3, 2012. His 42 years of appointed United Methodist ministry took place across the West Virginia Conference. In retirement he and his wife moved to North Carolina where he was active with programs of the Cleveland County Council on Aging. His wife, Jane Hicks Greenwood, two children, and three grandchildren survive him.

C. FRED HARPER D'56 of White House, Tenn., died Sept. 1, 2012. He was a United Methodist pastor who served for 60 years in many middle Tennessee communities. He was an avid sports fan—especially for the Boston Red Sox and the Duke Blue Devils—and a longtime Rotarian. He is survived by his wife, Patty Sue Ray Harper, three daughters, three granddaughters, and one great-grandson.

ROBERT W. MORGAN T'57, G'60, D'64 of Willow Spring, N.C., died Sept. 28, 2012. He was a scholar of the German language who served United Methodist parishes across the North Carolina Conference. His wife, LaVette C. Morgan, three children, four grandchildren, and seven step-grandchildren survive him.

NEILL R. LIGHTFOOT G'58 of Abilene, Texas, died Sept. 18, 2012. He taught New Testament and biblical languages at Abilene Christian University for 47 years, wrote dozens of books and scholarly articles, and was an elder in the Church of Christ. He is survived by his wife, Marjorie Floyd Lightfoot, three daughters, a step-daughter, thirteen grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

WAYNE H. WILEY D'63 of Lynchburg, Va., died May 31, 2012. He was a professor of education and philosophy at James Madison University (1973–1976) and Mount Olive College (1976–1979), a Fulbright Scholar while at Central Virginia Community College (1979–2001), and a United Methodist minister who served parishes in the Virginia Conference. He is survived by his wife, Meriel Brown Wiley, two children, and seven grandchildren.

GRANT J. BURNS D'64 of Henderson, N.C., died June 15, 2012. He was a veteran of the U.S. Army and a retired minister with the United Church of Christ. He is survived by his wife, Patricia Coghill Burns, two sons, and five grandchildren.

ROY K. PATTESON JR. D'64, G'67 of Harrisonburg, Va., died Aug. 30, 2012. He was a minister in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), whose teaching and administrative leadership posts included service at Peace College, Davidson County Community College, the presidency at Southern Seminary (now Southern Virginia University), Mary Baldwin College, and the presidency of King College in Bristol, Tenn. Upon retirement he and his wife became oil painters whose work depicted venues from their travels in Italy and New England. His wife, Pauline Cox Patteson, two sons, and four grandchildren survive him.

ALLEN L. PUFFENBERGER D'67 of Reynoldsburg, Ohio, died Jan. 3, 2013. He served eight United Methodist parishes during his long career in the West Ohio Conference. His wife, Martha Kirby Puffenberger, two sons, a daughter, and five grandchildren survive him.

LAWRENCE W. "LARRY" HENDON D'77 of Gainesville, Fla., died May 19, 2012. He was a chaplain (Lt. Col.) at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo., and overseas in Korea and Cuba. He also served Presbyterian churches in Virginia, Arkansas, Washington, and Florida. His wife, Ann Moore Hendon, two sons, three daughters, and a granddaughter survive him.

A. CLARK JENKINS D'77 of Columbia, S.C., died Jan. 9, 2013. He was a United Methodist pastor who served parishes over 36 years in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee; and as superintendent of the Spartanburg District in South Carolina and the Morristown District in Tennessee. He is survived by his wife, Carolyn Pearson Jenkins, a son, a daughter, and three granddaughters.

LEONARD E. "LENNY" STADLER D'80 of Reidsville, N.C., died Oct. 22, 2012. He spent most of his career in ministry serving as pastor of Weddington United Methodist Church and published four books, including his spiritual biography, *From Hard Rock to Solid Rock*, reflecting on his years as a member with "Blackfoot," a southern rock band. His wife, Shana Morell Stadler, and two children survive him.

TIMOTHY J. HAZEN D'82 of Poquoson, Va., died July 18, 2012. A U.S. Navy veteran, he was a second-career Divinity student and later a pastor. He is survived by his wife, Eddice T. Hazen, a son, and a daughter.

ANTHONY C. BUSIC D'88 of Salem, Va., died July 23, 2012. A United Methodist minister and graduate of the Reynolds Leadership program, he served several parishes in the Virginia Conference. He is survived by his wife, Vickie Tetreault Busic, two daughters, and a son.

RONNIE R. DAWSON D'96 of Surf City, N.C., died Aug. 7, 2012. He was a former aide to the late U.S. Senator John East of North Carolina and was later a pastor with several rural United Methodist parishes in the North Carolina Conference. He is survived by his wife, Debra Heath Dawson, and a son.

STEVEN C. REINHARTSEN D'97 of Elon, N.C., died Sept. 13, 2012. He was a Unitarian Universalist minister who served for over two decades as a career counselor to students at Alamance Community College. His wife, Mary Davis, and a son survive him. ■

Heart Language

BY ELLEN DAVIS

THE BIBLICAL WRITERS mean to speak to our “hearts,” which is, in the metaphorical physiology of the Bible, the locus of cognition, spiritual vision, and will. Probably the closest equivalent term in contemporary English is “imagination.” But when the words of the Bible are read quickly, with no particular thought to their meaning (as often happens in worship services), this carefully crafted heart language cannot do its intended work of engaging and even transforming our imaginations.

In a commentary on the book of Ruth that is both verbal and visual, printmaker Margaret Adams Parker and I seek to slow down readers (and viewers!), in order to re-establish the connection between heart and text. My (original) annotated translation is designed to give something of the experience of reading this seemingly simple tale in Hebrew and discovering its many subtle nuances. Artistic representations of Ruth are often romanticized, making a superficial appeal to the imagination, but Parker’s twenty stark woodcuts reveal the tragedy and the tension in this account of the death and resurrection of a family within a community of smallholder farms. Visual commentary on Scripture that probes the text deeply may play a crucial interpretive role particularly in our time, when many Christians are more adept at reading sophisticated images than complex texts.

Parker’s portrait of Naomi evokes the line, “And the woman was left without her two boys and without her husband” (1:5). The reference to “boys” suggests how the loss of adult sons feels to their mother, especially since they died without issue—as children themselves, genealogically speaking. The portrait shows the gaunt face, the bony clenched hand, and the sagging breasts of the woman who is “empty,” as she says bluntly, because “Shaddai has done me evil” (1:21). When Naomi uses that rare divine name,



the alert Hebrew speaker might hear a pun, as *shaddai* also means “my breasts.” Could this be a wry allusion to how Naomi sees her own body, once a source of life and joy, now emptied by these three deaths? A group of indigenous Christian women in the Peruvian Andes spoke out their own experience in response to the raw physicality of this image: “She looks hungry.”

A second woodcut comments on the line, “And they lifted up their voice and wept still more” (1:14).

While the phrasing is standard biblical idiom, the image underscores the fact that weeping aloud is a fully embodied action. In my translation, I mimic the Hebrew by rendering “voice” in the singular; in complementary fashion, Parker portrays the three women as one solid body of grief and love. Moreover, it is impossible to distinguish one from the others. Two are young and one is old—but which? One will leave Naomi and one will “stick by” her—but which? A young Jewish woman in Jerusalem looked at the image, and her eyes filled with tears: “They are like a tree.” She saw in the three intertwined figures an image of hope: the trunk is living, and new life will somehow spring from it.

Since Parker and I had each worked on the book of Ruth before beginning our collaboration, we initially expected that the woodcuts and the annotated translation would be quick work. In fact, the project took well over two years, as together we considered different readings of the text, as translation and verbal interpretation influenced visual interpretation, and vice versa. In the end, the commentary we produced reflects a story that is far more complex—emotionally, literarily, and theologically—than either of us had imagined we would find in this little book. Ruth may well be “the still small voice” in the Hebrew Bible. It attests to God’s presence and action, not in the great dramatic events of sacred history, but rather in the ordinary yet profound agonies and joys of people living together in “good-faith,” the covenant virtue this book illumines. ■



These images are taken from the book *Who Are You, My Daughter? Reading Ruth through Image and Text* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2003). In this annotated and illustrated translation of the book of Ruth, Ellen Davis and Margaret Adams Parker demonstrate how translation and art can be complementary forms of biblical interpretation. The three components of the book—translation, notes, and images—explore the story of Ruth as one of suffering and loss redeemed by steadfast faithfulness. The translation is loyal to the original; the notes reflect on Ruth's story, literary form, lexical choices, and theological meaning; and the woodcuts provide a stimulating running narrative.

Margaret Adams Parker is a sculptor and printmaker whose work often deals with religious and social justice themes. She has taught as an adjunct instructor at Virginia Theological Seminary since 1991. www.margaretadamsparker.com



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