

focus

Boston University School of Theology 2017

Inside:

Risking arrest to fight climate change

What nature teaches us about grief

Meeting Christ on the US-Mexico border

LIVING IN THE STORM

The search for healing in a
wounded and divided nation

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focus 2017



focus

Boston University
School of Theology
2017

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Photo of Timothy Jones ('09-'19) courtesy of STH

TABLE of CONTENTS

DEAN'S MESSAGE	2	JOURNAL: POWER, PRIVILEGE, AND PROPHETIC WITNESS	
FEATURES			
In the Trenches	10	Stillness in the Storm	18
Marla Marcum ('03) is willing to risk arrest to draw attention to climate change		Only by seeking the source of our nation's wounds will we gain the strength to heal them <i>By Micah Christian ('12)</i>	
Ministry of an Adventuring Journalist	12	Empowering the Marginalized	24
Environmental reporter Alison Morrow tells stories that bring awareness and hope		Public acts of faith give Latinx* immigrants a sense of belonging <i>By Jonathan Calvillo, assistant professor of sociology of religion</i>	
Digital Healing	14	Creation Can Help Heal Society's Wounds	28
Counselor Soo-Young Kwon invents devices to help bring solace to the suffering		What grass and garden pests teach us about the gift of grief <i>By Tallessyn Zawn Grenfell-Lee ('04,'16)</i>	
Caring for Creation	16		
C. Dean Freudenberger spent World War II hauling chemical fertilizer. In the decades since, he's advocated treating the land as a covenant gift.		<i>*Editor's note: Latinx is a gender-inclusive alternative to Latina or Latino.</i>	
		Other Sheep I Have	32
		Jesus said he would bring diverse people into his fold. Following him means uniting people through kindness. <i>By Lawrence Edward Carter, Sr. ('68,'70,'79)</i>	
		How to Save Life on Earth from Extinction	38
		It's too late for incremental progress on climate change—we need an immediate turnabout <i>By Mark Y. A. Davies ('01, GRS'01)</i>	
		Power and Privilege Can Work for Good	42
		The community plays a critical role in realizing individuals' unique potential <i>By Nimi Wariboko, Walter G. Muelder Professor of Social Ethics</i>	
		Entering the Wounded Body of Christ	46
		We encounter God when we choose to walk with those who suffer <i>By Laura Rambikur ('17, SSW'17)</i>	
		ALSO IN THIS ISSUE	
		STH News: STH's pledge to diversity, religion meets basketball, and more	4
		Reflection: Climate Change Is a Justice Issue	52
		Shared Roots	53



Janice Checchio



Dean Mary Elizabeth Moore

DEAN'S MESSAGE

MANNA IN THE WILDERNESS

BY MARY ELIZABETH MOORE

The past year has raised devastating questions for the United States, and for global relationships and planetary health. It has also been challenging for me personally, caring for my husband in his declining health, living with his death, living with cancer, and tending the quite amazing BU School of Theology. The School has had a lively year as we seek to carry on our collaborative work with vision and excellence, while responding to the strong fears evoked by endangered human rights, global wars, and turmoil in the United States and many other countries.

In living these days, one image that continually renews my hope is “manna in the wilderness,” God’s gift to the Hebrew people as they wandered hungry in the wilderness between their life in slavery and their new life as settled people. The manna was not an overflowing feast, but, together with quail, it provided sustenance and strength one day at a time (Exodus 16:2–15). Today, we are wandering in a new kind of wilderness. As a global people facing extreme social, cultural, and personal challenges, we wander in a daunting wilderness, daily facing the

destruction and potential destruction of climate care, health care, just relationships across communities of difference, and international relations. Yet, the wilderness also provides space to re-create our social fabric and personal worlds. For that hard work of world-making, we are given manna, enough for one day at a time.

We collectively live in grim times. Whatever are our diverse political views, theological perspectives, distinctive life experiences, and gendered-sexual-racial experiences, we face these grim times together. In the United States and in much of the world, refugees live in fear for their lives every day; Native peoples see their sacred lands and people trampled again and again; children bully one another in classrooms and playgrounds; LGBTQ people are battered in courtrooms and families and city

streets; people paint swastikas on public schools and synagogues and send threatening letters to mosques; Christian, Jewish, and Muslim extremists threaten and kill one another around the world; the gap between the rich and the poor grows exponentially; nations across the globe negotiate with one another carrying dangerous, homogenizing prejudices; and, in the United States,

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overflowing feast, but,
together with quail, it
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strength one day at a time.

1. Boston University School of Theology, “Diversity Statement,” accessed May 22, 2017, bu.edu/sth/welcome/mission/#diversity-statement.

2. Wolfgang Mieder, *Making a Way Out of No Way: Martin Luther King’s Sermonic Proverbial Rhetoric* (Frankfurt on the Main: Peter Lang, 2010), esp. 171–186; Monica A. Coleman, *Making a Way Out of No Way: A Womanist Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008).

3. Abraham Joshua Heschel, “Religion and Race,” *The Insecurity of Freedom: Essays on Human Existence* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1966), 85–100. The original speech was delivered to the National Conference of Christians and Jews on Religion and Race, January 14, 1963.

4. Ivone Gebara, *Longing for Running Water: Ecofeminism and Liberation* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1999), 19. Gebara, living with the poor in Brazil, recognizes that poisoning nature is also destroying human life (27–28).

young black and brown men are targeted and condemned without trials. This list is only a small glimpse of grimness. Yet the onus is on the human family to respond, not simply to shout favorite prejudices and decry favorite scapegoats, but to recognize the wilderness in which we wander and to search for new ways to live as a human family on a threatened planet, as the early Hebrews sought to build a new culture beyond slavery.

The Hebrews’ wilderness journey was marked by three features: uncertainty, promise, and responsibility. *Uncertainty* was a stark reality. The people did not know what to expect from day to day, and they were not sure what lay ahead of them—a journey that was to last some 40 years. They had no strategic plan that laid out each year and each day; they simply wandered the best they could. The people grumbled from hunger, and they blamed their leaders Moses and Aaron. They longed for the days of slavery when they at least had food to eat. And God responded to the grumbings of the people by promising manna each day, just enough for one day’s nourishment, except on the eve of Sabbath when people could gather two days’ worth without risk of spoilage. Throughout Exodus 15–17, *responsibility* joins with uncertainty and promise. The people are compelled to act, but they cannot control their fate. They do act anyway. They cry out about their conditions, protesting. Moses and Aaron listen to the people’s cries and make their own cries to God. Then, in response to God’s daily gift of manna, the people are responsible for gathering what they need each day, no more and no less.

In the 2016–2017 academic year, the School of Theology has focused for a second year on the theme Power, Privilege, and Prophetic Witness. The theme appears in classes, special events, systemic decisions, a bold statement on diversity,¹ and the sermons and essays in this issue of *focus*. These writings name hard realities and directions for the future, focusing especially on global and ecological issues. In days of uncertainty, most people long for easy promises, like the “land flowing with milk and honey” that comes later in Exodus (33:3a). In the Hebrews’ wilderness wanderings, the promises are more limited, however. In that wilderness, people seek “to make a way of no way”—an African American proverb that has carried power for generations, as exemplified by Martin Luther King, Jr. (GRS’55, Hon.’59) and womanist theologian Monica Coleman.²

Uncertainty, promise, and responsibility persist over centuries, and so do we. The present moment cries for the human family to live well together and to seek good for the planet. When we ourselves cry, we recognize with Abraham Joshua Heschel that “some are guilty but all are responsible.”³ We recognize with Ivone Gebara that the same forces that destroy ecosystems also destroy life for people living in poverty; thus, we need to be “continually alert to the flow of life.”⁴ We are Exodus people wandering in the wilderness, and we *must* cry out! Even as we do, we can trust the promise of manna in the wilderness to support our efforts for justice and healing one day at a time. □

Chitose Suzuki

CAMPAIGN UPDATE

TWO YEARS TO THE FINISH LINE

With your help, the Campaign for STH has raised nearly \$21 million of its \$25 million goal. The Harrell F. Beck Chair of Hebrew Scripture, established in honor of the former STH professor and alum ('45, GRS'54), has been endowed with more than \$1 million in gifts and pledges. New contributions to this endowment will continue to support the chair. STH is working to build the following funds by 2019:



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\$203K



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RAISED
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* Matching funds are available.

A CULTURE OF DIVERSITY

BY LARA EHRLICH

The School of Theology adopted an official diversity statement in February 2017, pledging to “nurture a community culture that values inclusive diversity in all its forms, while paying particular scholarly and social attention to the intersectionality of race, gender, sexuality, physical ability, learning differences, and global origin.” The statement was prepared by a committee of faculty, staff, and students.

According to Bryan Stone, associate dean for academic affairs, the statement ties into University-wide efforts to foster inclusivity. BU is searching for an associate provost for diversity & inclusion, while in spring 2016, Dean Mary Elizabeth Moore served on a University committee that outlined a plan to expand the Howard Thurman Center for Common Ground, a campus hub for dialogue across races, religions, and disciplines.

“You can’t have academic excellence without diversity of viewpoints, perspectives, and experiences,” says Stone, also the E. Stanley Jones Professor of Evangelism. “Recruiting a very fine, diverse class is at the core of excellence as an academic mission. You have to have diversity to have excellence.”

Stone says that scholarships designed to attract students from a broad range of backgrounds are

essential to that mission. Funds at STH include the Howard Thurman Fellowship, named for the former dean of Marsh Chapel and mentor to Martin Luther King, Jr. (GRS’55, Hon.’59); the Raíces Latinas Fellowship for students serving Latinx* communities; and the Indigenous Studies Fellowship for those aiming to serve Native American, Hawaiian, and Pacific Island communities.

One of the beneficiaries is Ylisse Bess ('17). “I believe theology is something we do,” says Bess, a recipient of the Thurman Fellowship, which is awarded to students who demonstrate moral and spiritual leadership. “In order to do it well, I have sought out educational, professional, and spiritual opportunities that connect me to community.” She is a member of numerous service and diversity committees at BU, and volunteers with groups including the Boston Doula Project. Her work often assists people “who are the most disinherited, disenfranchised, in a society that does not recognize the many *isms* it uses to create an uneven ground,” she says.

According to Stone, STH fellowships have helped the School expand its diversity and allowed students in its first-level master’s programs to graduate with less debt than any other United Methodist seminary.

Bess, a leader in STH’s Anna Howard Shaw Center and Association of Black Seminarians,



Ylisse Bess ('17) received the Howard Thurman Fellowship, one of several STH scholarships supporting students from diverse backgrounds.

credits the Thurman Fellowship with affording her “the opportunity to dive deeply into community building and advocacy work in Boston, at BU, and at STH,” while the financial assistance provided by the fellowship “eases the stress and has given me the chance to throw myself into justice work for the many communities I am a part of.”

*Latinx is a gender-inclusive alternative to Latina or Latino.



To help fund STH scholarships, visit bu.edu/sth/giving.

Austin Washington

JUSTICE-SEEKERS AND RISING LEADERS



STH presented six graduates with Distinguished Alumni/ae Awards in 2016. The recipients are, from left: Cornell William Brooks ('87, Hon.'15), then-president and CEO of the NAACP, next to Dean Mary Elizabeth Moore; Theodore "Ted" Lockhart (CAS'65, STH'68), a poet and retired United Methodist minister who has worked for inclusion in the Church; Wendy von Courter ('05,'17), a Unitarian Universalist minister, immigration rights activist, and leader in justice work; Boustan

Hirji ('81), an author, advocate of gender and human rights, and faculty member at Dawson College in Quebec, Canada; Nikita McCalister ('05), associate executive minister for administration for the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island and senior pastor of Bethany Baptist Church in Pawtucket, Rhode Island; and Jabulani McCalister ('05), senior pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Providence, Rhode Island, and interim operations manager of the Ministers

Council of the American Baptist Churches USA. The McCalisters received Distinguished Alumni Awards in the category of emerging leader.

→ Watch the distinguished alums discuss the three greatest challenges of the next decade at livestream.com/watch (search "STH greatest 2016").

Melissa Ostrow

A MEMORIAL FOR MACHOZI

In March 2016, Vincent Machozi ('15) was murdered by uniformed soldiers in his native Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Machozi, a priest and peace activist, had operated a website (benilubero.com) where he posted grisly photos of victims of violence in the DRC province of North Kivu, as well as reports that often identified the killers as military or government agents. Machozi, who was working toward a PhD at STH, hoped that the photos of dead and dismembered bodies would galvanize site visitors to help end the violence. "Pray for me, because I will be murdered," he reportedly told a fellow priest, "but like Christ, for the sake of our people, I will not be silent."

STH has launched a memorial scholarship and lecture fund to honor Machozi's legacy. The scholarship will be open to theology students from Africa, with a preference "for those who are committed to study and service focused on justice and peace," according to the School. The Fr. Vincent Machozi Lecture on Building Justice and Peace will have a similar focus.

The \$100,000 needed to endow the scholarship—which ensures that the fund will be invested in order to provide STH with annual earnings for the scholarship and lecture—were raised by May 2017 with donations and pledges from faculty, staff, current students, and alumni.

This effort was led by the STH Class of 2017, resulting in over \$5,000 added to the fund.

Machozi's academic supervisor, Barbara Brown, director of the African Studies Center's outreach program, says that in the months after his death, she gave much thought to how he would be remembered.

"There was a man who did a doctorate at BU and worked for justice and was assassinated in 1968, and the whole world knew about it," says Brown. "Here was a man, also a black man, who worked for justice in a place where over five million people have died and no one has paid attention. When he was assassinated, it wasn't in the newspapers, and no one told the bigger story. How can we let his death, which is personal to us in Boston, go without attention?"

—Art Jahnke and Andrew Thurston



Vincent Machozi, above, paused his STH studies in 2012 to work against violence in his home country, the Democratic Republic of Congo.

→ To support the Fr. Vincent Machozi Memorial Scholarship and Lecture, visit bu.edu/machozi.



Vincent Machozi, in baseball cap, hoped to encourage the people of North Kivu to report local mass murders.

RELIGION MEETS BASKETBALL

Onaje X. O. Woodbine was a basketball star in the making. Playing college hoops for Yale, he made the starting five his first year, and was voted a second-team Ivy League All-Star his second.

But in his junior year, Woodbine ('04, GRS'14) quit the team. "I feel called to study philosophy and religion, to expose the contradictions that people of African descent face in America every day, to give my life to humanity," he wrote in the *Yale Daily News*. His studies led him to STH.

Today, Woodbine teaches philosophy and religion at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, and is the author of *Black Gods of the Asphalt: Religion, Hip-Hop, and Street Basketball* (Columbia University Press, 2016), named by the *Boston Globe* as one of the best books of 2016. He spent four years interviewing young African American



Onaje X. O. Woodbine hopes his book, *Black Gods of the Asphalt: Religion, Hip-Hop, and Street Basketball*, helps young men realize that through the game, "they were exploring these really human, central questions" about life.

men about their experiences playing in street basketball tournaments and documenting what he describes as their lived religion. He also created a choreographed basketball court ceremony that he says dramatizes "the African American search for identity, for the purpose of

reimagining a more just future."
—Reporting by Michael S. Goldberg

➔ Read more of Woodbine's story in "Of Hoops and Healing" at bu.edu/bostonia (search "hoops").

STH PROFESSOR HONORED

Dana L. Robert, Truman Collins Professor of World Christianity & History of Mission, has been elected to the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, a prestigious policy research center whose members convene to address public problems. Robert, who is the founding

director of the Center for Global Christianity & Mission at STH and is regarded as a leading scholar in her field, "has brought to the foreground the global complexity of Christianity, with all of its flaws and contributions," says Dean Mary Elizabeth Moore. "We're bursting with pride."

—Sara Rimer, adapted from *Bostonia* (bu.edu/bostonia)



Dana L. Robert

Top and bottom: Sydney Scott

SEE THE WORLD, CHANGE THE WORLD



"The Indonesia Travel Seminar afforded me the opportunity to study trauma with my STH peers, as well as students from Indonesia. Our ability to collaborate through the sharing of cultures and ideas allowed for a deeper understanding of trauma. Diving into another culture through both immersion and relationship has been a deeply valuable experience."

—NIKKI YOUNG ('18), Theology House
Program coordinator, fifth from left

SEND STUDENTS AROUND THE GLOBE TO DO GOOD

At STH, we encourage our students to lead change beyond the classroom. The Global & Contextual Engagement Fund awards fellowships to participants in educational enrichment experiences such as travel seminars, elective internships, action-reflection programs with faith communities or community organizations, presentations at professional

conferences, service learning, and community-based research. These students make an impact from Boston to Bali and beyond.

A generous donor will give two dollars for every dollar donated to these efforts, up to \$250,000. Help us make this endowed fund available for future STH students in perpetuity.

Email sthdev@bu.edu, call 617-353-2349, or visit bu.edu/sth/giving

IN THE TRENCHES



From left: Marla Marcum prays and reads from the Bible as activists Ken Ward and Jay O'Hara prepare to blockade a shipment of coal in Newport, Rhode Island, in 2013.

MARLA MARCUM ('03) IS WILLING TO RISK ARREST TO DRAW ATTENTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

BY ANDREW THURSTON

The police captain loomed over Marla Marcum. She'd tricked him and now he was fum-

ing. Behind her, dozens of protestors lay in a trench that would soon carry a natural gas pipeline through Boston's West Roxbury neighborhood. In 2015, Marcum ('03) was an organizer for Resist the Pipeline, an ultimately unsuccessful grassroots effort to block Spectra Energy's West Roxbury Lateral Pipeline. One of her roles was police liaison, an intermediary between law enforcement and campaigners. Marcum says the captain was angry that protestors had returned hours after quitting the digging site, and after a wall of police had been replaced with two detail cops.

"Sometimes, I need to stand there and let a man who weighs about 50 pounds more than me scream at me about six inches from my face, and I need to do that calmly so I don't escalate the situation," says Marcum, a climate activist who specializes in helping those participating in acts of civil disobedience. "I can do that. I think I was a person who could always do that, but what seminary training did for me is to help me manage any sort of anger or taking it personally—anything that might be happening inside me

while the screaming is happening—and to just focus on the core of what I'm called to do. And I think that's to bring love into the world in a way that's active."

Marcum is used to operating on the law's edges—sometimes just over them. She's the director and a founder of the Climate Disobedience Center, a nonprofit that promotes direct action on environmental issues and provides logistical and legal support to campaigners. It offers training on topics like media management and finds pro and low bono lawyers for protestors who've landed in the dock. Part of Marcum's job at the center, which was founded in 2015, is guiding those who are publicly airing their dissent—and flouting the law—for the first time.

For "people who have never intentionally broken a law, and who are accustomed to doing what the police ask them to do, it can be very stressful, no matter how committed they are," she says.

Leading the nonprofit is a full-time position: as well as giving advice and support to fellow activists, she writes e-newsletters, answers requests for resources, and fundraises. It doesn't pay much, but Marcum doesn't mind. She grew up in rural Missouri, where most of her family scratched a living from the land; for two years, Marcum and her mom didn't have a home. "We always had a place to sleep, but it wasn't ours," she says. Her upbringing helped her live

on little and forge a passion for the land and ecological issues.

Marcum says she was the child "who noticed every injustice—and expressed outrage about it." She considered channeling that energy into the law, then social work, then urban planning. None seemed the right fit. Her now-husband



In 2015, Marcum (center, to rear left of marcher in sunglasses) organized protests against Spectra Energy's West Roxbury Lateral Pipeline. She was joined by Mariama White-Hammond ('17) (front row, in white collar), Ian Mevorach ('09, '15) (center, to rear left of Marcum), and Ashley Anderson ('14, SSW'14) (far right).

made an off-the-wall suggestion: seminary. She thought it was ridiculous. Until she realized many of the people she respected "who were agents of change"—including academic and civil rights activist James Lawson ('60)—had taken the same route. Although Marcum would complete a master's degree, she drifted out of STH's doctoral program as one leave of absence to focus on climate activism blended into another. (Many fellow STH community members have joined her on protests; among those arrested in West Roxbury were Ashley Anderson, '14, SSW'14, and Lindsay

Popper, '15.) Marcum says STH gave her room to explore "where my strength came from—it's not really mine." A climate change skeptic in the White House gives her the courage to keep fighting what might seem an uphill battle.

"One difference between secular environmental activism and the work I do is that while I would like to be successful in my time, my personal understanding of success isn't tied to the success or failure of a particular endeavor," says Marcum. "I wake up in the morning and I do the thing I feel like I have to do, because my faith is calling me to do it."

Although Marcum has been arrested once—outside the White House as she protested the Keystone XL pipeline—she thinks it's only a matter of time before she takes an action that threatens a tougher punishment. One of her fellow founders is facing the prospect of a 30-year sentence for closing a safety valve on an oil pipeline in Washington.

"The power we have is in our bodies, in our spirits; there's not enough money in the world for us to fight the fossil fuel industry," says Marcum. Until now, she's concentrated on ensuring others have support when they defy the law, but with the Climate Disobedience Center growing, she says the foundations are in place for her to step onto the front line.

"My house is in order and when the fight that is mine to fight in that way comes, I'm prepared to step into the breach." □

Left to right: Ben Thompson; courtesy of Marla Marcum/Resist the Pipeline

MINISTRY OF AN ADVENTURING JOURNALIST



Alison Morrow

ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTER ALISON MORROW TELLS STORIES THAT BRING AWARENESS AND HOPE

BY JULIE BUTTERS

A gunner's belt strapped around her insulated flight suit, Alison Morrow inched feet-first toward the open door of the Coast Guard Black Hawk as it flew above protected marine reserves near Cannon Beach, Oregon. Morrow ('07), environmental reporter at King 5, an NBC affiliate in Seattle, had joined the helicopter crew to scour the Pacific for illegal crab traps. The belt tightening against her suit, she eased her video camera out of the chopper, scanning for brightly colored buoys—the telltale signs of traps for the region's coveted Dungeness crabs. Illegal crabbing can dangerously deplete the Dungeness population: more than 200 crabbers were cited by Oregon and Washington State in 2016 alone. After two hours scrutinizing the cold Northwestern waters, the Coast Guard found no violations, but Morrow had great footage for her TV report on the poaching trade. And the gunner's belt did its job. "I was happy I did not fall out—or throw up," she said in her February 2017 report.

At King 5, Morrow writes and reports on topics ranging from wildlife rehabilitation to environmental pollution. She has adventurous moments on the job—like the Black Hawk mission—and less glamorous ones, too, like picking up animal dung to help researchers studying wildlife health. In 2016,

she co-won an Emmy Award for a collection of reports, "Protecting Washington's Natural Resources," which included stories about a lawsuit against a polluting dairy farm and how abandoned fishing nets endanger wildlife. Being an environmental reporter isn't "just a job... it is an identity for me," says Morrow, who buys thrift-store clothes to avoid supporting the pollution of the fashion industry and traces her love of animals back to owning a horse, Sassy, since she was 11.

A desire to support the environment and the opportunity for adventure were big reasons Morrow took the job, but she's driven by a greater mission—one she discovered at STH, at a time when she thought she was through with journalism.

Morrow had wanted to work as a morning show producer since childhood, when she and her friends goofed around making videos at the barn where they rode horses. She later fulfilled that dream by spending a year as a producer for *Fox & Friends*. Meeting celebrities on the job like Ozzy Osbourne and Tom Selleck was exciting, but the job didn't match the person she'd become—someone who was more serious and wanted to tackle weightier subjects. She left TV for graduate school with an eye toward a counseling career. But a required preaching class taught by the late Professor Dale Andrews made her rethink her decision.

Courtesy of King 5

"His first lecture was about how... the way we tell stories about our communities can move them forward or backward, and that even if we're not preachers, we all have the opportunity to participate in helping tell stories that give hope and bring justice, versus toxicity, to our neighbors," she says. "I had never thought about journalism being a ministry."

Morrow realized her attraction to counseling was "telling stories, and using that for healing and change"—something she could still do in TV. After finishing her master of divinity with a specialization in psychology and counseling, she re-entered journalism on the reporting side, working in Georgia, Tennessee, and Florida before arriving in Seattle.

For Morrow, living out a journalism ministry at King 5 means doing justice to the complexity of environmental issues in Washington State, which she says is politically "very divided by the Cascade mountain range"—primarily blue in the west and red in the east. Her stories often touch on how the interests of animal rights activists and environmentalists sometimes clash with those of oil, agricultural, and commercial fishing industries.

"My stories," she says, "are an opportunity for the different sides to see the point of view of the other... [and] to get information out there so that the policymakers and the people who are at the table can better understand all of the nuances of an issue."

One conflict Morrow has covered in depth involves wolves and cattle ranchers. Gray wolves are a recovering endangered

species in some areas of Washington State, and in most cases, it's illegal to kill them. Animal lovers and activists are fiercely protective of the wolves: in 2016, as she noted in one story, when the state allowed a pack to be killed after non-lethal methods failed to stop cattle attacks, ranchers and state wildlife managers received death threats. But as Morrow pointed out in her reports on a rancher named Sam Kayser, ranchers face a big challenge trying to coexist with wolves and protect cattle. Non-lethal protection methods like range-riding, in which a person stays with the cattle throughout their grazing season, "require a lot more work on the part of the ranchers, who feel like they're taking the brunt of the restoration of wolves in Washington while the rest of us kind of sit back and have warm fuzzies about them," she says.

In a society where "people just find their own source of self-confirmation news rather than challenging themselves by reading different points of view," says Morrow, she pushes herself to explore the complexity of an issue by including as many voices as possible.

"I don't answer ultimately to my bosses," she says. "I feel like I answer to God, and that's a much higher standard when I come back to my house at night and think, 'Was I fair? Was I just? Did I get it right?'" □

➔ Watch Morrow on the Black Hawk mission at kng5.tv/IllegalCrabbing.

DIGITAL HEALING



Soo-Young Kwon

COUNSELOR SOO-YOUNG KWON INVENTS DEVICES TO HELP BRING SOLACE TO THE SUFFERING

BY JULIE BUTTERS

On April 16, 2014, a single high school in South Korea lost 250 students. The teens, from Danwon High School in Ansan, were traveling on the Sewol Ferry to the island of Jeju for a holiday trip. The ferry capsized and sank after the ship took on water, for reasons still being investigated; more than 300 people died.

As soon as Soo-Young Kwon heard the news, he contacted the school to help. Kwon ('95), the director of the Center for Counseling & Coaching Services at the United Graduate School of Theology at the nearby Yonsei University in Seoul, set up a healing center at the high school with the help of community organizations. "It was for the trauma healing of the victims and the recovery of the whole [community]," he says. Research shows that offering counseling after a tragedy can help reduce anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Going to those who suffer tragedy is Kwon's modus operandi at Yonsei University, where he supervises education programs for more than 350 counselors and coaches-in-training and is also a professor of counseling and coaching. Kwon,

a licensed coach and counselor in Korea who has written more than 10 books on theology, counseling, and coaching, became "fascinated by psychoanalysis and family therapy" while studying pastoral care and counseling as a master of divinity student at STH. He received a PhD in religion and psychology from Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California.

"Our center [at Yonsei University] will not wait until our clients come to our therapy rooms," says Kwon. The center offers services like addiction intervention, runs support groups, and has counseling contracts with companies, governmental organizations, and hospitals such as Severance

Hospital at Yonsei University, where it administers a stress management program for nurses. In 2006, Kwon helped establish an angel fund to take counseling to people with limited financial resources; in 2009, he says, his research led the government to launch an outreach counseling program for North Korean refugees. In Korea, says Kwon, counseling has traditionally been viewed as a service only for people who have severe mental disorders, and many individuals are reluctant to seek help.

"God gives us deep breathing as a way of healing trauma."

—Soo-Young Kwon

Courtesy of Soo-Young Kwon

Kwon is not only a counselor, but an inventor, and he uses his technological innovations in his counseling outreach. When the ferry disaster struck, he gave the school a device he'd recently invented to help children and teens practice deep breathing to support their mental health. Healing Mirror: In-Spire includes a heart-shaped tube connected to a wall-mounted screen. When a person exhales into the tube, the images on the screen—famous works by artists like

of depression and lower stress. A study Kwon conducted of 20 resident nurses in Severance Hospital showed that his mirror device could lower stress levels by almost 78 percent.

In 2016, he released a smartphone app, Yellow Butterfly, in which the user's breathing activates a digital remembrance of ferry disaster victims. "The app notifies the user of the birthday of the victims," says Kwon. "At that time, when a user breathes a long breath into the mobile phone microphone, a yellow butterfly, a symbol of resurrection and eternal life," takes off in flight and joins a memorial that shows pictures of students who died in the tragedy. He says Yellow Butterfly "developed a reputation as a meaningful app for many people" as South Korea works to recover from that terrible event. In March 2017, the *New York Times* reported that nine passengers remained missing, including two teachers and four students from Danwon High School.

Kwon's inventions make him stand out in his field. Roughly 600 patents are filed at Yonsei each year, but it's uncommon for a humanities professor to file one, he says. As an inventor, clinician, and theologian, "sometimes I feel an academically ambiguous existence between different fields," he says. "However, I find that there is an exquisite insight at such a crossing. Harvard psychologist Ellen Langer calls it sideways learning." He hopes those who encounter his work "experience sideways learning and get a glimpse of God hidden in the lines." □



Soo-Young Kwon (right) counsels a student at Yonsei University.

Yonsei Center for Counseling & Coaching Services

Marc Chagall and Leonardo da Vinci—change, switching from blurry to clear, or from black-and-white to color. The Healing Mirror helps people "enjoy the peace and compassion that God has given" while "breathing in digital artworks," says Kwon.

"God gives us deep breathing as a way of healing trauma," he says. According to the National Institutes of Health, relaxation techniques such as deep breathing can reduce symptoms

CARING FOR CREATION



C. Dean Freudenberger

C. DEAN FREUDENBERGER SPENT WORLD WAR II HAULING CHEMICAL FERTILIZER. IN THE DECADES SINCE, HE'S ADVOCATED TREATING THE LAND AS A COVENANT GIFT.

BY LARA EHRLICH

During the labor shortage of World War II, C. Dean Freudenberger, then a teenager, worked as a stevedore for the chemical fertilizer plant where his father was superintendent. He rode with truck drivers from South Gate, California, into the Imperial, Coachella, and San Joaquin Valleys to unload freight cars of fertilizer. While it's now understood that chemical fertilizers can contaminate groundwater, diminish soil fertility, and cause cancer, "in those times we didn't know any better. The whole concept of sustainability and organic agriculture was not invented yet," says Freudenberger ('55, GRS'69), who would become an early and passionate advocate for the environment.

Since the early 1960s, Freudenberger has been tackling the issues of water scarcity, climate change, soil loss, and overpopulation in his missionary work and scholarly writings. "Seen from the biblical perspective of land as [a] covenant gift, the situation is of crisis proportion," he wrote in the 1991 paper "Rural America in Crisis," published in *Word & World*. Freudenberger called upon farmers and agribusinesses "to deal kindly with the earth, to uphold its blessing, and then take what it yields on its own accord," a message he's echoed in more than 50 other publications—including five books.

After World War II, Freudenberger began working toward a bachelor's

degree in agriculture at California State Polytechnic College. He wanted to find a way to serve others through the industry, but wasn't sure how until he spent a summer volunteering in Germany, helping to build a children's orphanage. This trip—his first beyond the Rocky Mountains—"enlarged my horizon to a larger world and its needs," he says, "and crystalized a lot of thinking about our purpose in life. I began to think about how I might be able to contribute to the world in the issues of hunger and rural poverty and environmental degradation." He decided to serve as an agricultural missionary for the United Methodist Church, a role that required him to earn a theology degree. "So, with fear and trepidation, I traveled in an old pickup truck from Southern California to Boston," he says.

Freudenberger found his first year at STH challenging because he was not versed in the style of reading and writing required of seminary students. "In agriculture, you're dealing with animal and soil science and agricultural mechanics," he says, "which are all practical approaches to learning, and different than a liberal arts education with a background in sociology and philosophy."

After graduation, Freudenberger spent a year in Brussels, Belgium, where he learned French in preparation for missionary work in the then-Belgian Congo. In 1957, he and his wife,

Elsie, relocated to the Congo's Katanga Province, where Freudenberger worked in agricultural development and education. Two of the couple's four children were born there; in 1960, the Congo Civil War forced their evacuation from the Katanga Province—with a six-hour detour along a dirt road to a bush hos-

pital, where their daughter Anne was born. They left the country, but returned two years later, and Freudenberger became the director of the Congo Polytechnic Institute.

Freudenberger returned to BU for a doctorate, after which he served for 4 years with the Methodist Board of Missions in

22 countries, leading projects addressing problems such as hunger and desertification in Sub-Saharan Africa and deforestation in Southeast Asia. While Freudenberger has spent his career tackling these issues, "it's taken a good 30 years for general awareness of what's happening across our planet, in terms of exhaustion of basic resources and pollution, to catch up," he says. "Now there's a significant awareness, and we're dealing with the realities of climate change that

were not on the horizon in the mid-fifties and early sixties. We've seen a lot of wake-up in half a century."

But it's still not enough, he says.

"The planet cannot sustain this kind of environmental stress. It's a major sin, the fact that we are exhausting resources upon which human life depends," Freudenberger says. "Two hundred years from now, we may not be able to experience the survival of humankind. We are heading toward planetary resource exhaustion unless we can figure out a way to turn things around."

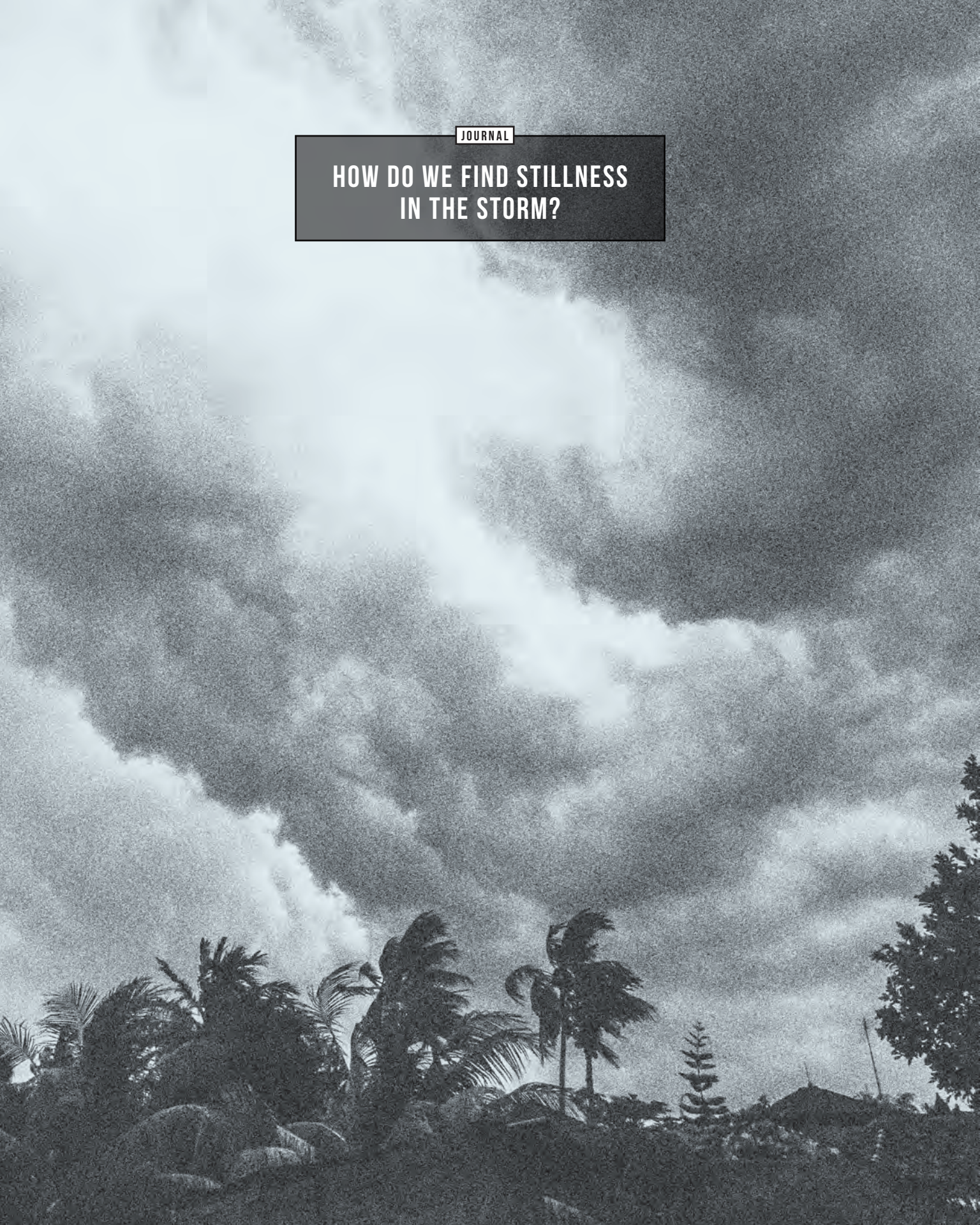
It's a monumental task, but "caring for creation is the next adventure in Christian discipleship. It has got to be our fundamental responsibility from here on out," Freudenberger says. "The theological question is: How can humanity regenerate rather than exhaust the resources upon which we are all dependent? Theology has to be rooted in basic understanding of how biological life works."

Freudenberger taught these issues as a professor of international development and missions at Claremont School of Theology for 17 years, and then as a professor of church and society at Luther Seminary in Saint Paul, Minnesota, until his retirement in 1997. He now lives with his wife at the ecologically responsible senior community Pilgrim Place in Claremont, California. At 87, he is still a devoted caretaker of the Earth; among other projects, he helps Pilgrim Place grow its own food—without any of the chemical fertilizers he hauled into the desert more than 70 years ago. □

"Caring for creation is the next adventure in Christian discipleship. It has got to be our fundamental responsibility from here on out. The theological question is: How can humanity regenerate rather than exhaust the resources upon which we are all dependent?"

—C. Dean Freudenberger

Courtesy of C. Dean Freudenberger



JOURNAL

HOW DO WE FIND STILLNESS IN THE STORM?

Only by seeking the source of our nation's wounds will we gain the strength to heal them

BY MICAH CHRISTIAN ('12)

*God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.*

*Therefore we will not fear,
though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in
the heart of the sea;
though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble
with its tumult....*

"Be still, and know that I am God!

I am exalted among the nations,

I am exalted in the earth."

*The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge.*

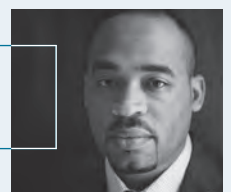
—Psalm 46:1–3, 10–11

We are in the midst of a storm. America has revealed its true colors on a massive scale; we have learned that our love has been shallow and our peace a façade, and we have to figure out how to deal with this new reality. The destructive rhetoric and images that have pervaded the airwaves and social media have wreaked havoc among familial relationships and in friendships, and have stirred up the collective traumatic memories of black folks, Latinos, and Muslims, as well as survivors of sexual assault, bullying, abuse, and homophobia. And they have also wounded those who have journeyed through the

trauma with people they love. There is an ache in the land, a pain so deep that some have lost their minds and acted out in violence against themselves and others.

Something within me knows that we have a long, long way to go, and that the violent symptoms of our sick nation will continue to emerge over the coming months and years. But there is good news: the storm that we are in provides a necessary moment for us to consider with greater depth our spiritual and emotional condition, as well as our calling as people of God. *(Continued)*

About the Author



Micah Christian ('12) is a singer/songwriter and arranger from Randolph, Massachusetts. He completed his undergraduate degree in communication at Stonehill College, Easton, Massachusetts, and his master of divinity at STH. He served as a Catholic lay missionary in Latin America for two years, and is currently the lead singer for *America's Got Talent* finalist, Sons of Serendip.

Courtesy of Micah Christian

PSALM 46

Human beings are genetically predisposed to respond by fight or flight in the face of a perceived imminent danger. In Psalm 46, the psalmist is facing a storm, a time of fear and deep uncertainty, much like our current sociopolitical climate; the Earth is changing, the mountains shake in the heart of the sea, its waters roar and foam, the nations are in an uproar, and the kingdoms totter. The psalmist, however, does not take the instinctual approach of fight or flight, but instead introduces

us to a third way: to dig our tattered and wounded feet into the soil of the Spirit and be still. “[God] says, ‘Be still, and know that I am God!’” the psalmist writes. Be still. Why would we be invited to stillness in the midst of chaos? It is because the outer storm is a direct reflection of the inner storm, and the inner storm is fortified by the outer storm. If we desire stillness in the land, we must begin to develop stillness within.

What do I mean by inner stillness? Stillness is an attitude of prayer, the inward journey that transforms how we journey outward. It is the space where we untether our inner life from the outer storm, and where we reencounter God and ourselves, so that we may encounter others with deeper understanding and compassion.

REENCOUNTERING GOD

“Be still, and know that I am God!” In other words, “Be still and become aware of my presence in this moment.” As a people of hope, our inner stability, strength, and vitality are not rooted in perfect circumstances, but are rooted in the reign of God that is upon us, and in the reality that in God we find “our refuge” (Psalm 46:1), even in the most disturbing circumstances. In stillness, we take the aim of our gaze off the storm

Why would we be invited to stillness in the midst of chaos? It is because the outer storm is a direct reflection of the inner storm, and the inner storm is fortified by the outer storm. If we desire stillness in the land, we must begin to develop stillness within.

and place it back on God, and we become aware of God’s healing and life-giving presence on a more profound level.

God is very, very near: closer than we are to ourselves. God was there at our beginnings, knitting us in our mother’s womb, breathing life into our lungs, animating our spirit. God is not just with us, but we dwell in God and God dwells in us. Anthony de Mello, a Jesuit priest and author, once compared our search for God to a fish in the ocean searching for water.¹ So the question is not, “Is God here?”; the question is, “Am I still enough to be aware of God’s presence in this moment?”

If you’ve ever taken a moment to pause and look up at the stars and contemplate the universe and your place in it, then you know what I’m talking about. If you’ve ever held a newborn

1. “God, whatever that is, is there. It’s all there. The poor little fish in the ocean says, ‘Excuse me, I’m looking for the ocean. Can you tell me where I can find it?’” Anthony de Mello, *Awareness* (New York: Doubleday, 1990): 103.

2. “Where Does It Hurt?”, *On Being with Krista Tippett*, September 15, 2016, accessed March 28, 2017, onbeing.org/programs/ruby-sales-where-does-it-hurt.

and looked deeply into this child’s eyes as the child breathes in and out in the palms of your hands, and thought about the miracle that is life, you know what I’m talking about. If you’ve taken a moment to close your eyes and feel the air on your skin, feel the rush of life as the air flows through your body, then you know what I’m talking about. If you’ve ever allowed the beauty of a sunrise or a sunset to overwhelm you, or if you’ve ever lay in bed in the darkness, tears flowing down your face, and felt an unexplainable embrace, then you know what I’m talking about. It is that deep primal connection to the life force that animates all of existence; it is God’s healing and life-giving presence. In the midst of a storm that has wounded us and has wreaked havoc on our inner landscapes, it is important that in stillness, we reencounter this very real presence so that we may begin the journey toward healing, wholeness, and peace.

REENCOUNTERING OURSELVES

Stillness also sets the inner climate for us to reencounter ourselves. In a recent interview, civil rights activist Ruby Sales tells a story about a defining moment in her life.² She was at her friend’s home one morning getting her

Understanding the source of our pain and our fears will help us to sort through the suffering that calls for our attention; it will help us to recognize what is in need of God’s healing touch, while gleaning wisdom where it can be found and letting go of the suffering we have created with our own minds.

dreadlocks washed. The daughter of her friend came home after being out in the streets, hustling all night. In the interview, Sales said that this young woman had sores and bruises on her body and she was in a drug-induced state. When Sales saw her, a question emerged from within to ask this young woman, “Where does it hurt? Where does it hurt?” Sales then said, “...that simple question unleashed territory in her that she had never shared with her mother.” The young woman began to speak of her experience of abuse as a child and “literally shared the source of her pain.” What we see in our everyday lived experience is only the tip of the iceberg. There is another reality within us at work in each moment. The storm is raging all around us, trauma and pain have gone viral, so it is imperative that we take a deep,

long look at the condition of our inner lives and ask ourselves, “Where does it hurt?” Understanding the source of our pain and our fears will help us to sort through the suffering that calls for our attention; it will help us to recognize what is in need of God’s healing touch, while gleaning wisdom where it can be found and letting go of the suffering we have created with our own minds.

Thich Nhat Hanh once said that sometimes “we are like an artist who is frightened by his own drawing of a ghost.”³ Especially at a time when there is a storm in the land, the stillness that leads to self-awareness will help us keep our feet planted firmly on the ground. And it provides us with a greater capacity for empathy, as it gives us insights into the fears and wounds of others that we encounter in life and in ministry.

ENCOUNTERING OTHERS

Lastly, from stillness, we will be able to especially minister to our fearful and wounded communities with deeper compassion. Recently, I had an impactful encounter with an elderly Chinese woman. I was heading to a café and I saw her heading my way from farther up the sidewalk. As she got closer, I saw that she was carrying a stick on the back of her neck with two large black trash bags full of cans hanging down on both ends of the stick. As I walked by her, I said, “Hello!” and she looked up and smiled with the most beautiful smile. Then I continued to walk by her, thinking, “She looks like she’s doing fine; she’ll be all right.” As I kept walking, something in my spirit began to twist.

Especially at a time when there is a storm in the land, the stillness that leads to self-awareness will help us keep our feet planted firmly on the ground. And it provides us with a greater capacity for empathy, as it gives us insights into the fears and wounds of others that we encounter in life and in ministry.

I turned around and ran back to her and said, “Excuse me. Can I carry this for you?” She looked up at me as if she didn’t understand, so I grabbed the stick and trash bags full of cans off the back of her neck and put it in on the back of mine. When that weight hit my neck, I thought I was going to break something and fall over. I immediately thought, “How did this elderly woman carry this much weight for so long?” As I carried the load, I looked over and saw that she had a bloody wound on the back of her neck. We walked together in silence until we got to the T stop where she would catch the train. As I left, she said something to me in Mandarin Chinese that I didn’t understand, and then said “Thank you,” and bowed.

I tell you this story because of this: within the chaos of the storm, we have come to encounter one another based on false assumptions and misperceptions rather than reality, especially across society’s manufactured walls that are between us. No matter their race, religion, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic background, sexual orientation, or political affiliation, everyone is hurting in some way. And we have no idea the weight of the burdens that people are carrying all around us.

3. “Being Peace in a World of Trauma,” *On Being with Krista Tippett*, July 14, 2016, accessed March 28, 2017, onbeing.org/programs/thich-nhat-hanh-cheri-maples-larry-ward-being-peace-in-a-world-of-trauma.



At the core of encountering and ministering to others from the place of stillness is compassion; at the core of compassion is understanding; at the core of understanding is deep listening. In the coming months and years, deep listening will be the most important form of ministry that we can offer to others. The central questions for the coming months and years will not be, “Who did you vote for?” or “What is your political party?” or “Are you liberal or conservative?” These are the questions of the storm. But as Ruby Sales brings to our attention, the central question that allows us to encounter one another as human beings will be, “Where does it hurt?” And then we listen.

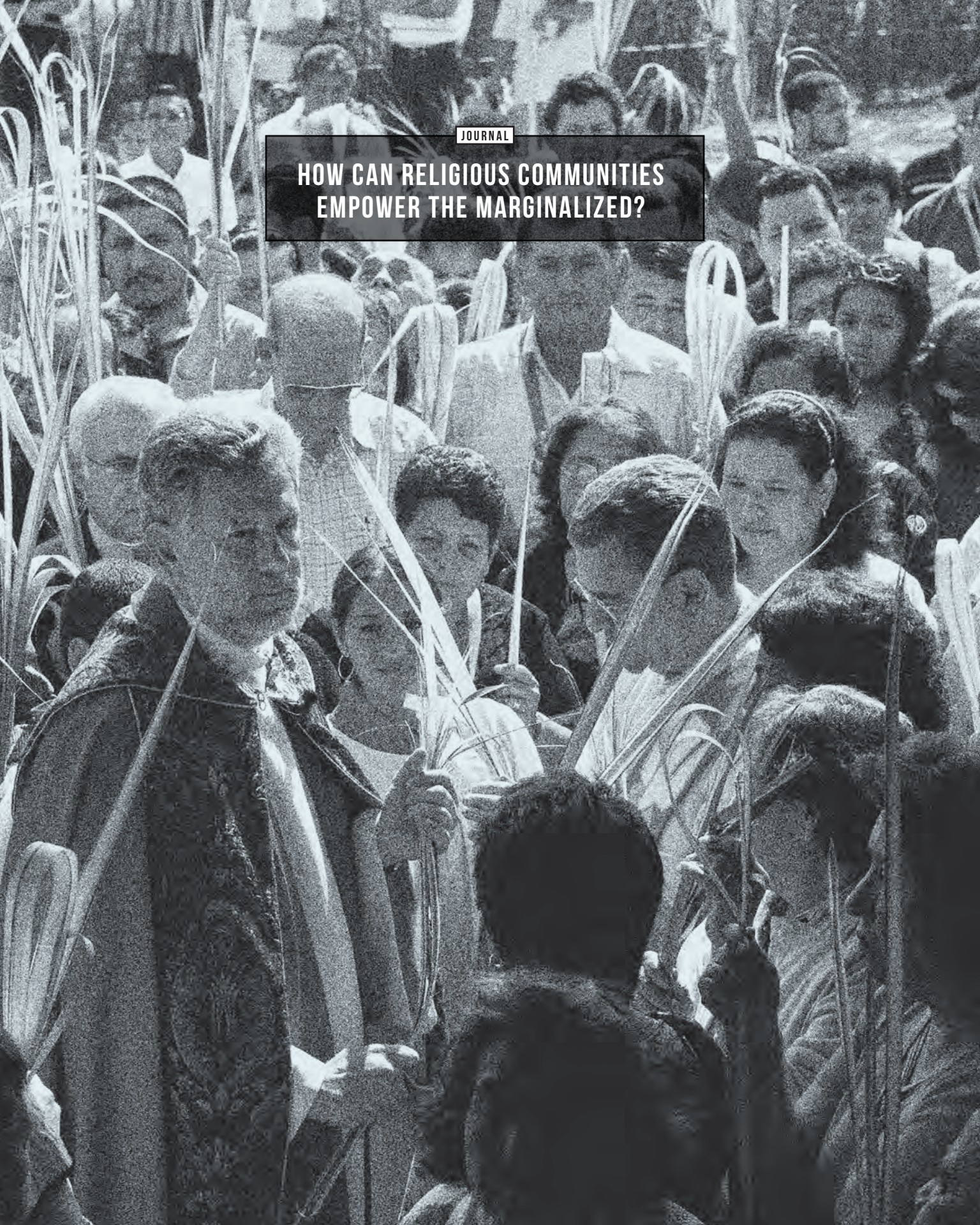
We listen to understand, not to agree. We listen as an act of compassion. We listen to help others bear the load they are carrying around. We listen because listening has a transformative power in relationships. We listen because what we’ve come to understand through the

storm is that people have a real need to be heard. We listen because the inner posture of a listener creates the outer climate for genuine human connection; where there is genuine human connection, by the grace of God, stillness in the land becomes possible.

Stillness in the land is possible. But it will begin with stillness within—where we encounter God and ourselves, and go out into an aching world to minister with deeper understanding and compassion.

Let us meditate on these words: “Be still, and know that I am God!” Be still and know that I am. Be still and know. Be still. Be. □

This article was adapted from a sermon delivered at Boston University’s Marsh Chapel on October 26, 2016. Watch at livestream.com/watch (search “STH Micah Christian” and start at 12:46).



JOURNAL

HOW CAN RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES EMPOWER THE MARGINALIZED?

1. Pseudonyms are used to protect research subjects' names.

2. Christopher Arriola, "Knocking on the Schoolhouse Door: *Mendez v. Westminster*, Equal Protection, Public Education, and Mexican Americans in the 1940's." *Berkeley La Raza Law Journal* 8:2 (1995): 166–207.

3. Ibid.

4. U.S. Census Bureau. American FactFinder. Accessed April 17, 2017. factfinder.census.gov.

5. U.S. Census Bureau. QuickFacts. Accessed May 21, 2017, census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/0669000.

P

ublic acts of faith give Latinx* immigrants a sense of belonging

BY JONATHAN CALVILLO

"If you really want to see what our religion is like, you have to come around here to the community, where the true religion takes place." Edgar Olvera,¹ a lay Catholic leader, offered this advice regarding my study of Latinx religions in Santa Ana, California. I observed as Edgar led a procession through a neighborhood in Santa Ana and noted how people embodied their faith locally. At this procession, the faith of one local resident, Mercedes Uribe, stood out. Mercedes' hospitality spurred dozens to join a concluding celebration, hosted at her home. Her devotion, embodied in steamy bowls of stew, seasoned with fragrant oregano, and accompanied by the boisterous laughter of volunteers, engulfed the street. Most participants were immigrants. Many were undocumented. Those yearning to re-create ethnic traditions found solace. In this moment, this *barrio* (neighborhood) belonged to the faithful. In these public acts of faith, members of a marginalized population enacted membership and citizenship in a society that questions the legitimacy of their presence.

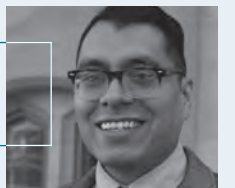
COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Santa Ana's history is replete with tales of Latinx working to legitimize their local presence. For example, historians recall *Mendez v. Westminster*, a 1947 federal court case encompassing Santa Ana,

which purported to end the segregation of Latinx schoolchildren;² the case provided a precedent for *Brown v. Board of Education*.³ Subsequent generations of local Latinx activists hearken back to this legacy through immigrant rights advocacy, combating gentrification, decrying educational inequality, and spearheading health and housing initiatives. Yet the city of roughly 325,000 residents, whose population is nearly 80 percent Latinx⁴ and almost half foreign-born,⁵ is home to many residents endangered by their legal status. Even US citizens in these communities are burdened by the realities of

(Continued)

About the Author



Jonathan Calvillo is an assistant professor of sociology of religion. His work examines the role of faith in society's incorporation of racialized and immigrant people, especially those of Latinx* identities. A Southern California native of Mexican heritage, he has fulfilled pastoral roles within several urban, immigrant communities.

* Editor's note: Latinx is a gender-inclusive alternative to Latina or Latino.

Courtesy of Kimberly Macdonald

family members, friends, and neighbors grappling with issues of legal status. Communities of faith become all the more important for residents seeking refuge, resources, and respect.⁶ Beyond receiving religious benefits, religious participation enables immigrants to influence their neighborhoods. Through religious activities, participants network, organize, and offset deficits in their neighborhoods.

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

The faith communities I observed were particularly invested in empowering immigrant parishioners through public acts of faith. Parishioners participated in activities such as prayer walks, peace marches, and cultural celebrations throughout their residential neighborhoods. Faith groups often collaborated with nonprofits and city agencies to host public events. These collaborations strengthened ties between immigrants and local institutions. Many of these activities, not focused on proselytizing, beckoned the participation of surrounding residents.

Direct efforts to reach non-members and invite them into the fold also provided important pathways for local engagement. When such events were framed as opportunities to save corrupt and immoral neighborhoods, local residents often perceived these events as acts of outsiders encroaching on residents. However, outreach events that involved community members in planning and staging, and highlighted residential community assets, were received more readily. Members of marginalized communities, often seen solely as objects of community outreach, were effective at working within their own communities. As such, events were most successful when community

members were leading the efforts themselves. The passionate faith expressed by the Catholic and Protestant parishioners I encountered did not require positive aspects of communities to be downplayed.

The manner with which faith groups spoke about local neighborhoods correlated with the affective ties group members demonstrated toward their neighborhood. Messages spoken by church leaders, for example, correlated with how parishioners perceived their neighborhoods of residence and their role therein. Some Santa Ana parishioners internalized church messages emphasizing neighborhood problems, paralleling Omar M. McRoberts’ work among African American parishioners in Boston.⁷ Members internalizing such messages were less likely to invest in and draw from the assets of their working-class communities. In contrast, parishioners who internalized church messages that valued local communities spoke positively about the neighborhood they lived in and invested in the well-being of their neighbors. Parishioners tended to either take ownership of their neighborhoods or to retreat from their own residential communities. Immigrants who had more positive views of their communities were embedded within resource-rich residential networks, while immigrants with negative or apathetic views of their community held weaker ties to these residential networks.⁸

ACTIVATING LOCAL CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship provides an important conceptual lens for examining the social value of public religion in immigrant communities. Bloemraad, Korteweg, and Yurdakul define citizenship as a “form of membership in a political and geographic

6. Charles Hirschman, “The Role of Religion in the Origins and Adaptation of Immigrant Groups in the United States.” *International Migration Review* 38 (2004): 1206–1233.

7. Omar M. McRoberts, *Streets of Glory: Church and Community in a Black Urban Neighborhood* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

8. For a valuable study on how perceptions of a residential neighborhood affect resident engagement, see Mario Small’s Boston-based study: Mario L. Small, *Villa Victoria: The Transformation of Social Capital in a Boston Barrio* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

9. Irene Bloemraad, Anna Korteweg, and Gökçe Yurdakul, “Citizenship and Immigration: Multiculturalism, Assimilation, and Challenges to the Nation-State.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 34:1 (2008): 154.

10. These categories are adapted from the four categories presented by Bloemraad et al., *ibid.*

11. Evelyn Nakano Glenn, “Constructing Citizenship: Exclusion, Subordination, and Resistance.” *American Sociological Review* 76:1 (2011): 1–24.

community.”⁹ These scholars conceive of citizenship as involving four interlocking, shifting spheres:

1. Permission, denoting legal status conferred on members by the state; **2. Privilege**, signifying rights afforded to members; **3. Participation**, referring to members’ engagement in political and civic arenas; and **4. Place**, encompassing a sense of societal belonging.¹⁰ As these spheres shift across historical periods and geographic regions, marginalized members of society might lay claim to societal membership based on religious participation. The membership and contributions of immigrants within local religious communities often fit what

Evelyn Nakano Glenn refers to as “substantive citizenship.” According to Glenn, substantive citizenship involves “local practices that recognize or deny standing to certain groups and individuals irrespective of their formal standing under constitutional provisions or statutory law.”¹¹ Substantive citizenship accounts for limitations within formal citizenship, such as when formally recognized citizens cannot exercise inherent rights or when productive members of society lack pathways to legal citizenship status. This is a space for faith groups to potentially step in.

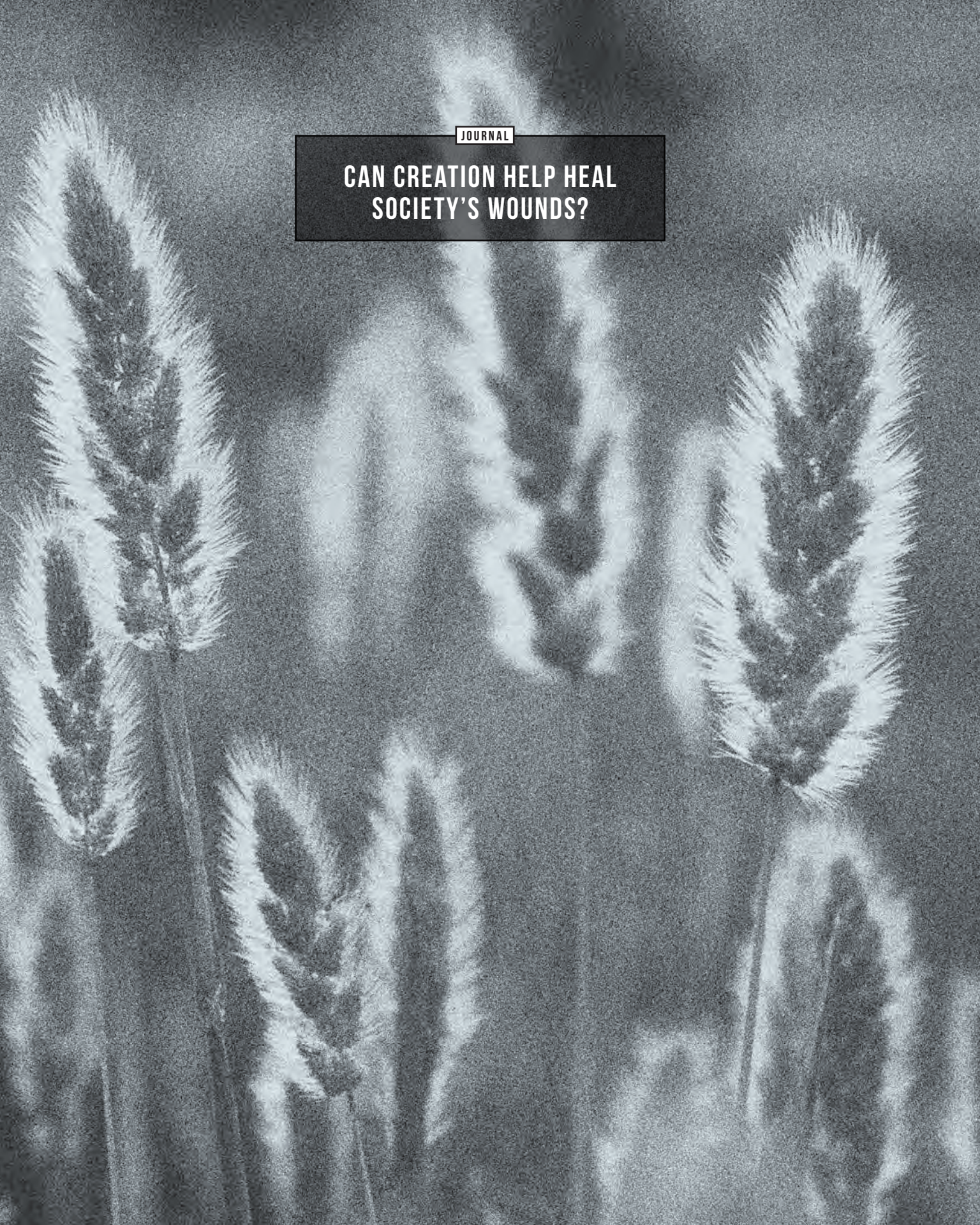
When faith groups facilitate the local involvement of marginalized popula-

tions, they are essentially affirming the substantive citizenship of marginalized groups. Many churches and faith leaders advocate streamlining formal citizenship pathways *and* protecting the rights of formal citizens whose rights are categorically denied. Additionally, by providing marginalized populations with platforms of local empowerment, faith groups bolster the substantive citizenship of excluded groups. Faith groups can thus occupy the

space between the legal and the social, even as they work to close that gap. Recognition of substantive citizenship is critical, as marginalized groups find themselves stuck in perpetual advent, waiting to be recognized. The immigrants that I encoun-

tered not only fine-tuned important civic skills through religious participation, they also solidified their sense of community ownership. As they shared meals with others, reached out to at-risk youth, and celebrated rites communally, residents activated their substantive citizenship. Platforms of local community engagement amplified voices often unheard. It behooves faith communities, nonprofits, and civic organizations to expand on these practices. The dignity of individuals and entire communities is enhanced by these efforts. When the most vulnerable among us are lifted up, society as a whole flourishes. □

Substantive citizenship accounts for limitations within formal citizenship, such as when formally recognized citizens cannot exercise inherent rights or when productive members of society lack pathways to legal citizenship status.



JOURNAL

CAN CREATION HELP HEAL SOCIETY'S WOUNDS?

1. Including the therapeutic benefits of relationships with non-human animals. Howard Frumkin, "Building the Science Base: Ecopsychology Meets Clinical Epidemiology," in *Ecopsychology: Science, Totems, and the Technological Species*, ed. Peter H. Kahn, Jr., and Patricia H. Hasbach (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012).

What grass and garden pests teach us about the gift of grief

BY TALLESSYN ZAWN
GRENFELL-LEE ('04,'16)

The darkness of winter solstice last year felt hopeless indeed to many toiling to build the kin-dom. Then and now, everywhere we look, we see broken bodies, broken systems, and a broken planet. Despair seeps through the cracks of our convictions and eats away at our determination. It hovers behind acts of courage, resistance, and healing that embody the gospel hope. It whispers, "The brokenness is too deep. The disease has spread too far. It's not enough. It can never be enough. *You* are not enough." How can we scrape together prophetic witness in today's social, political, and ecological landscape of devastation?

In fact, the crises of today—refugees, terror, police brutality, rape culture, eco-cide—are symptoms of a deeper disease, one so deep that it has become normalized. Patriarchy is so embedded in our individual and collective consciousness that we do not recognize it. We accept the inevitability—and divine sanction—of Lordship as we simultaneously blame victims for the resulting destruction. For a disease that runs so deep, perhaps a solution lies in digging even deeper into our communal identity; perhaps we need to reach down past our intellect, our emotion, past our very bodies, and into the soil beneath our feet.

Nature is the great equalizer. No matter our power or privilege, the truth

we need to remember, perhaps, is that we never left—we still are earth, and to Earth we shall return. Each diverse blade of grass soothes our souls with its "imperfections": no two alike, blends of many hues; Creation accepts us unconditionally. Unsurprisingly, nature connection studies resoundingly demonstrate the healing and empowerment of time spent in and with nature.¹ Of course, plenty of people spend ample time in nature and then proceed with divisive, fear-based ideologies and behaviors that demonize the other and perpetuate hate. Like followers of other peace-preaching religions, Creation's disciples can also miss its greatest lessons of love and acceptance. With such potent medicine, what's going wrong? *(Continued)*

About the Author



Tallessyn Zawn Grenfell-Lee ('04,'16) received her PhD from STH. Her dissertation, "Creation, Food, and Ecological Ethics: The Garden as Mediation," examined the potential of congregations to build ecological peace and justice. She lives in Switzerland, where she contributes to the ecofeminist liturgical movement and explores theologies of permaculture.

Courtesy of D. G. Grenfell-Lee

The answer may sound familiar to anyone who has spent any length of mindful time connecting with nature, from wilderness to window garden: Creation confronts us with our deepest wounds. Understandably, this process can be terrifying and paralyzing. Nature connection mentor Jon Young describes an ancestral “wall of grief,” which stems from our loss of kinship with other-kind and with our ecosystems.² Urban

children often fear nature and wilderness,³ a phenomenon reinforced since the onset of cities in the Middle Ages.⁴ Womanist historian Dianne D. Glave also asserts the role of generational memory in the trauma specifically associated with slavery.⁵ Evelyn C. White describes this heartbreak: “*I wanted to sit outside and listen to the roar of the ocean, but I was afraid.*”⁶

“Forests, parks and other areas of great natural beauty,” writes geographer Carolyn Finney, who quotes White in her book *Black Faces, White Spaces*, “are not exempt from the psychological ramifications of an American history steeped in oppressive tactics designed to diminish the humanity of one group of people because of the color of their skin.”⁷

White’s description captures a tragic reality: even children and adults who yearn to reconnect with their deepest identities as creatures of Creation face barriers that can seem too great to overcome.

Creation itself can help us discern how to begin the healing process that would release us from these burdens. Permaculture farmers and gardeners have demonstrated that all “pests,” from aphids to swarms of locusts, represent ecosystems trying to heal.⁸ This ecocentric world view compassionately redefines all brokenness as part of a Creation yearning toward wholeness. Seen this way, our individual and systemic sins—our

moments of snide superiority, our lashing out in anger, our lack of self-love and acceptance, our demonization of the other, and all the ways these sins manifest in society and climate—represent opportunities. When we see grief as a gift, we unlock its potential for healing.

According to Young:

For thousands of years, ancient wisdom

*traditions have developed practices to tend to the grief and fear that can hold us back from healing ourselves, our relationships with other people and our children, and our relationship with nature. Through these practices, grief becomes an ally.*⁹

If we run from grief, we hold it inside our (individual and collective) bodies, leading to disease, John Wesley’s term for sin; yet, our traditions can help us welcome sorrow and release anguish. It is time to revive the ancient wailers, to “call for the mourning-women to come; send for the skilled women to come; let them quickly raise a dirge over us, so that our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids flow

**When we welcome grief
as a companion, we can
appreciate the night: instead
of terror and despair,
darkness provides the womb
that, in time, brings forth
new birth.**

2. Jon Young, Ellen Haas, and Evan McGown, *Coyote’s Guide to Connecting with Nature* (Santa Cruz: OWLink Media, 2010), 164.

3. Robert D. Bixler and Myron F. Flood, “Nature Is Scary, Disgusting, and Uncomfortable,” *Environment and Behavior* 29:4 (1997).

4. Vito Fumagalli, *Landscapes of Fear: Perceptions of Nature and the City in the Middle Ages*, trans. Shayne Mitchell (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 8–14, 76–89, 180–85.

5. Dianne D. Glave, *Rooted in the Earth: Reclaiming the African American Environmental Heritage* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2010), 4–5.

6. Evelyn C. White, “Black Women and the Wilderness,” in *Names We Call Home: Autobiography on Racial Identity*, ed. Becky Thompson and Sangeeta Tyagi (London: Routledge, 1996), 283.

7. Carolyn Finney, *Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 118–9.

8. Sepp Holzer, *Sepp Holzer’s Permaculture: A Practical Guide for Farmers, Smallholders & Gardeners* (East Meon, Hampshire, UK: Permanent Publications, 2004), 65–7.

9. Claire Dunn, “Nature’s Wall of Grief,” Huffington Post Australian Edition website, October 18, 2015, huffingtonpost.com.au/claire-wren-dunn/natures-wall-of-grief_b_8229816.html.

10. Jeremiah 9:17–18.

11. Francis Weller, *The Wild Edge of Sorrow: Rituals of Renewal and the Sacred Work of Grief* (Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 2015), 122.

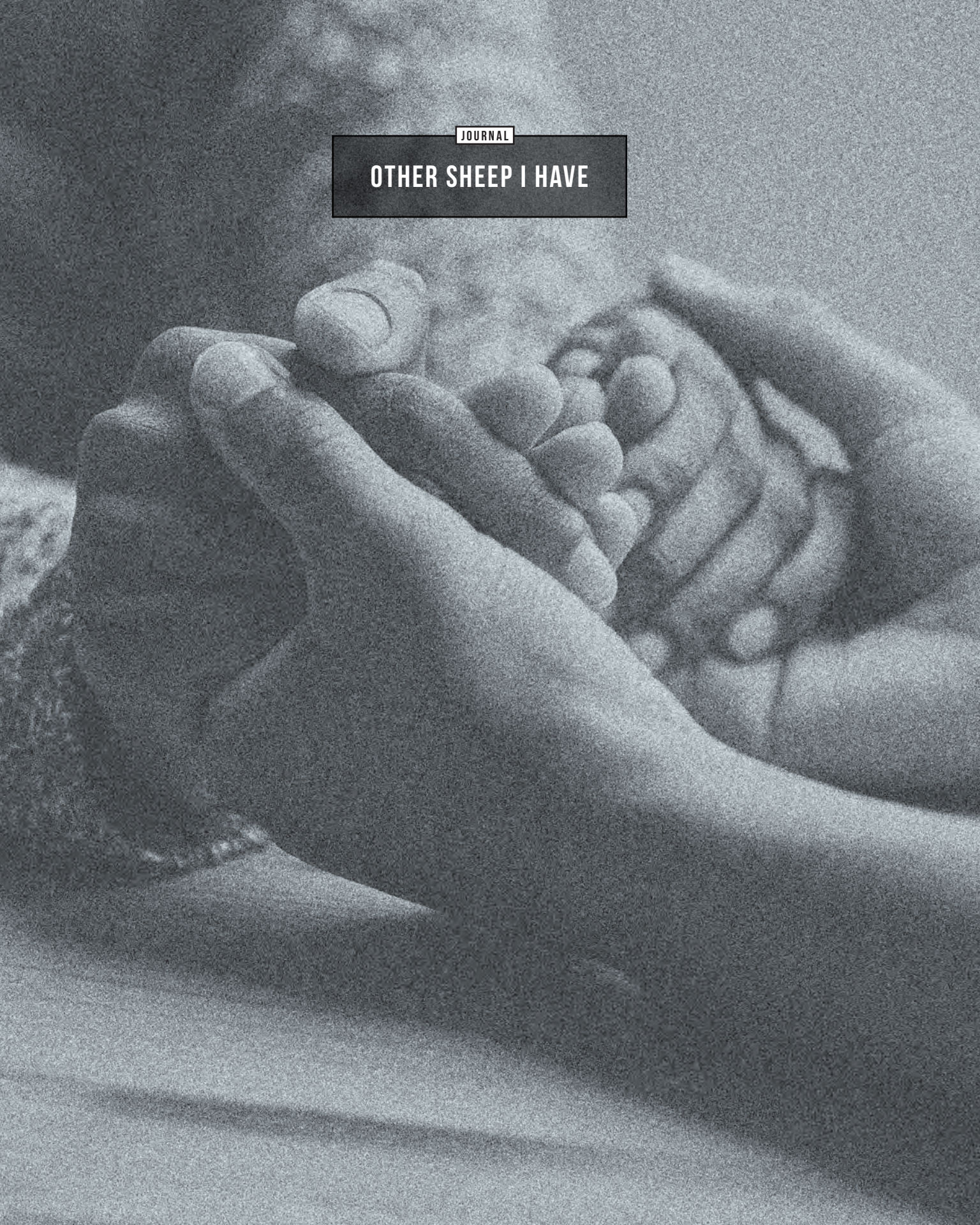


with water.”¹⁰ Lament must once again become not only culturally acceptable but central to our self-understanding. According to Francis Weller, communal grief rituals release shame, depression, and fear, and build empathy, intimacy, and gratitude within us, with one another, and with the whole of Creation. When we welcome grief as a companion, we can appreciate the night: instead of terror and despair, darkness provides the womb that, in time, brings forth new birth:

*Grief takes us below the surface of our ordinary lives, dropping us into a world the color of a raven’s wings. It is the night world, an encompassing surround of darkness and mystery...and we all take this journey downward into the belly of the earth. This is a sacred terrain filled with memories, the artifacts of a lifetime, ancestors, and spirits. Grief pulls us into the underworld, where we are invited to discover a new mode of seeing, one that reveals the holiness of all things.*¹¹

The gift of grief enables us to see the true abundance in the broken bread and shared cup: we do not need to worry that compassion for Creation will take away from compassion for racism, sexism, or any other brokenness. All wounds swirl together in the cup of the New Covenant, which overflows with unending compassion when we welcome the healing it offers.

So as we journey forward, whatever stands in the way of life and hope—whatever keeps us from the fullness of love for self, other, Creation, Divine—let us take it by the hand as the companion that alone will lead us to wholeness. Creation embraces our broken branches, our misshapen roots. The beautiful soil welcomes our tears, which water its fertile compost to bring forth new life. Together, we are, abundantly, enough. □



JOURNAL

OTHER SHEEP I HAVE

Jesus said he would bring diverse people into his fold. Following him means uniting people through kindness.

BY LAWRENCE EDWARD CARTER, SR. ('68,'70,'79)

“And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.”

—John 10:16¹

Howard Thurman said to me in 1979, “When you arrive in Atlanta, walk among the crimson hills, listening to the voice, then become the Voice.” Mahatma Gandhi said in 1906 during his first nonviolent campaign in South Africa, “Be the change you wish to see.”

The advice of Thurman (Hon.'67) and admonition of Gandhi are the long shadow of Jesus' infallible, one-sentence sermon in his native synagogue: “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing” (Luke 4:21).

In other words: I will be my own Scripture, the Word made flesh. I will walk among you full of life and grace. You shall know me by my fruits. My body is the temple of God, and God is in his holy temple. If you see me, you have seen the Father, the One who sent me, for the Father and I are one. There is no separation. I will be the Voice and I will be the change.

The problem is that most Christians assume Jesus is speaking only about himself. I believe Jesus was speaking about all of us.

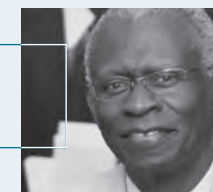
As the struggle continues, while waiting for justice, what are we to do?

Jesus says to download the Word of God into your biodata so that it is fulfilled, manifested, actualized, and realized for all to hear and see, and walk among us full of life and light. We must up-level our spirituality and our cooperative vibrations. If we obey, emulate, and follow the Palestinian Prophet, while waiting for justice, we will become justice for those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersexual, or asexual; the gun-carriers; the non-believers; the unlettered; and the black Americans.

For at its heart, justice is kindness or extra consideration. Kindness,

(Continued)

About the Author



Lawrence Edward Carter, Sr.

('68,'70,'79) was recruited by Martin Luther King, Jr. (GRS'55, Hon.'59) to attend Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1958. In 1979, he became the first dean of the Martin Luther King Jr. International Chapel. During his career, he has worked and studied in 14 American universities, and today is a tenured professor of religion at Morehouse College.

1. The Original African Heritage Study Bible King James Version.

I believe, is a major piece of the pattern that unites people across all boundaries, building bridges for reconciliation.

Thirty-eight years of experimenting in the Chapel at Morehouse College has convinced me that Christian believing is not synonymous with, but secondary to, Christian realization.

In his book *Teacher and Child: A Book for Parents and Teachers*, child psychologist Haim G. Ginott published an excerpt of a letter to educators written by a Holocaust survivor: “I am a survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw . . . gas chambers built by learned engineers, children poisoned by educated physicians, infants killed by trained nurses, women and babies shot by high school graduates. So, I am suspicious of education! My request is: help your students to be human. Reading and writing and spelling and arithmetic are only important if they serve to make students more human.”²

Holocaust, apartheid, segregation, untouchability, and bigotry were and are perpetuated by people who call themselves Christians, believers, or religious. Faith identities often create narrow, exclusive, mean, negative, and rival communities leading to racial and religious bias, hatred, ignorance, confrontation, violence, war, and the destruction of bridges to reconciliation. Teaching

people to empathize with believers of other faiths, races, professions is a strategy to eliminate hostility. A very close understanding between persons is the best defense against aggression. If I can feel for you, there is a good chance I will not hurt you. If you are not so quick to see intentionality in other people’s mistakes, you may be able to forgive them.

A NEED FOR NONCONFORMISTS

According to Martin Luther King, Jr. (GRS’55, Hon.’59), we need a dedicated circle of transformed nonconformists, a dedicated minority of the creatively maladjusted—not a conforming majority. I hope there is not a normal person reading this sermon. Can students and professors be designers of reconciliation? The answer is yes—if we shape the soul by letting its divine essence speak.

If you do not like the current makeup in our global neighborhood, then work on yourself. “This new age in which we live is geographically one and now we are challenged to make it spiritually one,” said King.³ To achieve this dream—a planet of the right to universal human dignity—we must become maladjusted to anti-Semitism, casual bigotry, justifiable war, camouflaged poverty, police racism, patriotic xenophobia, arrogant sexism, varieties of

2. Haim G. Ginott, *Teacher and Child: A Book for Parents and Teachers* (New York: Avon Books, 1972).

3. Mervyn A. Warren, *King Came Preaching: The Pulpit Power of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 173.

4. “What Is Human Revolution?,” Daisaku Ikeda website, accessed May 21, 2017, daisakuikeda.org/main/philosophy/essays-on-buddhism/what-is-human-revolution.html.

5. “Wisdom and Knowledge,” Daisaku Ikeda website, accessed May 21, 2017, daisakuikeda.org/main/educator/edu/edu-05.html.

6. King James Version.

raging homophobia, expedient abortion, salary inequality, environmental pollutants, and suffocating nationalism. We must practice, not just preach, deep spirituality. Yes, you have the right in this country to carry a gun, but that does not give you the right to disrespect my right to human dignity.

Daisaku Ikeda, a lay Nichiren Buddhist of Japan and president of Soka Gakkai International, tells us we need a revolution of the inner life.⁴ He teaches that we must not confuse knowledge with wisdom, and that compassionate wisdom and a natural empathy toward life in its infinite diversity is the goal.⁵ The failure of this makes police violence possible. Our goal as spiritual beings in a spiritual universe, as planetary citizens and as human incarnations must be diversity-maturity as moral cosmopolitans.

Peace can only occur, however, when each individual dares to acknowledge, appreciate, affirm, and celebrate the sacredness of all people in all religions and nations.

Jesus said: “Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold” (John 10:16).⁶ He made it clear to us that his ministry was for the lost of the household of Israel. But it is also apparent in this Johannine text that Jesus was also a moral cosmopolitan.

The Mahatma’s friends frequently asked him why he did not become a Christian, since he was so impressed with Jesus as the Christ, whom he believed to be the greatest human who ever walked the Earth.

Gandhi’s response would go something like this: Just because I admire, love, and respect my best friend’s mother does not mean that I have to give up my own mother in order to show my profound appreciation for my best friend’s mother. My mother, Hinduism, has served me well. I love and respect her and I will keep her because she has permitted me to use the hymns, prayers, and rituals of the great religions of the world in my search for truth and my experiment with truth, irrespective of where truth comes from. If I were a Christian and attempted to use the hymns, prayers, and rituals of the great religions of the world in my search for truth, regardless of its source, Christians would accuse me of blasphemy. Therefore, I will remain a Hindu. I will keep my mother.

Gandhi was a universal human, building bridges for reconciliation by respecting the truth and wisdom in all religions, while waiting and working for justice. He was not petitioning, but giving himself permission. *(Continued)*

A very close understanding between persons is the best defense against aggression. If I can feel for you, there is a good chance I will not hurt you.

Peace can only occur, however, when each individual dares to acknowledge, appreciate, affirm, and celebrate the sacredness of all people in all religions and nations.

I don't intend to forsake my mother, Christianity, just because more than half of the Church believes that preaching without practicing is sufficient.

You cannot hope to build a better world without improving yourself and sharing a responsibility to model justice for all of humanity through cross-cultural and interracial affiliation. Quoting poet and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson, my dear friend and mentor Ikeda says, "What matters is the 'depth at which we live,' the 'power of thought' we manifest."⁷

OUT OF THE BOX

I have been baptized in the Jordan River, the Nile River, and the Amazon River and have floated on the Ganges. However, it is not simply your activism that matters but rather what you are transmitting and how you are showing up in the world. We must move from ritualizing in worship to realization, to being the thing itself, because too many people have elevated the messenger and discarded the message. They would rather worship by going from "born of the Virgin Mary" to "crucified, dead, and buried,"⁸ ignoring Christ's life in between. They would rather see Jesus as their exception, not as their example.

Gandhi was a transformed nonconformist. He practiced a creatively maladjusted, original Hinduism that produced the most powerful, healing, nonviolent

weapon of the 20th century. King said, "I have been a keen student of Gandhi for many years. However, this business of passive resistance and nonviolence is the gospel of Jesus. I went to Gandhi through Jesus."⁹ Pope John Paul II revealed that Gandhi taught him how to improve his spirituality.¹⁰ Gandhi's spiritual dictionary was the Bhagavad-Gita, but he read all of Islam's Qur'an and studied comparative religion. We

must think outside the imaginary box to survive, to grow, to learn, and to be bridge-builders and reconcilers.

Jesus thought outside of the proverbial box, which is why he could say: "I must need go by Samaria" (John 4:4).¹¹

"The Kingdom of God is among you" (Luke 17:21). "Greater things than this shall you

do" (John 14:12).¹² "Today, you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43).

"And you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (John 8:32).

"I am not working these miracles, it is the Father who worketh through me" (John 10:38, 14:10).¹³

"I have not come to bring peace, but a sword" (Matthew 10:34).

"And other sheep I have, which you know not of, which are not of this fold..." (John 10:16, KJV)

7. Daisaku Ikeda, *The Heart of the Lotus Sutra: Lectures on the "Expedient Means" and "Life Span" Chapters* (Santa Monica, CA: World Tribune Press, 2013), 211.

8. "Apostles' Creed," United Methodist Church website, accessed May 21, 2017, umc.org/what-we-believe/apostles-creed-traditional-ecumenical.

9. David J. Garrow, *Bearing the Cross, Martin Luther King Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1986), 75.

10. "The Time When John Paul II Bowed Before Gandhi," *La Stampa* website, April 22, 2014, accessed May 21, 2017, lastampa.it/2014/04/22/vaticaninsider/eng/world-news/the-time-when-john-paul-ii-bowed-before-gandhi-h6dMyjOUoPt5GuoHwx7loM/pagina.html.

11. "But he had to go through Samaria," New Revised Standard Version.

12. "and greater works than these shall he do," KJV.

13. "Believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father" (John 10:38); "The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works" (John 14:10), NRSV.

14. Vincent Harding, "Martin Luther King and the Future of America," *CrossCurrents* 46:3 (Fall 1996), 303–312.

15. Martin Luther King, Jr., "Palm Sunday Sermon on Mohandas K. Gandhi," delivered at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, Montgomery, Alabama, March 22, 1959. The King Institute at Stanford University website, accessed May 21, 2017, kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/primarydocuments/Vol5/22Mar1959_PalmSundaySermononMohandasKGandhi,DeliveredAtDext.pdf.

16. Martin Luther King, Jr., "Inscription to Harry Emerson Fosdick," November 1958. The King Institute at Stanford University website, accessed May 21, 2017, kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/primarydocuments/Vol4/17-Nov-1958_FromFosdick.pdf.

17. "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you," KJV.

18. Edith Wharton, "Vesalius in Zante. (1564)," *North American Review* 175 (Nov. 1902), 631. Washington State University website, accessed May 21, 2017, public.wsu.edu/~campbell/d/wharton/whartpoe2.htm#Vesalius%20in%20Zante.

Jesus pointed to the Centurion soldier, a non-temple-goer, when he illustrated real faith (Matthew 8:10). Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel pointed to King and said, "The whole future of America will depend on the impact and influence of Dr. King,"¹⁴ because he left us the blueprint of how to re-create the greatest ecumenical-interfaith, multicultural reconciliation force in modern history. Speaking about Gandhi, a Hindu, in a 1939 sermon, King said, "It is one of the strange ironies of the modern world that the greatest Christian of the twentieth century was not a member of the Christian church."¹⁵ He also believed that Harry Emerson Fosdick, an Anglo-American, was the preacher of the century.¹⁶ King stepped beyond conventional group-thinking to speak the truth as he understood it. He was not bound by cultural, racial, nationalistic, theological, or sexual stereotypes. Jesus preached: "You have heard it said of old, but I say unto you, love your enemies, do good to those who despise you" (Matthew 5:44).¹⁷

They all transcended race, age, education, class, culture, faith, sexual preference, nationality, and gender to discover and affirm truth. While waiting for justice, get out of your imaginary boxes in pursuit of wisdom, irrespective of the source, and you will start to succeed in unexpected ways.

How can we cause the light of compassion and courage to shine on the challenges and conflicts of the world's diversity while waiting for justice? Edith Wharton wrote, "There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it."¹⁸ If the world you are seeing is not to your



Mahatma Gandhi statue in silhouette, New Delhi

liking, there is only one thing to do: work on yourself.

I'm the one who measures out the goodness of God in my life. How much goodness can you measure out? Can you be an architect of reconciliation toward the "other sheep" who are not of this fold? Jesus was! Are you? □

This article was adapted from a sermon delivered at Marsh Chapel at Boston University's Sunday Interdenominational Service on July 24, 2016. Listen at blogs.bu.edu/sermons/2016/07/24.

WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO SAVE LIFE ON EARTH FROM EXTINCTION?



1. Martin Luther King, Jr., *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), 167.

2. Edward O. Wilson, *The Creation: An Appeal to Save Life on Earth* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2006), 5.

3. *Ibid.*, 4–5.

It's too late for incremental progress on climate change—we need an immediate turnabout

BY MARK Y. A. DAVIES ('01, GRS'01)

In his 1967 book, *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?*, Martin Luther King, Jr. (GRS'55, Hon.'59) included a chapter titled “The World House,” in which he called on all persons to work together to eradicate the evils of racism, poverty, and war. He wrote, “We have inherited a large house, a great ‘world house’ in which we have to live together—black and white, Easterner and Westerner, Gentile and Jew, Catholic and Protestant, Moslem and Hindu—a family unduly separated in ideas, culture, and interest, who, because we can never again live apart, must learn somehow to live with each other in peace.”¹

King recognized that although we may be from many different religions and cultural backgrounds, we share this one planet, this one world house, of which we are all a part. King also recognized that unlike other kinds of houses, if we destroy our world house, we cannot simply move to another house or build a new one. This world house is the only one we have. We share the awesome responsibility of making sure the home we have inherited will be enjoyed by generations of life to come, humans—from all faiths and no faith—and nonhumans alike.

On a planet that has existed for 4.6 billion years or so, we have only existed as a species for a couple of hundred

thousand years. For most of that time, we had very little impact on the global environment, but recently that has changed. In less than a blip of geologic time, so minute as to be almost no time at all, we have contributed to a mass extinction of species and we are changing the very climate of Earth itself. According to entomologist Edward O. Wilson of Harvard University, conservative estimates are that species are going extinct over 100 times faster than they would without the presence of human activity in the world.² At the current projected pace of extinction, about half of the species of life that existed at the beginning of the century may no longer exist at century's end.³

(Continued)

About the Author



Mark Y. A. Davies ('01, GRS'01) is the Wimberly Professor of Social and Ecological Ethics and director of the World House Institute for Social and Ecological Responsibility at Oklahoma City University. He is an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church and serves as a member of the United Methodist University Senate.

Our legacy may be the sixth great extinction on our planet, and the only one brought about by the activities of a single species. It is the greatest moral imperative of our time that we turn away from ways of living that bring more death to the world than life. This moral imperative calls us to think thousands and millions of years into the future, and to think about all species of life rather than just thinking about our own generation. This moral imperative calls on all persons from all religions and all cultures to work together for the regeneration of our human and ecological communities. As King recognized in his world house vision, we must somehow learn to live with each other in peace, but living in peace with each other as humans is not enough—we must also find ways to live at peace with the planet itself.

The 2016 Paris Agreement is a hopeful sign that global awareness and commitment to do something to avoid the worst-case scenarios of climate change are growing. Unfortunately, we have waited too long to take the necessary action to avoid bad-case scenarios. The best we can hope for now is to avoid the catastrophic consequences of out-of-control climate change. As hopeful

Our legacy may be the sixth great extinction on our planet, and the only one brought about by the activities of a single species. It is the greatest moral imperative of our time that we turn away from ways of living that bring more death to the world than life.

as the Paris Agreement is, many climate scientists do not see it as being enough to keep us below a 2 degrees Celsius increase over pre-industrial average temperatures, which could be the point of no return when it comes to any hope for a livable climate.⁴

The new presidential administration in the United States has indicated it will not adhere to the Paris Agreement, and the Cabinet members leading the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Energy, Department of State, and Department of the Interior oppose the EPA’s Clean Power Plan. The new administration is aligned to promote an energy policy with fossil fuel at its core. The chances of preserving a livable climate were already extremely slim, but they are even smaller if we

commit our society and its infrastructure to another generation of dependence on fossil fuels.

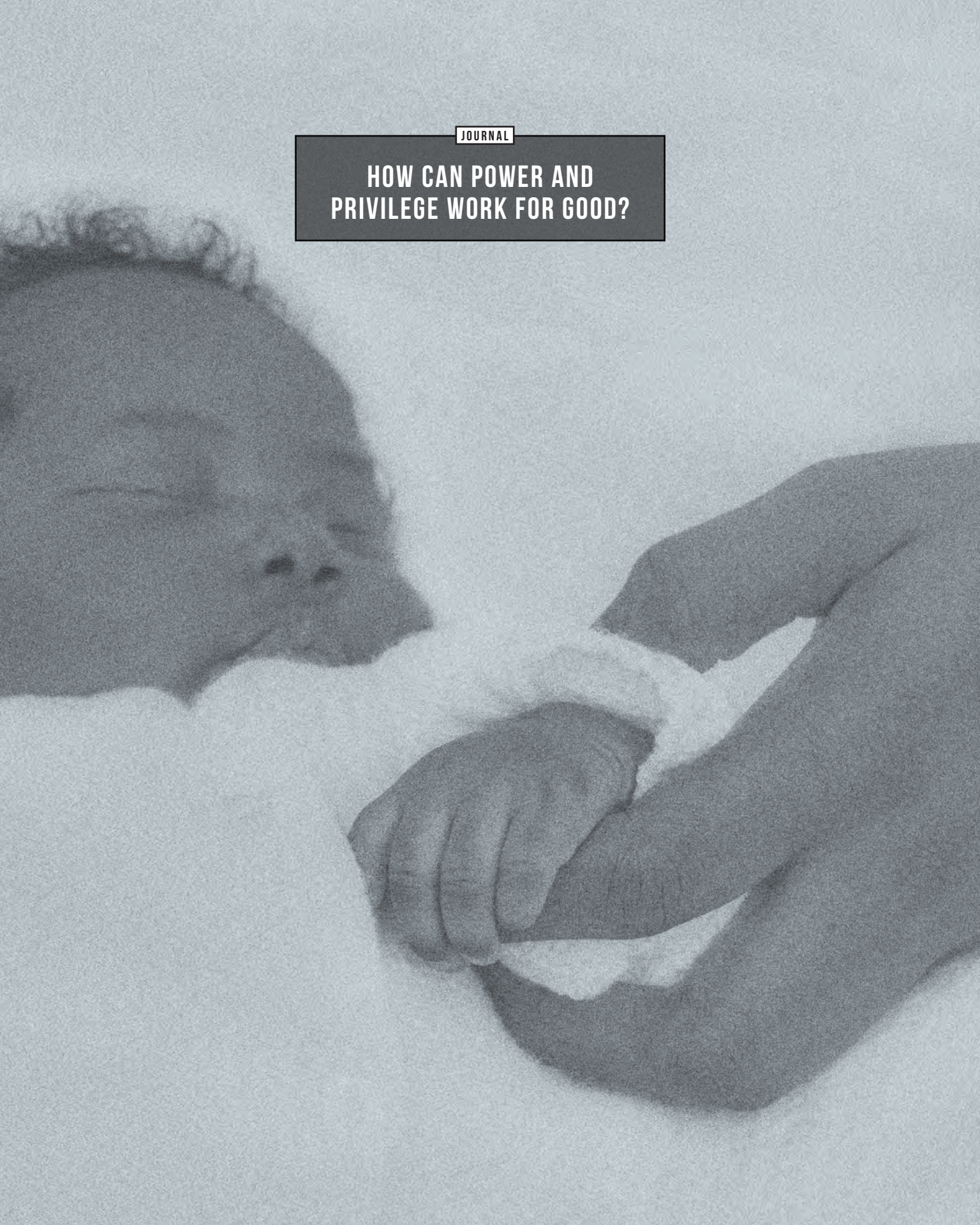
If human civilization were the *Titanic* and an unlivable climate were an iceberg, the past decade represented a very slow turning of our societal ship away from the iceberg. The turning had been too slow, but at least we were making some effort. Now the fossil fuel industry in the United States is grabbing the

4. Nsikan Akpan, William Brangham, and Eric Osman, “Why the Paris Talks Won’t Prevent 2 Degrees of Global Warming,” December 2, 2015, accessed March 15, 2017, pbs.org/newshour/updates/why-the-paris-talks-wont-prevent-2-degrees-of-global-warming.

ship’s wheel and turning us back straight toward the iceberg, full steam ahead. There is an opportunity that presents itself to us in this dire moment. The slow turn we have been making to avoid climate chaos was likely not sharp enough to avoid an unlivable climate. The incremental actions might have been giving us the false hope that we were doing enough to avoid a catastrophic collision. Now there is no doubt we are being steered on a collision course. Our self-made demise can

be seen clearly on the quickly approaching horizon with no fog of false hope to hamper our view. If we cannot see clearly now, we never will, at least not until it is much too late. We have to take the ship’s wheel into our hands and make the sharp turn for all people and the planet. We have to turn that wheel with our whole lives and our whole beings, with a commitment and intensity that will challenge us to our core. Everything we care about depends on it. The fog has lifted. □





JOURNAL

HOW CAN POWER AND PRIVILEGE WORK FOR GOOD?

1. Here I am using “erotic” in the old philosophical sense, meaning the power to connect, yearning for the something new, driving to wholeness and thus to overcome estrangement, or driving to exceed the given.

2. Nimi Wariboko, *The Principle of Excellence: A Framework for Social Ethics* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2009).

The community plays a critical role in realizing individuals’ unique potential

BY NIMI WARIBOKO

When you hear the words “power, privilege, and prophecy,” what energies of freedom do they solicit? Is it negative liberty, as in removing obstacles, or positive liberty, as in the capacity or possibility to act? If you gravitate toward negative freedom, you are with the majority of theologians and social activists.

Many think that power generates privilege, and that prophecy comes around to remove social constraints to human flourishing, to attack the marriage of power and privilege, which is often named as unethical or evil. The “and” that conjoins the three words in this understanding is a contra, and not a belonging. In this essay, I want us to think of the “and” as *erotic*, as in power and privilege belonging together with prophecy.¹ The three Ps are rooted in one ontological principle, and here I will explain this principle and argue that the usual practice of positing prophecy against power and privilege does not adequately address the issue of creating relationality without special privileges, without subjugation, and without discrimination.

Let us begin by (re)defining the three terms: power, privilege, and prophecy. The point is to enable us to develop new perspectives on praxis and resistance that draw inspirations from the erotic quality of “and” in our social existence and as a community-building power.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Power is the capacity, capability, or drive to actualize the potentialities of a person or group. Every move of power from essence (or will-to-live) to existence privileges a path, creates a specific process of moods, modifications, and concretion of existing data or entities to produce and guard its actualizations.² The notion of “privileging a path” speaks to the logic of differentiation and differential gearing that every individual needs in order to drive toward self-fulfillment and human flourishing at her own pace and preference within the context of a community that puts a premium

(Continued)

About the Author



Professor Nimi Wariboko is the Walter G. Muelder Professor of Social Ethics. His scholarship focuses on social and economic ethics, continental philosophy, Pentecostalism, and African social traditions. A former investment banker, he was previously Katherine B. Stuart Professor of Christian Ethics at Andover Newton Theological School, Massachusetts. He is the author of 17 books.

Courtesy of Nimi Wariboko

on human dignity and equality. To “privilege a path” does not mean that there is a unique path that each person must follow to actualize her individual potentialities. It only means that a person should become what she “is essentially and therefore potentially”; the individual is to establish herself as a person and a person in communion.³ Every person is a *miracle* of new beginning in the world⁴ and has the capacity to introduce something new, something totally unexpected into the world.

Thus, ignoring this purpose to do and actualize what one is essentially and what one is potentially capable of doing, is deemed immoral.

The individual and her community forge the privilege of a way forward to realization of God’s gifts in the individual. The privilege of actualization of potential is a moral act. Following Paul Tillich, I would say that “every moral act is also an act in which the community and the individual work together to establish the individual as a person capable of answering to the demands of life.”⁵ And this takes place through the “process of actualization of potentialities for the sake of the individual and the community.”⁶ When an individual is given her due—her privilege—she also gains access to the relevant communal-institutional forms

in which everyday person-to-person encounters happen and that make for human flourishing.

The concept of privilege recognizes the uniqueness of every individual, and accordingly affirms Hannah Arendt’s notion of natality, which nudges us to acknowledge that every human being carries the possibility to act in totally unexpected ways that might constitute a fresh start for our social existence. Every child is a miracle to the world and a potential source of miracle. When we as a community regard every child as a miracle, as something that has never happened in the world before, and thus remain open and willing to allow and support her to follow the “law” of her own individual development, give her the right of exception to the actualization of her potentialities, and not consider her as a cog in a wheel, we are enacting privilege for her. Here, privilege (from *privus* and *lex/leg*, meaning private or particular, and law) gestures to the “private law,” the force of the alternative, the underside of standards that deform and disrupt hegemonies and hierarchies that are proprietary to publicly, widely recognized, institutionally proper practices and appearances.

Prophecy, as informed by our definitions of power and privilege, is the

3. Paul Tillich, *Morality and Beyond* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1963), 20.

4. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 9, 177–78, 247.

5. Nimi Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle: Ethical Methodology in New Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012), 180.

6. Ibid.

7. For a description of weary love as used by Catholic theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar, see Shelly Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), 71–72, 79–80, 163.

urgent practice of returning power and privilege to every woman so she can become all that her gifts and training can allow her to be in order to enjoy maximum human flourishing. Power and privilege are the two eyes of prophecy. This means the eyes of the prophet are ever trained on power and privilege, watching their every inclination and movement away from social justice. Two eyes of the prophetic consciousness can also mean that without broadened understanding of power and privilege, the prophet cannot adequately see reality, that is, the adaptive network of how the power of being, potentialities, and the moral imperative to be a person is articulated and functioning.

THE EROTICISM OF “AND”

“And” signifies the nature of relationships between power and privilege to prophecy. It is the eroticization of the relationship between power and privilege on one side and prophetic consciousness on the other. The relationality here is not oppositional; there is no unholy power-and-privilege here versus holy prophecy over there. The “and” implied by our definitions of power, privilege, and prophecy tracks no ontological distinction between the three Ps. Rather, I have attempted to illuminate the site of intersection

of the three Ps. This is a fluid site of love. It is a place where prophecy yearns for power and privilege, power of being and grace, as a movement toward fulfillment of individuals. I name this site the restless ocean of “and,” a rhizome of overflowing creativity. This home of “and” is the womb of unfolding, enfolding, and refolding motions, energies, multiplicities, and possibilities. “And” is love, active and weary, that wants to conquer the estrangements between power, privilege, and prophecy, ever weaving the threads that bind them together.⁷

I have taken us through an alternate world of thought on power, privilege, and prophecy to search for a new way of visualizing the three words and to use any insights gained from this vision to *re-cognize* them and to invigorate our praxis of resistance, especially in this post-election era when vulnerable minorities feel weary, confounded, and afraid. The three Ps sutured by “and” as a form of eros signals not only the urgency to safeguard the flourishing of vulnerable minorities, but also the connection-making power within life and social existence. “And” in this sense demands for the praxis of “freedom from” and “freedom to,” negative liberty and positive liberty. □

Power and privilege are the two eyes of prophecy. This means the eyes of the prophet are ever trained on power and privilege, watching their every inclination and movement away from social justice.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ENTER INTO THE WOUNDED BODY OF CHRIST?



1. John 20:24–29, *The New Interpreter's Bible* Volume IX (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), 848.

2. John 20:25, *ibid.*

I experienced God's presence while volunteering as an aid worker on the US–Mexico border

BY LAURA RAMBIKUR ('17, SSW'17)

One of the most important lessons I have learned at the School of Theology is the responsibility we have to be accountable for the theology we practice and preach. Growing up, I knew the disciple Thomas as the one who was skeptical, the one who said he wouldn't believe the miracle of the resurrection until he had seen Christ and touched his wounds.¹ I did not just learn this in church; it is a message perpetuated by popular culture and has become engrained with the name Doubting Thomas. The message is simple: do not be like Thomas, believe in the resurrection. Do not question, just believe.

Thomas teaches us about wounds—how to ask questions and how to serve as witness to the wounds that accompany the resurrection. When Jesus appears after the crucifixion, it is not in a new body, but in a wounded body. Is there something to be learned from a wounded resurrection? The *New Interpreter's Bible* highlights the graphic description of Thomas' request, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my fingers where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it."² Thomas' grief takes on a challenge not expressed by any of the other disciples; Thomas needs to physically enter into the wounds to believe the resurrection, to find hope. Thomas helps us understand what it means to

enter into the broken body of Christ. This particular passage has always captivated me because it is the Thomas moments, the moments upon entering the wound, where I encounter God. What does it mean to enter into the wounded body of Christ?

When I think of the wounded body of Jesus, I think of home, the border, and the physical barrier that divides Arizona and Mexico. I think of the wilderness where so many hundreds of people have died trying to escape political violence and economic downturn. For six summers, I worked in Honduras and heard horror stories of the border, *la frontera*, from my Honduran friends and family. I never doubted the stories were true, but I needed to touch the wounds of the border to fully understand the responsibility I have—like

(Continued)

About the Author



Laura Rambikur ('17, SSW'17) is from Arizona and is pursuing ordination as a deacon in the Desert Southwest Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. After graduation, she plans to return to the borderlands and conduct advocacy work for immigrants.

Courtesy of Laura Rambikur

Thomas, I needed to experience this wounded body of Jesus.

In spring 2010, I went on my first trip as a volunteer with a group that provides humanitarian aid on the US–Mexico border. Despite its beauty, the Sonoran desert is one of the most deadly migration corridors in the western hemisphere. We had been searching all day, we knew the migrants were there; we had followed their trails, walked their footsteps, found their empty, broken water bottles and food containers. We found shoes, prayer cards, and pictures of families, the loved ones they had left behind. Bumping along the dusty dirt road, we saw the saguaro cacti standing tall with their long arms reaching out, resembling human figures frozen in place.

We finally hit the intersection where the road turned to pavement. As soon as we made the turn, we saw them. There were six of them; their movements were slow and weary, reflecting exhaustion known only to those who have stared death in the face. Being the translator for the group, I swung the car door open and hopped out. “We are friends of the Church, do not be afraid.”

SHARING STORIES

They were from Chiapas, Mexico, and had traveled for three months.

Originally, they were part of a group of 25 and had become separated. For nine days, they had been wandering, lost in the desert wilderness without food and water. They had been traveling by night when vehicle headlights appeared and sent the group scattering. Afraid of being discovered, they did not call out for help. They had left their homes, their loved ones, everything they had behind in Chiapas. Raul, a farmer whose land had been taken from him by government officials, explained he could not find work. “My children cannot eat,” he said. “We cannot survive, so I left looking for work, looking for a way to survive.” I sat with them, and they told me their stories. I carry these stories with me; they are stories of the wilderness and the wounded body of Christ.

When we asked about their feet, the six exchanged looks, resistant at first, but I explained we had medicine to clean and bandage their blisters. Reluctantly, they took their shoes off, exposing their bloody and blistered feet. *My God!* I thought as I saw their wounds. I had never participated in a foot washing. I felt as if I had been given a tremendous responsibility. As we cleaned their feet, we listened to stories of Chiapas, the soft green landscape, so far from this deadly, dry, desolate wilderness. Raul

3. John 20:28, *ibid.*, 849.
4. *Ibid.*, 849–850.
5. John 20:27, *ibid.*, 849.

told me God had sent us as their guardian angels, that they thought they were going to die alone in the desert, so far from their families, so far from God. His words hit as I realized the responsibility I was now charged with upon entering into this wound, by becoming part of their story.

After Thomas sees the risen Jesus and touches his wounds, he responds, “My Lord and my God!”³ The New Interpreter’s Bible highlights this as one of the most powerful responses in the Gospel of John.⁴ Theologically, this response points to the beginning of John, where the word is God and becomes flesh. It is in the wounded body of humanity that Thomas encounters God. As I sat there with these six, it hit me; all I could do was serve as witness: “My Lord and my God!”

When Jesus appears in this passage, he gives in to Thomas with compassion. The word compassion is derived from the Latin *pati cum*, “suffer with.” Maybe Thomas is the disciple who, in the most material and graphic way, helps teach compassion. Jesus does not shame Thomas for his request to touch his wounds; instead, Jesus invites Thomas into his wounds: “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and

believe.”⁵ The compassion demonstrated in this passage is not often highlighted. Yet, the way Jesus and Thomas interact is critical: theologically, it points to the resurrection that happens through the act of compassion when Thomas enters the wound. This is where Thomas finds resurrection.

COMPASSION AND RESPONSIBILITY

The afternoon had finally started to cool when I saw the unmistakable white-and-green truck identical to the vehicles used by animal control—a lifted pickup truck with a steel cab covering the bed where they lock away dangerous animals. Border Patrol had found us; my heart sank, even though I knew this moment was coming. The group had asked us to call; they wanted to go home. They were terrified and felt this was the best way to ensure their safety.

The agent got out of the truck and unlocked the back, the door swung open, and I watched in horror as they piled into the back of the truck that would haul them away to one of the private prisons where God only knows what would become of them. Raul was about to get in when he turned and hugged me. Tears welled in my eyes as he said, “You have saved my life, thank you.” Just then, the agent

yelled, “Hey! You! What’s in that bag, *su mochila?*” Raul was the only one who had a *mochila* (backpack). “*Nada!*” Raul began. “*Solo es...*” But before he had a chance to explain, the agent had ripped the bag from his hands. “What’s in here? *Drogas?* (Drugs?) Guns?” As the officer reached into the bag, I saw that Raul’s expression was completely calm, while the officer was shocked. “A Bible?” It caught him completely off guard. “All right, get in.”

I could no longer hold back my tears. We watched them drive away, all crammed into that tiny space. They had wandered into the wilderness, where they had lost so much, yet all the while carrying their faith, the hope that drives humanity to seek survival despite all odds.

This is their story, the story of the wounded body of Christ. This is the story of Thomas entering into Jesus’ wounds. When we choose to walk with those who suffer, we choose compassion; when we choose to enter the wound, we have a responsibility to serve as witness. When we serve as witness, we have a responsibility to be held accountable for the wounds we have experienced. To share the stories of the wounds that accompany the resurrection is to encounter God. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. □

This article was adapted from a sermon delivered at Boston University’s Marsh Chapel on October 29, 2016.



More than 400,000 individuals and family groups were caught trying to enter the United States illegally between ports of entry on the southwest border in fiscal year 2016, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

CLIMATE CHANGE IS A JUSTICE ISSUE



Jen Bloesch

IF WE'RE SERIOUS ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS, WE NEED TO TAKE ACTION ON THE ENVIRONMENT

BY JEN BLOESCH ('18)

I first fell in love with nature when I was introduced to a park ranger at Theodore Roosevelt National Park in North Dakota. A gruff, yet jolly fellow, he lamented with true woe and sincere anger how the landscape had changed over his lifetime. He kept meticulous records of the daily weather and of the birds and animals he'd seen, and he could tell you how migration patterns had changed and how the Aspen bloomed earlier than they used to. He knew the reality of climate change because he lived so close to the land.

Most of us, however, do not, and it often means we see environmentalism as a niche interest. While so many people are suffering from poverty or racism or political upheaval, there isn't time to focus on the environment. This justification might be valid, but we forget that a changing climate *is* a justice issue. I couldn't underscore it more heavily: *climate change is a justice issue.*

We've all heard the predictions—rising sea levels, more intense storms, increased irregularity of temperature, more droughts and floods, and decreased biodiversity. These things are not necessarily justice issues themselves, but

consider who they impact and who has the capacity to alleviate them. When people lose their homes due to rising sea levels or floods, are not able to feed their families because their crops won't grow, are forced to flee from their homes due to fighting over scarce resources, and suffer from intense heat waves, these are all matters of justice. The list could go on to include victims of pipeline spills, nuclear pollution, water contamination, extreme storms, and drought.

This can all get a little gloom-and-doom, but it reminds us that we have a responsibility to each other, to live in our world in such a way that stops these problems from occurring. If we truly believe that access to clean water and air, safe housing, and affordable food are human rights, we must all be concerned about what's happening to our planet. I truly believe that the environment as a political issue cannot be separated from other social justice concerns. A vote for the health of the planet is a vote for social justice. □

Jen Bloesch ('18) is a second-year master of divinity student. She is working toward becoming an ordained pastor in the United Church of Christ.



SHARED ROOTS

Photo by Rebecca L. Smith ('16, SSW'16)

The three columns seem monuments to time, weathered by centuries—no longer able to carry a powerful building, but strong enough to support three intertwined trees.

Not all is what it seems. The columns are made of steel wrapped in basalt stone aggregate. The olive trees—real enough and 80 years old—were transplanted onto the columns in 1990 and are kept green by a drip-nozzle irrigation system.

Despite the artifice, Ran Morin's *Olive Columns*, perched on a hill close to Jerusalem, sent a powerful message to Rebecca L. Smith. She visited the installation during

a spring 2015 travel seminar, and her picture of the columns, *Shared Roots*, won BU's Religion & the Arts 2016 photography competition.

"Beyond the representation of the symbolism of the number of trees and their embodiment of peace, the symbolism of the anatomy of the trees was most profound," says Smith ('16, SSW'16). "We are in a severely divided time in our world. Our divisions are what make us unique, but it is our polarization that creates permanent disconnection. I need to be reminded that, above all, we share the roots of our humanity and that this can be a pathway to peace."—Andrew Thurston



BU Religion & the Arts Initiative annual competitions, which have also included poetry and hymn composition, are open to alums. Find out more at sites.bu.edu/religionandthearts.



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Rev. W. Bobby McClain ('62,'77) and Jo Ann McClain, pictured in Marsh Chapel

The McClains have included a gift to STH in their estate plans.

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