THE FOOD ISSUE

A HUNGER FOR JUSTICE: FOOD INSECURITY AND GOD’S ABUNDANCE

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A HUNGER FOR JUSTICE
The reality of God’s abundance should shape the response to the struggles of food insecurity
By Norbert Wilson

NO LEFTOVERS
Alumni in the Triangle area serve churches with food ministries that help communities thrive
By Stephanie Hunt

LEARNING A LITURGY OF SHARING FOOD
Adapting the agape meal for Zoom gatherings revealed a new understanding of hunger for community
By Kendall Vanderslice
RECIPE FROM
THE DUKE DIVINITY
COMMUNITY
Faculty and staff share favorite recipes and meaningful food traditions

ON THE COVER:
Bread baked by Kendall Vanderslice M.T.S.'19, an award-winning baker who incorporates baking and sharing bread into liturgy and practical theology.

PHOTO BY KC HYSMITH
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FEATURES ON FOOD AND FAITH

Examining how food matters for ministry and exploring ways to practice justice and mercy
A HUNGER for JUSTICE

Food insecurity and God’s abundance

BY NORBERT WILSON
raise the morsel of bread, the host. Looking into the expectant eyes, I state: “The body of Christ, broken for you.” Laying the crumby bread into the bowled-shaped hands, I smile. For a brief moment our hands touch. Then, almost reflexively, the recipient scoops the morsel into their mouth to receive the bread of life. We share in the charity of Christ.

Even before I was an ordained deacon in the Episcopal Church, I had borne the body of Christ, this sacred bite, to hungry folks many times before. As the paten is an empty vessel to carry the spiritual meal, we who serve God in this meal or any food ministry are here as a vessel for God’s abundance.

Serving Holy Communion, the Eucharist, informs my notions of food ministry, and growing up in a Black Baptist church founded my understanding of ministering through food. Repasses after funerals, breakfasts after Easter sunrise services, potlucks after big Sunday services—all were expressions of love to one another and foretastes of the Great Banquet. We delighted in God’s abundance collectively, even if some did not have much individually. Leftovers in foil-tented plates may have helped a member, especially a “senior saint,” stretch the dwindling food stores until the next month’s check or charity. These communal meals were important ways to support one another and others beyond the church in accessing food.

**CONNECTING CHURCH FOOD AND CHARITABLE FOOD**

I could not have imagined that these early and sustained experiences with food in the church would inform my professional expertise. As an agricultural economist, I found few ways to connect these ideas with my secular work until Martha Henk, executive director of the Food Bank of East Alabama, asked me to join the food bank board in Auburn. Serving on the board gave me new
insights into the challenges of food insecurity locally and nationally. I worked with members representing vastly different aspects of society—business, ecclesial, governmental, and civil society leaders—to support the food bank and meet the needs of as many folks as possible. We were not naïve enough to think that the food bank’s work alone would eliminate food insecurity. I wonder, though, if the busyness had us so focused on the immediate need that we did not consider the larger issues faced by families in our community. Nevertheless, my participation on the board sparked a new focus of research and engagement.

Today, when I teach my Charitable Foods course at Duke Divinity, we push each other—instructor and learners—to think critically about the good work of giving food to people in need. We interrogate established institutions and individual actions with an eye toward constructive and practical ways to address the charity and justice gap in the emergency food sector (food banks, food pantries, soup kitchens, and the like).

Deeply embedded in many religious traditions is a call to care for the poor, offering charity to those in need. That charity is frequently the work of justice, addressing the misalignment of our ideals of a free society with the everyday experiences of those in need. Further, many of us in the Christian tradition feel compelled to serve the Lord unawares (see Hebrews 13:2) by feeding the hungry, caring for the stranger, and visiting the prisoner. Thus, a duty to serve is integral to the identity of the Christian. But those involved in charity work must think through what we are doing and our motivation for doing it.

When week after week, or month after month, we see the same people cycling through our food pantry, or those individuals tend not to look like our community, in whatever way defined, we should ask ourselves why this is happening. Janet Poppendieck argues in her book *Sweet Charity* that early creators of the charitable food sector saw it as emergency relief. But what happens when the emergency is not temporary but is a chronic problem? The food we are giving is not solving the root problem that keeps certain folks returning. Is
Reducing the solution of food insecurity to financial or charitable transactions fails to acknowledge the complexity of the food system and the human and ecological systems that support it.

our notion of caring for people who experience food insecurity too limited, meeting an immediate need at best? Are we perpetuating an injustice?

FOOD INSECURITY AS A JUSTICE ISSUE

The paradoxical solution to food insecurity in the U.S. is not food. Rather, families with concerns or limited access to food need financial resources and economic opportunities to provide for themselves. Consider two of the 10 statements that the U.S. government uses to evaluate food insecurity:
1. “(I/We) worried whether (my/our) food would run out before (I/we) got money to buy more.”
2. “The food that (I/we) bought just didn’t last, and (I/we) didn’t have money to get more.”

These statements focus on concerns about accessing food because of financial resources and assert that food access would not be a problem if people had enough money. Without a doubt, folks without financial means cannot support their family’s food needs. Through economic opportunities or social support, individuals can access resources to obtain food.

Federally, we provide this social support through programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formally the Food Stamp Program) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). But is not our ability to feed ourselves more than just our capacity to purchase foods? Our families, social location, culture, and identity shape our foodways. Resources such as time, health, and capacity are necessary to feed ourselves. Reducing the solution of food insecurity to financial or charitable transactions fails to acknowledge the complexity of the food system and the human and ecological systems that support it.

While from a technocratic viewpoint food insecurity can be considered a matter of inefficiency, fundamentally food insecurity and, more broadly, challenges in the food system are justice concerns. As a result, we need a food justice lens.

In Cultivating Food Justice, Alison Hope Alkon and Julian Agyeman describe food justice as a broad construct that scholars and activists use to describe an ideal food system. Some voices argue for food justice where everyone can access the foods they need that are culturally relevant and environmentally sustainable. Others point to exacerbating racial and class inequalities in the food system. Others demand a de-corporatization of the food system with an orientation toward local foods. While some long for agrarianism that supports small producers using traditional techniques, others believe that a technologically advanced and efficient food system will yield a sufficient food supply for the most people possible. The distinctions and categorizations suggested here are imperfect; we can find people who propose different assortments of these ideas (and others) to define what true food justice should be.

The larger point is that there are different conceptions of food justice, and we need a well-informed public discussion of these ideas of justice for the food system.

In my research and teaching, I hope to engage students, faculty, community members, businesses, and policymakers in productive conversations to develop a fuller and better understanding of a just food system. Admittedly, some of these ideas of justice are in conflict. In reality, ideas of food justice highlight political and cultural perceptions of justice and rights on which we have not achieved consensus. Navigating these challenges means that a just food system, like food insecurity, is not simply about food. I am not the first to argue that food is political and also cultural. Conceptions of food and the food system reflect and refract our deepest values and ideals. Thus, we need multiple voices to have meaningful conversations on food in our society.
In reality, ideas of food justice highlight political and cultural perceptions of justice and rights on which we have not achieved consensus. Navigating these challenges means that a just food system, like food insecurity, is not simply about food.

THEOLOGY AND FOOD JUSTICE AT DUKE

Working at Duke Divinity School has broadened my perspectives on food issues. At Duke Divinity, great colleagues like Norman Wirzba and Ellen Davis have thought critically about food in both society and Scripture. We also have amazing students who extend our conversations, especially those in the Food, Faith, and Environmental Justice certificate. Beyond the Divinity School, the engagement of the World Food Policy Center and the Sanford School of Public Policy, along with other units at Duke and throughout the Triangle region, create opportunities to see food and the food system more fully. We can move beyond discussion to create solutions to the injustices of the food system.

Duke Divinity School is a wonderful place to participate in these efforts. What does this mean, however, for people beyond this place? First, we must welcome the broader community into these conversations and seek the restoration of the food system through traditional and new modalities. Food is too big to discuss in an ivory tower alone. These conversations and solutions must have roots grounded in the reality of everyday life and needs. Thus, I hope that we can find ways to learn from each other and co-create knowledge.

Second, I want to see the exchanges of ideas and praxis that I described earlier happen in settings beyond the academy. Third, I am concerned that our work and conversation about food systems frequently occur in silos with little exposure to larger and more diverse audiences. I would like to see conversations in houses of worship, businesses, community centers, and homes where people of differing views and life experiences begin to address food concerns and partner to take on problems in their local food system. Duke Divinity theology professor Luke Bretherton might provide insights into participating in these conversations and organizing in constructive and generative ways in his Listen, Organize, Act model.

THE GARDEN OF ABUNDANCE

Growing up, my parents always had a garden. I hated cutting okra. I remember the green hue of my fingers after shelling peas. Crookneck squash, which I thought was the only squash that existed, and tomatoes (for frying when green or eating directly once red) were abundant and flavorful. I always loved the collard, mustard, and turnip greens, a different trinity that this garden produced over the year and that my momma cooked to perfection. Even now, deep into their retirements, my parents maintain this garden. The mix of foods has changed, but staples are still there.

My parents have always shared the garden’s bounty with family and neighbors. The example of my parents and their garden, the take-out meals after church repasses, and the morsel of the bread of Communion are manifestations of the grace of the Holy Parent sharing creation’s wealth with all of creation. Despite the real scarcity that we create, like food insecurity, we have these experiences that show that abundance exists if only we can see it, if only we remove obstacles so that all can share in this abundance. The work for food justice that I hope occurs here at Duke Divinity and in your community will move us to experience God’s grace. As we taste and see this abundance, we will know that it is too good for ourselves alone, and like my parents and their garden, we will share in the abundance of truly just food. ■
In addition to his role as professor of food, economics, and community at Duke Divinity School, Norbert Wilson is also the director of the World Food Policy Center with a secondary appointment in the Sanford School of Public Policy at Duke. His research touches on food issues such as access, choice, and food waste, along with ongoing work on food safety and quality issues in international trade and domestic food systems. Recent projects include “From scarcity to prosperity: Nutrition and food spending goals and constraints for Americans with low incomes,” “Investigating the evolution and influences of spending patterns among low-income mothers receiving an unconditional cash transfer,” and “Online grocery shopping as a mediating intervention in the administration of SNAP benefits: A pilot study.”

The mission of the World Food Policy Center is to advance connected and inclusive food system policy and practice in support of equity and resilience of local/national/global food systems. The work of education, research, and convening centers on root causes and narratives of racial inequity in the food system, the role of institutions in supporting community-led food justice, economic development through food justice, food systems analysis, and public health and nutrition. To facilitate innovative thinking and coordinated action to change policy and practice, the center bridges the worlds of academia, industry, philanthropy, nonprofits, governance, community, and culture.

As just one example of this work, in 2020 the World Food Policy Center at Duke University supported Share Our Strength’s No Kid Hungry campaign. Food insecurity in children is a tragic issue around the world, and in the U.S., the issue is especially challenging in rural areas. Rural faith communities often play a central role in addressing rural child hunger, and the support needs and desires of these organizations are nuanced by their faith tradition. The resulting report, Rural Child Hunger and Faith Community Engagement, was produced by lead author Emma Lietz Bilecky M.T.S.’19, research fellow at Princeton Theological Seminary’s Farminary Project; Norman Wirzba, Gilbert T. Rowe Distinguished Professor of Christian Theology and senior fellow at the Kenan Institute for Ethics; and Robb Webb, director of the Rural Church Division of The Duke Endowment and chair of the Rural Life Committee of the North Carolina Council of Churches. The report and a podcast episode with the authors is available: https://wfpc.sanford.duke.edu/research/rural-child-hunger-faith-community-engagement-project.

TO LEARN MORE about the World Food Policy Center and to see more examples of innovative research, including how COVID has impacted food systems, see https://wfpc.sanford.duke.edu.
NO Leftovers

Alumni in the Triangle area serve churches with food ministries that help communities thrive

BY STEPHANIE HUNT
It’s Thursday morning, which means Pat Haggard is up and at it, ready for a busy day. As executive director of the Holly Springs Food Cupboard, she welcomes 25 volunteers who help sort nonperishable food items, fresh meat, dairy, and produce. The former three-bedroom home, now converted into a bustling hive of pantry shelves, industrial refrigerators, and freezers, is buzzing as the crew preps boxes for the 54 or so families who show up every Thursday for the weekly food pick-up. Families on the margins in this generally affluent southern Wake County community are struggling to put food on the table.

Haggard and her husband are active members of Sunrise UMC, a congregation that was instrumental in establishing the independent, nonprofit Food Cupboard in 2010, when Haggard led the missions committee. Like many others, they moved to this fast-growing area, drawn by the golf course neighborhoods and a quaint small town feel yet with easy access to Raleigh. According to the Rev. John Michael McAllister, M.Div.’08, Sunrise’s senior minister, Holly Spring’s population numbered around 10,000 when the North Carolina Conference first planted the church in the mid-1990s in an effort “to get out in front of the region’s anticipated growth—and boy did they ever!”

Today some 40,000 people call Holly Springs home, a population explosion that has left “a lot of people pushed out,” McAllister notes. “There’s a reason the county dump is located here. It was a rural, sparsely populated area, mostly poor and people of color. They’re still here, only the growth makes it harder to see them.” But not on Thursdays at the Food Cupboard. There the disparity is evident.

“We’re seeing more and more demand,” says Haggard, a volunteer, like her fellow board members and all Cupboard workers. “The current surge in food, fuel, and housing costs are making it increasingly difficult for people to make ends meet.” New families join the regulars for food assistance each week, she reports, including one woman who shared that she used to live in the home that now houses the Cupboard. “At that time she was a single mom with three small children—they often all slept in one bedroom together to stay warm. She said she was grateful for the place to live and thanked God for it, and before moving away prayed that God would always use the property for good.”

Indeed the property is being used fully and well. The Cupboard, which received $500,000 in contributions in 2021 and partners with local grocery stores and restaurants as part of a food recovery program, draws support and volunteers from Sunrise and other congregations in the Holly Springs Interfaith Alliance. It has expanded to include an organic garden, complete with chicken coop and apiary. Local scout troops and youth groups have built greenhouses and raised beds. Thanks to garden volunteers who weed, prune, and harvest three mornings each week, the Cupboard produces some 2,000 pounds of fresh produce annually for distribution.

It’s a true ecumenical ministry, “and a concrete way of helping,” says McAllister.

“It’s about finding the common good and aiming for it, or what John Wesley would call works of service and mercy—helping make the kingdom of God more tangibly present. These are real on-the-ground needs, not lofty ideals.”

Even so, McAllister finds that ministry with the poor and hungry “is harder than it should be and harder than it looks.” Cultural barriers, he explains, often keep outreach more transactional than relational—it’s one thing to pick up extra canned goods at the grocery and bring them to a food drive, “but often we don’t get beyond that,” McAllister says. “In an
ideal world, folks would get engaged on a personal level and maybe even a policy level. Through relationships, hearts open and soften, so there’s less judgment and fear and ‘othering’ of the poor—and that’s a win. Ultimately poverty and hunger is a systemic issue, but we’ve got to start somewhere, and the most basic thing we can do is feed the poor.”

DINNER AND DIGNITY
Twenty-two miles north of Holly Springs in northwest Raleigh, the Rev. Dr. Bankole Akinbinu, D.Min.’19, similarly has been surprised by the pockets of food insecurity that exist in the otherwise comfortable, upper-middle-class community that he serves. He is the senior pastor of Baptist Grove Church, a historic African American congregation founded in 1858. Now the community around the church is mostly white, with the median household income in a three-mile radius of over $100,000. “When you look at our local community, you’d think the need is not as great, but the face and narrative connected to hunger is changing,” he says. “Just because people live in a nice neighborhood, there can still be need, especially since the pandemic.”

To respond to food insecurity, Baptist Grove operates Life Harvest Food Pantry, housed within the church and fully staffed by church volunteers. Life Harvest was launched in 2016, a few years after Akinbinu was called to Baptist Grove, as an expansion and evolution of a once-a-month food delivery service the church had undertaken for elderly homebound members. “My vision for ministry revolves around three pillars—living in faith, living in fellowship, and living to serve—so I brought on a part-time outreach minister to really focus on that third pillar,” he says. The pantry became the outreach focus. Twice monthly on Saturday mornings, the church basement fills with volunteers loading bags of food items, including meats, produce, staples, and toiletries and paper goods when available. Outside, some 40 to 50 individuals (on average 25 families) line up for the drive-through pick-up service.

“We partner with the Interfaith Food Shuttle which provides much of the meat and day-to-day needs,” says Suzette Aiken, Baptist Grove’s outreach coordinator and Life Harvest manager. Their congregation fully funds and staffs the pantry, including drivers who deliver bags to those unable to pick up. “We serve people from all races and ethnicities and ages, including sometimes members of our own congregation,” Aiken adds. Many are repeat visitors, so Aiken and her team get to know them and their needs. “If it’s a family with young children, their bag will include juice boxes and easy-to-prepare items like little small packs of ravioli. One gentleman is on a low-sugar diet, so we take that into account, and one woman...
requests a certain apple juice that she likes for taking her medication.” If recipients desire prayer in the drive-through, volunteers happily oblige, but there’s no obligation.

Aiken’s goals include transitioning to online registration and using technology to reach more people, improve operational efficiency, and better engage with Life Harvest’s visitors, connecting them to community resources and church events. “We’re initiating programs to reinforce a healthy mindset; for example, sharing healthy recipes and then making sure that week’s bag includes all the items needed to prepare the healthy meal,” she says.

For Akinbinu, the pantry gives his congregation an opportunity to embrace Matthew 25 in a meaningful way. “We believe that God cares for those who are hurting, and that what we ‘do for the least of these’ is integral to being a good disciple of Jesus,” he says. “This ministry is done in a spirit of excellence that affirms the image of God. We are called not only to see, serve, and support those facing challenges, but to honor their dignity as well.” The fact that one former patron of the pantry now volunteers at Life Harvest is testimony to this, Akinbinu adds. “I’m energized when I see faith making a difference and a community of faith coming together to live out our purpose.”

COMMUNITY AS CONGREGATION
Mycal Brickhouse, M.Div.’16, has seen the potent multiplying effect his small, 150-member congregation has had in addressing hunger for thousands of low-income kids and families in Wake County. Brickhouse has served as senior pastor of Cary First Christian Church for the last seven years, and shortly after arriving he became aware of a gap that left area school children who qualified for the USDA free and reduced lunch program in the lurch during summer break. “The Wake County school district is different from most. They don’t have the infrastructure for a summer food program,” he says. Brickhouse met with the department of Health and Human Services and discovered they had the federal funding but lacked a distribution mechanism. “I recognized that the church could stand in that gap. We may be small, we may not have the financial resources to make a big

Photos below and bottom right: Volunteers from Cary First Christian Church distribute boxes of food. Photo top right: The Rev. Mycal Brickhouse, pastor of Cary First Christian, exhorts the congregation.
impact, but we have manpower. We have credibility in the community,” he says. “This is an innovative way to be relevant and effective with no financial risk.”

Brickhouse reached out to local ministerial colleagues, creating a partnership with eight other churches, and together they developed a network of eight to ten different meal distribution sites, each located in a red zone—areas with high percentages of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch—all staffed by church volunteers. They enlisted local vendors as partners, including Boston Market. The Summer Meal Distribution Program “may not have a sexy name,” says Brickhouse, but it’s had a dynamic impact—distributing more than 154,000 meals from 2016 to August 2020. During the pandemic, they ramped up to more than 20 sites, serving some 8,000 hot meals every week. They gave out school supplies and expanded to partnering with farmers to distribute 16,000 pounds of fresh produce each week. Brickhouse may have been the program’s early visionary and organizer, but he credits the program coordinator, the Rev. Stephanie Workman of Kirk of Kildaire Presbyterian Church, with growing its reach.

“I grew up in poverty. I remember what it was like to not have enough food in the house,” says Brickhouse, who has several church members who benefit directly from receiving meals. The impact, however, has reached beyond filling stomachs to revitalizing his church. “This outreach has brought my congregation a sense of relevancy that had been in decline before this. Being an active force in this community and living out the gospel in very real, tangible and meaningful ways has given us a second wind. We’ve received new members through this ministry. It’s helped us redefine who our neighbors are and what it means to love our neighbor,” adds Brickhouse, whose predominantly African American congregation has become more diverse as a result.

There are also those affiliated with the Summer Food Program who consider themselves part of Brickhouse’s congregation despite not joining in worship. “We now serve more people outside our church than inside it,” he notes. “They may not come on Sunday, but they have my cell number and personal email. When they’re in crisis or need prayer or want to share their testimony, they call me. I am their pastor, even though they’re not on our membership roll.” While some more traditional, longstanding church members have struggled to accept Brickhouse’s sense of radical hospitality, he finds the congregation as a whole is energized, and his concept of who that congregation even is has expanded. “We see our community as our congregation.”

**NO LEFTOVERS**

Until recently, Tobi Nguyen, M.Div.’17, was not a Bok choy expert, nor was horticulture in her theological bag of tricks. But in her new role as pastor of outreach, missions, and evangelism at University UMC in Chapel Hill, N.C., she does think a lot about Jesus’s parables, particularly the parable of the loaves and fishes. “When it comes to our food-related ministry, I’m always asking: What are our five loaves, what are our two fish—what are the resources we have to share? Our garden is definitely one of those five loaves,” she says. That garden is the church’s Giving Garden, located several miles from the Franklin Street sanctuary and main church campus, on land given to the church by the Umstead family.

“Until the church figures out what we want to do with the property, we’ve turned it into a Chapel Hill community garden,” explains Nguyen. The Giving Garden has allotted half its land for growing produce donated to TABLE, a local hunger relief nonprofit started by University UMC church member Joy MacVane D’99, and the other half for community members to grow whatever they want. The majority of volunteer gardeners are not church members. Many of those who show up for open garden hours every Tuesday and Saturday morning are people in rental homes or apartments who don’t have access to land, and many others are international families. “So they’re growing a lot of Bok choy and Asian greens and other items that are hard to find at the market,” Nguyen says.

What’s special, she notes, is that the plots dedicated to hunger relief are planted according to the recipients’ needs and requests—currently a lot of potatoes, spinach, onions, and garlic, among other items. “We’re growing what our families in need know how
to use and what they want. When we’re doing mission well and in better relationship, then we’re better able to respond to their specific needs.”

The shift is significant, Nguyen says. “Instead of giving from what’s left over, we’re asking what they want and starting from seed, quite literally. We’re tending the ground, mixing in compost, all the way to bringing people fresh food. I think of it as Slow Food missions—an affirmation that we serve a God of abundance, not of scarcity and leftovers,” she adds.

Last year the Giving Garden donated over 800 pounds of fresh produce to TABLE, which in turn served fresh meals to 750 kids, delivered directly to 420 homes in Orange County. “When you’re talking spinach, that’s a lot of spinach,” laughs Nguyen. But that’s not the only way the church is putting its resources toward hunger relief. According to Nguyen, another of the church’s “five loaves” is the offering of its otherwise unutilized certified kitchen space for weekday use by the county’s Child Care Services division. “They come in and cook hot meals for 30 different federally subsidized day care facilities. All we do is open the doors—we don’t pay them, they don’t pay us, but Monday through Friday all morning long our kitchen is being used and kids are being fed across the county, just because we said, ‘come use it,’” she says.

The miracle of the five loaves should inspire our own openness to God’s multiplication, notes Nguyen. “Couldn’t it be through an unleashing of compassion and generosity?” she asks. The Giving Garden is an unleashing of compassion and generosity, through people not just bringing loaves and fishes (or fish emulsion fertilizer) but also contributing their time and sweat equity. “To me it’s significant that the miracle happens when Jesus thanks God for the loaves and fishes. It happens with gratitude. Instead of witnessing in a traditional evangelical way, our outreach entails doing a lot of witnessing through gratitude. There aren’t leftovers—neither leftover people nor leftover food.”

Photos opposite page: Fresh okra harvested from the Giving Garden; the Rev. Tobi Nguyen. Photos below: The garden is open to members of the community to plant, tend, and harvest food and flowers.
LEARNING a LITURGY of Sharing Food

Adapting the agape meal for Zoom gatherings revealed a new understanding of hunger for community

BY KENDALL VANDERSLICE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY KC HYSMITH
On the evening of March 30, 2020, I scooted a chair up to my desk, my sermon notes projected on one monitor and a Zoom waiting room displayed on the other. I gave the living room behind me a once-over, making sure there was nothing embarrassing for the congregation to see. We were two weeks into lockdown, and this was my first time preaching virtually.

Then I dipped a piece of sourdough into the bowl of butternut squash soup resting on the desk in front of me.

This was no ordinary church service I was about to stream into, it was a virtual agape meal.

Ten months before the world shut down for the COVID pandemic, I released my first book, We Will Feast: Rethinking Dinner, Worship, and the Community of God. The book is a survey of churches that hold their primary services around a meal: dinner churches, as they call themselves. My research began while a graduate student in food studies at Boston University studying commensality, or the social dynamics of eating together. I was curious what it was about meals that alter the ways humans interact. How do meals spark a sense of belonging? How do they create space for conversation? Why do they sometimes serve the opposite purpose—reinforcing otherness or leaving diners feeling awkward and out of place?

These questions accompanied me each Sunday when I walked to the front of the sanctuary, my palms cupped to receive the bread. I wondered what I might find if I approached Communion with similar research questions. For two years I interviewed pastors and congregants at dinner churches across the country, considering what they might teach the church at large about this sacred meal.

In the 10 months after the release of We Will Feast, I traveled across North America teaching about the importance of embodied community and relationships formed around the table. I led dinner services in church fellowship halls and gave lectures on college campuses. I facilitated workshops with clergy who were curious about how to start a dinner church of their own.

“I’m not here to convince you your church needs to launch a dinner service,” I told each group. “Instead, I want us to look at what’s happening in these communities in order to understand more fully the importance of building community around the table—and then imagine together what that could look like in our own context.”

The relationships formed around the table are not just a convenient addition to church life, I argued, an optional add-on after worship. They are central to our lives as Christians. At the table, God provides for the lonely and for the hungry in a tangible way. At the table, all are free to express their need. A church built around the table is a church primed to care for one another as a natural outpouring of worship.

Then, in March 2020, the message I had spent a year preaching was not...
When we share a meal with others, we invite them into the story of our own lives and we open ourselves up to being part of their own story, too.

only impossible—it was a danger. The very form of gathering designed to meet our deepest needs became a setting that could kill.

As the Zoom waiting room page was replaced by dozens of faces speckled across my screen, I prayed that my words would somehow meet each congregant in their unique point of pain.

EATING, TOGETHER
We as humans were created with two basic needs: to draw energy and nutrition from food and to find companionship by sharing life with others. At the culmination of creation, there was only one thing God did not call good: a human being, alone. When we sit at a table with others, we address both of these needs at once. Oftentimes in our eating, we experience the delight of God’s pleasurable creation too.

But eating together is also a vulnerable practice. It is inherently sensual, while reminding us of our reliance on outside resources to live. Eating together requires the sharing of time and personal resources; it reveals taste preferences, table manners, and cooking skills (or lack thereof). It creates a space to know others in a deep and different way than conversation alone allows.

The foods we eat, the ones we avoid, and the foods that connect us to family or to home say something about who we are and where we come from. Our meals tell stories about migration and displacement, about abundance and famine, about power and vulnerability.

When we share a meal with others, we invite them into the story of our own lives and we open ourselves up to being part of their own story, too.

In Christian tradition, the meal of bread and wine tells the story of Christ’s death, resurrection, and promised return. But it does more than simply tell a story: it offers us sustenance while we wait, filling us up while teaching us to hunger all the more for the heavenly banquet to come. Meanwhile, the meal itself has the potential to create a community that mirrors God’s kingdom here and now—a community that cares for one another’s physical, emotional, and spiritual needs through the very practice of eating and worshipping together.

When I offered that first Zoom sermon, I shared the ways my research provided insight into why our separation was so painful, so isolating: we were created to need one another. Sitting at a table, holding hands, offering hugs—this intermingling of our bodies is meant to ground us, to bring us comfort, security, and joy, especially in times of anxiety or grief. Our isolation resulted not only from the loss of something good but also from the sudden inversion of community interaction from a source of life and joy to a source of fear of death.

I closed the service with these words, which I would repeat dozens of times in the months to come: “In some traditions, the agape meal is a meal offered when a community cannot celebrate Communion due to the lack of a minister to bless the elements. It’s something to hold on to in the meantime, to point toward the meal that cannot be shared. We are not wanting for a pastor or priest, but for the ability to gather together in person—to share Communion in community with one another. May this meal we share, eating together over Zoom, as awkward as it might be, point toward the day that we can gather in body once again.”

BAKING AND SHARING
When my 2020 speaking plans shifted to online events, I knew my research could be used to build resources that name and address the needs of congregants in the long months of isolation. Instead of leading workshops encouraging pastors to start meal-centered ministries in their congregations, I led virtual agape meals with churches across the continent, opening and closing each service with the reminder above. For churches in Durham, where I live, I made hundreds of loaves of bread for the leadership to distribute among congregants before the gathering.

“We cannot be together in body,” I would tell them. “But just hours ago this bread was all part of a single batch of dough. As we eat it together, may it serve as a tangible point of connection despite our separation.”

As I baked, I prayed for the people who would consume each loaf. I prayed that it would serve as
a reminder of God’s goodness when surrounded by tragedy, both to those who ate it and to me, the baker.

Each time I repeated that closing line, “May this meal we share, eating together over Zoom, as awkward as it might be, point toward the day that we can gather in body once again,” I found that in a strange way this virtual gathering taught me something important about the sacrament of Communion, and all our eating: This meal offered by Jesus as the center point of our worship provides sustenance to us while we await Christ’s return. But, like the virtual agape meal, it is inherently unsatisfying too. As it fills us, it teaches us to hunger all the more for the new creation to come, which means the more it fills us the more it leaves us wanting. It’s a stand-in: a beautiful, powerful, constant reminder that this world is not our home.

It teaches us, week after week, that in some strange way, our hunger is also good.

EDIBLE THEOLOGY PROJECT

In early 2021, Kendall Vanderslice founded the Edible Theology Project—an educational media project connecting the Communion table to the kitchen table. Through an email newsletter, podcast, and church curriculum, the project helps people meet God in tangible ways, in the kitchen and at the table. By demonstrating the ways food shapes individuals and communities in Scripture, throughout history, and around the world, the goal is to help others find healing in relation to their bodies, their communities, God, and the church.

These resources have supported hundreds of churches looking for ways to rebuild community after extended separation. The podcast has reached thousands of listeners with the healing to be found in relationship to food, to their bodies, and to God. The newest program, a curriculum for small groups, Sunday schools, and groups of friends called Worship at the Table, aims to transform the ways Christians understand their relationships to the table and to food.

In the simple practice of storytelling through meals, churches can create spaces of hope and belonging that help hard conversations can lead to healing—becoming communities that offer a taste of God's kingdom, here and now.

THE EDIBLE THEOLOGY PROJECT has resources for denominational leaders, pastors and lay leaders, and individuals interested in food, liturgy, and theology. To learn more, visit edibletheology.com.
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-- Rev. Josh Kurtz
/NOTES/

News, events, updates (and recipes!) from Duke Divinity School
Food, Faith, and Environmental Justice Certificate Offered at Duke Divinity

The Certificate in Faith, Food, and Environmental Justice is for students seeking training and preparation for engaging faithfully in environmental justice work, agricultural production, healthy food access and food systems, creation care ministries, land use issues, policy advocacy, and environmental management. The context of such work might be congregational ministry, nonprofit work, farming, or governmental agencies. It is also for students who may have a more general interest in addressing the array of urgent challenges related to the ecological crisis, rural precariousness, resource conflicts, animal suffering, climate change, environmental racism, and industrial agriculture. The Faith, Food, and Environmental Justice certificate can be earned as part of the residential M.Div. and M.T.S. degrees.

Alongside access to some of the leading environmental theologians in the world, the certificate provides opportunities for learning from and engaging with the broader university and the surrounding community. Students can take courses at the Nicholas School of the Environment, Duke Farm, and the World Food Policy Center at the Sanford School of Public Policy. Drawing on the resources of Duke Divinity School and Duke University, students have specific coursework requirements, internship opportunities (M.Div. only), and access to North Carolina conferences focused on agriculture and environmental justice issues.

Resources and Reflections on Food and Ministry at Faith & Leadership

*Faith & Leadership*, the online publication of Leadership Education at Duke Divinity, is a leading destination for resources, reporting, and reflections on food, ministry, theology, and justice. Articles include “Tracking the Christian food movement” by Nurya Love Parish; “A network of Black farmers and Black churches delivers fresh food from soil to sanctuary”; “Soil and Sacrament: A spiritual memoir of food and faith” by Fred Bahnson; “The Bible’s food rules” by Lisa Nichols Hickman; and features on efforts in the Nashville, Chicago, and Washington, D.C., areas to address food insecurity and access. To feast on their award-winning journalism, visit www.faithandleadership.com.

The Rev. Dr. Heber M. Brown III has leveraged his church’s garden into a multi-state network that connects Black churches, Black-owned farms, markets, and consumers.
Ormond Center Podcast Episode on Food and the Church

The Ormond Center has sponsored the podcast *Embedded Church*, and the fifth season kicked off with an episode on “Access to Food and the Church.” The episode features Pastor Cynthia Wallace of Bible Center Church in Pittsburgh, Pa., and the Oasis Farm and Fishery operated by the church. Originally started as an educational initiative to help families learn how to eat and cook healthier, the program has evolved into growing food for the local community. This work began as the church gained a deeper understanding of the food insecurity, or lack of access to food, that so many of the local neighborhood residents are facing. The episode includes conversations with field guides, including Professor Norman Wirzba from Duke Divinity School, who provide professional research expertise to expand upon the social and economic implications of food insecurity in our communities. To listen to the episode, visit www.embeddedchurch.com/season-5 or ormondcetercom/embedded-church.

Food and Theology in the Ancient World

Dean Edgardo Colón-Emeric and Professor Norman Wirzba led a group of alumni and friends of Duke Divinity School this summer on the trip “Ancient Sites & Modern Faith: A Culinary and Theological Exploration of Greece.” Associate Dean for External Relations Dan Struble commented, “Dean Colón-Emeric and Professor Wirzba provided rich theological and philosophical insights that embroidered our experience of Greece’s amazing history, culture, food, wine, and religious practice.”

Many other participants delighted in the experience of exploring Greece:

- Blanche Williams: “It was exciting to tour the Acropolis ruins in person. The Meteora landscape and monasteries were breathtaking! And the cuisine was excellent!”
- Anne Bernhardt: “Talks by Edgardo Colón-Emeric and Norman Wirzba (on such topics as the proper way to observe the Sabbath and the work of the Holy Spirit) punctuated our daily schedule filling us with knowledge and spirituality.”
- Maribel Padial: “The lectures, the visit to the Hosios Loukas monastery, and the singing with the Father represented an experience of a lifetime. My son’s awe at the holiness represented in those icons was priceless.”

“Our fellow travelers became fast friends and sources of joy,” Struble said. “We all hope to do another trip with Duke Travels and the Divinity School!” To find out about other trips planned for alumni and friends, contact externalrelations@div.duke.edu.
Recipes and Meaningful Food Traditions to Share

Food is nourishment, hospitality, and delight. Some of the most memorable and meaningful human experiences happen when sharing a meal, and the faculty and staff of Duke Divinity School have shared some of their favorite recipes and meaningful food traditions. Maybe you’ll be inspired to add a new dish or tradition to your own food life!

CARNITAS
from Daniel Castelo,
William Kellon Quick Professor of Theology and Methodist Studies

Here is a recipe for carnitas that is one of my favorites and truly a crowd-pleaser:

INGREDIENTS
5–6 lb. pork shoulder or pork butt
5 garlic cloves minced
1 Tbsp. salt
1 tsp. cumin
1 tsp. chili powder
1 tsp. black pepper
1 tsp. oregano
1/4 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 cup orange juice
1/2 cup of salsa
Juice of 3 limes

INSTRUCTIONS
Add dry ingredients to a bowl and make into a paste.

Rub the seasoning on the meat and place in a crock pot. Add the liquid to the sides of the meat. Cook on LOW for 7 hours or until tender.

Pull meat apart with forks; let cook for another hour in juices.

Serve with tortillas, guacamole, sour cream, and cheese.

A Meaningful FOOD TRADITION

from Mycal Brickhouse,
Director of Grants, Leadership Education at Duke Divinity

MY FAMILY and I have a practice of baking cookies each Sunday of Advent. It is a way for us to spend time together and reflect on the coming of our Lord.
SRI LANKAN CHICKEN CURRY
from Minoka Yonts,
Director of Alumni Relations

My family heritage is Sri Lankan, and this is the go-to meal for my husband and me when we aren’t sure what to eat. Note: Sri Lankan curry can be spicy; adjust spices as you see fit.

INGREDIENTS
2–3 Tbsp. coconut oil
1/2 red or yellow onion, diced or sliced
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 inch ginger, minced
6–7 curry leaves OR 2 bay leaves
2 1/2 Tbsp. roasted Sri Lankan curry
1 cinnamon stick
1 tsp. chili powder OR cayenne pepper
1 Tbsp. paprika OR sweet paprika (not smoked)
2 lb. chicken
2 serrano peppers
3 Roma tomatoes or 2 regular tomatoes, cubed
1 tsp. sugar
½ tsp. salt
2 tsp. apple cider vinegar
1/2 cup coconut milk
water as needed

INSTRUCTIONS
Heat the coconut oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion, garlic, and ginger and cook until softened.

Combine curry leaves, Sri Lankan curry, cinnamon, salt, chili powder/cayenne pepper, and paprika. Then add the spice mix to the saucepan and cook until you begin to smell the spices.

Add the chicken, peppers, tomatoes, sugar, and salt and stir to coat the chicken. Cook for 10 minutes with the lid off on medium high heat. Stir frequently to ensure the chicken and spices don’t burn.

Add vinegar, coconut milk, and water and bring to a boil. (For less gravy, add less water.) Simmer for 15–20 minutes with the lid on, stirring occasionally. Serve with rice.
SCALLOPED SWEET POTATOES
from Jerusha Neal,
Assistant Professor of Homiletics

I enjoy having colleagues to dinner when I can—though COVID has made that harder! Here is a recipe from an evening with Brittany Wilson and her husband, Jonathan.

INGREDIENTS
8 cups peeled and sliced sweet potatoes (about ¼ inch wide)
3 Tbsp. olive oil (divided)
1 cup chopped onion
3 Tbsp. flour
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper
2 1/2 cups milk
1 cup shredded Gruyere cheese
1 tsp. dried rosemary (or 2 tsp. fresh)

INSTRUCTIONS
Toss sweet potato slices with 1 Tbsp. of oil and a dash of salt and pepper. Roast them in a single layer at 425 degrees for 20 minutes.

Sauté onion in remaining 2 Tbsp. of oil until soft. Add flour, salt, and pepper and cook for about a minute more. Add milk and rosemary and increase the heat.

Cook until the sauce thickens and bubbles. Remove from heat. Remove the sweet potatoes from the oven and preheat the broiler. Layer half the sweet potato slices in a 2-quart, broiler-safe baking dish, and spread with half the white sauce and a ½ cup of cheese. Add the remaining sweet potatoes and top with the remaining sauce and cheese. Broil until cheese begins to brown. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.
MOM’S HOT DOG CHILI SAUCE
from Barbara Campbell,
Course of Study Registrar & Student Services

My mother (who had seven children) was the most amazing person, seamstress, and cook! She passed away 13 years ago, well before her time, and we all miss her terribly. She had many homemade recipes, but the one I’m most fond of is her homemade hot dog chili sauce. I prepare it to this day, and I may have a serving or two in my freezer at this very moment!

INGREDIENTS
1 lb. hamburger
1 can tomato sauce
Onions (about half of a large onion diced, or your choice)
Celery (about 2 heart branches and 2–3 outside branches, or your choice)
1/2 each of 3 bell peppers (red, green, orange, yellow; your choice)
Catsup and water (use 1/2 each to fill the empty tomato sauce can)
Chili powder (to taste)
Pepper (to taste)
Pinch of salt (to taste)

INSTRUCTIONS
In a skillet, begin browning the hamburger and onions. Add salt, pepper, and chili powder. Cut the celery and add to skillet; then cut bell peppers and add to skillet. Continue to sauté all until hamburger is brown and veggies are partway cooked, then drain. (Be careful not to lose your valuable veggies!)

Once drained, return to stove and add tomato sauce. Measure catsup and water in the empty sauce can and add to skillet. Add additional chili powder, if needed. (The secret to the hot dog chili flavor is in the chili powder, pepper, and catsup.)

Continue to cook down the mixture, reducing the liquid and thickening to your desired consistency. It may take an hour or so but is worth the wait. Enjoy!

NOTE: The sauce can be frozen and makes about 5 servings; each serving is enough for 4 hot dogs.

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A Meaningful FOOD TRADITION
from Norman Wirzba, Gilbert T. Rowe
Distinguished Professor of Christian Theology;
Senior Fellow at the Kenan Institute for Ethics

A favorite meal tradition happens on Thanksgiving. Our four adult children have all become excellent cooks and bakers, and so we all get in on the act of preparing dishes that are recent favorites. There are staples, of course, like turkey, apple pie, and a red cabbage dish my mom taught me to make. I love keeping some of my mom’s German tortes in the mix, but then there is plenty of room to bring new dishes to the table. Our kitchen is a hive of busy activity. Shoulders rub, we compete for stovetop space, and the wine flows. I look forward to this meal every year. And there are leftovers!
Over the past few years, we converted our front yard from a weedy lawn into a wildly productive garden bearing fruits, vegetables, herbs, and flowers. We even discovered a fruiting pear tree in a hedge!

The biggest discovery has been the gift of sharing the bounty with our neighbors. One neighbor, Shaldah, doesn't speak much English, and I don't speak Arabic, but we've learned to speak through food. A careful conversation about what we are growing turned into an ongoing exchange of delicious gifts: figs from her yard, okra and squash from ours; baklava from her Libyan hometown, tomatoes and more okra from us; falafel from her kitchen, strawberries from our overwhelmingly productive patch.

Growing food in the front yard has become more than a practical venture or an indulgent hobby. It's taught me to receive and share the small blessings of the ground, to delight in growth, and to be generous with the earth's abundance. It's given me community and connection with my neighbors. More than a green thumb, growing food in my garden has given me a green heart.

from Alaina Kleinbeck,
Director of Thriving in Ministry Coordination Program at Leadership Education at Duke Divinity

A Meaningful FOOD TRADITION
Here is a fourth-generation family recipe for chocolate zucchini cake. I still have this recipe saved in my childhood handwriting!

**INGREDIENTS**
- 1/2 cup margarine
- 1/2 cup oil
- 1 3/4 cups sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1/2 cup sour milk
- 1 cup chocolate chips
- 2 cups grated zucchini
- 2 1/2 cups flour
- 4 Tbsp. cocoa
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. salt

**CHOCOLATE ZUCCHINI CAKE**
from Sarah Jean Barton, Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy and Theological Ethics

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Soften the margarine then add the sugar, oil, vanilla, sour milk, and eggs. Mix well.

In another bowl combine the flour, cocoa, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt. Sift over other ingredients. Mix well.

Take half the chocolate chips and add them to the mixture. Then add the grated zucchini. Make sure all the moisture is squeezed out. Mix well.

Tip the contents into a 9 x 13 pan. Add the other half of the chocolate chips on top. Cook for 45 minutes.

Take out of oven and let cool. Frost if desired. Enjoy!
Becoming the Baptized Body: Disability and the Practice of Christian Community
By Sarah Jean Barton, Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy and Theological Ethics
Baylor University Press, 2022

BAPTISM OFFERS the distinctive practice of Christian initiation, rooted in Jesus’ own baptism, ministry, death, and resurrection. Too often, however, people with intellectual disabilities are excluded from this core Christian practice and so barred from full inclusion in the life of discipleship. How can the work of the Triune God in baptism renew Christian imagination toward an embrace of baptismal identities and vocations among disabled Christians? In this book, Sarah Jean Barton explores how baptismal theologies and practices shape Christian imagination, identity, and community. She weaves a lively tapestry of stories, theological insights, and partnerships with Christians who experience intellectual disability. Her book resists theological abstraction, engaging with and expanding the field of disability theology. With a methodological commitment to inclusive research and a focus on ecclesial practice, Barton brings theologians of disability, biblical accounts of baptism, baptismal liturgies, and theological voices from across the ecumenical spectrum into conversation with Christians shaped by intellectual disability. This important book explores how the experiences of disabled Christians enrich Christian theological traditions and illustrates avenues for vibrant participation and formation for all believers.

Don’t Look Back: Methodist Hope for What Comes Next
By Will Willimon, Professor of the Practice of Christian Ministry
Abingdon Press, 2022

IT IS TIME for United Methodist pastors and congregations to stand up and move forward, according to Will Willimon. He spent a year committed to asking questions and careful listening in conversations with clergy, organizational leaders, and parishioners across the U.S. What’s next for Methodist church folk? What is God up to in the present moment? What does it look like to respond to God’s call now? What are the biblical texts, stories from the past, and core Wesleyan convictions that might provide guidance from this point? This is a book to read and reflect on with colleagues, congregants, and Methodist friends.

Fully Alive: The Apocalyptic Humanism of Karl Barth
By Stanley Hauerwas, Gilbert T. Rowe Professor Emeritus of Divinity and Law
University of Virginia Press, 2022

SWISS THEOLOGIAN Karl Barth publicly rejected Hitler’s Nazism, advocated on behalf of workers and laborers, and ministered to prisoners. In *Fully Alive*, Stanley Hauerwas demonstrates that Barth’s radical theological perspective is particularly relevant and applicable to the challenges of the contemporary moment. Hauerwas argues that Barth’s engagements with the social and political struggles of his day can help us see what it means to be fully human in the 21st century. The ecclesiastical and the political were inseparable for Barth; similarly, Hauerwas shows why it is crucial for theological claims to produce insights that make it possible for lives to be well lived. In chapters on race, disability, and the church in Asia, Hauerwas shows how Barth’s political theology can be read as a training manual that can help maintain humanity in a world in crisis.

The People Called Methodista
By Edgardo Colón-Emeric, Irene and William McCutchen Associate Professor of Reconciliation and Theology
Abingdon Press, 2022

“CHURCH RENEWAL” is widely discussed across Methodism today, and yet such renewal will not happen apart from serious engagement with and from the margins of society. Through a series of new and previously published essays, this book looks to the experiences of Methodists in Latin American
pueblos and Hispanic barrios to open new scholarly conversations about doctrine, worship, and mission for the sake of social renewal. The flames of renewal do not confine themselves to Methodism. But from the people called metodista they can spread, sharing in the Wesleyan movement’s fundamental calling to revitalize the church universal in its mission to the world.

Reformed Government: Puritanism, Historical Contingency, and Ecclesiastical Politics in Late Elizabethan England
By Polly Ha (chief editor), Associate Professor of the History of Christianity, with Jonathan D. Moore and Edda Frankot
Oxford University Press, 2022

This critical edition of the scribal publication Reformed Government (c. 1594) provides a unique point of entry into the 1590s. Recovering a pivotal moment in the history of Puritan radicalism, it represents the most extensive Reformed response to the onslaught of anti-Puritan literature in the late 16th century, including Richard Hooker’s Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity. In addition to mounting an epistemological and ecclesiastical defense of Reformed Presbyterian government, it sheds light on new appropriations of Renaissance ideas about historical contingency and introduces a dynamic reading of Christian antiquity.

The edition also provides a wider context for later developments in the 17th century. By expanding and reconfiguring the relationship between civil and ecclesiastical government, Reformed Government imaginatively reinterpreted recent historical changes to entertain new societal possibilities. This recovery of an alternative vision of a Reformed society in the late 16th century offers an opportunity for a fresh re-reading of this tempestuous period of church history. Based on maximal visions and proposals of reform, Reformed Government is essential reading for the study of ecclesiastical tradition alongside confessional documents and summative statements.

This Sacred Life: Humanity’s Place in a Wounded World
By Norman Wirzba, Gilbert T. Rowe Distinguished Professor of Christian Theology; Senior Fellow at the Kenan Institute for Ethics
Cambridge University Press, 2021

In a time of climate change, environmental degradation, and social injustice, the question of the value and purpose of human life has become urgent. What are the grounds for hope in a wounded world? This Sacred Life gives a deep philosophical and religious articulation of humanity’s identity and vocation by rooting people in a symbiotic world that is saturated with sacred gifts. The benefits of artificial intelligence and genetic enhancement notwithstanding, Wirzba shows how an account of humans as interdependent and vulnerable creatures orients people to be a creative, healing presence in a world punctuated by wounds.

He argues that the commodification of places and creatures needs to be resisted so that all life can be cherished and celebrated. Humanity’s fundamental vocation is to bear witness to God’s love for creaturely life and to commit to the construction of a hospitable and beautiful world.

Listeners Dare: Hearing God in the Sermon
By Will Willimon, Professor of the Practice of Christian Ministry
Abingdon Press, 2022

Preaching is instigated by an astounding claim: Good news—God has spoken to us. The Christian life is what you get when ordinary folk respond: I have heard. This book, a companion to Willimon’s book Preachers Dare, is for anyone who listens to sermons—which includes preachers, since there’s no way to preach without gaining skills as a listener. Listening is a human skill, but as God’s word is proclaimed, the hearer experiences a vocal mix of preacher, listener, and God.

Our Hearts Are Restless: The Art of Spiritual Memoir
By Richard Lischer, James T. and Alice Mead Cleland Professor Emeritus of Preaching
Oxford University Press, 2022

The genre of spiritual autobiography has flourished ever since Augustine essentially invented it in the fourth century. In Our Hearts Are Restless, Richard
Lischer—author of two spiritual memoirs—takes readers on a guided tour of the genre, examining the life writings of 21 figures from Thomas Merton to James Baldwin and from Julian of Norwich and Emily Dickinson to Anne Lamott. Lischer proves a perceptive reader and an engaging guide in the art and craft of spiritual writing. Our Hearts Are Restless shows readers how history’s most brilliant spiritual writers have sought and found a pattern of meaning in the face of tragedy, conflict, and the responsibilities of daily life.

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The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley, Volume 14: Doctrinal and Controversial Treatises III
By Randy Maddox (editor), William Kellon Quick Professor Emeritus of Wesleyan and Methodist Studies, with Sarah Lancaster and Kelly Diehl Yates
Abingdon Press, 2022

THIS VOLUME completes the three-volume subset of The Works of John Wesley devoted to his doctrinal and controversial treatises. It includes sections on Wesley’s critical engagement with the Moravians, Roman Catholic doctrine and practice, William Law, Emanuel Swedenborg, and others. Unlike previous collections of Wesley’s works, the contents are grouped in chronological order, placed in historical context, and fully annotated. Items (manuscripts and rare tracts) are included in each section that have not appeared in previous collections of Wesley’s works. The volume concludes with indexes to the three-volume subset. These volumes will aid and broaden readers’ understanding of and appreciation for Wesley as a theologian.

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Agrarian Spirit: Cultivating Faith, Community, and the Land
By Norman Wirzba, Gilbert T. Rowe Distinguished Professor of Christian Theology; Senior Fellow at the Kenan Institute for Ethics
University of Notre Dame Press, 2022

FOR THOUSANDS of years most human beings drew their daily living from, and made sense of their lives in reference to, the land: growing and finding food, along with the practices of home maintenance and the cultivations of communities. In Agrarian Spirit, Norman Wirzba demonstrates how agrarianism continues to have vital significance for spiritual life and provides an important corrective to the political and economic policies that do much harm to our society and habitats. With an invitation to the personal transformation that equips all people to live peaceably and beautifully with each other and the land, Agrarian Spirit begins with a clear and concise affirmation of creaturely life. Human life is inextricably entangled with the lives of fellow animals and plants, and individual flourishing must always include the flourishing of the habitats that nourish and sustain our life together. Wirzba explores how agrarian sensibilities and responsibilities transform the practices of prayer, perception, mystical union, humility, gratitude, and hope. The book provides an elegant and compelling account of spiritual life that is both attuned to ancient scriptural sources and keyed to addressing the pressing social and ecological concerns of today.

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Good Enough: 40ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection
By Kate Bowler, Associate Professor of American Religious History, and Jessica Richie
Convergent Books, 2022

IN THEIR first-ever devotional book, Kate Bowler and co-author Jessica Richie offer short spiritual reflections on how to make sense of life not as a pursuit of endless progress but as a chronic condition. Written gently and with humor, Good Enough is permission for all those who need to hear that some things can be fixed—and some things can’t. In these gorgeously written reflections, Bowler and Richie offer fresh imagination for how truth, beauty, and meaning can be discovered amid the chaos of life. Their words celebrate kindness, honesty, and interdependence in a culture that rewards ruthless individualism and blind optimism.

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A History of Contemporary Praise & Worship: Understanding the Ideas That Reshaped the Protestant Church
By Lester Ruth, Research Professor of Christian Worship, with Lim Swee Hong
Baker Academic, 2021
NEW FORMS of worship have transformed the face of the American church over the past 50 years. Drawing on a wide range of primary sources, including interviews with dozens of important stakeholders and key players, this volume by two worship experts offers the first comprehensive history of contemporary praise and worship. The authors provide insight into where this phenomenon began and how it reshaped the Protestant church. They also emphasize the span of denominational, regional, and ethnic expressions of contemporary worship, taking into account the liturgical dynamics involved in its emergence and the dynamics that led to its growth. The authors show that contemporary worship came about through theological reflection on the Bible, not merely as the result of cultural impulses. This book will be of interest to professors and students of worship, worship pastors, leaders of contemporary worship services, liturgical scholars, and church and cultural historians.

Nurturing Faith: A Practical Theology for Educating Christians
By Fred Edie, Associate Professor of the Practice of Christian Education, and Mark Lamport
Eerdmans, 2021

IN THIS comprehensive guide to educational ministries in the 21st century, Fred Edie and Mark Lamport explore how church leaders and others involved in Christian education can nurture a robust, cruciform faith within their communities. When discussing strategies and goals, Edie and Lamport consider a range of contexts and a variety of related fields that might give insight into educational ministry: theology, pedagogy, philosophy, social science, and more. Those working with any age group—children, adolescents, and adults—will find a relevant discussion of key underlying theological themes, a guide to concrete practices, and indispensable help in navigating shifting cultural dynamics. Exceedingly practical and consistent with the teachings of the gospel, the wisdom in this book will speak to all who long to foster discipleship in their church, school, or missional community.

Flame of Love, 2nd edition
By Clark Pinnock, with foreword and commentaries by Daniel Castelo, William Kellon Quick Professor of Theology and Methodist Studies
IVP Academic, 2022

FOR THIS second edition of Clark Pinnock’s magnum opus on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, theologian Daniel Castelo draws from his experience using Flame of Love in the classroom to add notes with helpful commentary and brief reflections on each chapter’s main themes and contributions. Pinnock pointed the way to restoring the oft-neglected Spirit to centrality in the life and witness of the church in a book that is both catholic—respecting the beliefs and worship of the historic church—and evangelical—drawing particularly on the heritage of the Reformation. Always in sight is the mission of the church, because “people want to meet the real and living God and will not be satisfied with a religion that only preaches and moralizes.” While the classic text is preserved, the book becomes even more accessible to contemporary readers.

Honest to God Preaching: Talking Sin, Suffering, and Violence
By Brent A. Strawn, Professor of Old Testament; Professor of Law
Fortress Press, 2021

OLD TESTAMENT scholar and interpreter Brent A. Strawn argues that today’s preachers must deal honestly with questions of faith that emerge from the themes of sin, suffering, and violence in the Old Testament text. Asserting that keeping secrets can lead to a kind of sickness, Strawn uses texts from the Pentateuch and the Psalms to model honesty about sin, without which there can be no reconciliation, and honesty about suffering, without which there can be no healing. He also looks at the book of Joshua and various psalms to model honesty about violence, which can serve as a way to contain, limit, and ultimately transcend violence and lead to healing. Strawn frames these themes specifically for working preachers so they can create sermons that speak to these thorny themes with depth and clarity.
SARAH JEAN BARTON published *Becoming the Baptized Body: Disability and the Practice of Christian Community* (Baylor University Press) and “Re-membering Methodologies in Theologies of Disability” in the *Journal of Disability & Religion* (Oct. 8, 2021). Her research poster, with Reilly Cosgrove, “Knowing That You Are Connected: Religious Participation and Occupational Identity among Adults with Intellectual Disabilities,” was presented in August at the World Federation of Occupational Therapists Congress. She delivered a number of workshops, seminars, and lectures: “Disability Justice: Cultivating Anti-ableist Practices in Church and Community” at the Summer Institute for Reconciliation in May; “Imagining the Disabled Body in Clinical Practice” at AnMed in March; “Co-constructing the Sacred: Why Research Methodology Matters” at the Conference on Medicine and Religion (Portland, Ore.) in March; “Who’s in the Room? Bioethical Reflections on Disability in Health Professions Education” at the OHSU Center for Ethics and Health Care in February; “Disabling Christian Formation” at the Forma Conference in January; and “Disabling Theological Education,” a roundtable session with Benjamin Conner, J.J. Flag, Erin Raffety, and Miriam Spies, at the AAR Annual Meeting in November. In January she began service as senior warden at St. Joseph’s Episcopal Church (Durham, N.C.) and as executive vice chair of the L'Arche North Carolina board of directors. She also is a member of the Disability Pedagogy grant team through AAR and the Wabash Center.

LUKE BRETHERTON published “Grief, Mortalist Politics, and the Formation of a Common Life” in the *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* (42.1, 2022); “Political Theology, Radical Democracy, and Virtue Ethics; or Alasdair MacIntyre and the Paradoxes of a Revolutionary Consciousness” in *Political Theology* (22.7, 2021); “Political Theology and Qualitative Research” in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Political Theology and Qualitative Research*, eds. Pete Ward and Knut Tveitereid. He wrote, produced, and presented the *Listen, Organize, Act! Podcast*, a 12-part series on community organizing, Christianity, and democratic politics and was interviewed on the topic of Christian humanism on the *Faith Angle* podcast and *The Whole Person Revolution* podcast (with Anne Snyder). He was appointed to the selection committee for the Holberg Prize, an international prize established by the Norwegian government awarded annually for outstanding work in the humanities, law, social science, or theology.

DOUGLAS CAMPBELL published “The Future of New Testament Theology, or, What Should Devout Modern Bible Scholarship Look Like?” in *Religions* (12.12, 2021); “Paul’s Account of the Future: A Case Study in Pauline Dogmatics” in *The Finality of the Gospel: Karl Barth and the Tasks of Eschatology*, eds. Kaitlyn Dugan and Philip G. Ziegler (Brill); and “Chronology” in the *T&T Clark Handbook to the Historical Paul*, eds. Ryan S. Schellenberg and Heidi Wendt. He spoke at the online Open Table Conference in February and on two podcasts, *Grace Saves All* (episode 81), on the topic of Christianity and universal salvation, and *Apokatastasis: Conversations on Universal Salvation* (with Fr. Aidan Kimel), on universalism in the thought of the apostle Paul.

DANIEL CASTELO published “Constructive Theology with an Eye to Creation and Humanity: Engaging Kärkkäinen’s Third Volume of a Constructive Theology for the Pluralistic World” in The Dialogic Evangelical Theology of Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, eds. Peter Goodwin Heltzel, Patrick Oden, and Amos Yong (Lexington Books/Fortress Academic). He wrote the foreword and chapter reflections and edited the updated manuscript and footnotes for Flame of Love, 2nd edition, by Clark Pinnock (IVP Academic). He participated in a Syndicate symposium on Simeon Zahl’s The Holy Spirit and Christian Experience, recorded a video on the Trinity for a men’s group of the UMC North Georgia Conference, and was a presenter for the “Iniciativa para la Transformación y la Reconciliación” program for the Center for Reconciliation at Duke Divinity School, a respondent/presenter for three sessions at the Wesleyan Theological Society Annual Meeting, an instructor for the CPE Spanish Cohort of the Triad Area of North Carolina, and a respondent to Steve Fowl at the SBL Annual Meeting.

STEPHEN B. CHAPMAN was the William Barclay Distinguished Visiting Professor of Biblical Studies at the University of Glasgow in the fall of 2021. He gave invited lectures at the University of St. Andrews and Durham University. He published “Delitzsch’s Fourth Edition” in The History of Isaiah, eds. Jacob Stromberg and J. Todd Hibbard (Mohr Siebeck); “Who Prays the Psalms? Bonhoeffer’s Christological Concentration” in the Toronto Journal of Theology (372, 2021); and “Psalm 115 and the Logic of Blessing” in Horizons in Biblical Theology (44.1, 2022). He presented “Jeremiah 29 and Political Theology” for the Symposium on the Theological Interpretation of Scripture hosted by North Park Theological Seminary and “Reflected Glory: The Imposition of the Divine Name as Theophany” for the Scripture and Theology Colloquium at Wycliffe College (Toronto).


SUSAN EASTMAN published “The Motif of Freedom in New Testament Texts: An Introduction” in Freedom: Christian and Muslim Perspectives, ed. Lucinda Mosher (Georgetown University Press) and “Christian Experience and Paul’s Logic of Solidarity: The Spiral Structure of Romans 5–8” in The Biblical Annals (12.2, 2022). She presented numerous papers and talks: “Participation and Personhood: Paul’s Anthropology in Conversation with Contemporary Thought” for Biblical Anthropology—A Message for Contemporary People, an online conference sponsored by the Pontifical Biblical Commission and the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin (Poland); “Stop Making Sense: Paul’s Pedagogical Strategy in Romans 2:1–3:9” for the Institute for Biblical Research online conference; “Mercy and Grace in the New Testament Epistles” for Mercy and Grace: Christian and Muslim Perspectives, a Building Bridges seminar for Muslim-Christian Dialogue sponsored by Georgetown University; and “Divine Participation and the Justification of the Ungodly in Romans 5–8” for the conference Romans 8 through the Lens(es) of Pauline Research Past and Present at the University of Vienna. She was a resident scholar at the Collegeville Institute (Collegeville, Minn.) in the spring of 2022 for her book project “Romans for Real People,” a commentary on Romans for the Interpretation Commentary series. She taught the online course “Participation and Personhood: Paul’s Anthropology in Conversation with Contemporary Thought” for the Stalcup School of Theology, Brite Divinity School (Fort Worth, Texas).

FRED EDIE published, with Mark Lamport, Nurturing Faith: A Practical Theology for Educating Christians (Eerdmans).

DAVID EMMANUEL GOATLEY has been named the sixth president of Fuller Seminary. His appointment will begin in January 2023.

POLLY HA was the chief editor, with Jonathan D. Moore and Edda Frankot, of Reformed Government: Puritanism, Historical Contingency, and Ecclesiastical Politics in Late Elizabethan England (Oxford University Press). She also published
“Discovering Orthodoxy: Revisiting the Purpose and Impact of the Synod of Dort” in A Landmark in Turbulent Times: The Meaning and Relevance of the Synod of Dort Theology (1618–1619), eds. Henk van den Belt, Klaas-Willem de Jong, and Willem van Vlastuin (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht). She was invited to deliver the lecture “Recharacterizing Calvinism?” for the Synopsis Purioris Theologiae book launch symposium (Leuven, Belgium).

RICHARD HAYS has been awarded the prestigious 2022 Burkitt Medal by the British Academy in recognition of special service to biblical studies. He published, with Christopher Blumhofer, “The Scriptural Matrix of the Gospels” in The Cambridge Companion to the Gospels, 2nd ed., eds. Stephen C. Barton and Todd Brewer. He gave several talks: the Ring Lecture “Reading Backwards: What Does It Mean to Say Israel’s Story Is Scripture for the Church?” at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church (Gainesville, Fla.); “A Fifth Quartet? Reconsidering Resurrection in Eliot’s Four Quartets” for the Theology, Modernity, and Literature conference (part of DITA) at Cambridge University; “The Biblical Theme of New Creation” for the Easter at King’s Festival, Clare College, Cambridge University; and “Is Love All You Need? A Reconsideration of the Role of Love in New Testament Ethics” at St. George’s House (Windsor, England). He was honored with a Festschrift, A Scribe Trained with a Festschrift, ed. Lis Valle-Ruiz and Andrew Wymer (Lexington Books). He was awarded the prestigious 2022 Burkitt Medal by the British Academy in recognition of special service to biblical studies.

ZEBULON HIGHBEN published “The Power of Song: Remembering the Work of Susan Palo Cherwien and Stephen Sondheim” in The Hymn: A Journal of Congregational Song (73.3, 2022) and the composition “Easter Dawn.” SATB divisi, a setting of a sonnet by Malcolm Guite (MorningStar Music). He delivered numerous papers and lectures: “The Power of Song: Hermeneutics for Music in Worship” and “Luther and Music” at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (Columbia, S.C.); and “Vocation, Roles, and Worship Planning,” a moderated panel for the Church Music Institute of Dallas/Brite Divinity School (Fort Worth, Texas). His new commissioned compositions premiered at Duke University Chapel, Trinity UMC (Columbus, Ohio), and University Lutheran Church (East Lansing, Mich.). He was a finalist for the 2022 American Prize in Virtual Performance for anthems recorded with the Duke Chapel Choir, including “Easter Dawn,” “Non nobis, Domine” by Rosephanye Powell, and the spiritual “God’s Got the Whole World,” arranged by Mark Miller. He was appointed chair of the artistic director search committee for the National Lutheran Choir (Minneapolis, Minn.) and served as conductor of the alumni choir for the 40th anniversary of the Lutheran Summer Music Academy and Festival, Valparaiso University (Valparaiso, Ind.).

SANGWOO KIM published a chapter in All the Good: A Wesleyan Way of Christmas (Abingdon Press).

RICHARD LISCHER published Our Hearts Are Restless: The Art of Spiritual Memoir (Oxford University Press); “Our Thesis Sentence” in Preaching the Fear of God in a Fear-Filled World, ed. Dawn Ottoni-Wilhelm (LIT Verlag); four book review essays and the articles “A Season of Sighs” (on Advent preaching) and “Stunned Observers” (with Will Willimon) in The Christian Century; and introductions to The Art of Eloquence: The Sacred Rhetoric of Gardner C. Taylor by Joseph Evans and Preaching by Heart by Ryan P. Tinetti. He was a visiting scholar and lecturer at Princeton Theological Seminary for the fall of 2021, and in December 2021 he was honored by his church on the 50th anniversary of his ordination.


JERUSHA NEAL published “Of Handmaids, Mediatrixes, and Mothers: The Idealized Feminine and Rhetorics of Whiteness” in Unmasking White Preaching: Racial Hegemony, Resistance, and Possibilities in Homiletics, eds. Lis Valle-Ruiz and Andrew Wymer (Lexington Books), and “Sacramental Homiletic Formation: Breaking and Blessing the Practices of Preaching” in Theology Today (79.1, 2022). Her speaking engagements included “Intercultural Courage: Preaching at the Borders of Belonging,” the keynote for the 2022 Rethinking Preaching Conference at the University of Toronto; “Shifting Pulpits: Embodiment, Place, and Power in U.S. Pandemic Preaching” at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary; “The Shape of the Whole Creation: A Wesleyan Preaching” and “Luther and Music” at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (Columbia, S.C.); and “Vocation, Roles, and Worship Planning,” a moderated panel for the Church Music Institute of Dallas/Brite Divinity School (Fort Worth, Texas). His new commissioned compositions premiered at Duke University Chapel, Trinity UMC (Columbus, Ohio), and University Lutheran Church (East Lansing, Mich.). He was a finalist for the 2022 American Prize in Virtual Performance for anthems recorded with the Duke Chapel Choir, including “Easter Dawn,” “Non nobis, Domine” by Rosephanye Powell, and the spiritual “God’s Got the Whole World,” arranged by Mark Miller. He was appointed chair of the artistic director search committee for the National Lutheran Choir (Minneapolis, Minn.) and served as conductor of the alumni choir for the 40th anniversary of the Lutheran Summer Music Academy and Festival, Valparaiso University (Valparaiso, Ind.).
for the Homiletics Local and Global lecture series at the Ecumenical Center for Homiletic Orientation (Madurai, India); “Preaching Hope in the Climate Crisis” for the Pastoral Care for Climate conference co-sponsored by Duke Marine Lab, Nicholas School of the Environment, and Duke Divinity School; “Exilic Hope for a Home in Crisis: Creation Care and the Bible,” the Gibson Lecture Series for the Congregational Summer Assembly (Frankfort, Mich.); and guest preaching at Wilshire Baptist Church (Dallas, Texas).

RON RITTGERS is a senior research fellow at the Leibniz Institute for European History in Mainz, Germany, for his book project “The Enchanted Word of Early Protestantism.”

LUKE POWERY published “Flesh That Needs to Be Loved: Wounded Black Bodies and Preachin’ in the Spirit” in The Sexual Politics of Black Churches, ed. Josef Sorett (Columbia University Press); “Is Preaching Political?” in Shouting above the Noisy Crowd: Biblical Wisdom and the Urgency of Preaching, eds. Charles L. Aaron Jr. and Jaime Clark-Soles (Cascade); and an op-ed in the Duke Chronicle. His conference papers and lectures included “The Cost of Healing” and “Outcry (Mark 15:33–39)” at the Festival of Homiletics (Denver, Colo.); the welcome address from Duke University leadership for the Black Alumni Collective 2022 Conference (Durham, N.C.); “In the Sanctuary: An Inaugural Symposium on Music and the Black Church” for the Interdisciplinary Program in Music and the Black Church at the Yale Institute of Sacred Music (New Haven, Conn.); “Lessons from a Prophet (1 Sam. 3:1–10)” at the South Carolina Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Annual State Convention; “The Spiritual Melody of Preaching” and “Preaching in a Valley of Dry Bones” for the 2021 Preacher Initiative conference of Highland Oaks Church of Christ (Dallas, Texas); and the LEAF Lecture “How Shall We Live? Jesus and Justice in a Racialized World” at Elon University (Elon, N.C.). Other preaching engagements included Rankin Chapel at Howard University, First Baptist Church (Raleigh, N.C.), and Duke Chapel.

DANIEL TRAIN co-edited, with JEREMY BEGBIE and W. David O. Taylor, The Art of New Creation: Trajectories in Theology and the Arts (IVP Academic), to which he contributed the essay “Love’s New Creation: Reconciling Two Approaches to Theology and the Arts.” During Holy Week 2022, he launched DITA’s Theology, Modernity, and Literature project. He organized and co-led a retreat at Laity Lodge for the Theology and Arts Scholars Initiative and preached “Strange Birds and the God of Extra,” a sermon on Flannery O’Connor, for Oak Church (Durham, N.C.).

ROSS WAGNER presented the paper “Scriptural Speech and Divine Identity in Paul’s Letters” at the 2022 Annual Meeting of the Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas (Leuven, Belgium). He delivered the Staley Lectures at Campbell University on “Isaiah 6 in Early Christian Imagination” and spoke on “New Testament Perspectives on the Resurrection of the Body” for the Triangle Christian Medical and Dental Association webinar Touching Death: Christian Perspectives on Anatomy Lab. He participated in a meeting of the Center for Barth Studies translation seminar (Basel, Switzerland) and served as a consultant for the annual meeting of the Center for Pastor Theologians (Raleigh, N.C.). He preached in Goodson Chapel on Hebrews 9:11–14 and for the Easter Vigil at All Saints Anglican Church (Durham, N.C).

LACEYE WARNER edited and contributed to All the Good: A Wesleyan Way of Christmas (Abingdon) and published “Called to Covenant” in What’s Next?, ed. Kevin Slimp (Market Square Publishing). She was interviewed by Lindsay Peyton for the piece “New Ways to Experience Lent,” published in Cross Connection, the newsletter of the Texas Annual Conference, and was a guest on the Un-tied Methodism podcast episode “Asbury Crossing: Leadership Styles of John Wesley and Francis Asbury.” She was the presider for “Women in Wesleyan/Methodist Traditions” for the Wesley Studies Group at the AAR Annual Meeting (San Antonio, Texas) and instructor for three courses—“United Methodist Polity,” “United Methodist History,” and “Saving Women: Women in U.S. Church History”—for the Advanced Course of Study at Duke Divinity School.

WILL WILLIMON published Listeners Dare: Hearing God in the Sermon (Abingdon). He was a guest lecturer at the University of Glasgow (Scotland), preached on the 1,700th anniversary of the establishment of Christianity on the Isle of Iona in Scotland, and participated in a workshop on the church after the pandemic for Church of Scotland pastors held at the University of Edinburgh. His lectures and teaching included a class on Christianity and racism at Wofford College (S.C.); lectures at the Korean
Evangelical Seminary in Seoul; a series on his book Aging: Growing Old in Church (Fortress) at Arbor Acres (Winston-Salem, N.C.) and Croasdaile (Durham, N.C.); a workshop on the church after the pandemic for the North Carolina Cooperative Baptist Fellowship; and a retreat for Fishers of Men (Basalt, Colo.). He spoke at the S.C. State Bar Convention, Furman University, Wofford College, and the Greenville (S.C.) Public Library on the 75th anniversary of the lynching of Willie Earle. His numerous preaching engagements included Epworth UMC (Toledo, Ohio), St. Peter’s Anglican Church (Mount Pleasant, S.C.), Buncombe Street UMC (Greenville, S.C.), Providence UMC (Warrenton, N.C.), St. John’s UMC (Rock Hill, S.C.), Grace Episcopal Cathedral (Charleston, S.C.), and the Dune Church (Southampton, N.Y.).


NORMAN WIRZBA published This Sacred Life: Humanity’s Place in a Wounded World (Cambridge University Press); Agrarian Spirit: Cultivating Faith, Community, and the Land (University of Notre Dame Press); “Creation Ex Amore” in The Christian Century; and multiple op-eds for ABC Religion & Ethics, Religion News Service, and Faith & Leadership. In March 2022, he was a senior visiting fellow at Campion Hall, Oxford University, where he delivered two lectures, “Agrarian Logic: What It Is and Why It Matters” and “The Soil of Spirituality: Agrarian Principles for a Life of Faith.” He presented “Rooted in the Land,” the keynote address at the Memory and Landscape conference at Brecon Cathedral (Wales). He was featured in several podcasts, including Mars Hill Audio, The Ridley Institute, and Tent Theology.


SAVE THE DATE FOR SUMMER INSTITUTE!

MAY 17–19, 2023

Come expand your theological imagination, grapple with practical problems, and continue a journey of reconciliation within a wider community at Duke Divinity School’s Summer Institute for Reconciliation. At this annual event, the focus on reconciliation is grounded in a distinctly Christian vision and a framework that is richly practical, contextual, and theological.

LEARN MORE: divinity.duke.edu/events/summer-institute-reconciliation
LISTEN TO DUKE DIVINITY FACULTY ON PODCASTS!

Duke Divinity faculty are frequent guests on some of the most popular podcasts on faith, culture, current events, and more. Here’s a sample of some of the podcasts and episodes where you can hear engaging conversation and compelling analysis, available from your favorite podcast player.

- **Luke Bretherton** wrote, produced, and presented the *Listen, Organize, Act!* Podcast, a 12-part series on community organizing, Christianity, and democratic politics. He was also interviewed on *Faith Angle* podcast and *The Whole Person Revolution with Anne Snyder* podcast on the topic of Christian humanism.

- **Douglas Campbell** was a guest on *Grace Saves All: Christianity and Universal Salvation* (ep. 81, March 14, 2022) to discuss the implications of the apostle Paul’s implicit universalism.

- **Lacey Warner** was a guest on the *Untied Methodism* podcast (Sept. 20, 2021) to discuss “Asbury Crossing: Leadership Styles of John Wesley and Francis Asbury.”

- **Norman Wirzba** has been featured on numerous podcasts, including *Mars Hill Audio, The Ridley Institute,* and *Tent Theology.*

- **Everything Happens with Kate Bowler** hosted guests including Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, Tara Westover, Anna Sale, Cammie McGovern, Mitch Albom, Ann Patchett, and more.

- **Will Willimon** appeared on podcasts including *Vicar’s Crossing, Vital Congregations, Voices in my Head, Crackers and Grape Juice, The Weight,* and *Godpod.* He also published and participated in seven podcast episodes related to the publication of his book *Listener’s Dare.*

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Welcome Our New Alumni Director!

Minoka Yonts D’17 has been appointed as director of alumni relations. She earned her undergraduate degree from Virginia Tech and her M.Div. from Duke Divinity School in 2017. She has worked for five years with the admissions team, mostly recently as senior admissions recruiter. She is available by email at minoka.yonts@duke.edu.

Library Resources for Alumni

Many library resources are now available for Divinity alumni, including access to the Divinity Library. See the information at https://library.divinity.edu/alumni. There are also new direct links to the Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries and the Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary available from the Divinity Library site.

SHARED YOUR ALUMNI NEWS!

Have you changed appointments? Moved recently? Do you have a new email or family news? Want to share information about a new book you’ve published or podcast you’ve produced? Be sure to let us know! You can update your information or share alumni news at divinity.duke.edu/alumni/submit-class-notes or by using the QR code.
In Praise of Church Nuts

TERRY WILLIAMS D’99 was the pastor at Englewood UMC in Rocky Mount, N.C., a region known for hog barbecue with vinegar sauce and for fried peanuts. “We’re able to take the proceeds for what we do and make a difference. That money is planted right here back into the ground of Nash County,” Williams said. Peanut sales began at Englewood in 1955, and today the church oversees “cook teams” who fry and pack enough peanuts to gross about $100,000 in annual sales. Proceeds go to local organizations like the food bank and Salvation Army. Read more: foodandwine.com/snacks/in-praise-of-church-nuts

Reflecting Theologically on Eating Together

GRACE HACKNEY D’03 founded the nonprofit organization Life Around the Table. The ministry has a team of about five people and has developed a theological framework called “Eating Together Faithfully” that guides congregations and others to reflect theologically on what it means to eat together. This reflection includes what we imagine and believe about God, how we treat our neighbor, how we treat the earth, how we treat and value ourselves, and more. They also run “Sabbath Life,” a monthly experience that allows pastors to visit their farm and work the fields in the morning, reflect together over lunch, and spend the afternoon in silence. Read more: lifearoundthetable.org

Filling Backpacks and Bellies

JOY MACVANE D’99 founded TABLE in Carrboro, N.C., a nonprofit organization to provide backpack meals for children in the community. Some 25 percent of students in the Chapel Hill area are food insecure, and TABLE fills a void in food access and feeds many hungry children every year. Read more: tablenc.org

Farming as a Spiritual Calling and Social Justice Endeavor

AMBER BURGIN-BROTHERS M.A.’21 started Elijah’s Farm, named for her son, in Orange County, N.C., in 2019. She specializes in organic herbs and varieties of mushrooms and is part of a group of several Black female farmers who want to remake the local food system to give more people access to fresh, healthy foods. She describes her desire to farm as a spiritual calling, one that gives direct access to the miracle of creation through the cycle of birth, death, and resurrection in nature. Her vision of farming also includes food justice advocacy and a redress of the harms of limited food access for many households of color. In addition to her work with the Culinary Femme Collective, she has joined the Black Farmers’ Market, a community-centered marketplace with locations in Durham and Raleigh, where a sign informs customers, “Your Blackness Is Welcome Here.” Shopping at the market keeps dollars circulating in the community and supports local Black farmers and other food suppliers. Read more: bread.org/blog/food-justice-her-calling
OBITUARY NOTICES

**1940s**

**1950s**

**1960s**
Paul M. Bassett M.Div.’60 died May 7, 2022.
Lloyd A. Sawyer M.Div.’69 died Feb. 6, 2022.

**1970s**
James Carroll Lee M.Div.’74 died April 7, 2022.
Michael Dean McLaurin M.Div.’75 died March 17, 2022.

**1980s**
Dana Bruce Wooten M.Div.’83 died April 4, 2022.

**2020s**
Donna Lynn Scott M.Div.’22 (posthumous) died March 7, 2022.

NEW BOOKS

Mary R. H. Demmler D’03 has published *Phe and the Work of Death* (BookBaby), a story that explores death and the spirits present with souls at the moment of death. She is an ordained Episcopal priest, and in addition to her work as a chaplain at an international boarding and day school, she also publishes regularly at https://prayerfulkitchen.blog.

Michael J. Gehring D’92 published *Losing Church: The Decline, the Pandemic, and Social and Political Storms* (Resource Publications).


Yohan Hwang D’12 published *Reclaiming Our Political Roots: Rethinking Church in Nationalist Times* (Wipf and Stock), a constructive theological politics that addresses the current divisiveness as well as the exodus of Millennials from the church.

Mark Jeong, Th.D. student and instructor of Hellenistic Greek at Duke Divinity School, has published *A Greek Reader: Companion to “A Primer of Biblical Greek”* (Eerdmans Language Resources). This resource for students learning biblical Greek includes dozens of simple, enjoyable narratives that bring to life the vocabulary and grammar taught in Clayton Croy’s *Primer of Biblical Greek*. Using this reader instead of difficult primary texts, students can progress more quickly to fluent, comprehensive reading. The book has won praise from numerous professors of New Testament and biblical languages.
O. Richard Bowyer D’60,’68 published the article “30 Years with the West Virginia Board of Medicine” in the Spring 2022 issue of Goldenseal magazine. He has been appointed to the board by seven state governors and is the only non-physician to serve as board president.

Thomas “Tom” K. Stephenson D’86 has announced his retirement from full-time ministry. He has served congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for 43 years in North Carolina, Kentucky, Nova Scotia, Georgia, and Ohio. He and his wife, Gladys, have relocated to the family farm near Reidsville, N.C., in June 2022.

James P. Byrd D’91 has been named to the Cal Turner Chancellor’s Chair of Wesleyan Studies at Vanderbilt University Divinity School. He is also professor of American religious history, chair of the Graduate Department of Religion, and the associate dean for graduate education.

Brian Foreman D’96 was named the coordinator of congregational ministries for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. He also serves as executive director of the Center for Church and Community as well as director for community engagement and leadership at Campbell University in Buies Creek, N.C.

Albert Mosley D’98 has been appointed the 13th president of Morningside University in Sioux City, Iowa.

Matthew S. C. Olver D’05 has been awarded tenure and promoted to associate professor of liturgics and pastoral theology at Nashotah House Theological Seminary. He has also been named the Alan Richardson Fellow for 2022–23 by the Department of Theology and Religion at the University of Durham (U.K.).

Jeremy Alder D’09 has released his first standup comedy special with Dry Bar Comedy, which is available online.

Wallis C. Baxter III D’09 has been appointed vice president of academic affairs for Maple Springs Baptist Bible College and Seminary in Capitol Heights, Md.

Jessie Colwell D’09 was named the director of clergy excellence for the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church. This role provides resources for 1,500 pastors and works closely with the Board of Ordained Ministry.

Drew McIntyre D’09 published a chapter in Theology and “Game of Thrones”, part of the Pop Culture and Theology Series (Fortress/Lexington Press), exploring the Night’s Watch as an analogy for the church. He serves as pastor of Grace UMC in Greensboro, N.C., and as an adjunct instructor in the Department of Religion at Greensboro College.

Jeremy Gilmore D’13 received a Triangle Business Journal “40 Under 40 Leadership Award.” He is the director of spiritual care at WakeMed Health and Hospitals in Raleigh, N.C.

OPENING CONVOCATION Welcomes New Entering Class

The Divinity School's 96th Opening Convocation service welcomed 226 new students and included a blessing for new staff. You can read more about Dean Edgardo Colón-Emeric's sermon, calling the school to love mercy as it continues its Pentecost journey, and watch the service: DIVINITY.DUKE.EDU/NEWS/