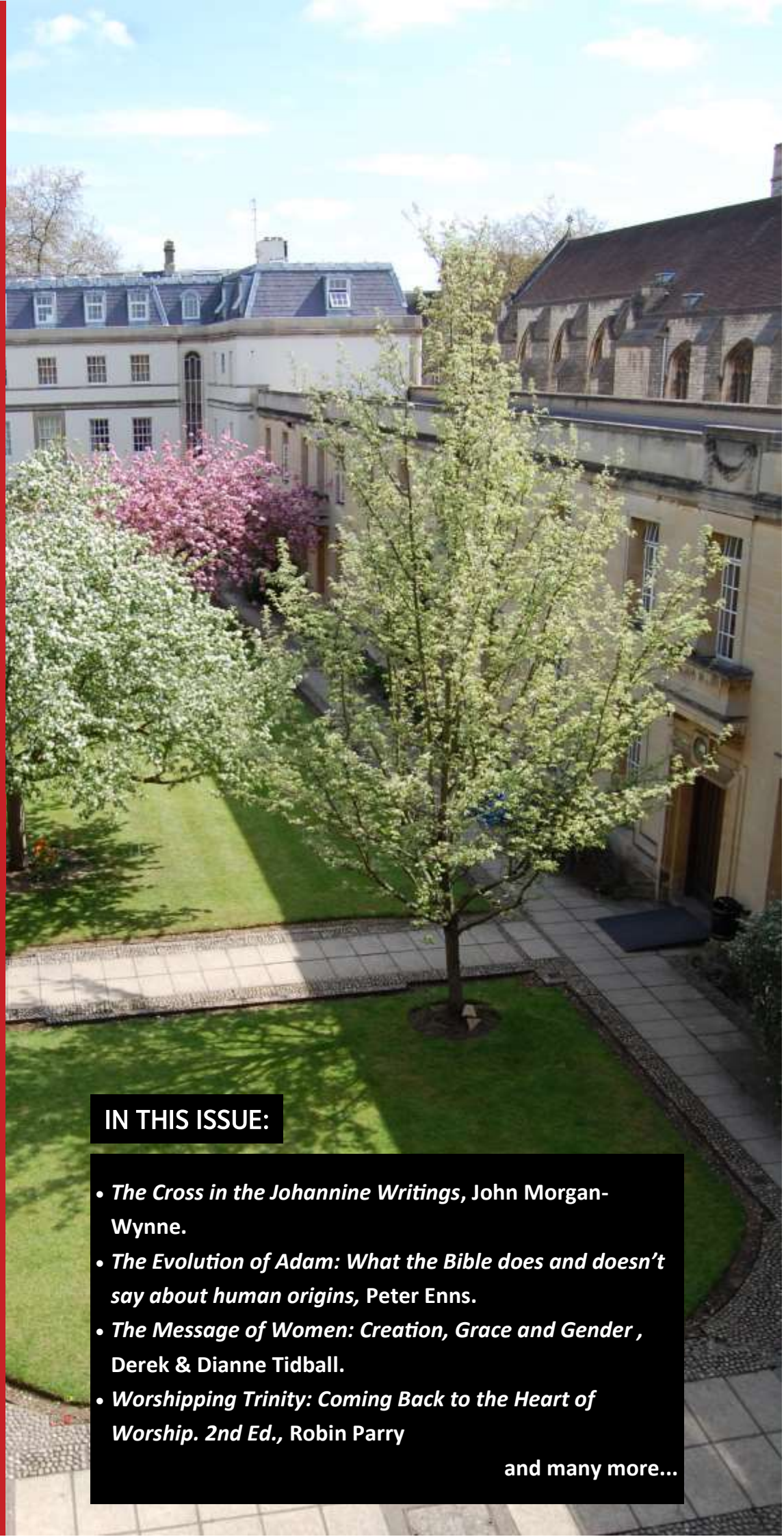


Reviews

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IN THIS ISSUE:

- *The Cross in the Johannine Writings*, John Morgan-Wynne.
- *The Evolution of Adam: What the Bible does and doesn't say about human origins*, Peter Enns.
- *The Message of Women: Creation, Grace and Gender*, Derek & Dianne Tidball.
- *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship. 2nd Ed.*, Robin Parry

and many more...

Table of Contents

Editorial.....	3
John Morgan-Wynne, <i>The Cross in the Johannine Writings</i> (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011), xiii+303pp.....	5
Robert W. Wall with Richard B. Steele, <i>The Two Horizons New Testament Commentary: 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus</i> (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), xvi + 416 pp.....	6
Walter Brueggemann, <i>Out of Babylon</i> (Nashville: Abingdon / Alban Books, 2010), 160pp.....	7
Peter Enns, <i>The Evolution of Adam: What the Bible does and doesn't say about human origins</i> (Brazos Press / SPCK, 2012), 172pp.....	7
James K. A. Smith, <i>The Fall of Interpretation: Philosophical Foundations for a Creational Hermeneutic</i> (2 nd Ed.; Grand Rapids MI: Baker Academic, 2012), 229pp.	9
Alison Jack, <i>The Bible and Literature</i> (London: SCM Press, 2012), 352pp.	10
Derek & Dianne Tidball, <i>The Message of Women: Creation, Grace and Gender</i> (The Bible Speaks Today; Nottingham: IVP, 2012), 300pp.....	11
Peter C Phan (ed.), <i>The Cambridge Companion to The Trinity</i> (Cambridge University Press, 2011), 432pp.....	12
Gilles Emery and Matthew Levering (eds.), <i>The Oxford Handbook of The Trinity</i> (Oxford University Press, 2011), 648pp.	12
Robin Parry, <i>Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship</i> . 2 nd Ed. (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2012), 203pp.....	13
Sung Wook Chung (ed.), <i>Jürgen Moltmann and Evangelical Theology: A Critical Engagement</i> (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012), xviii + 249pp.	14
Jürgen Moltmann, <i>Ethics of Hope</i> (SCM Press, 2012), xvi + 271pp.....	15
Michael P. DeJonge, <i>Bonhoeffer's Theological Formation: Berlin, Barth and Protestant Theology</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 146pp.....	16
Dwight N. Hopkins and Edward P. Antonio (eds.), <i>The Cambridge Companion to Black Theology</i> (Cambridge University Press, 2012), 350pp.....	19
Nicholas Wolterstorff, <i>The Mighty and the Almighty: An Essay in Political Theology</i> (Cambridge University Press, 2012), 192pp	21
Rowan Williams, <i>Faith in the Public Square</i> (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), 344pp.	22
Aristotle Papanikolaou, <i>The Mystical as Political: Democracy and Non-Radical Orthodoxy</i> (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012), 232pp.	24
A.P.F.Sell (ed.), <i>The Great Ejectment of 1662: its Antecedents, Aftermath and Ecumenical Significance</i> (Eugene Oregon: Pickwick, 2012), 296pp.....	25

Jolyon Mitchell and Owen Gower (eds.), <i>Religion And The News</i> (Ashgate, 2012), 200pp.....	27
Luke A. Powery, <i>Dem Dry Bones: Preaching, Death and Hope</i> (Fortress Press / Alban Books, 2012), 157pp.	28
Samuel Wells, <i>Be Not Afraid: Facing Fear With Faith</i> (Brazos / SPCK, 2011), 204pp.	29
John Pritchard, <i>Living the Gospel Stories Today</i> (SPCK, 2012), 120pp.	30
Pete Ward (ed.), <i>Perspectives on Ecclesiology and Ethnography</i> (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2102), 254pp.	30
Michael Moynagh with Philip Harrold, <i>Church for Every Context: An Introduction to Theology and Practice</i> , (London: SCM Press, 2012), 512pp.....	32
Stephen Pickard, <i>Seeking the Church: An Introduction to Ecclesiology</i> (SCM, 2012), 239pp.....	33
Martyn Percy, <i>The Ecclesial Canopy: Faith, Hope and Charity</i> (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 224pp.	34
Andy Draycott and Jonathan Rowe (eds.), <i>Living Witness: Explorations in Missional Ethics</i> (IVP, 2012), 296pp.	36
David Bosch, <i>Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission</i> , 20 th anniversary edition (Markynoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011), 640pp.....	38
Lucy Peppiatt, <i>The Disciple: On becoming truly human</i> (Cascade Books, 2012), 162pp.....	39
Andrew Goodliff, <i>'To Such as These': The Child in Baptist Thought</i> (CBHH Vol. 4; Regent's Park College, 2012), 91pp.	40
Justine Allain-Chapman, <i>Resilient Pastors: The Role of Adversity in Healing and Growth</i> , (New Library of Pastoral Care; SPCK, 2012), 160pp.	41
Judith Thompson and Ross Thompson, <i>Mindful Ministry: Creative, Theological and Practical Perspectives</i> (SCM Press, 2012), 224pp.	43
Steve Summers, <i>Friendship: Exploring its implications for the Church in Postmodernity</i> (T&T Clark, 2009), 211pp.	43

Editorial

As always a wide range of books are under review in this edition of *Regent's Reviews*. Of particular interest is the increasing interesting work being done in the area of ecclesiology. Reviewed below are four examples. First is a new book, *Perspectives on Ecclesiology and Ethnography*, (part of new project and series) looking at ecclesiology and ethnography and how the two might informed one another. One of the academic institutions involved in this project is Regent's Park College itself, with Paul Fiddes as one the project initiators. The second is what could be termed a textbook on 'Fresh Expressions'. *Church For Every Context* (at over 500 pages) is a detailed and rigorous exploration of pioneering forms of church. There is nothing like it and offers the first full-blown attempt to present these new ecclesiological ventures as legitimate. The third book is *Seeking the Church*, which works both as a contemporary introduction to ecclesiology and as a constructive contribution to what it is to be church today. I found the final chapter on 'Slow Church' great reading. The fourth book *The Sacred Canopy* is the third book from Martyn Percy on church and culture. Percy always make interesting observations and arguments. In hopefully the next edition we will have reviews of two further books on ecclesiology – Bryan Stone's edited *Reader in Ecclesiology* and Graham Hill's book *Salt, Light and City* on missional ecclesiology.

Beyond all this ecclesiology are books on Moltmann, Bonhoeffer, the doctrine of the Trinity, hermeneutics, preaching, pastoral ministry and much more, including if I can be so bold, a review of my own very little book *'To Such As These': The Child in Baptist Thought*.

Andy Goodliff
Editor

R Alastair Campbell, *'Born Again': What Did Jesus Mean?* (Cambridge: Grove Books, B66, 2012), 26pp

This is a welcome and helpful addition to the Grove Biblical series reflecting on what has been a significant phrase among evangelical churches. The focus of the book is a study on Nicodemus' encounter with Jesus in John chapter 3 (Campbell is a New Testament scholar and, among other things, former tutor at Spurgeon's College) but from this Campbell ranges more widely, especially around the themes of God's family and baptism.

The thrust of Campbell's argument has resonances with the New Perspective movement on Paul, in that he seeks to free the Nicodemus story from being read through the lens of later evangelical spirituality and asks what John would have understood by the phrase. To be born again is not, Campbell argues, about an interior change in the heart (as suggested by the likes of Ryle, Carson and Piper) which then interprets Nicodemus as someone too confident in his own self-righteousness. Rather, it is about a change in status in which one is brought into God's family by faith, as opposed to Nicodemus who considered himself a member of God's family by birth. Campbell thus offers an objective understanding of being 'born-again', which is the work of God to bring us into God's family, rather than the more subjective experience of our own turning back to God and inner change. Moving out from the Nicodemus story Campbell explores the wider biblical notion of God's family and adoption into God's family as a metaphor for salvation, which he considers expressed similar ideas to new-birth.

Campbell considers varying interpretations of the phrases 'born again' and 'of water and spirit' and, to this reviewer, presents a very convincing argument. For some the phrase 'born-again' is personally meaningful and significant while for others its overuse in particular contexts means it is now somewhat tainted. Campbell offers a solid basis for the way the phrase itself might be able to be redeemed. There is significant scholarship behind the book, although Campbell wears that lightly. He offers a very readable and accessible reflection, 26 pages in total, but one that will still encourage people to grapple with the twin horizons of Jesus' ministry and John's church as well as later interpreters. The occasional expression or sentence may cause some to question. His suggestion, for example, on page 19, that since the theme of new-birth is not in the Synoptics it is not therefore something that Jesus was remembered for teaching, reveals something of his understanding of John's Gospel as a whole which will not be shared by all.

One of the other areas in the study that will be of particular interest for Baptists is his linking of new-birth with baptism, which he suggests not only has been the dominant interpretation of 'water' through the centuries, but is also the right one. If new-birth is about adoption into God's family and being given a new status as a child of God, baptism is a significant moment in this change of status. Although Campbell does not make this explicit connection there is much here to feed into discussion and practice in Baptist churches about the link between baptism and church membership.

This is a well written and accessible piece which could be read by many in our churches. It offers significant insight into the biblical text and should make us think about our use of language and church practice.

Anthony Clarke
Regent's Park College, Oxford

John Morgan-Wynne, *The Cross in the Johannine Writings* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011), xiii+303pp

I remember the author (hereafter M-W) giving a useful series of lectures on the cross in the Fourth Gospel when I was a student at Regent's forty years ago and so was very pleased to be offered this book to review. From those lectures I learnt something important about John's understanding of the Atonement, and it was good to be reminded of a debt.

In this book M-W takes issue with those scholars, from Bultmann to the present, who claim that Jesus is merely a Revealer and not a Redeemer, and that John has no special interest in the cross as a saving event. He first shows the importance of the cross in John's thinking. It is the hour towards which Jesus' ministry is moving. It is the place where Jesus is glorified and the means by which he is lifted up. So far we might suppose that the cross is just the supreme revelation of God's love, but it is more than that. Mankind's problem is not merely ignorance; it is domination by evil powers, notably the Prince of This World with his lies and accusations. The cross is needed if this bondage is to be broken. But why and how?

The heart of this book is M-W's exposition of John 12:31-32. 'Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.' The repeated 'now' points to the cross whose 'hour' has come. Jesus identifies himself with the human race in its condemnation and is judged in its place, and as a result the Prince of this world loses his case and is ejected from the court (as in Rev. 12:10-11). In this way he is the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (1:29), and in his death Jesus gathers all people back into God's family (11:52). Compare the statement in the modern Anglican eucharistic prayer, 'He opened his arms wide upon the cross.'

In the second part of the book M-W turns his attention to the Johannine letters, dutifully accepting the scholarly consensus that they are by an author other than the fourth evangelist, and then showing how very close in thought they actually are! Thus we learn that salvation stems from God's loving initiative (1Jn.4:10, Jn.3:16). Jesus came to take away sins (1Jn.3:5, Jn 1:29). Jesus' death is an expiatory sacrifice (1Jn. 1:7, Jn.1:29). Jesus is our *parakletos*, our advocate in heaven (1Jn.2:1), the counterpart to the Prince of This World, who, as prosecuting attorney is ejected from the court. M-W concludes his examination by saying, 'Dodd may have overstressed differences in understanding Jesus' death in the Letter and the Gospel.' Something of an understatement surely!

This book belongs to the genre of academic thesis. As such it is typically cautious in its conclusions, and spends much of its time debating with German scholars of whom you have probably never heard. It is meticulously argued and fully deserves to hold its own in the scholarly market place. At the same time we must hope that M-W will distil from it a more popular book that will place its conclusions within reach of the busy pastor and thoughtful lay person.

Alastair Campbell

Robert W. Wall with Richard B. Steele, *The Two Horizons New Testament Commentary: 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), xvi + 416 pp.

This book has two aims. One is to interpret the Pastoral Epistles as a resource for today's church. The other is to show-case so called canonical criticism as a fruitful method of interpretation.

Critical scholarship has tended to discount the Pastoral Epistles, partly because they are judged not to have been written by Paul, and partly because in comparison to the acknowledged Paulines they are seen as pedestrian in style and content. Dunn spoke of 'fading vision' and Banks of 'drift', while what they have to say about women keeping silence and slaves obeying their masters has caused great embarrassment to the modern interpreter.

By contrast Wall insists: 'Rather than approaching the Pastoral Epistles as a marginal collection of biblical letters, whether because they are addressed to individuals rather than to congregations, because of authorship doubts or a late date of composition, or because certain instructions seem offensive to contemporary sensibilities, we should read them within their present canonical setting as of indispensable importance in guiding faithful readers of the Pauline corpus as a distinctive apostolic witness to God's gospel' (p.36). With this approach interest shifts from the author's intention in writing these letters to the church's intentions in canonizing them.

To establish this he provides for each epistle first a free-flowing commentary on the text, then what he calls 'A Rule of Faith Reading' of the letter showing how it expresses the same faith as Tertullian's 'Rule of Faith', and finally a historical study (by co-author Richard Steele) showing how a leading figure in Methodist history - John Wesley, John Fletcher or Phoebe Palmer - was influenced by these letters and applied their teaching as a word for their own day.

I welcome the positive approach to the Pastorals. In particular Wall argues that the dominant metaphor for the church as the Household of God provides an effective counterweight to the church as the Body of Christ. 'The addition of the Pastoral Epistles to complete the Pauline canon adds a depth to its ecclesiology for the subsequent reader.' The church as charismatic community is 'supplemented by a more mundane conception, the "household of God", organised and led by Spirit-filled individuals' (pp.170-1). Similarly, a possibly one-sided reading of grace in the earlier Paulines is corrected by the Pastorals' insistence on good works as the test of a real Christian, and the church accepts the Pastoral Epistles because of 'their effect in forming a congregation that is wise for salvation and mature for good works' (p.25).

I am less persuaded of the value of canonical criticism. The implied narrative whereby the collection of the Pastorals was added by the church to the canon in the late 2nd century to determine (over against Marcion) how Paul's letters are to be read seems to me speculative and to run the risk of domesticating the earlier Paulines. To say as Wall does that, 'the Rule of Faith constrains what an interpreter may or may not retrieve from a biblical text for the community's theological instruction' (p.40), runs the risk of silencing a distinctive biblical voice and ensuring that we never hear anything that we don't know already.

Alastair Campbell

Walter Brueggemann, *Out of Babylon* (Nashville: Abingdon / Alban Books, 2010), 160pp.

Taking its cue from the lyrics of the song 'Time in Babylon' (Emmylou Harris, Daryl Hall and Jill Cunliff), this volume is a good introduction to Brueggemann's thoughts on exile, one of the major themes he has pursued throughout his lengthy and prolific career as a teacher and writer. With his usual commitment to making connections between the Old Testament text and contemporary life, Brueggemann traces the movement of Israel from the prediction of exile, through coming to terms with loss, the birth of hope, the recognition of different voices on exile, to departure from exile. The final two chapters explore firstly the contemporary resonance of the metaphor of Babylon and secondly the potential of engaging with empire through 'accommodation and resistance', exemplified in the Persian period in texts such as Daniel and Esther, as an alternative to the more familiar Babylonian 'exile and restoration' model.

Those familiar with Brueggemann's work will notice a development in his thinking in the helpful inclusion of texts from the Persian period, as well as tantalising allusions to earlier work on exile such as *Cadences of Home*, which should really be read by anyone wanting to explore further Brueggemann's reflection on this theme. *Out of Babylon* is readable and engaging, although those new to his work may be a little delayed by wondering about the meaning of a few of his favourite shorthand words and phrases, which occasionally appear with only minimal explanation (e.g. 'hegemonic summary' on p.36).

Brueggemann's American focus requires some translation for British readers, particularly concerning the position of the state in relation to empire, but this book will nevertheless resource a critical and engaged response to the changing context of the church in the UK. As the British media periodically report on apparently 'persecuted' British Christians, the publication of this book is timely for those wishing to think more carefully about the situation of Christians in contemporary society. It is, furthermore, an excellent starting place for someone who is new to either the work of this creative Old Testament theologian or the biblical metaphor of exile as a way of understanding the church.

Helen Dare
Broad Haven Baptist Church

Peter Enns, *The Evolution of Adam: What the Bible does and doesn't say about human origins* (Brazos Press / SPCK, 2012), 172pp.

By one of those strange coincidences, while I was reading *The evolution of Adam* I attended a Christians in Science lecture by Professor Simon Conway Morris, a Christian palaeontologist, on a similar theme: *If evolution is true, what hope for Christianity?* After the lecture, held in a large student church, I heard some people expressing overwhelming excitement about his ideas, while others were asking whether the speaker was in fact a Christian!

This book on the relationship of the biblical stories to the theory of evolution by Peter Enns is one of the clearest I have read on the subject. In particular Enns explores critically the popular idea that Adam and Eve are the original human parents – an idea commonly and illogically held even by some Christians who attempt to assimilate

aspects of evolutionary thought. This material will be disturbing to some churchgoers, but life-giving to others.

Enns frames a bold, accessible, and convincing argument around three main building blocks. First, he examines the interpretive issues around the task of reading ancient stories in the modern and postmodern era, noting that 19th century scholarship delivered a serious three-sided challenge to biblical literalism in the form of (a) the investigation of the fossil record and the conclusions of Darwin and others about evolution; (b) the rise of biblical criticism and fundamental questions about authorship; and (c) biblical archaeology, and especially the recovery of ANE religious texts that predate and parallel the Genesis accounts of creation and flood.

Second, Enns discusses the hermeneutical significance of the fact that much of Israel's written religious texts are postexilic, written in the spirit of what we today would call theological reflection and apologetics. Who is God, and what does it mean to be his people Israel, in the light of the exile and return?

Finally Enns addresses the key New Testament material in which Paul draws a parallel between Adam and Christ as historical figures. Enns believes that Genesis alone would not have provided sufficient grounds to validate the creationist lobby, but Paul's epistles have made critical interpretation much harder. In these epistles (primarily Romans and 1 Corinthians) Paul associates responsibility for sin and death with Adam, and resurrection and life with Christ. Enns argues that these passages require a careful reading on the following grounds.

- Paul - and indeed the whole Bible and the other extrabiblical ancient texts - are pre-scientific, and it is wrong to attribute any kind of rational empiricism to the material. The matter of the origins of humanity may have been a non-question for ancient peoples, for whom the existence of the supernatural was beyond doubt.
- The Old Testament stories were revised, edited, and committed to written form as part of a process of establishing national identity for Israel as the people of God, and were not about answering the kind of existential questions that occupy the modern mind.
- Paul was influenced by his own cultural context just as we are by ours today, and his worldview and purpose are not ours. Paul was concerned mainly to address the transformational significance of the death and resurrection of Christ, and its impact on Israel's national identity. He was also concerned to show that Jews and Gentiles shared in the salvific work of Christ, and so a common human origin permits the access of both groups.
- Paul therefore uses Christ to interpret Adam, and not the other way round (we tend to be used to the idea that Adam sinned, therefore Christ came - and see Adam as the 'cause' and Christ as the 'solution'). Rather, for Paul, the work of Christ is the centre point in history and not human creation: so Paul works back from the 'solution' (Christ) to the 'problem' (humans) and therefore, to understand the death and resurrection of the very son of God, attributes sin and death to Adam. This thought process and hermeneutic is very different from that used by current interpreters seeking to discredit evolution as damaging to 'Christian' faith.

Far from being uncomfortable reading, I was left with a sense of increased wonder at the way God trusts himself to the processes of human communication, warts and all; and how the very messiness of scripture ensures that it remains alive in every generation. If we find ourselves worrying about the honour of the scriptures in this sceptical age then this book assures us that God spoke one word, and that word was 'Jesus'.

Sally Nelson
Wetherby Baptist Church

James K. A. Smith, *The Fall of Interpretation: Philosophical Foundations for a Creational Hermeneutic* (2nd Ed.; Grand Rapids MI: Baker Academic, 2012), 229pp.

This book describes itself as a 'postfundamentalist' book about hermeneutics. In an autobiographical introduction, the author James Smith traces his own journey away from Brethrenism and the restrictive readings of scripture that dominate such contexts. His book will speak especially to those who have found a fundamentalist hermeneutic of 'immediacy' lacking, but who remain dissatisfied with the alternatives offered by 'emergent' theologians such as Brian MacLaren. Originally published in 2002, this second edition includes a significant new chapter where Smith retraces his original trajectory and considers its implications in terms of the way in which church communities might function as interpretative communities. He offers catholic (Nicene) orthodoxy as a way into a community of practice that he upholds as both nourishing and governing interpretation.

For Baptists, the question of hermeneutics remains a 'hot topic', albeit one which frequently finds itself obscured by other more news-worthy debates. And yet, lurking behind our conversations on, for example, same-gender partnerships, or our divisions over women in ministry, lies the way in which we interpret the Bible. If we do not address our hermeneutic of scripture, we will struggle to adequately address our presenting issues. Smith's book is a helpful contribution to this debate, and offers an interesting and fruitful approach. Baptists will find much here that is helpful, and it provides a useful adjunct to *The 'plainly revealed' Word of God: Baptist Hermeneutics in Theory and Practice*, (eds. Simon Woodman and Helen Dare, Macon GA: Mercer University Press, 2011 reviewed in RR April 2012).

Smith's approach is to root his Christian general hermeneutic in a theology of creation, and he argues that interpretation is not a consequence of human fallenness but rather should be affirmed as a part of the goodness of creation. He engages methodically and in detail with some key proponents of various hermeneutical positions, and through this dialogue outlines his own constructive proposals. This reviewer particularly enjoyed the footnotes which do battle with Kevin Vanhoozer, who has been getting away with it for too long. The first chapter considers Rex Koivisto and Richard Lints as representatives of what Smith terms a *present immediacy model* of hermeneutics, whereby the text is encountered 'without interpretation'. Against this, Smith argues that humans are part of a cultural context by divine intent, and that any attempt to claim prelapsarian hermeneutical immediacy is inherently flawed. Wolfhart Pannenberg, along with Hans-Georg Gadamer and Jürgen Habermas, are then considered as representatives of an *eschatological immediacy model*, whereby humans are redeemed (or redeem themselves) from their experience of postlapsarian hermeneutics at the eschaton (whenever that may be). Against these, Smith pits Martin Heidegger and

Jacques Derrida as representatives of the perspective that still regards hermeneutics as fallen, but who make no attempt to escape this condition by seeking to regain a prelapsarian hermeneutical paradise, a position Smith characterises as a *violent mediation model*. At this point, the ground is cleared for Smith to offer his constructive proposal of a *creational model* of interpretation which sees hermeneutics as an intentional aspect of a good, peaceful creation. The story of Eden – Fall – Babel – Pentecost is read as a story of human communication ruptured by sin and restored by the Spirit. The pneumatic hermeneutic is not one of uniformity however, rather it is 'a space, a field of multiplicitous meeting in the wild spaces of love, where there is room for a plurality of God's creatures to speak, sing and dance in a multivalent chorus of tongues' (p.197).

Simon Woodman
Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church

Alison Jack, *The Bible and Literature* (London: SCM Press, 2012), 352pp.

The SCM Core Texts series in which this volume features is an eclectic and interesting series. Aimed at university level students, it offers accessible and scholarly engagement that will be appreciated by many beyond the academy. In *The Bible and Literature* Alison Jack begins by differentiating between the Bible *in* literature, and the Bible *as* literature. In considering the former, she notes the debt that English literature owes to the King James Version, which is ranked alongside the works of Shakespeare in terms of shaping the printed word in the English speaking world since the seventeenth century. Jack invites readers to engage with three readily-accessible poems: from T. S. Eliot's 'The Journey of the Magi' (1930) through W. B. Yeats's 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree' (1893) to Dylan Thomas's 'And Death Shall Have no Dominion' (1936) readers are invited to compare the ways in which the Bible affects the poets' uses of language, themes, and creation of meaning. Attention then moves to an exploration of what it means to read the Bible *as* literature, opening up areas such as the narrative skill of the various biblical writers, and placing the Bible in meaningful dialogue with other texts such as novels and poetry. The rest of the book is bracketed by two chapters which address two key recurring themes in the Bible: Creation and Apocalypse. From Stephen Marx to William Shakespeare, from Genesis to John, from W. B. Yeats to Edwin Muir, the trajectory of existence from beginning to ending is explored in dialogue with both literature and the biblical text. Along the way, Jack helpfully addresses the methods and limits of intertextuality, the challenges of narrative criticism, the role of the reader, and the contribution of feminist readings.

As with most of this Core Texts series, the chapters in this book would readily lend themselves to a ten week study course. Each is discreet within itself, and yet each also builds on that which has gone before. This book will be appreciated by teachers and students alike, and offers an helpful bridge between the worlds of biblical studies and English literature. It is well written and accessible, and will inspire further reading and study, with each chapter ending with insightful questions for further reflection. It is good to see that SCM are continuing to publish creative and engaging books such as this, and also that they have moved from endnotes to footnotes.

Simon Woodman
Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church

Derek & Dianne Tidball, *The Message of Women: Creation, Grace and Gender* (The Bible Speaks Today; Nottingham: IVP, 2012), 300pp.

The scope of this book is ambitious: in 300 accessible paperback pages it offers a wide-ranging exploration of a biblical perspective on women. Written by two influential Baptist ministers with strong academic and pastoral credentials, who also just happen to be married to each other, it is the book that many pastors have been waiting for. Scholarly enough to command respect, and accessible enough to recommend to a home group, it is a book that busts myths and explores options. There is careful attention to context throughout, and it is carefully footnoted with a helpful and extensive bibliography. The Tidballs neither shy away from the 'difficult' and 'controversial' passages, nor do they seek to impose upon them a forced hermeneutic. Rather, they are sensitive to the variety of opinions on this topic that can be found in church life. In a sense, there is not much that is 'new' in this book – and for some Baptists it may be a rehearsal of arguments long settled. For others it will not go far enough in its engagement with feminist theology. However, the experience of women in some areas of Baptist church life remains one of oppression and inequality, and a book such as this, written by two respected evangelicals, may well get a hearing amongst a readership that other voices have failed to reach.

The Message of Women begins at the beginning, tracing a trajectory from creation through fallen humanity to new creation in Christ. An analysis of the first three chapters of Genesis is set alongside the 'Magna Carta of Humanity' found in Galatians 3.28. Imbalance between the genders is presented as a result of human sinfulness, and the new creation in Christ is seen as restoring the equality that was lost at Eden. The book then explores what it calls 'Women under the old covenant', highlighting the variety of roles fulfilled by women in the culture and religion of ancient Israel. From wife and mother to educator and household economist, from victim of sexual assault to politically powerful leader, from resolute tower of strength to prophetic oracle, from sexually liberated adventurer to capable and independent entrepreneur; the picture emerges of a wide spectrum of femininity within early Israelite culture. The Tidballs consistently unpick stereotypes, and offer alternative perspectives on oft-cited passages. In the section 'Women in the kingdom', the focus moves to the gospels, and explores the roles women played in the life and teachings of Jesus. What emerges is a story of empowerment and disrupted oppression. The fourth section of the book, 'Women in the new community' turns to Paul and the practices of the early church. Once again the emphasis is on the way in which the early Christian community empowered women and recognised their gifting, so Lydia the businesswoman, Priscilla the teacher, Phoebe the deacon, and Junia the apostle are all cited. This section also engages the 'difficult passages' with helpful explorations of *women in prayer*, *women in worship*, *women in marriage*, *women in leadership*, and *women in widowhood*. This final section offers a detailed engagement with the passages that are normally referenced by those who would seek to restrict the vocations available for women, and offers a careful reading of them that concludes in the direction of gender equality at all levels of life: family, society and church. This will be particularly helpful to those who are wanting to explore how one might combine an egalitarian position with an evangelical approach to scripture.

Simon Woodman
Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church

Peter C Phan (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to The Trinity* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), 432pp.

Gilles Emery and Matthew Levering (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of The Trinity* (Oxford University Press, 2011), 648pp.

Do we need another book with a collection of essays to give an overview of the Trinity, let alone two? These books are both designed to give an overview of developments of the doctrine of the Trinity; charting how it has developed and been understood over the last two thousand years before giving greater attention to developments over the last few decades. Where they differ is both in length (the *Oxford Handbook* is more than twice the length) and in the particular areas they focus on.

The *Cambridge Companion* is one of a growing number in this series, designed to cover the major topics and key figures in theology and religious studies. As such they are a great resource for students learning the contours of the subject for the first time or for ministers who wish to keep abreast of subjects whilst engaged in church ministry. Often local church ministry is full of opportunities to learn of new methods whereas the reflective minister needs to carve out time to consider principles; the Cambridge companions provides this opportunity as well as a 'road-map' for the subject area. This volume does not disappoint, with good endnotes after each chapter along with some suggestions for further reading. My only gripe is why the publisher uses endnotes rather than footnotes, which are much easier to follow. Of particular value in this volume is the global breadth of perspective. This is seen in the wide range of contributors whose nationalities, church background and research interests vary enormously. As a result, there are chapters that dialogue with other religions as well as one that considers the 'life-giving reality of God from black, Latin American, and US Hispanic theological perspectives'. This last chapter is a fine example of how Trinitarian Theology not only raises questions about the nature of God but also its connection with the reality of the present social order. To name God as *El Dios de Nosotros* [the God who is for us] invites reflection on how otherness is essential both to God's life and to human life whilst also pointing to how, in Jesus, God works to cultivate an inclusive community of others.

Inevitably, the length restriction of each chapter mean many subjects are given brief mention and the breadth of chapters means they feel disconnected from each other, despite the book being divided into six parts. But these are a small price to pay for a volume which weaves historical discussion with contemporary figures, the main trajectories of thought with contemporary concerns.

The *Oxford Handbook* is likewise divided into several parts each containing a number of chapters. Unlike so many books of this type, it devotes the first part to 'The Trinity in Scripture'. This is not an anachronistic attempt at reading the Biblical text but rather an exploration of the place of the Biblical text in discussions on the nature of the Trinitarian God. Noting both that the settlement of the New Testament Canon and early Trinitarian theology emerge over the same period; how the discussions of the Trinity in the Early Church were relentlessly exegetical and how the contours of personal divine identity are expressed in Scripture. Parts two, three and four chart the development of the doctrine from the patristic period to the twentieth century before part five considers Trinitarian Dogmatics. Parts six and seven then consider the Trinity and Christian life, and wider ecumenical and interfaith dialogues. Finally the editors conclude with prospects for Trinitarian theology suggesting there are eight tasks that present themselves for Trinitarian reflection. These highlight the various biblical,

historical and systematic approaches taken in the book which it is hoped will allow the reader to confess the mystery of the Trinity but also to live it, proclaim it and give an account of it.

The contributors are from Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant traditions, giving the book breadth since it gives particular weight to the biblical texts and the development of doctrine in the early church (most notably the councils of Nicea and Constantinople). The writers are mostly well known which gives added weight to the book, supporting its claim to offer 'authoritative and up-to-date surveys of original research', the forty-three essays plus introduction and conclusion making it an ideal resource for students or as the basis for sabbatical study.

In summary, both books make useful contributions to a crowded book market. The *Cambridge Companion* makes good reading for all at an affordable price. The *Oxford Handbook* is a price more suited to libraries but the attention to questions of Scripture and exegesis are an important aspect of Trinitarian thinking which should be on all our minds.

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Robin Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*. 2nd Ed. (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2012), 203pp.

This is a second edition of a book that originally appeared back in 2005. It is a gem of a book for several reasons. First of all, it is an accessible introduction to the doctrine of the Trinity. I do not know of many books that you might be able to offer to someone in your church as a helpful description of what it means for the church to confess belief in the triune God. Chapters 2-6 offer chapters on the Bible (what Parry calls the 'trinitarian geography' in scripture), the early church and what it means to bring worship to (so the classic 'Glory to God the Father and the Son with the Holy Spirit') and also worship with God as Trinity (so the equally classic 'Glory to God the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit'). Second of all, it offers a practical theology of what it means to worship, sing and pray the Trinity. The book's aim and intention is to resource the church, not address the academy and so the latter chapters provide a lesson on leading good worship.

The second edition is updated and expanded with a new chapter on lament and the Trinity and two new appendixes, one 'Father, Son' language and another on family prayer.

The only perhaps sad thing is that while this book was endorsed by worship songwriters like Matt Redman, Keith Getty and Stuart Townend – Redman and Getty both write forewords and Townend played at the book's launch – we have not seen much of an increase in rich trinitarian songs and hymns from these and other names in the years following 2005. All the examples of songs in the book remain pre-2005, which makes me ask and wonder has the book done the work it might have hoped. On reading the first edition and seeing Matt Redman's name attached, I was looking forward to seeing the impact on his songwriting and in the albums since its publication have been disappointed not to see one song that addresses God as Trinity.

If your church has a library get this book. If your church has worship leaders, encourage them to read this book. If the doctrine of the Trinity passed you by at college, read this book.

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Sung Wook Chung (ed.), *Jürgen Moltmann and Evangelical Theology: A Critical Engagement* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012), xviii + 249pp.

This book was enjoyable, varied, and interesting to read. It is a set of 10 quite different essays from a variety of “evangelical” stand-points that each deal with one or two major themes in Jürgen Moltmann's writing. The majority of these offer good, detailed exploration of the given topic alongside each individual's own critique. Many of the essays also make special effort to present the context of Moltmann's life and work for those who are unfamiliar with his ideas. This makes the book accessible for any level of knowledge of this prolific theologian's corpus.

By its very nature, as a collection of contributions this book does not go as deep as do the many doctoral theses concerned with Moltmann's work. However, given that each chapter narrows down its attention quite specifically on to this or that issue, there is within a good range of robust engagement with the Professor's theology.

Perhaps also of note is that there are no female contributors to this volume. While this is disappointing, there could be many possible reasons behind this.

The book's title phrase “Evangelical Theology” and the implied juxtaposition of Moltmann's theology might suggest to some that the contributors all come from a particular stable. While this is certainly true in the broadest sense, each chapter displays different levels of appreciation of, comfort with, and utilisation of Moltmann's ideas. In the main the book's atmosphere is respectful yet probing.

As for the particular chapters, Stephen N. Williams' grappling with Moltmann's christology is one that stands out. It is an impressive and compact piece of work, both appreciative and critical of its given subject, while the author is self-aware and searching in his approach. Timothy Bradshaw's contribution on ecclesiology was also of particular interest to me as it helpfully explored a section of Moltmann's work with which I am least familiar, and perhaps a subject which has not received as much attention as it should.

Almost without exception, each of the chapters themselves serve as a high quality introduction to the relevant section of Moltmann's thought. Kurt Anders Richardson presents a sympathetic and attentive reading of Moltmann's trinitarianism. Graham Buxton is more critical, yet certainly still respectful, in his approach to Moltmann's doctrine of creation and environment care passion. Specifically, he engages in well balanced discussion of the tricky topic of Moltmann's use of the Jewish kabbalistic concept of *zimsum*, and his idea of cosmic universal salvation. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen gives a skilful introduction and journey through Moltmann's pneumatology, leaving the reader with some thought-provoking questions to consider.

A few of the contributions left the feeling that they might have investigated a bit deeper into Moltmann's thoughts of their subject, even given the restraints of a single chapter. With that caveat in mind, David Hohne offers a challenging look at God's salvation of humanity, particularly Moltmann's description of God's own involvement in that process; Daniel Castelo gives a balanced and respectful assessment of Moltmann's eschatology (I can hear the voices crying out: “Surely you can't expect anyone to engage with the whole of Moltmann's eschatology in one chapter!?” But still, it would have been good to have a little more on Moltmann's more recent eschatological work); and Paul

Parker gifts us with a considerable discussion on Moltmann's view towards the struggle between violence and non-violence as he considers Moltmann's ethics.

A couple of the chapters could have perhaps been a little more considered (or considerate) with their criticism. Lanier Burns contributed a good overview of parts of both Moltmann's doctrine of creation and his anthropology. However, the criticisms he makes are less convincing, being a bit dismissive of Moltmann's work and sometimes not taking into account other ideas present in Moltmann's writings that might begin to answer Burns' objections. Sung Wook Chung's opening chapter also offers some good exposition of Moltmann's view of Scripture and God's revelation, but the subsequent critique over-polarises the views of Moltmann and "evangelicalism", presenting quite an exclusive picture of what "evangelical" theology might be. However, the fact that Chung, as editor of this volume, has brought together such varied contributors with seemingly quite different opinions of the overlap between Moltmann's work and "evangelicalism" suggests that he may not be so exclusive as his chapter threatens to imply.

While it is perhaps unfortunate that I found the opening chapter the hardest to engage with, this does not deny the fact that this is a book rich with ideas and challenges for the Church today, one that is well worth the read.

Ben Dare
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Jürgen Moltmann, *Ethics of Hope* (SCM Press, 2012), xvi + 271pp.

This offering from Moltmann scores highly for being readable and accessible to a wide audience. A well-presented structure with clearly sign-posted chapters creates a piece of work which covers a significant quantity of ideas but also does not overwhelm. Moltmann also displays some of his most appreciated characteristics here. Firstly, he demonstrates a humility not just for his own ideas but for Christian thought in general (it is not often that you read "Christians have no better answers to the questions about life, the earth and justice than secular people or[...] different religions" (p. xii) in a Christian work). Secondly, he keeps his writing in an attitude of worship and celebration of who he perceives God to be. Furthermore, Moltmann refuses to ignore the pressing questions of the world today. He does not ask, how do we find a better church for the church's sake, rather, how does the church give itself for the world's sake and for God's sake. With the hope that we have, how are we to live? And with the fears that are present, how must we live?

So we have here many thoughts on the topic of Christian ethics, glimpses of which were seen throughout his work, drawn together into one place. There are four key topics which Moltmann addresses: the relationship of hope and ethics; an ethics of life; an ethics of the Earth; and an ethics of peace, justice and righteousness. Finally Moltmann closes with a few brief discussions of what beauty can be found in the world to encourage ethical behaviour.

The Introduction through to Chapter 4 deal with the link between what is hoped for, what is believed to exist now, and what is to be done. Moltmann appreciatively criticises three different eschatological positions for the perspective they give us on today's work. He rejects divisive dualism between a spiritual world and civic/secular world. He also critiques a view of the end-times as a struggle between God and the devil; should it not rather be the unfolding of God's victorious work in creation? Moltmann also rejects eschatological theories that either legitimate religious power or give up all

interaction with the world by the religious community. For him, *transformation of the world* is the goal of eschatology, and the task of the one who hopes in accordance with “the process of Christ's coming” (p. 41).

Chapters 5-6 deal with the ethics of life. Moltmann considers there to be so much threat, fear, and presence of death in today's world that it has become difficult to sustain a love for all life, difficult to love the community of all life. He goes on to discuss the issues of birth control in its many forms, the dignity of a person in the face of illness, and issues surrounding death and our possible control of it. When does life occur? When does death occur? What does the resurrection of the body say to life now? Moltmann's discussion here is sensitive, even if certain phrases might seem overly black and white (particularly if taken out of context).

Chapters 7-10 focus on an ethics of our treatment of the earth. Moltmann seeks an appreciation of the *whole* earth for its own sake: a creation of God, loved and cared for, encouraged, enlivened, and with a future. He employs his own theologically orientated history of the cosmos (original creation, continuous creation, new creation) to look at the concept of evolution, bringing his own critical question to bear: is evolution a struggle between life, or is it cooperation? Moltmann then discusses God's place in this interdependent planet followed by humanity's place. For him, the resurrection of Jesus leads the church to drop its fear of death and therefore its greed for life as well.

Chapters 11-15 deal with issues of peace, politics, justice, righteousness, violence and power. Moltmann outlines his key understandings of what an ethics concerned with these things needs and certain critical questions come to the fore: does criminal punishment truly help either the victim or the perpetrator? For him, it does not make the unjust just. It does not display *creative* justice. Should resisting the world's evil powers be about destroying enemies or overcoming enmity? How do we ensure trust, and not control, is the basis for the world's societies?

Similar to his other recent works, while there are no drastically new concepts Moltmann does still develop his ever-growing ideas with fresh attempts to explore the practical implications of Christian theology for today's world. For any reader, from an avid Moltmann fan to the first-time discoverer, the explorations within question and challenge us about how to face up to the real issues of the world in the light of the concrete future for which we hope.

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Michael P. DeJonge, *Bonhoeffer's Theological Formation: Berlin, Barth and Protestant Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 146pp.

In *Bonhoeffer's Theological Formation*, Michael DeJonge presents students of Bonhoeffer with a crucial resource. Those familiar with Bonhoeffer's theology will appreciate the discipline and the clarity with which DeJonge engages Bonhoeffer's *Habilitationschrift, Act and Being*. While it is indubitably Bonhoeffer's most erudite and most arid text, DeJonge's precise exegesis unveils a concept which he will suggest informs Bonhoeffer's entire theology: the person-structure of revelation. This structure, expressed fully in Jesus Christ, constitutes a central point of dissonance between Bonhoeffer and his theological mentor, Karl Barth. For DeJonge, the person-structure of

revelation both unifies Bonhoeffer's thought and provides a contrast with Barth's own act-structure of revelation.

Although accessible and direct, DeJonge's text remains best-suited for those with some prior knowledge of Bonhoeffer's theology. Even with DeJonge's careful analysis and thorough explanation *Act and Being*, which forms the textual basis for DeJonge's thesis, remains Bonhoeffer's most technical work. However, the text blossoms for the seasoned theological reader; those acquainted with Bonhoeffer will note two points of particular scholarly advancement. First, *Bonhoeffer's Theological Formation* demonstrates the critical importance of *Act and Being* for Bonhoeffer's theology. For reasons already mentioned, *Act and Being* is Bonhoeffer's least-engaged text. DeJonge's exposition of *Act and Being* shows both how integral it is for Bonhoeffer's theology and how deficient any account of Bonhoeffer's thought is without it. Second, the text elucidates how conceptions of revelation delineate Bonhoeffer's thought from Barth's. Barth stands as Bonhoeffer's preeminent influence outside of Luther. This influence has generated questions regarding how much Bonhoeffer in fact differs from his mentor. For DeJonge, Bonhoeffer's person-structure of revelation decisively demarcates his thought from Barth's. Rather than Barth's dialectical approach to revelation, informed by Reformed commitment, Bonhoeffer's own hermeneutical approach to revelation follows from his respective Lutheran commitment. DeJonge's work contributes both to discussions of *Act and Being* and to conversations regarding Bonhoeffer's debt to Barth.

Chapter 1 emphasizes the context within which Bonhoeffer writes *Act and Being*. Finished in 1932, *Act and Being* seeks to unify two disparate Protestant options. On the one hand 'culture Protestantism' focusses on human inclinations towards the divine, inclinations couched in language of 'culture, history, and ethics' (5). On the other hand, Barth radically emphasises the otherness or transcendence of God over against liberal Protestant theology. The former is problematic due to its taming of God's otherness. The latter is problematic for its removal of God from the concrete world. *Act and Being* seeks a way between the Scylla of removing God's transcendence and the Charybdis of cleaving the historical world from God.

Chapter 2 articulates DeJonge's reading of *Act and Being's* central thesis: revelation as the unity of transcendence and historical existence must be understood as both act *and* being. Bonhoeffer first cites a litany of philosophical representatives of both act and being traditions. Here DeJonge expertly guides the reader through what is otherwise abstruse and difficult reading. While initially philosophical, Bonhoeffer also detects act and being traditions within theology. Specifically, revelation is theologically understood as either act, wherein revelation occurs in discrete moments in time, or being, wherein revelation is perpetually possible for human beings. Neither alternative does Bonhoeffer find acceptable.

Chapter 3 presents the act-character of Barth's theology. Here DeJonge finds the most significant divergence between Bonhoeffer and Barth. Barth's emphasis on act, for DeJonge, follows from his privileging of God's absolute or formal freedom. God is not bound to humankind, even when God acts on humankind's behalf in revelation. Consequently, even in the incarnation divinity is 'veiled' in Jesus Christ (47). Only in acts of revelation is Christ's divinity manifested. Barth's act-theology reflects Reformed concerns; whereas Reformed theology sees incarnation as the *medium* for revelation, Lutheran theology identifies the incarnation *as* revelation. DeJonge writes, 'From Barth's perspective, Lutheran theology is essentially Christocentric and therefore errs by treating an objective condition of revelation as revelation itself' (52).

Chapter 4 builds upon Bonhoeffer's criticism of Barth by reinterpreting theology's understanding of God. Rather than an account of God-as-Subject, which

erroneously draws upon a subject-object paradigm, Bonhoeffer argues that God is *Person*. In a subject-object paradigm, subject perpetually acts and object perpetually is. In contrast, through the category of person Bonhoeffer can present both God's *act upon humankind*, which yields faith, and God's *being with humankind* through the church. This unity of act-being/faith-church is revealed in the person of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 5 locates Bonhoeffer's proposal of God as Person (rather than Subject) squarely within Lutheran tradition. Particularly, Bonhoeffer draws upon the Lutheran conviction that all one knows of God one sees in Jesus Christ. God's own inclination towards humankind Christ reveals in his 'pro me' structure: 'Jesus Christ's personal structure is such that his 'being there' is always also a 'being for me'. He is ontologically *pro me*' (93). While Bonhoeffer supports Lutheran Christology over against Barth's Reformed Christology, he preserves divine transcendence through the uniqueness of Christ's own being.

Chapter 6 examines both the accuracy of Bonhoeffer's criticism of Barth and its reception in scholarship. While admitting Bonhoeffer interprets Barth incorrectly at points, DeJonge maintains Bonhoeffer accurately identifies revelation-as-act as a central problem within Barth's thought. DeJonge persuasively engages two influential interpreters of Bonhoeffer's divergence from Barth.

Chapter 7 describes Bonhoeffer's own rejection of Karl Holl's Lutheran theology of conscience. Although Bonhoeffer supports distinctively Lutheran accounts of revelation, he rejects Holl's account due to its latent 'being' character. For Holl, revelation manifests in the conscience, which is 'haveable' in consciousness. As a result, revelation becomes inappropriately continuous and possible. While Lutheran, Holl's account of revelation privileges being over act and thus succumbs to Bonhoeffer's criticism of such theologies as lacking transcendence.

Chapter 8 traces Bonhoeffer's insights in *Act and Being* through his later work. Having already dealt in detail with Bonhoeffer's early academic work, DeJonge describes the influence of *Act and Being* on Bonhoeffer's thought structures in *Discipleship* and *Ethics*. While Bonhoeffer's later works exhibit more pastoral concern, DeJonge persuasively suggests that they too reflect Bonhoeffer's earliest convictions about act and being. In both *Discipleship* and *Ethics*, the preeminent danger consists of splitting apart reality into oppositional pairs, rather than finding them reconciled in Christ.

Few secondary resources on Bonhoeffer offer as much as does DeJonge's *Bonhoeffer's Theological Formation*. Not only does it serve as a valuable resource for those interested in (or perplexed by!) Bonhoeffer's *Act and Being*, but it also clarifies Bonhoeffer's larger theological vision in relation to Karl Barth. For the person relatively familiar with Bonhoeffer's corpus, the study operates a valuable reference tool. For those who wish to gain familiarity, it provides a strong ground from which to consider Bonhoeffer's later work. The latter will have a steep learning curve, since even in commentary the language is extremely technical. This does not take away from the text as a whole due to the careful and the skilled

handling given by DeJonge. He consistently reiterates fundamental themes and charitably dialogues with other Bonhoeffer interpreters. *Bonhoeffer's Theological Formation* is highly recommended for graduate students and faculty interested in Bonhoeffer.

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Dwight N. Hopkins and Edward P. Antonio (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Black Theology* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), 350pp.

The *Cambridge Companion to Religion* series has a rightly deserved reputation for excellence in clarity and depth that is appreciated by academics and students alike. This latest volume brings twenty-three authors together under the editorship of Dwight N. Hopkins and Edward P. Antonio and maintains those hard won standards throughout a richly diverse gathering of reflection and comment on Black Theology. While it makes no claim to being a 'Black Systematics', it quickly convinces the reader that there is now no major Christian doctrine that is now left unaddressed by Black theologians. And if no doctrinal assertions ought now to be made without consideration of comment from Black Theology, then this collection will prove an enduring point of first reference for many.

The book is helpfully divided into three sections. Part One consists of some general introductory historical and thematic material that will be essential for the novice. Dwight Hopkins begins by laying a firm foundation for all that will ensue, documenting the rise of Black Theology as a model of contextual and liberation thought in the United States but also noting its wider global significance wherever people of colour seek to relate socio-political issues with theological reflection. Gayraud S. Wilmore continues this trajectory with a historical examination of the developing motifs of survival, elevation and liberation in the following chapter. Edward Antonio then skilfully articulates the relationship between Black theology and Liberation Theology examining the tensions between 'struggles of recognition', centred on issues of race, gender, sexuality etc and the 'economic oppression' of material inequality. Further tensions between Black Theology and its Womanist sibling are then explored by Linda E. Thomas with a compelling anthropological study of two contrasting communities of resistance and Delores S. Williams' concise but comprehensive study of how, beginning with insight from Alice Walker, Womanist Theology allows women of colour to integrate their connection to feminism along with Black history, religion and culture.

The second section of the book unpacks a number of traditional theological themes and doctrines from a Black perspective. These are all self-contained chapters which enable the reader to readily pick and choose which topic is of immediate interest to them. The list of subjects does read like an Introductory Systematics, beginning with Dennis W. Wiley on God and continuing with Julian Kunnie on Christology and Jesus as the 'ancient ancestor' who is among us. The opening Trinitarian study is completed by Garth Baker Fletcher's study of the Holy Spirit. Drawing on James Cone and J. Deotis Roberts and Dwight Hopkins he examines how among varying articulations of Black and Womanist theologies the Holy Spirit has consistently been a central theme, progressing from that which enables people to survive injustice to that which enables the fullness of human liberation.

There follows a chapter by Riggins R. Earl Jr. on the nature of human purpose and how Christ's call to 'self denial' is understood against a background of violent suppression of racial and cultural identities. James H. Cone then shows why he has remained such a persuasive voice in the academy and the church with incisive comment on 'Theology's great sin: silence in the face of white supremacy.' Drawing on Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Martin Luther King he argues that what is needed today are scholars of religion with the courage to speak out the structural evils of society, particularly the sin of white supremacy. Why, he asks, is the theological task of addressing racism is too

often left to scholars of colour? When will White Christians break their silence, not only in acknowledging their complicity in sinful conditions and their propensity to abusing power, but when will they consciously and communally relinquish their advantage. This does not make for easy reading if the reader is white, but Cone is compelling in his argument that if racism is to be overcome, then white theologians must, at the very least, consciously engage with the thinking of people of colour. Allan A. Boesak then adopts the line 'De Lawd knowed how it was' to examine the problem of theodicy from a black perspective. Summing up the problem with characteristic focus, he asks 'If God is the One who liberated Israel from Egyptian slavery, who appeared to Jesus as the healer of the sick and the helper of the poor, and who is present today as the Holy Spirit of liberation, then why are black people still living in wretched conditions without the economic and political power to determine their historical destiny?'

Acknowledging that Black theology sees the Bible as a vital source for its articulation, but only as one source among many, and never as the fullness of divine self disclosure, Michael Joseph Brown offers a chapter on how Black theology uses the Bible, before Jeremiah A. Wright Jr. and Cyprian Davis give their thoughts on how Protestant and Roman Catholic ecclesiology are understood from a Black perspective. This second, 'systematic section' of the book then ends, as we might expect, with black reflections on eschatology, from J. Deotis Roberts. These are examined through the themes of dignity and destiny and carry the distinctive 'nowness' of Black theology that roots the coming Kingdom of God in time and space.

The final section of the book explores a number of the interdisciplinary and global expressions of Black Theology, beginning with Mokgethi Motlhabi who traces its history within South Africa and going on to Anthony Reddie's appraisal of developments in Britain. Readers in the UK will be challenged by Reddie's conclusion that black theology in Britain needs to challenge a 'normative black Christian faith that has far too long drunk rather too deeply from the well of "evangelical post Reformation theology" which has largely muted Christianity's embodied radical intent.' The global tour moves on to Walter Passos's consideration of slave religion in Brazil and the conclusion that while 'the epithelial color of the theologian is unimportant' we must look at 'Afro-Asia and understand why YHWH in his eternal wisdom chose the black civilisations as participants of his great project of the reconciliation of humanity with the creator.' Raul Suarez Ramos takes the reader on to analyse black theology in the context of Castro's Cuba and Noel Leo Erskine offers critical insight on its interaction with Marcus Garvey and the Jah movement of Rastafari in Jamaica. From there Anne Pattel-Gray reviews the development of Aboriginal theology, tracing the similarities and differences with Black theology as it emerged in the United States and recounting the biographies of pioneer pastors like Don Brady, Charles Harris and David Kirk. She then unpacks a seven fold methodology for Aboriginal theology that includes a call to participate in a rereading of biblical narratives, an overcoming of western dichotomised theology and a New Reformation that would dismantle both church and state racism, classism, sexism and homophobia ingrained in their many Institutions. Edward P. Antonio then moves this section towards an end with five reflections on the interaction between black theology and post colonial discourse. Finally James H. Evans considers the future of black theology, noting how the global religious and socio-political landscape has changed since the 1960s when it first sought to answer some of the critical questions of that time. How then, he asks, might Black theology address the new foundational theologies that are emerging, what might to say to the fresh expressions of ecclesial theology, especially Pentecostalism, and where will there flourish a practical theology that equips those committed to the Kingdom of God to resist all forms of oppressive Empire.

As with any such gathering of academics, particularly when some contributors have been expressed through translations of their work, there are varying styles of writing which will appeal in differing degrees to individual readers. While that lack of a consistent style can jar if reading the book from cover to cover, the overall quality of writing is constantly compelling, theologically erudite and never loses its challenging edge. This minor quibble over style is much less of a difficulty if readers are selecting chapters to read on a more 'free-standing' basis. Overall then, both in its breadth of engagement and its depth of analysis this *Cambridge Companion* makes a unique contribution to scholarship and deserves to become a standard text on the shelves of anyone who cares about the shape of theology today.

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Nicholas Wolterstorff, *The Mighty and the Almighty: An Essay in Political Theology* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), 192pp

Nicholas Wolterstorff writes clearly and provocatively. In *The Mighty and the Almighty*, Wolterstorff has a number of aims: one is to rebut the Anabaptist interpretation that Christians are not subject to the authority of the secular states in which they live (Yoder) or if they are, are only subject to it as resident aliens (Hauerwas). Another is to advance the project of *Justice: Rights and Wrongs* and continued in *Justice in Love* in which he places rights at the centre of an account of justice. The project will be continued in his forthcoming book *Understanding Liberal Democracy*.

According to Wolterstorff, Christians are under the authority both of God and of the state. Christians remain citizens of particular states, subject to the authority of those states and owing duties of loyalty to those states. They are also members of the church, which is also an authority structure and not merely 'a voluntary organization devoted to sponsoring religious activities' (pp.16-17).

Wolterstorff argues that a sufficient account of political authority can be given *from below*, by appealing to reason alone and considerations of justice alone, and a sufficient account of political authority can be given *from above*, by appealing to revelation alone (in particular Romans 13), the mission of God and the status of the Church (pp.102-104). *The Mighty and the Almighty* attempts to make the latter case.

Wolterstorff sees Romans 13 as 'essentially an adaptation to the Roman Empire of what the Old Testament said about the task of the state' (p.83). He centres his interpretation of the passage around verses 4-5 which he understands as authorizing government 'to exercise governance over the public for the purpose of executing wrath or anger on wrongdoers, thereby indicating its support of doing good' (p.88).

Government, according to Wolterstorff, has been authorized by God to fulfil a task. It has not been given a proxy to act on God's behalf. Therefore, citizens are only morally bound to obey the actions of governments which are authorized. Governments have authorization to punish wrongdoing. This is the same as saying that governments have authorization to redress injustice. Given the equation Wolterstorff draws between justice and rights in *Justice: Rights and Wrongs*, this is the same as saying that governments have the task of protecting the rights of the public (p.90). It follows that the authority of government is limited by the rights of its citizens (p.93) and of the

social institutions which they form, including churches, businesses, schools, and chess clubs (chapter 14).

For Wolterstorff the membership of the church is never limited to one nation and never includes all the citizens of a particular nation. Therefore, 'the state cannot express the shared religious identity of the people, since there is no such identity' (p.123). This means that government does not have the task of making its citizens virtuous or pious (p.101). There are not just two authority structures: church and state, each with the task of government over the same people. There are multiple authority structures in society, each with their own *telos*, and each having authority over different people (p.141), and governments should respect the rights of those structures whilst defending the rights of citizens who interact with them. *The Mighty and the Almighty* is a lively book and will inspire its readers to tackle some of the denser tomes of political theology.

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Spurgeon's College

Rowan Williams, *Faith in the Public Square* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), 344pp.

Rowan Williams managed to keep publishing important books across a range of subjects during his ministry as Archbishop of Canterbury, an amazing achievement given the stress of that task, and a testimony to his intellectual stature and encyclopaedic knowledge. While his writing is not 'easy', it is not academically abstruse, 'he wears his learning lightly'. His time at Lambeth was marked by his determination not to play the establishment archbishop, but rather to speak from the standpoint of 'the other' into debates, and from there try to find Christian insights. His ignited a furious fire storm of protest one weekend when he advocated the patching of Sharia law into the UK law, a move received by the British public with astonishment. Despite saying that he had not intended to commend hand lopping for thieves, merely some family law situations, he was in the pillory for a while afterwards. But his writing about faith in the public forum has had an influence, and while our judiciary is busily denying that Christianity has any sort of special place in our law, Mr Justice Baker cited the Archbishop's view that 'your culture or your rights' was not a valid stance and that Sharia law might indeed be patched in on the basis of that dictum – so his pro Sharia pleadings can be obiter dicta for judges, while any pro Christianity pleas are rejected, a post modern irony. And that mode of discourse is very much reflected in this fine and provocative set of essays, essays that might be put alongside those of Chief Rabbi Sacks, which are far more acceptable to the average Christian in terms of faith and culture.

There are twenty six essays in the book, in six main sections: Secularism and its Discontents; Living Within Limits: Liberalism, Pluralism and Law; Living With Limits: the Environment; Housekeeping: the Economic Challenge; Justice in Community; Religious Diversity and Civil Agreement; and Rediscovering Religion. The themes are deeply interconnected, revolving around the challenges of different cultures and their norms, secular and religious and inter-religious. These are the great and intractable questions of the day, the bombing of the Boston Marathon being a horrendous instance of cultural, if not civilizational, clash and traumatic failure of mutual understanding. Williams book will be priceless for the cause of multiculturalism of the type espoused by the Parekh Report, an Indian type of multiculturalism with religiously defined cultural living side by side in an attempt at mutual appreciation, on the constitutional basis of a

secular state. This kind of Indian secularism Williams describes as 'procedural' secularism which he endorses in the essays in the first section, in contrast to 'programmatically' secularism of the French type, which he finds problematic because that entails a state agenda, almost its own religion, intruding into customs and diversity in the public square – such as headscarves being banned in schools. That sort of secularism was what Attaturk laid down for Turkey and which is being now rolled back in the name of western liberalism, although only to the benefit on one faith.

Williams warms to the right kind of secularism, and finds it has its roots in Christianity and the political space invented by it. Christianity desires 'a life in which each member's flourishing depended closely and strictly on the flourishing of every other, and in which every specific gift or advantage had to be understood as a gift offered to the common life' – this model would also be that of Israel and the Jewish political understanding, but the Body of Christ metaphor sums it up for Christians. This is the citizenship truly rooted in heaven and yet also here and now, jostling in and among the power structures of the day. Williams picks up the thought of Lord Acton, the Roman Catholic historian, who argues that the state does not give rights but acknowledges them and seeks to help them thrive, in diversity – although the church's record in terms of centuries of anti-semitism hardly bears this out, we might add. Isaiah Berlin's writings on freedom and society are discussed, notably his famous distinction of person from social demands and the verdict that all personal freedoms must have limits in the interests of social cohesion. Williams endorses this view of liberalism, and again finds Christian roots for it, and wishes to add a dose of Abrahamic eschatology to temper Berlin's scepticism of any perfect society. The Pauline model of the Body of Christ is extended, in effect, for Williams' analysis of all society. He does instinctively hunt out a middle ground, refusing the personal versus social dilemma, and says that 'the future of religious communities in modern society should show us some ways forward that do not deliver us either into theocracy or an entirely naked public square'. On this basis he tends to favour banning 'hate crime', as does the Turkish politician who recently on the Sunday Programme defended the prosecution of a satirist of Islam on the grounds that such work prevented Muslims from worshipping in undisturbed manner. I am not sure that Williams thinks of such minority voices *within* religious communities, but seems content to let 'the community' smother any such dissent, he is catholic rather than protestant in his outlook on society.

Williams takes the process of cultural and social change seriously and this includes changing attitudes to other faiths as we really get to know them and really therefore understand that they all at heart are anti-violent. Violent anxiety is the problem we need to overcome, to become at ease with the presence of 'the other' as non threatening. This sounds rather like idealism rather than someone who has faced up to persecution or oppression, as Christians in Nazareth routinely do as Mosques blare amplified prayer calls into their wedding services by way of a long term eviction notice, although he has visited Pakistani Christians constantly harassed by the blasphemy laws. It is the western context, the western public square, that is Williams' real theme. He weighs the Enlightenment and finds that wanting in any vision for social bonds of trust and diversity, in the company of Berlin. He does want to hold to a universal vision of humanity, as the Enlightenment liberal did, but to interpret humans as belonging one to another, not as primarily rational individuals.

On climate and the environment, again he finds a kind of crevice between opposing views, and a positive one. So a Canadian politician is quoted as saying that even if the climate figures are in fact wrong, nevertheless this is a good opportunity for the nations of the world to think long and hard about equality and poverty and do

something about this – Williams can almost seem to echo Hegel’s ‘cunning of reason’ as the divine Spirit at work in history, through surprising events and counter events. Now is a new opportunity to debate what real human happiness might mean, a better line of discussion than frantic fending off of environmental catastrophe; ‘Creation, the total environment, is a system oriented towards life – and, ultimately towards intelligent and loving life’.

The book ends with an essay on ‘Religious lives’, considering in particular the concentration camp victim Etty Hillesum and her highly unusual pathway to faith. She describes kneeling on a coarse coconut mat in the bathroom, a moment often more intimate than sex. She died in the camp, but came to see faith as our safeguarding of God in all the horror around her, all the anti-God torture. She identifies God with a dimension of self, ‘God ripens ‘ within us. Should she not be more angry? Williams thinks not, she is keeping grief and disgust, and the reality of the divine within. ‘God is in safe hands with us, despite everything’, she wrote a month before her death in 1943, and for Williams a life is shaped to the extent that we call it a home, a shelter, for something, and we commend it by our simple actions in life, even learning how to kneel.

A magical book, a riveting read, taking us close to the God of the burning bush and to a society of diversity and unity: this is definitely one to ask your friends to buy you for Christmas!

Timothy Bradshaw
Regent’s Park College, Oxford

Aristotle Papanikolaou, *The Mystical as Political: Democracy and Non-Radical Orthodoxy* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012), 232pp.

Papanikolaou’s aim in this book is simple: to argue that the central idea of *theosis* (which he translates as divine-human communion) in Orthodox theology leads to ‘a political space shaped by a common good that embodies the principles of equality and freedom’ (p.198), in other words, to liberal democracy.

His route to that conclusion is necessarily tortuous. It is easy to establish that *theosis* has always been an important theme in Orthodox theology. Papanikolaou brushes aside discussion of the different ways in which *theosis* has been understood, presenting *theosis* as an understanding that human beings were created for communion with God (p.2) in a way which precludes a strict separation between nature and grace.

Since communion with God is an act of love, it cannot be forced. Divine-human communion can only be realized as human beings freely chose to pursue God, and to engage in the liturgical, eucharistic and ascetic practices which that pursuit demands. ‘If the church relates to the world through persuasion, then in order to be consistent with itself, the church must accept a community distinct from its own that consists of religious, political, and cultural diversity, and a state that affirms and protects such diversity (p.77).

Given the obviousness of this insight, Papanikolaou has to explain why this consequence of *theosis* has not been more clearly expressed through the Orthodox tradition. His answer comes down to two conquests of Constantinople. The Orthodox church learned to define itself against the West after the Fourth Crusade sacked Constantinople in 1204. It learned how to survive, without doing political theology, after Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453. Ottoman rule prepared the Orthodox church for living under communism but neither regime was conducive to the

development of Orthodox political theology from first principles. Now that the oppression has been lifted, the old memory of Western treachery means that Orthodox churches in Eastern Europe once again define themselves against the West.

Papanikolaou puts his key thesis in unfortunate terms, saying: 'the principle of divine-human communion demands, ironically, that Christians promote a space that maximizes the conditions for the possibility of rejecting God' (p.128). What the Orthodox vision of divine-human communion demands is that it is out of free love that human beings pursue communion with God. Arguably these are the only terms on which a genuine divine-human communion is possible at all. In order to enable the pursuit of such divine-human communion, the choice to reject God must be a genuine possibility, therefore an emphasis on divine-human communion correlates with the recognition that the political is not identical with the ecclesial and which gives people a genuine possibility of participating fully in the *polis* without membership of the *ecclesia*.

Papanikolaou works out in chapters 3, 4 and 5 of his book how his understanding of divine-human communion leads to a qualified affirmation of human rights, of the idea of a distinctly political common good, and of the importance of free speech. His book is a stimulating read, both for its discussions of Orthodox theology through the centuries and today, but also for its critique of the radical critique of liberal democracy offered by Hauerwas, Cavanaugh and Milbank. Its choice of topics and its construction felt slightly occasionalist, a selection of sketches rather than an overwhelming argument that a qualified endorsement of liberal democratic principles is the future for Orthodox political theology.

David McIlroy
Spurgeon's College

A.P.F.Sell (ed.), *The Great Ejection of 1662: its Antecedents, Aftermath and Ecumenical Significance* (Eugene Oregon: Pickwick, 2012), 296pp.

In 2009, Baptists celebrated the first believer baptism in Holland. In 2012 they marked the 400th anniversary of the establishment of the first Baptist church in England in Spitalfields. A strong case can be made for a third date of key significance – St Bartholomew's Day, August 24th 1662. On that day clergymen who would not conform to the liturgical demands of the Restoration Church of England were removed from their livings, be it parish, chaplaincies or lectureships. Whilst only a handful were Baptists, this ejection created a significant dissenting community, where Baptist and Quakers were joined by Presbyterians and Independents with their clergymen who were often university trained and congregation members often socially well connected. This enlargement of the dissenting community outside the law made it difficult for the Restoration authorities adequately to control or eradicate. Baptists and Quakers benefitted from this situation although all dissenters suffered during the Restoration legalised harassment and persecution.

So, in this book that marks that occasion Alan Sell has brought together history and reflection. The earlier sections by John Gwynfor Jones, David Appleby and Eryn White deal with the emergence and development of the Puritan movement identifiable within the English national church and its overflow into proscribed dissent. These early chapters are good summaries, useful to rehearse again the growth and identity of the Puritan movement within and then without the established church. The reader gains

quickly a good overview of the trends and currents of theological and ecclesiological debate, in England and Wales from the 1550s to 1689 and the brink of toleration.

The latter and larger part of the book is an essay by Alan Sell on the enduring significance of the ejection. It made a deep and lasting impression on the dissenting psyche - here were men of principle seen to suffer at the hands of an oppressive state church. He explores how the event was remembered differently over the years and how the message drawn from the events was distilled, recognising changing in context and contemporary needs – whilst the martyrs were commemorated, it was not always for the same reasons, nor indeed did their successors believe in exactly the same way. Yet there was a thread linking the present to the Bartholomew men and Professor Sell laments the erosion of this sense of history which has meant detaching the dissenters from their roots.

Fundamentally for Professor Sell God calls men and women by the Holy Spirit into a visibly gathered church. This challenges the concept of parochial church and established church. He acknowledges the bane of individualism that can undermine the place of the church community in relations with God, or indeed of churches with one another, but argues that Holy Spirit holds all together. The church is founded on the Spirit.

In such an understanding, church meeting is the place where the people of God come not to express democracy but to discern together the mind of Christ. This is a re-statement of the classic high view of church which has been eroded by individualist notions of salvation. And in truth the church meeting has often been allowed to become more duty than delight, and we have sold the birthright for a mess of procedural pottage - a point the author well understands.

The local church betokens a “Separatist catholicity”. Whilst each is the locus of God’s activity, yet they are all part of the great purposes and people of God. The unity of the Church does not need to be created because God has already willed it. Recent ecumenical conversations have done little to advance the visible unity of the Church; Sell suggests that we are in an “ecumenical winter” and need to strike out in a new direction, not focussed on structural negotiations. He offers the gathered community, the people of God drawn together, as the building block from which Christians can develop ecumenically in such a way as to express the unity that embraces all who confess Jesus Christ. He recognises that sometimes the Dissenters too have been guilty of unchurching those with whom they disagreed but sectarian thinking starts, he argues, with the ‘Galatian heresy’ which seeks to impose additional requirements beyond the acceptance of free grace. So, who is the sectarian now?

Professor Sell’s appeal for a resurgence of congregational authenticity sets in train a stream of ideas. If there is a future for this way of being church its truth must be incarnated: It is all too easy to give in to the siren calls for strong leadership that disempowers members or to settle for a detached independency that denies in practice the fellowship of all believers. Perhaps more corrosive is the sheer indifference to any principle of the congregational tradition evident in (too) many churches. To some Alan Sell’s appeal will be a welcome call to re-visit old truths and know them for the first time but one does just wonder whether he is trying to get us to board a train that has already left the station.

Stephen Copson
Central Baptist Association

Jolyon Mitchell and Owen Gower (eds.), *Religion And The News* (Ashgate, 2012), 200pp

News is in the news, with the Government still grappling with the Leveson report into press standards and a replacement for the Press Complaints Commission not expected until the summer. Religion is often in the news too, and well worth a book of this kind.

Mitchell and Owen's collection of essays by practitioners and academics is deliberately a mixed bag. Andrew Brown, Ruth Gledhill and Christopher Landau are well-known journalists. Richard Harries, Indarjit Singh and Jonathan Romain are religious leaders and broadcasters. Others are lawyers, lecturers and directors of think-tanks. They reflect on their own experiences of the interface between journalism and religion, on the social and cultural context for the reporting of religion and on its increasing significance in the modern world. This is, then, something of a ragbag of writings, though it is none the worse for that. Some common themes emerge.

One of these is the need for journalists to be better informed about religion. In recent years this has nowhere been more in evidence than when the Archbishop of Canterbury's remarks about sharia law, first in a lunchtime interview with Mr Landau and then in a learned lecture, led to a truly startling exhibition of journalistic laziness, ignorance and malice (not, it should be said, by Landau himself). It is this kind of thing that leads to the mistrust which characterises so many interactions between religious people and journalists.

Against really resolute attempts at misinterpretation the only defence is time. However, Mitchell in his introduction also notes the 'contrasting sets of norms, values and expectations' (p.24) which characterise journalists and religious people. *Times* journalist Ruth Gledhill recalls (p.91) Archbishop Robert Runcie establishing her clerical family background and saying benignly, 'Ah. One of us.' 'But I never was,' she says. Indeed; and the relationship between even a journalist who is a practising Christian and the story which is her target is far more complex than the late Archbishop imagined.

In general, specialists in religious journalism do a better job than non-specialists; they understand the nuances, at least. However, in an excellent essay, former Theos director Paul Woolley notes that coverage of religion focuses disproportionately on a narrow set of issues, including declining attendance, woman bishops and human sexuality (p.67). He quotes approvingly Tony Blair, who said in 2010 that the media concentrated on religious conflict and division instead of the way it inspired people to great acts of progress (p.68).

There is no point, however, in blaming journalists alone for the bad press the Church sometimes receives (and interestingly, the authors of chapter 2 conclude on p.41 that 'in general, there is a conservative and pro-Christian emphasis in British newspapers'). Horrendous examples of ineffective rebuttal strategies in major denominations are cited (ch.17). I have myself read countless press releases from Christian organisations which are pointless, uninformative or ungrammatical.

Neither, however, should it be imagined that a slicker operation would ensure better coverage. It may be a melancholy truth, but it is still true that bad news is what sells. Churches are tellers of good news, which is rarely as inherently interesting.

The relationship between religion and journalism, then, is never going to be easy. Journalists, after all, reflect wider society as well as shape it. Religion is the better for losing society's automatic deference and facing up to its judgments. The best we can hope for, granted that journalists will write about things we would prefer them not to, is that they learn to speak our language a little, even if they never speak it like natives. As

Richard Harries says in a typically thoughtful essay, borrowing from Reinhold Niebuhr: 'Our capacity for truth makes a free press possible; but our inclination to untruth makes a free press necessary' (p.205).

There is a very thorough, and encouraging, bibliography; clearly a lot of good work is done in this field. The book has not been edited as carefully as it might have been. There are a few infelicities of expression, the Leveson report appears as Levenson throughout – startling given its significance – and "practice" as a verb is American English, not British.

Mark Woods

Journalist and former editor of The Baptist Times

Luke A. Powery, *Dem Dry Bones: Preaching, Death and Hope* (Fortress Press / Alban Books, 2012), 157pp.

The author, the new Dean of Duke University, describes his book as a homiletical pilgrimage to death as an avenue for proclaiming Christian hope. He trains his sights on the powerful influence of prosperity-gospel proclamation which he describes as offering a "candy" theology where 'every passage of scripture serves as a passport to a bigger house, a larger car, or an expanding bank account'. Such proclamation may not be so prevalent in the UK. However an awareness of life's little deaths and living in the context of Death and a defeated faith can often be missing from much contemporary Christian preaching.

He approaches his subject through an exploration of the impact of African American spirituals.

His book is in four sections:

1. The spirituals as historical and cultural musical sermons
2. The textual and acoustical analysis of spirituals
3. The nature of Christian hope and its relationship to death and the Spirit explored in the spirituals.
4. The relevance of the hermeneutic of hope embedded in the spirituals in the use of the Bible for preaching Christian hope in the context of death.

Powery is a preacher and this emerges in the final chapter. It is inspiring and took me back to a serious examination not only of the way I use Scripture and but how to preach in the context of loss and pain.

But for obvious reasons the early chapters were full of new material for me as one who has given no more thought to spirituals than the occasional encounter with a Paul Robeson track. It made me go and find (with some difficulty) CDs of spirituals noting on the way that they are not the same as 'gospel' and they are still talked of as Negro spirituals.

He lets the memory of enslavement and the expression given to faith in the context of oppression through the work of the 'black, unknown bards' mingle with an enlightening exposition of the image of the valley of dry bones from Ezekiel 37 which threads its way through the book as well as occasional meditation on particular spirituals.

His mentor, Howard Thurman sums up the process thus. Preaching is to proclaim that 'death is not the master of life. It may be inevitable, yes; gruesome, perhaps; releasing, yes; but triumphant, never'.

Although the chief context of this book is the oppressive empire of the Prosperity Gospel he also refers to a frightful experience for the preacher-pastor. It is a congregation of the Zombies. The bones are knit together but there is no life. They are 'shells of an ancient past without any present substance' so that 'preaching can be a ministry among zombies'.

Is the questioning of the purpose of preaching a sign of this in our Protestant English Baptist culture? And what if the preacher is a zombie I ask? 'They may look right and act right but still be dead because there is no breath, spirit, in them' too.

I am left thinking that it is time for congregations and ministers to wonder together about the purpose of the preacher. Without putting words into his mouth (he has plenty and I wish they had been better edited) I suggest Powery might say:

'It's not that we need fewer sermons;
We need more preaching.
It's not that we need less preaching
We need more prophecy'.
Let the preacher-prophet arise!

John Rackley
Manvers Street Baptist Church, Bath

Samuel Wells, *Be Not Afraid: Facing Fear With Faith* (Brazos / SPCK, 2011), 204pp.

Sam Wells, now vicar of St. Martins-in-the-Fields, London, is one of best preachers around, with an amazing ability of opening up scripture, that both illuminates Old and New Testament, and addresses the listener, or in this case, the reader, in ways that challenge and encourage. This set of short reflections began life as sermons delivered while he was Dean of Duke Divinity Chapel (2005-2012), they follow up an earlier book *Speaking The Truth* (Abingdon, 2008) and will be followed by a third *Learning To Dream Again* (due out later this year). They gather around the theme of how do we respond to fear. We live in a 'politics dominated by fear' (p.xvi) and yet the Christian gospel calls us to be not afraid.

The thirty-one reflections (sermons) are divided into six sections calling us to Be Not Afraid of Death, Weakness, Power, Difference, Faith and Life. A wide range of topics and subjects are covered how to die, living with illness, giving money, race, naming God, responding to AIDS, living with joy, laughing, and vocation. Wells addresses this wide range of topics that I would hazard a guess never get mentioned or tackled from the pulpit, but they are the everyday bits of living. Wells engagement with the bible, discovers a gospel that finds no area of life off limits or out of view, in other words, while the good news is about eternity, it is at the same time, also very worldly.

In each reflection Wells weaves story and scripture, question and application together that make him highly readable, but at the same time, the reading is seldom entirely comfortable. Read this book to become a better preacher. Read this book to inspire better sermons. Read this book to be challenged once again by the gospel.

Andy Goodliff
Belle Vue Baptist Church, Southend-on-Sea

John Pritchard, *Living the Gospel Stories Today* (SPCK, 2012), 120pp.

In this brief collection, John Pritchard, Bishop of Oxford, provides readers with reflections on 18 'gospel stories,' including parables as well as encounters Jesus has with those he teaches or heals. Each chapter contains a reflection on the incident in question, and also provides ideas for personal or group reflection, further group activities and prayers based on the passage.

In his introduction, Pritchard comments that, 'Stories are 'bridges' over which the love of Christ can travel to meet and embrace us.' As well as demonstrating the writer's ability to conjure up phrases that quicken and stir the imagination, this line gets to the heart of the aim of the book. Pritchard is clearly eager that those using this resource will read between the lines, stimulated to think and feel more keenly about what these stories reveal about Jesus' character and mission.

The real strength of these reflections is the way in which they encourage us to connect with familiar stories using our imagination as well as our intellect. Instead of looking for the 'cash value' of what a passage means in terms of doctrine or ethics, readers are invited to reflect on the motivations of key players or minor details which help us understand events in a new light. I was particularly moved, for example, by Pritchard's chapter on the story of Simon of Cyrene, described as a man who 'lost his neutrality but found a kingdom.' The writer also poses pertinent questions which help to bring passages 'up close and personal' for us; in his reflection on the Parable of the Rich Fool, he encourages each one of us to reflect on the issue of stewardship with the question, 'Whose life is it anyway?' I was also impressed with a number of the group activities, which will enable ideas to come out of the text and be embedded in people's lives in tangible ways.

I commend this book to those thinking of reading it personally, but especially as a study resource for home groups. As a minister who is regularly frustrated by the obvious and banal questions found in so many off-the-shelf material for house groups, I was inspired by the depth and thoughtfulness of this book.

Trevor Neill
Yardley Wood Baptist Church

Pete Ward (ed.), *Perspectives on Ecclesiology and Ethnography* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2102), 254pp.

This new book marks the first fruits of an exciting new project being undertaken by Pete Ward (King's College London), Paul Fiddes (Regent's Park College, Oxford), John Swinton (University of Aberdeen) and Christian Scharen (Luther Seminary, St. Paul). As the book's title suggests the project is bringing the study of ecclesiology into conversation with the practice of ethnography. The project is surrounded by conferences, a website and forthcoming new journal. There is also a second book in the series already published *Explorations in Ecclesiology and Ethnography*, with more being planned.

This first book establishes the proposal being made and some critical conversation around it. The proposal is that ecclesiology is both theological and social/cultural (p.2) and therefore ecclesiology must intentionally bring these disciplines into conversation. This is not new, others have been doing this for a while,

but the book and project reflect the 'ethnographic turn' in ecclesiology. Ecclesiological ethnography is being taken seriously.

The four names mentioned above – Fiddes, Ward, Scharen and Swinton – all offer a chapter in the section under the headings 'The Proposal'. Paul Fiddes' chapter argues that it is necessary for theology to engage with ethnography for *theological* reasons. Ecclesiology is grounded in God, and yet for Fiddes, this does mean ecclesiology can only be deduced from scripture and tradition. For example, he says *external* to theology is the fact that there is no one global culture and *internal* to theology are doctrines of incarnation, sacrament and revelation, which encourage us to beyond a simple applied theology (pp.18-19). Fiddes goes on to present a theological method that shares some similarity with scientific method, but with profound differences (p.24). The method, which Fiddes presents as a flowchart, is difficult to summarize, but brings together induction and deduction, that is, both the theological tradition and 'engagement' (Fiddes' word replacing observation) with religious experience, stories and practices. Fiddes concludes that drawing together the empirical and ethnographic with the 'doctrine' of the church will be contested, but that it is a discipline.

Pete Ward surveys a number of different examples of ethnographic studies of the church, showing the variety, but also the common attention to social and cultural reality of the church in situ. The different studies also highlight the number of different conversations that ethnographic study can generate depending on the research question being asked. Christian Scharen explores David Ford's study of what happens to a self as it is formed through the practice of Eucharist (found in Ford's monograph *Self and Salvation*). Scharen sees this as Ford's 'call for a theologically informed ethnography' (p.56). Where Ford turns (only?) to scripture to answer his question, and so avoiding 'submitting himself to the field' (p.55), Scharen looks instead at three brief case studies of the Eucharist in practice. Scharen 'proposal' is a demonstration of ecclesiological ethnography in action, and therefore offers the rich possibility of the project's hopes.

The final 'proposal' chapter is by John Swinton, who explores the issue that often ethnographic studies of the church, will have the theology as something that follows the ethnographic work done of observation. Swinton outlines the possibility of properly theological ethnography, one that is 'sanctified' (p.89). Here theologian does not pretend to be an ethnographer, than resort back to being theologian, but brings theology to bear into the practice of ethnography itself, its become a church discipline. Swinton notes that there is a likelihood that the Christian ethnographer will not only 'look at', but 'live in', will be shaped by the experience of study.

Part two of the book, provides eight chapters under the heading 'The Conversation', which engage and open up, both positively and critically, the proposals. They are written independent of the first part of the book, that is, they are not a commentary, but there of connections and comments, due in part that many of the authors were and are part of ecclesiology and ethnography workshops and conferences. I will highlight four out of the eight.

Elizabeth Phillips 'charts the ethnographic turn', noting the work of James McClendon, Stanley Hauerwas, William Cavanaugh, amongst others, before discussing her own study into Christian Zionism. Luke Bretherton's reflects on his experience with London Citizens, which offers a taster for a larger piece of work on community organizing that is forthcoming.

Nicholas Healy's chapter is a challenging read, as he first argues that ethnography studies reveal a diverse view between church denominations (obvious), but also between churches who share the same heritage and denomination, and within

local churches as well. This says Healy is to question the theologian who claims to speak about what the church believes and practices, ethnography says, which church? which Christian? His second related argument, presents what he calls a 'chastened' view of the church, that the claims of theologians and bishops are not as authoritative or as descriptive as they suggest. This leads him to begin to sketch out a new ecclesiology that suggests the church is more invisible than visible.

For those who know the work of John Webster, he unsurprisingly offers a more critical comment on the project, that is, his chapter is a response from what he calls a 'dogmatic ecclesiology' (p.201). It is in short, a sideswipe back at much of the rest of the book for not being theological enough, its contrast to the chapters by Healy (which comes before it) and Fiddes are obvious and yet Webster may find some comfort in his colleague John Swinton's proposal. Webster ends with the possibility of an ecclesial ethnography, but one which seeks 'to observe the church as an element of the divine mystery set forth in Christ' (p.222); one which attends to the metaphysical; one which recognizes that because of its divine origin is 'in some indiscernible' (p.222); and one, and this may well be the sticking point, that sees theology as the queen of the sciences. We might summarize Webster chapter by suggesting that he argues for a more 'chastened' view of what ethnography can observe.

This is a good book and gives high hopes for the project as it develops. Occasionally the argument is dense, but then it is concerned in part with issues of methodology, but on the whole it demonstrates the possibilities, along with some notes of caution, of an rigorous ethnographic ecclesiology.

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Michael Moynagh with Philip Harrold, *Church for Every Context: An Introduction to Theology and Practice*, (London: SCM Press, 2012), 512pp.

There are now quite a few books which tell us how to plant new/emerging/missional/Fresh Expressions of church. There are some that describe the experiences of those who have done so. What we have needed, for some time, is a textbook of substance to enable us to analyse emerging churches and to explore the theology that underpins them. In my view, this is such a book.

Michael Moynagh will be known to many working in this field as a prominent UK missiologist and a leading member of the Fresh Expressions Team. An author of a number of well-received works in the field, he leads the Team's work on research into the theology and practice of new forms of church. American academic Philip Harrold contributes chapter 2, on contextual churches in history.

Together they have written something that is both serious and accessible. They begin with a *tour d'horizon* surveying both the field and the scope of their work, viewing these in a variety of ways: theological, missiological and sociological.

As the work progresses, Moynagh drives more deeply into the theological justification for fresh expressions. What is the essence of church? What is the relationship between discipleship and mission? What is contextualisation and how does this impact upon our understanding of church? How may we explore the most appropriate form of church for each context?

On the basis of this theological exploration, the work moves on to practical considerations for church planters. What has been the experience of pioneers in the

field and what lessons might be drawn from their experience? The approach is highly practical: this is a textbook for actual and aspiring practitioners, as well as students of theology and missiology. In the closing sections of the book, Moynagh confronts some serious issues facing the emerging churches. The first relates to maturity and how this can be identified and pursued. He also confronts those who simply regard emerging church as a fashionable and interesting missional experiment.

I began by describing this as a work of breadth and this is just one of its major strengths. It will be useful to intelligent newcomers to the field, undergraduates, pioneer church planters and theological colleges. Seldom can a reviewer state it with confidence but I believe that this work will become a key bench-text in the field for some time to come.

Ivan King
Church from Scratch, Southend-on-Sea

Stephen Pickard, *Seeking the Church: An Introduction to Ecclesiology* (SCM, 2012), 239pp.

In his book *Seeking the Church* Stephen Pickard observes that the current time is one of renewed interest in ecclesiology, a topic that up until recently, he says, had been of a 'second order' for theology, and even a purely practical issue (p.26). This renewed interest, he says, results from a number of factors, not least the recovery of trinitarian theology, with its reflections on the nature of the relationships within God's self and the movement outward towards partnership with humanity as it is drawn into the community life that exists within the Trinity (pp.27-28).

Despite its subtitle, Pickard's book does not read like a standard introduction to ecclesiology. There are chapters that consider the familiar topics of scriptural images (2, Ecclesial Portraiture), the four marks of the church (6, Measuring the Mystery), and church organisation / order (7, Structured for Freedom). However these sit within a framework of theological reflection and engagement that is far more weighty than one might expect to find in an introductory book. Readers without a knowledge of other writers on ecclesiology, from Richard Hooker to Stanley Hauerwas and William Cavanaugh, might be left wondering why Pickard makes the points that he does. This clearly reflects Pickard's concern that ecclesiology be more than a purely practical issue, but it does also mean that the word 'introduction' might be a little misleading.

It does not take a close reading of the text to see that the writing of Daniel Hardy has been particularly informative for Pickard's project. It is from Hardy that he develops the idea of the Church as a 'renewed sociality' which he goes on to describe as a form of renewed place, polity, economics, interpersonal relationships and communication (p.92). The virtue of such an approach, as I see it for Pickard, is that it recognises what God is doing in creation, particularly in the wider world of human relationships, but without ignoring the obvious faultlines that exist.

He supports his proposal by arguing, in chapter 5, that recent ecclesiology has overplayed the significance of the social Trinity. One of the consequent weaknesses has been to project out of the nature of the relationships in the Trinity an idealised picture of the church that bears no relation to the concrete reality (p.103). Instead Pickard wants readers to consider a doctrine of God that is grounded in both creation and redemption, and he takes the Logos of John 1 as his starting point (p.111). This approach, he says, allows us to view the church as reaching further outwards into the

world while at the same time enabling an ever-deeper engagement with God and one another (p.114).

Hardy's writing also offers the point of departure for chapter 8, entitled Energy for the Journey, in which Pickard explores how 'worship, word, sacrament and witness' are the means 'through which a renewed sociality is achieved' (p.184). These practises are divinely energising – that is they are renewing – but that energy is to be neither 'bounded nor complete'. Instead, it is meant to overflow in a life of discipleship, characterised in service, care of others, the pursuit of justice and witness to Christ in word and deed (pp.204-205).

Pickard returns to his critique of idealised pictures of the church in his last chapter, Slow Church Coming. One of the problems with modern ecclesiologies, such as those of Hauerwas, Cavanaugh, Yoder, and Millbank, is that they imagine a pure form, usually drawn from a particular moment in the past, but one that has never truly existed. Rather than dismiss these out of hand, as Peter Dula does with his notion of the 'fugitive *ecclesia*' (pp.225-226), Pickard prefers the idea that the Church is just coming at a slower pace (p.229). And that this actually invites, even necessitates, a slowing down, in which Christians are more attentive to God and one another in the practises of shared life, worship and mission.

With its careful treatment of the broad areas of ecclesiology, its engagement with current themes and writers, and its imaginative development of Daniel Hardy's proposals around 'renewed sociality' Pickard's book is well worth the read. That it leans away from the tendency in much modern ecclesiology to anchor understandings of the church in the outward movements of the Trinity and emphasises instead the significance of creation as well as redemption is what gives this book its value in the continuing renewal of interest in the subject.

Ashley Lovett
Socketts Heath Baptist Church

Martyn Percy, *The Ecclesial Canopy: Faith, Hope and Charity* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 224pp.

This book completes Martyn Percy's trilogy on ecclesiology which began with *Engaging with Contemporary Culture* and continued with *Shaping the Church*. Like both previous volumes this one comprises essays, papers and talks originally prepared in other forms and melded together into a single volume. The overarching theme of this final volume in the set, as the title suggests, is borrowed from Peter Berger's notion of a sacred canopy which supplies social meaning and coherence in an apparently secularised world. One of the book's recurring themes is the paradoxical affirmation of both the reality of secularism and a serious questioning of the adequacy of the various versions of the secularisation hypothesis – though nowhere here does he examine concepts of secularisation in depth. This may be why he also moves back and forth between speaking of secularisation as a set of social processes and as a cluster of ideas or beliefs without explanation – perhaps an indication of the different provenance of the individual chapters, and there are times when the book does feel like a collection of disparate essays as much as it feels a true whole.

Percy's style is very readable: engaging, sometimes florid, witty, inclusive, generous, optimistic - and Anglican. Some of this needs elaboration. 'Inclusive' here has a double sense: he regularly pulls in events and artefacts from 'normal life' to ground his

discussions, summarising a movie here, referring to the Occupy demonstration at St Paul's there, and he concludes the book imaginatively with a short story, a satirical piece of fiction; but he is also inclusive in his range of themes, and the generally sympathetic way in which he deals with varying points of view. For instance, I think that he is not a great fan of Alpha, but he is able to see its strengths and comment positively on it. This is an aspect of his generosity in style too: all views are given a fair hearing. While offering penetrating assessment of the current situation for faith and the churches in 21st century Britain Percy remains basically optimistic. He has written elsewhere about the resilience of faith, and this comes through in most chapters of this book. It would be possible to find much of this analysis quite depressing – but Percy remains pretty chipper throughout! The audience Percy has most clearly in view, however, is an Anglican one – albeit an international Anglican one (well, western, at any rate). Percy writes as an Anglican *for* Anglicans, and Baptist readers will occasionally feel as though they are eavesdropping someone else's conversation. However, there is enough of common interest for this not to be a significant problem. At times Baptists will find the implicit contrast suggested by the text between Anglican and Baptist ways illuminating, and may even recognise some aspects of Baptist life when (for instance) Percy contrasts Anglicanism in the UK and the US.

This volume, again mirroring the previous two, is in three parts with the essays loosely gathered together under the headings of faith, hope and charity. Those in the first part foreground consumerism both outside and inside the church. Here we have intelligent and insightful discussions of Peter Brierley's work and the way in which so much discussion of ministry and church has been affected by business values. He sees opportunities and as well as threats in the latter, though on balance Percy cautions us against over enthusiastic adoption of market language and tactics. His discussion of Alpha in the second essay highlights its theological shortcomings while also appreciating its success.

The second set of essays reflects on the politico-social agenda and the impact of Christian faith and the churches. Here the reader will find some neat summaries and constructively critical observations on a number of ways of thinking about the church's engagement with society and culture, including Liberation Theology as it moves into a new phase when many of the most egregious wrongs it identified have at least begun to be addressed. There is a call for the concept of sin to be rehabilitated, along with a discussion of Reinhold Niebuhr's classic discussion on the subject, all the time relating the issues to contemporary forms of church life. A chapter also examines the churches' response to the Human Rights Act – though things move so swiftly, this chapter already feels a little dated – as Percy asks how Christian beliefs and values can contribute to the shaping of society, how Christianity takes a legitimate and widely acceptable social form.

The final set of essays begins with an exploration of how Christians who disagree (specifically, Anglicans, and Anglican communions, who disagree) can live together – the sexuality debate receives a good deal of attention here. Baptists should find plenty of relevance, post-Steve Chalke's contribution to the subject which recently ignited debate once more (if it was not already alight). But he has some bracing words here also for the resources and energy being directed towards Fresh Expressions. Instead of 'reinforcing the front line of mission' the church prefers to

pour millions of pounds of resources into specious missiological schema that go under the nomenclature of "fresh expression" or "emerging church". Which, ironically, simply turn out to be ways of manoeuvring faithful Christians into lighter forms of spiritual organisation that do not carry heavy institutional

responsibilities or broader-based ministerial burdens... Unwilling to do their sums and calculate the cost of weaning a new generation of Christian consumers on light, carefully targeted spirituality, the churches simply end up losing some of their brightest and best potential leaders to projects that are essentially a form of distraction. And who would otherwise bring much-needed energy and effort into helping shape the broader institution. Distraction is endemic: fed by consumerism, choice, and the need to keep people engaged, fulfilled and happy, it is rife in the churches – to the left and right, amongst conservatives and liberals, traditionalists and progressives. It is a tough time to be an ordinary church member; but happy the person who has found their cultural and contextual home in a new “fresh expression” or form of “emerging church”. One where there is little to bind the person to the messy contingencies of long-term institutional commitment, but here all the rewards of organisation membership are replete and immediate (pp.139f).

This is perhaps Percy at his *least* generous, but his position deserves careful consideration. Authenticity lies somewhere between cultural absorption and cultural detachment in an acceptable cultural adaptation. Theologically, incarnation is the fruitful concept with which he works, but he also reconsiders a metaphor first used in an earlier volume, *terroir*, coming from the French word for ‘land’ and which we might translate ‘terrain.’ As such, the French word is useful to describe how local conditions affect produce – as in the vineyards, where soil, climate, and other local factors make the same merlot grape taste different when grown in one place from another. Christianity too is inevitably planted in a *terroir* and will look and feel different in different contexts – even in different suburbs, let alone in different parts of the world. However, it still remains recognisably (as it were) the same grape. For Percy, fresh expressions capitulate to the culture while proving another form of user-friendly, consumer-driven, undemanding discipleship which will inevitably finally peter out.

A worthwhile read, at times passionate and always illuminating, Percy may have saved the best of his ecclesiological essays for last. There are signs of hurried editing (a few missing words, and the life), but it will replay leisurely reading. Here is a book for the local ministers’ reading group – or perhaps the ecumenical clergy gathering.

Rob Ellis
Regent’s Park College, Oxford

Andy Draycott and Jonathan Rowe (eds.), *Living Witness: Explorations in Missional Ethics* (IVP, 2012), 296pp.

The mission of the church is the outworking, in word and deed, of the command to be witnesses to Jesus in the world. Christian ethics, on the other hand, is the way we live, the way we make decisions in the light of circumstances that present themselves. They are apparently two different disciplines. But *Living Witness* argues otherwise and attempts to show how they are ‘intricately and necessarily interwoven’. How we live is, in large part, how we witness, at least how we witness in a way that does justice to the demands of a life that is wholly subjected to the Lordship of Christ.

Put another way, living in ways that are compatible with the world’s moral order is itself evangelical for it bears witness to the Creator. So, these essays pull together missional ethics ‘because right living is central to the church’s missionary task’.

The book is divided into two parts. In the first half a number of so-called foundational matters are addressed. In the second half, a number of different ethical issues are explored. The Editor recognises this isn't an altogether neat division, and the essay titles in the first section seem to confirm this with disparate offerings on Trinity, Creation, Hope, Church and Preaching. They are an eclectic mix, and are variable in their accessibility.

Chris Wright on *Trinity* is perhaps the truly foundational chapter, in a way the others are not, and as you can imagine, merits close reading.

Brian Brock's chapter on *Creation* is not what I first expected, namely a call to live an ecologically responsible life. Rather it is a call to accept that it is God alone who gives life and who has dominion over the physicality of the universe. He argues that our calling is to be gardeners, but in my view this metaphor gets complicated and will require, from me, a second reading. Grant Macaskill's contribution on the theme of *Hope* is challenging for his central thesis is that the church is called to embody and not just proclaim the eschatological hope of the gospel. Missional ethics brings these elements together. Matt Jenson's chapter on *Church* is excellent, seeking as it does to address not 'what is right or wrong' but the deeper ethical question, 'how are we to live together as God's people in hospitable holiness?' He takes as his case study how the church wrestles with homosexuality, and the sensitivity with which he handles the issue is exemplary. Andy Draycott takes the last of the foundations, *Preaching*, and lifts the role of preaching to high levels, and in so doing reminds us of the God-ordained nature of the task. He speaks of the church as the prophethood of believers and calls for an integrated missional-ethical understanding of preaching. Such preaching he argues is *free* speech (authorised and empowered by God); it is *public* speech (and thereby dialogical in nature – not monological) and it is ultimately *speech*, testimony to the God who is Word and acts in words.

The second half of the book looks at a range of ethical issues. Some are those that could be anticipated, for example politics, money or immigration. Of considerable interest is the chapter on *Packaging* by Sarah Ruble. In this context, packaging refers to the ethics of interpretation, or how a story is packaged and told. She offers two enlightening case studies from the American Journal 'Christianity Today', namely how the evangelism versus social action debate has been portrayed, and the role of gender and power in mission policy making.

This is not a unique book but it is a rare one, touching on disciplines that are all too rarely combined. In doing so it helps us avoid the all-too-easy dichotomies that characterise theological debate. Evangelism over and against social action, men versus women, the pressure to judge as right or wrong issues that go to the heart of who we are. This inter-connecting fabric is the ethical dimension that is all too often forgotten, not least in studies of the mission of the church.

Like all books that are collections of essays from different authors, this collection is varied, not so much in quality but in readability. But the many voices merit our attention as we will surely agree with the underlying premise of the book, namely that the way we live must be consistent with the gospel we offer to the world.

David Kerrigan
BMS World Mission

David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, 20th anniversary edition (Marknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011), 640pp.

The 20th Anniversary edition of *Transforming Mission* on which I am basing this review is the third copy of David Bosch's *magnum opus* that I have owned. With my first copy I took the advice of friends that it was a book which deserved careful reading, not a book to be read through from end to end in a hurried fashion. I took their advice: perhaps too literally. A colleague asked if he could borrow my thumbed and highlighted copy, by then eighteen months old. He approached me after a week or so and pointed out that the final fifty pages were missing! I promptly bought my second copy and made sure that I had read through *all* of the final chapter before my colleague and I sat down to discuss Bosch's contribution to the development of the theology of mission and the mission of theology.

Originally published in 1991, the first edition was widely lauded, and remains so today. It is recommended or required reading for the greater majority of mission studies programmes across the English-speaking world and beyond. It's a regular practice to use the year of publication as a guide to pruning reading lists for College and Seminary courses. That a twenty year old book should continue to appear on such lists, with little fear of removal, underlines the status of this book as a classic in its field.

However it *is* a twenty year old text and the missiological formulations and positions outlined in it were refined during the late 1980s in South Africa, prior to the demise of apartheid, the political changes in Europe, the renewal of interest in global Pentecostalism, and the emergence of uniquely Eastern Orthodox forms of mission practice and mission theology. Some commentators judged it 'retrospective' and consider it to have significant lacunae (feminism, ecology, and indigenous spirituality), thus seriously weakening Bosch's claim to outline a truly *post-modern* theology of mission. In re-publishing *Transforming Mission* with a new concluding chapter, written by Darrell Guder and Martin Reppenhagen, it would seem that the publishers felt it necessary to address some of these criticisms.

The addition of a final chapter by Guder (an American reformed Scholar from Princeton Theological Seminary) and Reppenhagen (a German reformed scholar from the University of Greifswald in North Germany) is welcome. It outlines biographical details, summarises key themes and methodological approaches in Bosch, and offers a fresh perspective on several areas of his contribution to mission theology. Bosch is portrayed by them as a thoroughly contextual theologian; marginalised by the Dutch Reformed Church for his anti-apartheid position. He is presented as a biblical missiologist, embraced by evangelical and ecumenical counterparts and as equally at home in the Lausanne Movement as he was within the World Council of Churches. Further, we learn that Bosch drew heavily upon the formative influences of theologians he met, including Oscar Cullman, Karl Barth and John Howard Yoder. The implicit claim advanced by Guder and Reppenhagen is that Bosch is a theologian for everyone. If this were ever in doubt, we also learn that he was an admirer of Andrew Murray's pietism.

Guder and Reppenhagen dispense efficiently (though not wholly convincingly in this reviewer's opinion) with criticisms by Sugden (1996) and Kim (2000) of Bosch's missiological retrospection and omission. It is a pity that opportunity was not taken to offer one or two translation or quotations from Bosch's work in Afrikaans, to which Guder and Reppenhagen appeal when defending him from the charge of not addressing matters of indigenous spirituality or Pentecostal mission, for example.

The concluding chapter in the 20th anniversary edition not only serves the purpose of an apologia for Bosch but also outlines the formative influence of his work upon the emerging post-Christendom paradigm of mission. Guder and Reppenhagen suggest that there are several trajectories that follow naturally from Bosch's work and which continue to have relevance. The most significant of these are the trajectories he set in motion for missional hermeneutics, missional ecclesiology, the mission of theology itself, an understanding that church history is mission history, and the notion that mission, church and unity together delineate particular forms of missiological practice and theology.

The final chapter's title 'The Continuing Transformation of Mission' alludes to Guder's *The Continuing Conversion of the Church*, published in 2000 as a contribution to the missional conversation then underway within *The Gospel and our Culture Network* (GOCN). Guder's extended discussion of missional ecclesiology in this final chapter appears to imply that the baton laid down after Bosch's untimely death in 1992 has been taken up, in certain aspects, by the GOCN. If that is the case, it has to be hoped that the emerging ecumenical missionary paradigm, described by Bosch in the penultimate chapter of *Transforming Mission*, will be articulated by more than a small, though deservedly influential, group of reformed theologians mostly located in North America.

Guder and Reppenhagen are surely correct to claim that Bosch's missiology has wide ecumenical appeal. For this reason alone, the global and ecumenical mission studies community will have to wait for a more comprehensive review and evaluation of Bosch's contribution to missiology. When it arrives, it is to be hoped that it will be compendious, will integrate a variety of disciplinary perspectives, and will reflect the creative tension generated by diverse theological and confessional assessments of Bosch. Guder and Reppenhagen have served us well in highlighting the more significant characteristics of Bosch's approach. We can now look forward to a treatment of Bosch that takes more seriously these characteristics of his lifetime's work.

Darrell Jackson
Morling College, Sydney

Lucy Peppiatt, *The Disciple: On becoming truly human* (Cascade Books, 2012), 162pp.

I firmly believe that the gravest failing of the Western church is to really form disciples, so I was filled with anticipation when I approached Lucy Peppiatt's book *The Disciple*. Lucy is Dean of Studies at Westminster Theological Centre, associated with the New Wine network, and with her husband pastors Crossnet Church in Bristol. So, an academic and a pastor! What is more, she did her doctorate under the supervision of Murray Rae at King's College, London, on Spirit Christology and Mission, and perhaps I was misled by all this background into thinking that this would be a book that integrates both practice of disciple-making and a theological understanding of discipling. My anticipation has only been partially fulfilled. I think the book falls between a number of stools: it is clearly not a 'how to be a disciple' kind of book (thank goodness), nor yet a

theological defence of discipling. I guess it best serves the pastor who wants to know what must be included if she is to form disciples.

Lucy Peppiatt structures her book around areas: disciples are formed by the Word, the Spirit, by Life, by one another and are formed to give away. Nothing wrong in any thing of that, but it's all rather pedestrian, I fear. I think you might be better served by returning once again to Bonhoeffer's *Discipleship*.

Paul Goodliff
Baptist Union of Great Britain

Andrew Goodliff, 'To Such as These': The Child in Baptist Thought (CBHH Vol. 4; Regent's Park College, 2012), 91pp.

Annie Dillard wrote 'On the whole, I do not find Christians, outside the catacombs, sufficiently sensible of the conditions. Does anyone have the foggiest idea what sort of power we so blithely invoke? Or, as I suspect, does no one believe a word of it? The churches are children playing on the floor with their chemistry sets, mixing up a batch of TNT to kill a Sunday morning. It is madness to wear ladies' straw hats and velvet hats to church; we should all be wearing crash helmets. Ushers should issue life preservers and signal flares; they should lash us to our pews. For the sleeping god may wake some day and take offense, or the waking god may draw us out to where we can never return' (*Teaching a Stone to Talk*, Harper & Row, 1982).

As a Youth and Children's Pastor I often listen to the words we say in Baptist churches when we present an infant soon after its birth and experience a similar sensation to the one described by Annie Dillard. Along with the family of the child, congregations make a series of promises to support both the family and the child in the task of reaching mature adulthood, and hopefully growing in Christian faith. I think about the various approaches these same congregations then have to the child in later years when she or he throws up on the new carpet, runs about during services, asks awkward questions, smokes in the toilets, speaks prophetically about what Jesus is saying and all the other things children do as they grow. I wonder whether they didn't realise what they were promising, or whether they have forgotten that they did.

In this slim volume Andrew Goodliff has looked at the words Baptists have used over their history in services of Infant Dedication or Presentation and asked some key questions about what we mean theologically when we say them. He has thoroughly summarised Baptist theological approaches to the child and his work contains a useful discussion of those approaches. He notes that usually these approaches have been responses to the question "Where is the child?" This question has been asked by Baptists since our earliest days, because of our belief that salvation can only be received by those professing personal faith, signified by believer's baptism, and that the church is made up of these believers gathered together. This raises questions for us about where the child is in relation to Kingdom, salvation and the church. The book contains chapters discussing the theological issues raised by each of these questions.

The chapter on the child in relation to the Kingdom focuses mainly on Jesus' response to children in Mark 10:13-16, arguing that this is the text Baptists

use to support the rite of Infant Presentation, although there is a variety of interpretations of its meaning; are children simply signs of the kingdom, or are they included within it? What is it about the child that makes them a sign of it? Most of the writers quoted argue that it is the child's deficit, its weakness and vulnerability that make it a sign of how the Kingdom is to be entered, but Goodliff argues that most readings have been defensive, whereas a creative approach might be more helpful.

In chapter 4, Goodliff explores the relationship between theologies of sin and salvation and approaches to the child, seeking a new language to discuss the development of faith that places more emphasis on salvation as a process rather than an event. This leads on to a discussion in Chapter 5 of the child in relation to the church and here the problems inherent in a very binary in-or-out approach become even more obvious. Goodliff notes Nigel Wright's use of the term "gathering" rather than "gathered" in relation to the community of the church; again taking a process view and applying it not just to children but all those growing in faith.

In his conclusion Goodliff returns to the rite of infant presentation, examining it in more detail in light of the discussion so far. He invites us to look at the rite afresh and to imbue it with deeper meaning and significance, with a focus on the child, rather than is often the case, the adults. As a Youth and Children's Pastor, the final Post Script section offered the most interesting and challenging thinking. Goodliff draws on his experience as a Youth Pastor and now Pastor and looks at some examples of what it would mean for churches to take seriously the promises made at infant presentation and become more radically all-age congregations.

This is a helpful book for those wanting to take seriously the place of children and young people in Baptist churches. It would make useful companion reading to the "Today Not Tomorrow" material recently produced by Arise Ministries in conjunction with the BU Mission Dept.

(See: <http://todaynottomorrow.org.uk/>), offering a thorough theological background to it. Goodliff has also helpfully added an amended version of the liturgy for infant presentation taking his thinking into account. Although much has been written by Baptists on this subject over the years, this book may encourage not just youth and children's workers but congregations more widely to think afresh about what they mean when they participate in an infant presentation.

Sarah Fegredo
West Brigidford Baptist Church

Justine Allain-Chapman, *Resilient Pastors: The Role of Adversity in Healing and Growth*, (New Library of Pastoral Care; SPCK, 2012), 160pp.

Resilient Pastors is the latest title in the SPCK New Library of Pastoral Care series. Informed by research into 'resilience' (the capacity to bounce back), Justine Allain-Chapman sets out to describe ways in which such resilience can grow. Drawing on seasons of adversity in her own personal and pastoral life, as well as the experiences of those she helps train through the South-East Institute

for Theological Education, Allain-Chapman offers this volume as a resource for pastors seeking - and wanting to enable - strength, stability and compassion. Given the battle to develop and sustain resilience in contemporary life and Christian ministry, this is a timely, and, as it turns out, an original and stimulating survey of an under-explored area.

Allain-Chapman's approach is to build a framework for understanding and building resilience by engaging with a range of 'critical conversation partners'. In the first two chapters she explores the need for resilience and describes its contours. She describes how those who are resilient have *coped* with adversity and embraced the struggle, been *constant* in connecting with their inner life and sense of self rather than making destructive choices, and been able to *construct* a new sense of who they are. This includes the ability to contribute and live compassionately in relationship with other supportive and life-giving companions.

In a robust view of pastoral care which properly recognises adversity but focuses on *building strength* rather than simply *understanding pathology*, Allain-Chapman chooses to dialogue with a creative mix of partners (inevitably other biblical and spiritual 'writers' are omitted) who act as pointers to how resilient, compassionate, altruistic living can be developed. These include Moses, Hagar, the lives and sayings of the 'Desert Elders', Rowan Williams' fresh application of monastic insights, and a final, nuanced engagement with how 'wounded healer' ministry can include the possibility of healing and growth. Throughout she avoids the twin pastoral pitfalls of either staying stuck with pain and victimhood or sidestepping the place of struggle through pious and trite responses.

While Allain-Chapman makes it clear that this is not a book of tips, her final chapter does explore a practical, pastoral theology of resilient living, with one of the book's significant themes coming to clear expression here: how might people be enabled to become resilient, contributors members of church and society *through seeing* coping, constancy and a newly constructed future *both* in the pastor's life *and* as it is woven into the framework of the church's teaching, liturgy and pastoral care? Here is one of this book's great strengths, exposing the myth that God and church are a way of fending off or controlling difficulty. Instead she reminds how adversity is a regular part of life (a usually unsought 'discipline') which can strengthen and encourage free and compassionate living and service. Here is a welcome and much needed exploration of this theme.

Although the author's style is prosaic and occasionally it reads like a dense summary of thesis material (which in part it is) on the whole the ideas remain accessible. Sometimes fuller explanations and signage would have been useful for those with less familiarity concerning contemplative prayer and life, and concepts like 'digging down to encounter God within the inner-self' and 'God growing people up through a prayerful, non-passive response to adversity.'

The book ends with some useful questions for reflection though some of these might have been more helpfully placed after earlier chapters. The best way to respond to the rich resources and questions in the text would be to read this book slowly and prayerfully. Highly recommended.

Colin Norris
Southern Counties Baptist Association

Judith Thompson and Ross Thompson, *Mindful Ministry: Creative, Theological and Practical Perspectives* (SCM Press, 2012), 224pp.

John and Judith Thompson have written a book 'for anyone who exercises a certain ministry within the Church, and wishes to do so mindfully and not narcissistically' (p.xvii) and largely succeed in a thoughtful and creative book that uses the familiar reflective cycle to engage theology and practice. Both Anglican priests, the book carries that particular denominational DNA, but without being unhelpfully so to those of us who are not ministers of the Church of England.

There has been much written over the past decade on new ways of imagining ministry in an Anglican context (one might immediately recall Stephen Pickard's *Theological Foundations of Collaborative Ministry*, 2009; John Pritchard's *The Life and Work of a Priest*, 2007; and Alan Billings *Making God Possible: the Task of Ordained Ministry Present and Future*, 2010) and this book both relies upon that re-imagining of ministry and adds to it. The Thompsons have in their sights the kind of thoughtless activism that a character played by Hugh Bonneville in the TV series *Rev* epitomises as, on arriving at a retreat with the hapless Adam Smallbone, he proclaims, 'we shouldn't be doing this... we should be out there, in the community, making our mark, spreading the word...'

In the place of such thoughtless activism, the Thompsons argue for a 'mindful' ministry, and expand on this theme by describing eight roles that the minister fulfils, each characterised by a 'mindful' dimension of ministry. Thus, the minister is the apostle (mindful representing); the holy one (mindful praying), the pastor (mindful serving); the teacher (mindful nurture); the leader (mindful oversight), the go-between (mindful collaboration, conviviality and communication); the herald of good news (mindful evangelism) and the liberator (mindful subversion.) This is a helpful conceit to organise their material, and as a framework it works, even if the content that fills each section is hardly groundbreaking.

All-in-all, a useful book for those engaged in ministry, and a helpful framework for those taking the time to review the character of their own ministry, and see what is, perhaps, under-emphasised, and what takes too strong a priority. As the Thompsons argue, ministry needs to integrate these dimensions if it is to really be 'mindful ministry.'

Paul Goodliff
Baptist Union of Great Britain

Steve Summers, *Friendship: Exploring its implications for the Church in Postmodernity* (T&T Clark, 2009), 211pp.

Talking with an American student last week, they were telling me about home and their 'best friend'. We were saying how important a shared history is and Amanda said 'I met Lucy in my first grade at school (aged 6/7) and she told me "We're going to be best friends. I didn't have much choice in this but it has proved to be true"'. 'Friends' is of course the title of the iconic American TV

programme about six friends in New York where we are invited to share their joys, sorrows, romances, failures and failings. It points to a deep seated aspect of being human, most people want friends, so it all the more surprising that this has not been the subject of serious theological exploration. Summers's book remedies this with a valuable, coherent and readable account of the nature of friendship in our contemporary culture. He offers friendship as a model of authentic Christian personhood that finds expression in the Eucharistic life of the Church, which after all started out a meal between Jesus and his friends.

Summers presents his arguments in three inter-linking parts. Part one offers a context for his analysis of friendship. In chapter one Summers offer a brief and critical commentary on biblical friendships before examining the postmodern context of friendship in chapter two. This includes the media's portrayal of friendship and asks the challenging questions as to whether or not one can establish friendship virtually? Summers adopts Bauman's concept of liquidity and applies this to both Modernity and postmodernism before concluding that even the self-reflexive individual is unable to meets the demands of postmodern ideals on their own. Friendship has a relational and communal dimension that informs and underpins the role of an ecclesial community in the 21st century.

Part two explores friendship in the classical period and beyond; a theological understanding of friendship and in interpersonal/relational view of friendship as the self and other. Chapter three examines the work of Plato, Aristotle and Cicero for insights into how friendship was understood as a virtuous relationship but differentiated according to particular cultures and contexts. This prepares the way for identifying a unique vision of friendship from a Christian perspective drawn from the works of Augustine and Aquinas (chapter four). Summers finds greater currency in Aquinas, rather than Augustine, for relevant discussion today. Both identify that friendship is a powerful way of conceiving divine-human relationship, hence "otherness" is essential for mutual relationship, and nowhere is this better modelled than in the life of the Trinity' (p.94). In chapter five Summers's explores the importance of understanding friends as they emerge out of notions of the 'self' and the 'other' aided by insights from Descartes, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Derrida. Summers finds support 'in favour of open-ended dynamic relationship between corporeal selves in which they can discover a communal existence appropriate for postmodern living' (p.117).

Part three covers chapter six 'friendship's particularity' and chapter seven 'The Church – A community of friends'. What does Summers mean by particularity? He sees it as specific expression of love that is expressed to 'others' (Levinas' ideas are influential here). Summers focuses on how people exist in relation to one another that allows love, whatever one's gender or sexual orientation. He examines how friendship serves as a model of authentically Christian being that underpins all relationships, however these relationships are expressed, and he illustrates this from the life of John Henry Newman, as well as the film *When Harry met Sally*. Friendship also represents the Trinitarian life of God and offers common ground for a Church to be a place of hospitality, acceptance and belonging. Summers final chapter pulls together the strands of earlier chapters and here he redefines community as a place of otherness and

togetherness mirroring the Trinitarian life of God where we gather as friends of Jesus especially focussed on the Eucharist.

As Baptists, Summers writing from his Anglican perspective, has much to offer especially in locating the Eucharist as a place of meeting as friends of Christ. Such is the invitation to participate, it is offered to all through acts of welcome and hospitality, including people we don't yet know but who are to become friends on the basis of the friendship of God. Viewing communion in this way could enrich these aspects of Baptist worship that are sadly often neglected. Summers is to be applauded for offering a thoughtful and challenging book with many helpful things to say to our Church community.

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