ON THE ROAD

Journal of the
Anabaptist Association of Australia and New Zealand Inc.
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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ross Coleman

The input from the AAANZ conference in Canberra was still ringing in my ears when the following incident occurred. I was approached by a local person who has been quite antagonistic to Diane and me. As far as we can tell, it's because we're church, religious, not "real" public housing tenants and friendly with one of her major rivals for power in the estate. It has been a very hurtful journey. We have tried to be balanced, fair and muted about the conversations we've had along the way with her.

Standing in the HaveAchat community café, she came up to me. It was clear from her breathing and body language that she was agitated. Amongst other things she said something like this - ''I'm very disappointed you stood as secretary at the tenants meeting last night. You are not a tenant and by taking that role, you disempowered other people here who have lots of skills. We have to live here - you can leave whenever you like." Her emotional outburst caught me off guard – all that good input from the weekend seemed to evaporate as my integrity, purpose and beliefs were challenged again.

The sense of what I said was "(name) I'm disappointed that you continue to misrepresent the reasons that have brought Diane and me to Glebe. The election of me as secretary was affirmed by the tenants group, I did not put my name forward. There were no other nominations. We are here to be involved in the community helping to make it an even better place to live."

I do not want to diagnose the conversation (I have done that in another context) but some of the lady's comments had merit and my responses showed a low level of listening.

After I calmed down, I recalled William Oates' three key words – sit, walk, and stand. William had given some valuable input from an aboriginal perspective to the conference. Being with people in their hurts and grievances is a key way of moving a relationship forward. I am thankful to William for those three small words – words that capture so much in the peacemaking process.

I have deliberately gone and talked to this lady since this conversation. She has commenced some university studies this year. I offered some support along the way.

I trust you enjoy this issue of ***On the Road*** with reflections on the conference. By the way, our next Anabaptist conference will be in Perth in January 2007. Like this one, it will change our lives forever.

On The Road

The AAANZ quarterly journal publishes news, articles, book reviews, and resource information. It is published online with a paper edition available for those without computer facilities. (Paper edition A$20 per year) To be added to the mailing list write :

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COVER SYMBOL: The lamb in the midst of briars is a traditional Anabaptist symbol. It illustrates the suffering Lamb of God, who calls the faithful to obedient service and discipleship on the road. This particular rendition is from ***Hymnal A Worship Book***. Copyright 1992. Reprinted with permission of Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, PA, USA.

THE VIEW FROM EPHESIANS FOUR

Mark and Mary Hurst

...to prepare all God's people for the work of Christian service

Newsletter = a small publication (as a leaflet or newspaper) containing news of interest chiefly to a special group

Journal = a periodical presenting news or containing scholarly articles on a particular subject

The first AAANZ newsletter was published in March 1998, seven years ago this month. It was a publication of sixteen pages put together by Doug Hynd with assistance from Chris Marshall and Gary Baker. It fit the "Newsletter" category.

Gary Baker and Chris Marshall in conversation at the January 2005 AAANZ conference in Canberra.

Issue 6 in November 1999 saw the newsletter named ***ON THE ROAD***. Doug wrote: "After extended reflection the Committee has agreed on the title ***ON THE ROAD*** – a title which contains echoes of the early church where Christians were referred to as followers of the way and also to the theme of discipleship, a key theme in the Anabaptist tradition.

There are some Australian echoes to this title. The writing, life and witness of Athol Gill and the music of Ross Langmead's come quickly to mind.

The resonances also echo in a recent work by the recently departed Morris West. In one of his last works ***The View from the Ridge: The Testimony of a Pilgrim*** the image that he [refers] to in describing his life is that of the pilgrim.

"*The fact is we can survive only in communion with our present, our past and with our dusty footsore fellows on the road.*" (p.3)

As a description of what this newsletter is seeking to assist that quote pretty much sums it up." (***OTR***, #6, p.3)

After three years and ten editions, the Editor hat passed from Doug Hynd to us. The idea was to continue the newsletter format with the publication of "Occasional Papers that would feature lengthier articles." That never happened. Instead we began publishing "lengthier," and hopefully more in-depth, articles in amongst the news and reviews. Over the years, we added colour to the publication and then book covers and photos, and our readership increased beyond our AAANZ membership. A recent survey of readers shows most are happy with what ***OTR*** is providing.

With this issue, we are taking the step (are we allowed?) of calling ***OTR*** the "Journal" of the AAANZ. We think it reflects the maturing of this publication and the Association it represents. Your comments on the change are welcome.

Reflections from the AAANZ January Conference take pride of place in this issue including art work from the children present. We are pleased to have articles from three Kiwi authors and hope this reflects our growing into a truly bi-national association. Our "Events" page highlights some important visitors coming to Oz in the weeks ahead. Take advantage of these opportunities if you can.

Periodically, we send a "Greetings from OZ" letter to supporters in North America chronicling our time here in Australia. If you are interested, these reports can now be found at the following church website:

http://www.ecsmc.org

Click on link: "Mark and Mary Hurst News"

Here is the direct pdf link for the most recent edition:

http://members.localnet.com/~mart2316/Hurst/March2005.pdf

Participants at January 2005 Conference in Canberra

LETTERS

On 16-02-05 we included the following item in the AAANZ Mailing:

Widow of murdered missionary honoured by Indian government New Delhi (ENI). The widow of an Australian missionary, Graham Staines, who was murdered in India in 1999 has said she is overwhelmed to have been honoured by the Indian government with a top award for civilians. "This is an honour not for me but for Graham and all the staff at the leprosy home" where the Baptist missionary worked, said Gladys Staines on Wednesday after hearing she was among 27 eminent people named for the Padmashree annual civilian awards. Graham Staines and his two sons Philip, aged 10, and eight-year-old Timothy were burned to death in January 1999 as they slept in a van in Manoharpur, a remote village in the Indian state of Orissa.

Wayne Pelling from Melbourne responded:

I grew up in the Churches of Christ and our church had an outreach to Monash University. We befriended an Indian couple who subsequently moved to Newcastle for employment at the Hospital there. A mate and I stayed for a few days and we shared our time there with a missionary from India who was a Queenslander. Our hosts, being Tamils, asked this chap to sing a hymn in the dialect he used in Northeast India, so he sang "Jesus Loves me this I know." It was one of the most Spirit-filled moments in my life...I commenced writing letters to this missionary and he once asked me to come and work in a Leprosarium (I am a nurse). We lost track of each other due to work and marriage commitments, but I will never forget Graham Staines...I found that the Missionary society back home here was quite paternalistic in their attitude to some of his co-workers and converts but he never, ever was.

It is good to receive your mailings...Recently I have been very irritated by some examples of Institutional Cruelty. To help me get my mind around such irritations I catch and write down some of the turbulent thoughts. This time they came out as a poem, which I am sharing with you. [See her poem below.]
Shalom.
Linley Kennett, Wellington, NZ

Jesus.
There you hang.
Supposed to have suffered for all of us.

Jesus.
Gone away.
Roman silenced. Cold rock encases you.

Jesus.
Emptied tomb.
Only hollow shapes show what covered you.

Jesus,
Your Spirit
Now sent ranging into people's lives.

Jesus,
Still you hang
While corrupted power tramples the little ones.

"Jesus!"
Voices cry
"You're used to oppress the unusual."

Jesus.
An excuse
To tame the agitated, bereaved ones.

Jesus?
Yes, you hear,
And, perhaps one day, followers will too.

Jesus,
Keep shouting
Your silent cry against all unfairness.

Jesus,
Let your name
Be used in love to heal our broken hearts.

Jesus,
Illuminate
Hearts darkened by anger and guilty fear.

Jesus,
Once again
Be the wall-breaker, the bridge-maker.

O God,
May people
Choose Jesus' way and discard the world's way.

O God,
May people
Wake up and join each other in strength.

O God,
Our brother
Jesus, and your upholding Spirit be

The One
Always here
For us abused, misunderstood mourners.

O God,
May leaders
Through your eyes, see their own self-centredness.

O Jesus,
Heal us all.

AROUND THE NETWORK

AAANZ Celebrates Ten Years Together

A conference centre on the outskirts of Canberra was the site for the AAANZ bi-annual conference. The conference centre grounds still bore scars from bushfires that two years ago swept through the area and destroyed several buildings and a Boy Scout camp next to it.

There were no fires this year for the forty-seven participants who came together from around Australia and New Zealand. International guests included Glenn Kauffman, Eastern Mennonite Missions Asia director from Hong Kong, Jon Rudy, MCC Asia Peace Resource director from the Philippines, and Christine Vertucci, an MCC volunteer in East Timor.

The gathering's theme was "Christianity and Violence" with Dr. Chris Marshall from New Zealand as the main speaker. Chris gave three talks with the overall title "For God's Sake". His sub-titles were "Terrorism, Religious Violence and Restorative Justice," "Religious Violence and the Peace of Christ" and "Atonement, Violence and the Will of God."

In his first talk, Marshall said five responses are needed by religious groups to deal with the violence around them. These five are (1) affirm the validity of protest, (2) interfaith dialogue, (3) improved grassroots/ lay education, (4) faith-based dispute resolution, and (5) undertake a "terror-audit" of your own religious group.

"Violence is the primary manifestation of sin in the world," according to Marshall. He spoke about the possibility of transformation even for terrorists with the Apostle Paul being a first-century example. He sees in Anabaptist theology an alternative to crusading and just war theology. Anabaptism has something positive to offer to a world facing annihilation.

Another speaker presented the conference with an Australian Aboriginal perspective on the topic. William Oates is a professor at Central Queensland University. He assured the conference participants that despite his snow white hair and beard, he is Aboriginal. He spoke about the need for "being wise" when looking at issues of violence in Australia. "We need a closer look at issues that are very complex. Don't judge by appearances nor make a decision based on hearsay."

He spoke about the Aboriginal need for "mentors" and "mates." His call to "Sit, Walk, and Stand" was a call for partnership and mutuality over co-dependency. There is controversy in Australia over who is "indigenous". Some want to say that only Aboriginals can make that claim but Oates said, "If your heart calls a place home, you are indigenous. Your responsibility is then to be a custodian of the land."

William Oates, one of the conference speakers

He ended his talk with the biblical invitation to "Come, let us reason together."

The third conference speaker was Christine Vertucci, a US citizen who has have lived in Asia since 1978. She has been with Mennonite Central Committee since 1996 where her first assignment was as the Country Representative for MCC-Philippines. Christine's second assignment is now in East Timor with the East Timor Student Solidarity Council in a mentoring role. She first served with the Commission for Reception, Truth, and Reconciliation in East Timor.

Doug Hynd, Christine Vertucci and Jillian Ferrer

Christine gave an impassioned presentation about East Timor. AAANZ members responded enthusiastically to the idea of a learning tour to meet the people where Christine works. A reciprocating idea emerged that would have members of the AAANZ hosting a few Timor students so they could practice their English skills in Australia. As president of AAANZ, Ross Coleman said, "It gives the network something specific, hands on." It gives a mission focus outside of Australia with one of its closest and poorest neighbours.

On Sunday afternoon, Doug Hynd, a local AAANZ member, conducted an Anabaptist tour of Canberra, the Australian centre of power. Doug's tour offered participants an alternative view of the exercise of power in architecture, national symbols, and what the nation holds sacred.

Sunday evening's worship service used World Fellowship Sunday materials from Mennonite World Conference. It was a reminder through stories, readings, and prayers that AAANZ is part of a larger worldwide family. Thorwald Lorenzen, senior pastor of Canberra Baptist Church, gave a rousing sermon calling for all gathered at the conference to "walk in the resurrection."

A PowerPoint presentation during a members' meeting recalled the last ten years of AAANZ and was followed by a "dreaming" session looking ahead to the next ten years. Several present were members of Perth Anabaptist Fellowship (PAF), a two-year-old house church in Western Australia's capital city. The PAF represents what many want for AAANZ's future – Anabaptist fellowships in major Australian cities with members of all ages.

Jon Rudy wrote in a trip report after the conference about his few days with these "Down Under Anabaptists." "I had numerous conversations that endeared me to this group. Because all members come from outside traditional Anabaptist circles, the critique of post-modern Anabaptism they have by living the gospel in a secular, post Christendom culture is prophetic to the church in North America."

Compiled by – Mark S. Hurst

Group building activity

AAANZ Conference Reflections

Greetings from Fennell Bay Mennonite Church of Hope. It was a good thing to be together with likeminded sisters and brothers at the AAANZ Conference in Canberra. May the Lord work in our hearts, as we put into practice the teachings we heard at the conference.
Peace - Alice and Foppe Brouwer, Fennell Bay, NSW

It was a time of renewal and intellectual stimulation for me; a time for making new friends and learning about Australians and Australia and New Zealand; a time for feeling a deep common commitment and bond for justice and peace with all of the conference participants; a time for seeing the need to go beyond familiar borders and meeting your neighbours in the region and creating opportunities for mutual learning and understanding; a time for quiet and meditative prayer in the mornings; a time for connecting with soulmates and receiving nourishment for my soul.

Thank you so much!
Much peace, Chris Vertucci, East Timor

Thanks for a great conference.
Peter Kennett, Wellington, New Zealand

Thanks again for the conference...I had a great time and especially enjoyed hearing Chris Marshall as well as catching up with some friends.
Peace,
Ian Packer, Sydney, NSW

Conference participants explore resource table

I had numerous conversations that endeared me to this group.
Jon Rudy, MCC Philippines

The AANZ conference was a great gift to me. It came at a critical time for me. In late November, I found myself working through a range of emotions. I had just returned from a wonderful three weeks in Indonesia with my son Evan who was studying there when I received the news that my father was in an advanced stage of a losing struggle with an aggressive cancer.

The impact of the trip to Indonesia had been powerful. I had arrived back in Australia with a commitment to try and engage the AAANZ with our neighbourhood and to find ways of opening up channels for mutual sharing with our brothers and sisters. In the run up to the conference, I found myself balancing the need to be present physically and in spirit with my Dad and with my family at the same time as I was preparing my own contribution.

Called to community

For me the conference was a reminder that we are called to a community of faith that is not confined by race or nationality. I was particularly reminded of this in flesh and blood terms through the presence of Bill Oates with his Aboriginal roots on the one hand and Glenn Kauffmann, Christine Vertucci and Jon Rudy with their contacts and engagement throughout Asia, Canada and the United States on the other.

Mark and Mary Hurst, Doug Sewell, Doug Hynd, Ross Coleman, Ed Love, Bessie Periera

The Anabaptist tour of Canberra on Sunday afternoon with 15 conference participants with its focus on symbols of power and war was a challenging reminder of why we need such a community. To resist the principalities and powers when they claim from us the worship that belongs to God alone is not easy if we are isolated from our brothers and sisters.

Called to give and receive

The call to the Association to embark on a path of giving and receiving in relation to East Timor was clear and inviting. The story telling of Christine Vertucci of the recent history of East Timor was passionate and invited us to see our neighbours as people with names and faces.

I found myself moved and humbled late Sunday afternoon, in the gift from the conference of a wonderful book for my part in organising and contributing to the conference and in being surrounded in prayer by conference participants, for myself, my father, and my family. It was a moment that brings tears of gratitude to my eyes when I stop and remember it several weeks later.

Called to life

The conference was also a call to affirm life through following Jesus on the way of non-violence. Chris Marshall in his three studies and Thorwald Lorenzen in his passionate sermon both convicted me deeply that non-violence is integral to the Gospel and not just an optional add-on or possible implication.

That is hard and I am grappling with how I can live this conviction more fully and give voice to this in my conversations both those who are already disciples of Jesus and those who see Christianity implicated in too many episodes of violence to be an option for them.
Doug Hynd, Canberra, ACT

The youth teach the group a peace song at the conference

Atonement, Violence and the Will of God:

A Sympathetic Response to J. Denny Weaver's *The Nonviolent Atonement*

CHRISTOPHER D. MARSHALL*

Abstract: In the past generation, criticism of "satisfaction" theologies of atonement has grown in intensity, especially among feminist, womanist and black theologians. Mennonite theologian J. Denny Weaver has recently added his voice to this chorus of criticism, arguing that satisfaction atonement theology "depends on divinely sanctioned violence that follows from the assumption that doing justice means to punish." In its place Weaver proposes a new, nonviolent model of atonement called "narrative Christus Victor," which takes the nonviolence of Jesus as its starting point. This article sympathetically reviews Weaver's proposal, then seeks to measure it against the witness of the New Testament. It argues that Weaver is correct in rejecting the violent presuppositions of satisfaction atonement, but wrong in concluding that Jesus' violent death was neither willed by God nor essential to the work of salvation.

Exposure to the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition has been one of the most formative influences on my Christian life. My encounter with Anabaptism began with reading key books by Mennonite authors during my student days in New Zealand in the early 1970s. It developed during my four years of doctoral research in Britain in the early 1980s, when my wife and I were members of the London Mennonite Fellowship. It was deepened further by sabbatical leaves at Mennonite institutions in the United States in the early, and then again in the late, 1990s. And throughout the past 25 years it has been continually enriched by fellowship with Mennonite friends and scholars around the world.[1]

From my contact with the Anabaptist tradition, I have come to believe that a commitment to nonviolence is an essential feature of Christian discipleship. At first I saw a peace commitment largely in connection with questions of war and militarism. It is a commitment to forswear lethal violence because it is incompatible with the worship of a crucified God. But I have since learned that violence is systemic and institutionalized, not just episodic and personal. Violence is arguably the primary social manifestation of sin (cf. Gen 4:1-16, 23-25; 6:11); it is all-pervasive in human experience. It shapes the way we view the world and influences how we exercise moral and theological discernment.

Those who take seriously Jesus' call to nonviolence must learn to read the Bible, do theology and think about God in light of this basic commitment, which is by no means easy. The Bible itself is full of violence, much of it ascribed directly to God. Also, the long history of Christian theological interpretation has been affected by the Church's profound compromise with violence, both in sanctioning the violence of the State and also in authorizing violence in pursuit of its own interests. This compromise has rested upon, and has strongly reinforced, a view of God as a violent and punitive deity who gets his own way-whether in the short term, through crusade or inquisition, or in the long term, through eschatological judgment and everlasting torment-by use of overwhelming coercion.

Such a God is increasingly hard for people to believe in. Many people today prefer atheism or agnosticism or some vague form of pantheism to the violent deity of traditional religion. And who can blame them, especially in these days when violence fuelled by religious fundamentalism is on the upsurge around the world. In such circumstances, atheism may be the morally better choice. "When persons take leave of God," Clark Pinnock reminds us, "we need to ask what sort of God did they take leave of?"[2] Surely it is better *not* to believe in God than to believe in a violent God who bullies, hurts and humiliates people for his own ends. Given that religiously sanctioned violence puts the very existence and character of God in the balance, it is incumbent on Christian believers to think carefully about how our hermeneutics, our theological method and our vision of God have been conditioned more by Christendom's longstanding accommodation to violence than by conformity to the revelation of God we see embodied in Jesus.

That Jesus himself lived and taught nonviolence is generally, if not universally, accepted by New Testament scholarship, and is well entrenched in the popular mind as well. But three issues arising from this fact are much more disputed. First, *why* did Jesus advocate nonviolence? Was it merely a calculated, pragmatic response to the particular political or social circumstances he faced? Or is it a normative principle of action for all time and in all circumstances? Second, *how* do Christians obey Jesus' word on this matter? Should we confine his call to nonviolence to the sphere of interpersonal relations alone? Or do we extend it to social and political relationships as well? And third, *what* does Jesus' teaching and practice tell us about the nature of ultimate reality? Should Jesus' rejection of the sword determine not just Christian ethics but the entire theological endeavour? Is God nonviolent? Or does Jesus reserve to God alone the right to use violence to achieve his purposes?

This last question is perhaps the most acute one for the Christian witness against violence. True, Christian nonviolence does not strictly depend on the supposition of a nonviolent God. Indeed Miroslav Volf argues that nonviolence is possible only in a violent world by the conscious deferment of violence to God: "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."[3] But it makes much better sense theologically to assume that Jesus practiced nonviolence and demanded it of his followers because he believed that nonviolence corresponds to the essential nature of the deity, [4] of whom he himself was the visible image and "exact imprint" (*charakter*) of his being.[5] Christian nonviolence,

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[*]Christopher Marshall teaches at Victoria University in Wellington, New Zealand. He presented this paper at the AAANZ Conference in Canberra, January 2005. This ariticle first appeared in ***Mennonite Quarterly Review***, January 2003 Number 1 Volume 76.

[1] . See C. D. Marshall, "Following Christ Down Under: A New Zealand Perspective on Anabaptism," in ***Engaging Anabaptism: Conversations with a Radical Tradition***, ed. John D. Roth (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 2001), 41-52.

[2] . Clark H. Pinnock, ***Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness*** (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 1-2

[3] . Deut 32:35; Rom 12:19; Heb 10:30. See Miroslav Volf, ***Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*** (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), esp. 275-306.

[4] . Cf. Mt 5:9, 43-48.

[5] . Col 1:15; Heb 1:1-4; Jn 14:8-13.

in other words, is ultimately grounded in the Christian apprehension of God as a God who loves his enemies, who sends rain on the just and on the unjust, and who overcomes evil through self-sacrificing love rather than through violent retribution.

This conviction has forced me, in my own recent work, to seek to go behind the violent imagery used in the Bible to portray God's work and to find a deeper, nonviolent reality beneath. My recent book ***Beyond Retribution*** attempts to furnish biblical and theological foundations for the so-called restorative justice movement.[6] Its central thesis is that the biblical witness to God's justice is better characterized in restorative or redemptive categories than in retributive or punitive ones. Two of the biggest hurdles I faced in arguing for this thesis are New Testament passages about Final Judgment, which anticipate wrath and damnation on God's enemies, and popular theologies of the Atonement, which attribute the salvific power of the cross to some cosmic act of substitutionary punishment. In both cases, God's justice appears to be definitively vindicated through violent, death-dealing retribution, which has disturbing implications for peace theology and practice. I am convinced, however, that in both cases the deeper reality of what transpired at the cross and what will happen at a future judgment is nonretributive and nonviolent in character. Indeed both events represent God's ultimate conquest of violence and disclose the true nature of divinity.

In this essay, I want to revisit the question of the Atonement, not to examine the link between atonement and justice, as I do in my book,[7] but to explore more specifically the connection between atonement and violence. I also want to engage in some initial dialogue with the book ***The Nonviolent Atonement***, which appeared shortly after mine.[8] Its author, Mennonite theologian J. Denny Weaver, shares my concern to expose and break the link between atonement theology and retributive violence, although we do so in different ways and although I remain uncertain about some features of his position.

ATONEMENT THEOLOGY AND VIOLENCE

To say that Jesus died on a cross is to make an objective historical statement. To say that "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor 15:3) or that "he was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification" (Rom 4:25) is to offer a theological interpretation of the *meaning* of that death. It is to assert something unique about the dying of Jesus, to claim that it achieved something no other death achieved-it effected the salvation of the world. That is what we mean when we speak of Christ's death and resurrection as the "Atonement."

There is no single or definitive way of explaining the atoning power of Jesus' death. In the history of Christian thought, several different theories have been elaborated to account for how and why Christ's death secures salvation. These are often grouped into three great families-the "Christus Victor" model, which stresses Jesus' triumph over Satan; the "Moral Influence" theory, which emphasizes the transforming impact on observers of the cross as a demonstration of God's love for humanity; and the "Satisfaction" model, which sees Jesus' death as satisfying the demands of God's honour or justice.[9] Each of these theories has enjoyed currency at some time, but none of them, on its own, is fully adequate to comprehend the mystery of the cross.[10]

The satisfaction model has exercised the greatest dominance in Western theology.[11] It was formulated by Anselm in the eleventh century and was refashioned by the Protestant Reformers in the sixteenth century into the more strictly legal doctrine of "penal substitution." Several scholars have argued that substitutionary punishment is basic to how the New Testament, especially Paul, understands the atonement.[12] Furthermore, in popular Christian thought some version of penal substitution remains the dominant way of explaining, and proclaiming, the work of the cross. Tom Smail deems penal substitution to be "one of the main bastions of evangelical orthodoxy, second only in importance to the supreme authority of Scripture. . . ."[13] According to the penal theory (which comes in several versions),[14] God passed the verdict of condemnation on humanity that God's law demanded, but applied the penalty to a substitute. A legal transfer took place. Our guilt and its punishment were imposed on Christ, and his righteousness was imputed to us. The genius of the cross lies in the fact that it allowed God to satisfy the demands of retributive justice by inflicting the penalty of sin on Christ, while at the same time satisfying his desire for mercy by conferring forgiveness on sinners.

There have always been dissenters from the satisfaction or penal theory. But criticism of it has grown in intensity in the past generation, especially among feminist, black and other advocacy theologians.[15] Criticism has centred not simply on the logical

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[6] . C. D. Marshall, ***Beyond Retribution: A New Testament Vision for Justice, Crime and Punishment*** (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001).

[7] . See Marshall, ***Beyond Retribution***, 38-69.

[8] . J. D. Weaver, ***The Nonviolent Atonement*** (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans, 2001).

[9] . See, for example, G. Aul,n, ***Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of the Atonement***, trans. A. G. Hebert (London: SPCK, 1931); Thomas N. Finger, ***Christian Theology: An Eschatological Approach*** (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1985), 1:303-48.

[10] . Some scholars seek to address this problem by blending all three approaches. The problem is that each model rests on differing presuppositions and the resulting synthesis still tends to favour one approach over the others.

[11] . "Satisfaction atonement assumes that the sin of humankind against God has earned the penalty of death, but that Jesus satisfied the offended honour of God on their behalf or took the place of sinful humankind and bore their punishment or satisfied the required penalty on their behalf. Sin was atoned for because it was punished vicariously through the death of Jesus, which saved sinful humankind from the punishment of death they deserved. That is, sinful humankind can enjoy salvation because Jesus was killed in their place, satisfying the requirement of divine justice on their behalf."-Weaver, ***Nonviolent Atonement***, 3; cf. 16-17, 179-224.

[12] . See, e.g., J. I. Packer, ***What Did the Cross Achieve? The Logic of Penal Substitution*** (Leicester: TSF Monograph, 1974); L. Morris, ***The Cross in the New Testament*** (Exeter: Paternoster, 1966), 382-88.

[13] . T. Smail, "Can One Man Die for the People?" in ***Atonement Today***, ed. J. Goldingay (London: SPCK, 1995), 75.

[14] . See P. S. Fiddes, ***Past Event and Present Salvation: The Christian Idea of Atonement*** (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1989), 96-104.

[15] . For an excellent review of feminist, womanist and black theology, see Weaver, ***Nonviolent Atonement***, ch. 4-6. See also E. Moltmann-Wendel, "Is There a Feminist Theology of the Cross?," in ***The Scandal of a Crucified World: Perspectives on the Cross and Suffering***, ed. J. Tesfai (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1994), 87-98; N. J. Duff, "Atonement and the Christian Life: Reformed Doctrine from a Feminist Perspective," ***Interpretation*** 53:1 (1999), 21-33. On advocacy theology generally, see D. Patte, ***The Ethics of Biblical Interpretation: A Reevaluation*** (Louisville: Westminster Jn Knox, 1995).

coherence of the model, [16] but on at least four other, interrelated features as well-its underlying concept of God, its class or gender interest, its ethical abstraction and its pastoral impact.

1. Many feminist critics allege that traditional satisfaction theology evokes the horrifying scenario of "divine child abuse." It portrays God the Father in an abusive relationship with the Son, demanding unquestioning obedience and imposing unmerited suffering upon him in order to defend his own dignity.[17] As Julie Hopkins writes, "It is morally abhorrent to claim that God the Father demanded the self-sacrifice of his only Son to balance the scales of justice. A God who punished through pain, despair and violent death is not a God of love but a sadist and despot."[18]

2. Critics also assert that, although satisfaction theology masquerades as objective, universal truth, it actually represents the interests and perspectives of particular groups. All theology is contextual or "interested" in nature, and satisfaction theology is no different. Anselm's account depends on the logic of the medieval penitential system and the presuppositions of feudalism, where protecting the lord's honour was an all-important consideration.[19] Penal substitution similarly reflects the "law and order" priorities of those thoroughly identified with the prevailing system-ruling-class, white, male clerics.

3. In addition, the abstract or mythical nature of such atonement theology has permitted the ruling elite to participate in systems of oppression without any sense of inconsistency with their Christian commitment. **If salvation from sin is a purely spiritual matter that takes place outside of history through some invisible transaction between Father and Son, and if the benefits of this act of salvation are appropriated by individuals solely on the basis of their believing it has happened, then theology becomes divorced from ethical commitment, which permits oppression to continue unchallenged**. Accordingly, a pious slave-owner could believe all the "right" theology and feel secure in his salvation without ever questioning his participation in the violence of slavery. A John Wesley could accompany condemned criminals to the scaffold, encouraging them to pray for the salvation of their souls, without ever questioning the violent institution of capital punishment.[20] Not only can satisfaction atonement accommodate violence, it may even *encourage* violence. As Timothy Gorringe has documented, the belief that God punished Christ retributively for the sins of the world to uphold his law has frequently been used in western history to justify excessively harsh treatment of criminals. "Wherever Calvinism spread," Gorringe observes, "punitive sentencing followed."[21]

4. A fourth major criticism of satisfaction atonement concerns its pastoral impact. Its depiction of Jesus obediently accepting death without protest to meet some divine obligation represents an unhealthy pattern for other victims of oppression to emulate. The model exalts innocent suffering as somehow salvific and discourages active resistance to injustice. In this way it contributes to the victimization of marginalized groups. **If those who live in abusive or oppressive situations are encouraged to forge their faith identity by identifying with a Jesus who sacrifices himself utterly for the sake of the One who demands his submission to suffering, their own victim-status is reinforced and sustained.** In accepting a worldview of divinely sanctioned redemptive suffering, victims can even become complicit in their own oppression by failing actively to resist and repudiate it.

Such, then, are some of the ill effects that have been imputed to satisfaction theologies of atonement. In view of them, it is not surprising that several critics jettison atonement theology entirely. All talk of atonement, they urge, is inextricably bound up with the promotion and justification of violence and so must be dispensed with altogether. This position usually goes hand in hand with an attempt to recover from the gospel tradition an emphasis on love, justice, peace, inclusiveness or liberation as the true centre of Christian faith. But to abandon the doctrine of atonement entirely is surely a counsel of despair and one that threatens to dissolve the heart of the biblical gospel. The real challenge is to find ways to understand and articulate the salvific character of Christ's death and resurrection that makes sense to our generation-ways that stands in continuity with the rich diversity of images New Testament writers use when they speak of the cross and ways that do not depend on discreditable views of God nor sanction violence of any kind.

One recent attempt to do this is found in J. Denny Weaver's new book ***The Nonviolent Atonement***. Weaver proposes a new atonement model of "narrative Christus Victor," which takes the nonviolence of Jesus as normative for atonement theology (and Christology as well). "Narrative Christus Victor," he writes, "is atonement from a nonviolent perspective."[22] It is also "the dominant and preferred reading of atonement in the Bible."[23] Before assessing this claim, a brief summary of Weaver's position is in order.

ATONEMENT THEOLOGY AND THE NONVIOLENT CHRIST

Developed from a historic peace church perspective, Weaver's basic methodological assumption is that "the rejection of violence, whether the direct violence of the sword or the systemic violence of racism or sexism, should be visible in expressions of christology and atonement."[24] Weaver observes a similar conviction at work in many feminist, womanist and black theologies as well, and devotes the central chapters of his book to reviewing, and largely validating, the criticisms each of these streams has levelled at traditional atonement theology(and christology). He also adds several fresh criticisms of his own and makes some intriguing

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[16] . See, e.g., T. Talbot, "Punishment, Forgiveness and Divine Justice," ***Religious Studies*** 29 (1993), 151-68; Fiddes, ***Past Event***, 83-111; T. J. Gorringe, ***God's Just Vengeance: Crime, Violence and the Rhetoric of Salvation*** (Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press, 1996); Smail, "Can One Man Die?," 84-86; R. D. Brinsmead, "The Scandal of God's Justice," ***Christian Verdict*** 8 (1983), 3-11; C. A. Baxter, "The Cursed Beloved: A Reconsideration of Penal Substitution," in ***Atonement Today***, ed. J. Gondingay (London: SPCK, 1995), 68-70.

[17] . The charge of divine child abuse is not levelled solely against satisfaction theology. Insofar as all the traditional models portray God demanding unquestioning obedience from the Son and imposing suffering on him in order to achieve some higher good, all have been accused of depicting abuse in a positive light. But the main target of the accusation has been satisfaction atonement.

[18] . J. M. Hopkins, ***Towards a Feminist Christology: Jesus on Nazareth, European Women, and the Christological Crisis*** (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 50.

[19] . On this see Weaver, ***Nonviolent Atonement***, 179-95.

[20] . See Gorringe, ***God's Just Vengeanc***e, 1-7.

[21] . Ibid., esp. 83-219 (quote from 140).

[22] . Weaver, ***Nonviolent Atonement***, 74.

[23] . Ibid., 69.

[24] . Ibid., 7, 12.

observations about how the early development of Christian doctrine served the interests of Constantinianism.

Weaver's chief assertion is that satisfaction atonement theology depends on the idea of a God who sanctions violence-indeed, a God who *requires* violence in order to satisfy his own honour or justice. The accumulated violence of our evil deeds is balanced by the compensatory violence of God's retributive punishment.

"Make no mistake about it," Weaver asserts, "satisfaction atonement *in any form* depends on divinely sanctioned violence that follows from the assumption that doing justice means to punish."[25] Historically, this fact has not much bothered Christian theologians, but it deeply perturbs Weaver, and for similar reasons to those listed earlier.

First, it exhibits a disturbing view of God as a violent and vengeful deity, which is not merely distasteful but also creates significant theological problems. The God of satisfaction theology is said to act in ways that contradict the nonviolent Christ of the gospel tradition.[26] God uses the violence that Jesus rejects. That, in turn, undermines classic Trinitarian doctrine, which holds that all the attributes of God are present in each person of the Trinity, and that what is true for each person of the Trinity must also be true for God as One.[27] Since Jesus' life and teaching are the benchmark for understanding the reign of God,[28] and since Jesus' rejection of lethal violence is fundamental to his vision of God's reign, satisfaction atonement must go.

Second, in common with feminist and womanist critics, Weaver objects to the way that satisfaction theology makes passive submission to abusive authority, rather than active resistance to it, a positive virtue. This theology is both a destructive model for other victims of injustice and a problematic ethical example for all other Christians. It also overlooks the fact that throughout his ministry Jesus himself engaged in active, though nonviolent, resistance to injustice and evil.[29]

Third, satisfaction atonement not only exalts divine violence, it actively accommodates human violence, both the overt violence of the sword and the systemic violence of racism and sexism. It does so because it conceives of atonement as something that takes place outside of actual history. It depends on some abstract transaction between Father and Son that somehow cancels human guilt and preserves God's honour or sense of justice but does nothing to confront or change actual historical structures of oppression. Satisfaction atonement also takes place outside the particular history of Jesus' earthly ministry. It reduces the meaning of Jesus' life to some elaborate scheme whose purpose was to produce his death. Like creedal Christology,[30] it moves directly from incarnation to crucifixion, with all that transpired in between having no ultimate significance for salvation or atonement. Consequently salvation becomes separated from ethics, permitting orthodox Christianity to regard violence as compatible with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Fourth, satisfaction theology acknowledges no necessary role for the resurrection. Payment is rendered by Christ's death, with the resurrection serving some other purpose. But the resurrection in the New Testament is the ultimate victory of the reign of God over sin and evil. As Weaver puts it, "The resurrection signifies that the order of the universe has been determined, that the reign of God has been revealed as ultimately established, whether or not rebellious human beings recognize it."[31] If such a victory was the outcome of God's act of retributive violence, then it merely shows that might is right, not that there is a power in the universe greater than violence.

Finally, Weaver's Mennonite perspective becomes most obvious when he links the ethical abstraction and violence-accommodating nature of satisfaction atonement with the legacy of the Constantinian synthesis-that coalition between church, state and culture known as "Christendom." Weaver argues that atonement theology and Christology give expression to an underlying ecclesiology; that is, they reflect the place the church occupies in society. In the pre-Constantinian period, the church existed on the periphery of society. It saw itself as the earthly manifestation of God's kingdom that stood in contrast to, and as a witness to, the prevailing imperial order that did not acknowledge God. The dominant atonement model at this time was Christus Victor, which, in its various forms, emphasized the cosmic victory of God over the forces of Satan and evil. Believers had been set free from these evil powers, but the powers were still seen to exert their baleful influence in the surrounding social and political order of paganism.

After the Constantinian settlement, however, the church moved from the periphery to the centre of society. It came to identify with the institutional structures of the empire, which were no longer thought to stand over against God's kingdom but were now under the control of divine providence and could be used to advance the church's own goals. **Whereas the pre-Constantinian church looked to Jesus as the norm for its faith and practice, and hence was pacifist, the church of Christendom looked to "Christian" society, and to the interests of the emperor himself, for its norms, and hence accepted the sword. "In a manner of speaking," Weaver observes, "*not* applying the teaching of Jesus became the 'Christian' thing to do."**[32]

At the same time, employing the abstract ontological categories of Greek philosophy, conciliar Christology became preoccupied with defining the two natures of Christ and the oneness of divine substance uniting Father and Son. The creeds said nothing about the social or ethical character of God's reign, as made known in Jesus' life and teaching. "If all we know of Jesus is that he is 'one substance with the Father' and that he is 'fully God and fully man,'" Weaver observes, "there is nothing there that expresses the ethical dimension of being Christ-related, nothing there that would shape the church so that it can witness to the world."[33] In a sense that was no longer necessary, for the church had now made peace with the world and with war:

I suggest that it is the church which no longer specific-ally reflected Jesus' teaching about nonviolence and his rejection of the sword that can proclaim christological formulas devoid of ethics as the foundation of Christian doctrine. The abstract categories of "man" and "God" in these formulas allow the church to accommodate the sword and violence while still maintaining a confession about Christ at the centre of its theology.[34]

The same applies to atonement theology. Weaver points out that satisfaction theory, unlike Christus Victor, has no real place

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[25] . Ibid., 203, also 2, 17, 19, 72.
[26] . Ibid., 65-66.
[27] . Ibid., 202, 209.
[28] . Ibid., 223.
[29] . Ibid., 34-46.
[30] . On the limitations and accommodationist impulse of Nicene-Chalcedonian christology, see ibid., esp. 92-96.
[31] . Ibid., 155, 147.
[32] . Ibid., 85. For an account of how this became reflected in Christendom's initiation processes, see A. Kreider, ***The Change of Conversion and the Origin of Christendom*** (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999).
[33] . Weaver, ***Nonviolent Atonement***, 93.
It should be emphasized that Weaver does not regard the Nicene or Chalcedonian formulas as wrong, invalid, or superfluous to Christology, but says only that they are contextual rather than universal or timeless statements and that they are inadequate in themselves for a Christian peace theology.
[34] . Ibid., 94.

for Satan in the mechanics of atonement. After all, there were few, if any, structures left for Satan to rule in Christendom! His activity could be limited to deviant individuals and infidels beyond the boundaries of Christian Europe.[35] Hence, banishing Satan on the one hand, and accepting the prevailing hierarchical structures of feudal society on the other, Anselm rethought atonement around the image of God as an offended overlord exacting satisfaction from his human vassals.[36]

The time has come, Weaver suggests, to put the devil back into the equation, not as a personified being but as a way of speaking about the accumulated sinfulness of institutional structures that refuse to acknowledge the rule of God and so become the vehicles of evil and oppression. Christ has triumphed over these powers in his mission, and thus secured atonement.

NARRATIVE CHRISTUS VICTOR: A NEW MODEL

This leads to Weaver's proposal for a new "narrative Christus Victor" model of atonement-a model that stands in continuity with classical Christus Victor but also differs in important ways. As the name implies, the model emphasizes *Christ's nonviolent victory* over the forces of evil, as recorded in the biblical *narrative* of Jesus' life and teaching and confirmed in his resurrection.

The purpose of Jesus' mission, Weaver suggests, was to make the reign of God visible and to overcome the forces of evil that resist God's rule. In his actions, Jesus brought healing, deliverance and restoration to the victims of oppressive situations and systems. In his teaching, he dealt with how people's relationships change when they are governed by the reign of God. In both word and deed, he actively but nonviolently challenged the structures that oppress and dehumanize people. When he encountered evil or violence, he refused to respond in kind, thus exposing and breaking the cycle of hatred and revenge. Jesus was ready and willing to die for the sake of his mission, Weaver says. But death was not the goal or culmination of the venture, even if it was an inevitable consequence of resisting the powers, especially those represented by imperial Rome and the Jewish holiness code. These powers were so threatened by Jesus that they conspired to kill him. Jesus submitted to their violence rather than meeting it on its own terms, thus showing that the rule of God does not depend on violence. He died a violent death. But God raised him from the dead, demonstrating that God's power is greater even than the annihilation of death that comes from the exercise of violence. Jesus' resurrection serves as objective evidence that the fundamental balance of power in the universe has now shifted.

RESPONSE TO WEAVER

Weaver makes a compelling case, and I concur with a good deal of what he says. I agree that it is necessary to think through atonement from a nonviolent perspective; that our understanding of atonement must square with and make sense of the New Testament narratives of Jesus' proclamation and embodiment of God's kingdom; that salvation is more a matter of liberation from the grip of evil than the discharging of a debt owed to God; and that Jesus' refusal of the sword and his call to love of enemy are a crucial clue to understanding *how* he defeated sin and brought deliverance. So I am in general sympathy with the direction of Weaver's thought. But there are two features of Weaver's explanation that I am less sure of.

First, because he considers it "very important to underscore that violence originates with humans and not with God,"[37] Weaver is adamant that the death of Jesus was not willed or intended or orchestrated by God. Nor was it a demonstration of God's love. "In narrative Christus Victor," Weaver writes, "the death of Jesus is anything but a loving act of God; it is the product of the forces of evil that oppose the reign of God. While God loved sinful humankind enough to send Jesus to witness to the rule of God, Jesus' death is not a loving act of God, but the ultimate statement that distinguishes the rule of God from the reign of evil."[38] Nor did Jesus *choose* death. "Jesus came not to die but to live, to witness to the reign of God in human history. While he may have known that carrying out that mission would provoke inevitably fatal opposition, his purpose was not to get himself killed."[39] Weaver seems to believe that any suggestion that Jesus' death was intended by God or chosen by Jesus is tantamount to sanctioning violence. To say that God willed Jesus' violent death is the same as saying that God approved of or even perpetrated the violence that killed him. But is this necessarily so?

The second feature of Weaver's explanation that creates difficulties for me is his claim that the cross was not a salvific necessity. Jesus' death, he says, "accomplishes nothing for the salvation of sinners, nor does it accomplish anything for the divine economy. Since Jesus' mission was not to die but to make visible the reign of God, it is clear that neither God nor the reign of God needs Jesus' death in the way that his death is irreducibly needed in satisfaction atonement."[40] His death was an unavoidable consequence of his ultimate threat to the powers of evil, but it was not a necessary outcome for the work of salvation. Yet, insists Weaver, "while Jesus' death was not the will of God, the ultimate power of the reign of God manifests itself in the resurrection of Jesus because he was killed. Then resurrection overcomes death, the last enemy."[41]

In a sense, then, Weaver transfers the work of atonement from the cross to the earthly ministry of Jesus on the one hand, and to the resurrection of Jesus on the other. Narrative Christus Victor proposes "a *how* explanation that focuses on Jesus' life as the reign of God rather than on Jesus' death as an act of God."[42] The cross happened because the evil powers made it happen; but there was no soteriological necessity for it to happen. When it did happen, God achieved victory over the powers by raising Jesus from the dead. This would seem to imply that, in principle, Jesus could have achieved universal redemption without the cross. His ministry of healing the sick, delivering the oppressed, embracing the outsider and loving the enemy was enough to establish God's rule. His death was an inevitable, but unessential, circumstance, although one turned to greater good by God's response of resurrection.

Now both of these claims-that Jesus' death was not willed by God and that it was not a saving necessity-seem to me to fly in the face of the accumulated weight of New Testament evidence. Nor are they indispensable to a nonviolent account of atonement. What if there was no possibility of defeating violence without enduring violence nonviolently? What if Christ's victory actually required him to absorb the worst that the powers could do, yet without retaliation? What if there was no other way to overcome death but to pass through death? What if God could not will our salvation without willing a final and definitive showdown with the supreme power of

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[35] . Ibid., 212-14

[36] . Although scattered references to satisfaction can be found in earlier writings, Gorringe insists that "to all intents and purposes the theology of satisfaction begins with Anselm." -***God's Just Vengeance***, 90.

[37] . Weaver, ***Nonviolent Atonement***, 49.

[38] . Ibid., 45.

[39] . Ibid., 211, also 132.

[40] . Ibid., 72.

[41] . Ibid., 133.

[42] . Ibid., 226 my emphasis.

sin, its power to inflict violent death on the innocent? Is that why the New Testament writers do not shrink from presenting Jesus' death as God's will for the salvation of all?

THE AGENCY OF JESUS' DEATH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Weaver, as we have seen, is insistent that the cause of Jesus' death lies solely with the powers of evil. God had nothing to do with it. But when measured against New Testament teaching, it appears that Weaver is correct in what he affirms but wrong in what he denies.

Clearly, the prosecution and execution of Jesus are attributed in the New Testament records to the powers of evil, operating through human malice in general and the self-interest of the Jewish and Roman authorities in particular. Mark, for example, frequently comments on how the Pharisees, Herodians and Sadducees plotted to kill Jesus out of fear, resentment and jealousy.[43] Matthew echoes this perspective, accenting even more sharply the combined hostility of the Jewish leaders to Jesus. Luke attributes the betrayal of Jesus to Satan entering Judas,[44] and he aligns the temple authorities who seize Jesus in Gethsemane with "the power of darkness."[45] John also ascribes Jesus' betrayal to Satan entering the heart of Judas.[46] Under the influence of its evil "ruler,"[47] the world in general hated Jesus without cause,[48] for people "loved darkness" and "their deeds were evil."[49] The speeches in Acts frequently accuse the Jewish leaders of having "betrayed," "rejected," "murdered," "condemned" and "crucified" Jesus despite his complete innocence.[50] A conspiracy of Jewish and Gentile powers united to destroy him.

The kings of the earth took their stand, and the rulers have gathered together against the Lord and against his Messiah. For in this city, in fact, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.[51]

Paul also notes the involvement of the Jews [52] and "the rulers of this age"[53] in the killing of Jesus. The writer to the Hebrews speaks more generally of Jesus enduring "hostility from sinners,"[54] and 1 Peter speaks of him being "rejected by human beings."[55] Finally John's Apocalypse posits a radical opposition between the Lamb who was slain and the powers of evil, which continue to "make war on the Lamb."[56]

So when Weaver attributes responsibility for the violent death of Jesus to the powers of evil or "Satan," a term which designates "the accumulation of earthly structures that are not ruled by the reign of God,"[57] **he is certainly echoing a notable New Testament motif.** But when he goes on to eliminate God's agency entirely from the explanation of Jesus' death, he departs significantly from what is the prevailing emphasis of New Testament teaching. By setting up the responsibility for Jesus' death in simple either/or terms, Weaver flattens out an important New Testament paradox. And to affirm this paradox is not simply "to play a sleight-of-hand language game";[58] it is to do justice to the full witness of the text.

THE SYNOPTIC NARRATIVES

In several ways the synoptic writers indicate that the death of Jesus fulfilled the will and purpose of God.[59] To begin with, all portray Jesus as always being in control of his own destiny. From the moment of his baptism onwards, where the voice from heaven unites his messianic appointment with the mission of the suffering servant of Yahweh,[60] Jesus freely embraced a vocation that he knew would end in death. This does not mean that Jesus passively accepted *all* suffering and rejection as invariably the will of God. Far from it. On several occasions when he encountered attempts to arrest or assassinate him, he acted to protect himself and his disciples,[61] for his appointed "hour" had not yet come.[62] Nor did he encourage an unhealthy martyr complex among his followers,[63] even though they too must reckon on the certainty of arrest, torture and execution in the future.[64] So Jesus did not court death as such, and he did not sanctify all suffering. Yet he knew the time must come when the "bridegroom" will be forcibly "taken away," and he did not seek to evade this climactic event.[65]The term "world" in Jn's Gospel, when used negatively, represents the sum of everyone and everything that sets its face against God's revelation in Christ. See S. B. Marrow, "*Kosmos* in John," ***Catholic Biblical Quarterly*** 64:1 (2002), 90-102.

On the contrary, Jesus chose to walk into the very jaws of death. "When the days drew near for him to be taken up," Luke says, "he set his face to go to Jerusalem."[66] He is therefore unfazed by reports of Herod's plans to kill him, "because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem."[67] On his journey to the city, Jesus repeatedly and explicitly spoke of

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[43] . See, for example, Mk 3:6; 12:12-13; 14:1-3, 10-11; 15:10; cf. 1:22; 2:7; 6:3; 7:1-5; 8:11-23; Lk 23:48; Jn 19:12.
[44] . Lk 22:3, cf. 22:31.
[45] . Lk 22:53, cf.23:45. On the symbolism of darkness in the crucifixion narrative, see C. D. Marshall, "Crime, Crucifixion and the Forgotten Art of Lament," ***Reality*** 9:49 (2002), 16-22.
[46] . Jn 13:2, 27.
[47] . Jn 14:30.
[48] . Jn 15:18, 25.
[49] . Jn 13:19, cf. 1:11.
[50] . Acts 2:23,36; 3:13-15; 4:10, 26; 7:51-52; 13:27-29, cf. Lk 23:14, 20, 22; 23:47
[51] . Acts 4:26-28, cf. 13:27.
[52] . 1 Thess 2:14-15.
[53] . 1 Cor 2:8; cf. Col 2:14.
[54] . Hebs 12:2-3.
[55]. 1 Peter 2:4,7.
[56] . Rev. 17:4. Weaver gives a helpful account of the nonviolent theology of the book of Revelation.-***Nonviolent Atonement***, 20-33.
[57] . Ibid., 210.
[58] . Ibid., 211.
[59] . Ideally the perspective of each gospel writer should be considered separately. But there is substantial enough narrative agreement between them in how they present the purpose and outcome of Jesus' mission to permit some broad generalizations about features common to each account.
[60] . It is often noted that the voice from heaven at Jesus' baptism (Mk 1:11/Mt 3:17/Lk 3:22) unites the messianic designation of Psalm 2:7 with the identification of the Servant of Yahweh in Isaiah 42:1, whose task involves suffering and rejection. There may also be an allusion to Gen 22: 2,12,16.
[61] . Mk 4:35-41/Mt 8:23-27/Lk 8:22-25; Mk 6:47-52/Mt 14:22-32/Jn 6:15-21; Lk 4:29-30; Mt 12:14-15 cf. Mt 2:13-15. See also Jn 17:11-12, 15.
[62] . Mk 14:35,41; Mt 26:55; Lk 22;14, 53; cf. Jn 2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 16:32; 17:1.
[63] . Mt 10:23; 24:15-20/Mk 13:14-18/Lk 21:2.
[64] . Mt 10:17-23, 28; 24:9-10/Mk 13:9-13/Lk 21:12-19; Jn 16:4.
[65] . Mk 2:19-20/Mt 9:15/Lk 5:35.
[66] . Lk 9:51-52.
[67] . Lk 13:31-33.

the fate that awaited him at his destination; his predictions sometimes employed the impersonal verb *dei* ("it is necessary," "must") to underline the divine necessity of what is to come. "The Son of Man *must* undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again."[68] A sense of divine purpose is also implied in sayings where Jesus spoke of having a "cup" (of suffering) to drink, a fire to kindle, and a baptism to undergo.[69] It is even clearer in the important saying where Jesus declared that the Son of Man came "not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."[70]

After a carefully choreographed entry to the city, Jesus engaged in highly confrontational tactics with the temple rulers, which finally sealed his fate.[71] The authorities were anxious to move against Jesus but were afraid to do so because of his popular support.[72] Knowing this, and that he was about to be betrayed, Jesus effectively delivered himself into the hands of his enemies by going to the one place where his betrayer knew he could be caught alone.[73] He was unsurprised when the authorities turned up, and he did not resist arrest. When put on trial, he refused to defend himself against any of the charges brought against him, much to the irritation of his accusers and the amazement of Pilate.[74]

So throughout their respective narratives, the gospel writers depict Jesus moving steadfastly and knowingly towards his divinely given destiny of suffering, death and resurrection. They see his death as more than simply the foreseeable or inevitable consequence of his confrontation with injustice, though it is that too. They portray it as a unique event, the climactic expression of his vocation of manifesting God's reign and the fulfilment of God's intention for his mission.

This is nowhere more clearly evident than in the Gethsemane episode where Jesus spoke explicitly of his struggle to submit to this dimension of God's will. In the garden he prayed, "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want."[75] Each synoptic account has a different way of underscoring the fact that, for Jesus, to accept death was to accept the will of God. Mark has Jesus pray the same prayer three times before submitting to God's will. Matthew records only two petitions, but the wording of the second ("My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done [*genethet*" to *thelema sou*]")[76] intentionally echoes the second petition of the Lord's Prayer ("your kingdom come, your will be done [*genethet*" to *thelema sou*] on earth as it is in heaven").[77] The implication is plain: it is precisely through Jesus embracing death that God's kingdom comes and God's will is done on earth as in heaven. Luke records an angel appearing from heaven to strengthen Jesus for what lies ahead, rather than to deliver him from it (Matthew has Jesus consciously forego the possibility of angelic deliverance).[78]

Another way in which the gospel writers underscore the divine necessity of Jesus' death is by presenting it as the fulfilment of scripture. The entire Passion narrative is constructed as a kind of dramatization of a large group of psalms-in particular Psalm 22-in which the righteous person suffers unjustly and cries out to God for vindication.[79] Sometimes selected details of Jesus' passion experience are expressly said to "fulfil" specific Old Testament texts, including an occasional reference to Isaiah 53.[80] Furthermore, in several of Jesus' own sayings he expressly declared that his sufferings are attested in scripture. "Then he took the twelve aside and said to them, 'See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished.'"[81] In refusing Peter's sword in Gethsemane, Jesus says:

Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?[82]

In Luke 24 the risen Jesus explained to his confused disciples-first to the pair on the Emmaus Road, then to the eleven hiding in Jerusalem-that the Messiah's sufferings were both necessary and foreshadowed in the scriptures.

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[68] . Mk 8:31-34/Mt 16:21-23/Lk 9:21-22, cf. 13:33; 17:25; Mk 9:9/Mt 17:9; Mk 9:12/Mt 17:12; Mk 9:22-23/Mt 17:22-23/Lk 9:44; Mk 10:32-34/ Mt 20:17-19/Lk 18:31-34.
[69] . Mk 10:38-40/Mt 20:22-23; Lk 12:49-50; cf. Jn 18:11.
[70] . Mk 10:45; Mt 20:28, cf. 1 Tim 2:5.
[71] . Mk 11:1-33; Mt 21:1-27; 23:37-24:2; Lk 19:29-20:8, cf. Jn 2:13-22.
[72] . Mk 11:18; 12:13; 14:1-2, 10-11; Lk 22:6.
[73] . Lk 22:6, 53.
[74] . Mk 15:2-5; Mt 27:11-14; Lk 23:8-12; Jn 19:8-10.
[75] . Mk 14:32-42; Matt 26:36-42; Lk 22:39-46.
[76] . Mt 26:42.
[77] . Mt 6:10, cf. 11:12.
[78] . Lk 22:42, cf. Matt 26:53. Even the writer to the Hebrews suggests that Jesus' prayers were heard by "the one who was able to save him from death because of his reverent submission . . . and obedience" (Heb 5:7-10).
[79] . For a full listing of the texts and how they are reflected in the passion narrative, see J. F. Jansen, ***The Resurrection of Jesus Christ in New Testament Theology*** (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980), 68-75.
[80] . See, e.g., Mk 14:27/Matt 26:31; Mk 14: 62/Matt 26:64; Lk 22:37, cf. also Jn 13:18; 18:9; 19:23, 28, 36; Acts 8:32-33. The place of Isaiah 53 in New Testament reflection on the meaning of Jesus' death, and especially its role in the mind of the historical Jesus, has long been debated. For a thorough, helpful and up-to-date review of this issue, see ***Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins***, eds. William H. Bellinger, Jr. and William R. Farmer (Harrisburg PA: Trinity Press International, 1998).
[81] . Lk 18:31, cf. Lk 22:22, 37; Matt 26:24.
[82] . Matt 26:52-54, cf. 21:42; Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:7.

"Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary (*edei*) that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.[83]

Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you-that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must (*dei*) be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures and he said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem."[84]

Now in presenting the death of Jesus against the backdrop of biblical testimony, the evangelists were not necessarily regarding all the specific texts they have in mind as predictive prophecies. They viewed them more as prefigurements in redemptive history of what God has now definitively accomplished in the death and resurrection of Jesus. And it is the existence of such divinely given anticipations and foreshadowings in scripture that proved that the death of Jesus accords with, and brings to fullness, the will of God.

John's Gospel

In John's gospel, Jesus is identified at the outset as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."[85] Throughout the ensuing narrative, Jesus moved steadily toward the appointed "hour" of his death,[86] which is also the hour of his "glory."[87] John's Jesus speaks of God "sending" and "giving" his Son to save the world as an expression of his great love,[88] and declares that "my food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work."[89] In contemplating the hour when the Son of Man will be "lifted up from the earth" on the cross,[90] Jesus asked:

"What should I say-'Father, save me from this hour?' No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.[91]

Several times John suggests that the details of Jesus' prosecution and death fulfil scripture.[92] Even more striking, however, is John's emphasis on the fact that Jesus' life is not taken from him against his will but is freely laid down by him:

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. . . . I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. . . . For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.[93]

At his arrest, Jesus identified himself to the soldiers and forbade Peter to defend him, since he must "drink the cup the Father has given me."[94] Accordingly, when Pilate claimed authority to crucify him, Jesus retorted: "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above."[95] It is impossible to avoid the conclusion, then, that John understands the death of Jesus to be willed by God and freely chosen by Jesus.

Acts and the Epistles

As noted earlier, the author of Acts expressly ascribes the death of Jesus to the malice and ignorance of the prevailing religious and political powers, and holds them culpable. But that is only one side of the story, for Luke also states quite clearly that these evil actions enabled God's will and plan, as attested in scripture, to be accomplished. The mysterious interface between divine will and human responsibility is captured well in Peter's Pentecost sermon in Acts 2: "This man, handed over to you *according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God*, you crucified and killed."[96] A similar juxtaposition features in Peter's sermon at Solomon's portico in Acts 3: "Now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. *In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets*, that his Messiah would suffer."[97] The same idea features again in Paul's sermon at Pisidian Antioch in Acts 13:

Because the residents of Jerusalem and their leaders did not recognize him or understand the words of the prophets that are read every Sabbath, they fulfilled those words by condemning him. Even though they found no cause for a sentence of death, they asked Pilate to have him killed. When they had carried out everything that was written about him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb.[98]

In his own writings, the Apostle Paul himself constantly asserted the divine initiative behind the death of Jesus. He discerned in Jesus' death, not just a tragic expression of human evil but a purposeful act of God, foretold in scripture, to achieve the redemption and reconciliation of the world. "Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures," Paul affirmed, just as "he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures."[99] Not only his resurrection but also his death and burial manifest the will and eternal purpose of God.[100] Accordingly, Paul spoke of God "sending his own Son" into the world to "deal with sin" and to "redeem those under the Law" from its curse.[101] God "did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us."[102] In giving him up to death, "God put [him] forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood . . . to show his righteousness."[103] **In some mysterious way, God "made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."[104] However we understand this text, God's active involvement in Jesus' death is clearly asserted. For "in Christ," Paul says, "God was reconciling the world to himself."[105] He was also "proving his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us."[106]**

As well as God's initiative, Paul also stresses Christ's willing submission to death. He was not merely killed by others against

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[83] . Lk 24:26-27, cf. Acts 17:1-3.
[84] . Lk 24:44-47.
[85] . Jn 1:29.
[86] . Jn 2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23,27; 13:1; 16:32; 17:1
[87] . Jn 12:23, 27-28; 17:1-5; cf. 21:19.
[88] . Jn 3:16-17.
[89] . Jn 4:34, cf. 6:37-40; 12:27-28; 17:4-5.
[90] . Jn 12:32-33.
[91] . Jn 12:27-28.
[92] . Jn 13:18; 18:9; 19:23, 28, 36.
[93] . Jn 10:11, 14-18
[94] . Jn 18:11, cf. 4-8
[95] . Jn 19:11.
[96] . Acts 2:23.
[97] . Acts 3:17-18.
[98] . Acts 13:27-29, cf. 8:32-35; 17:1-3.
[99] . 1 Cor 15:3-4, cf. Rom 1:1-4.
[100] . cf. Eph 2:13; 3:11-12.
[101] . Rom 8:3; Gal 4:4, cf. 2:21; 3:13; cf. also Titus 3:4.
[102] . Rom 8:32.
[103] . Rom 3:25.
[104] . 2 Cor 5:21.
[105] . 2 Cor 5:19, cf. Rom 5:10; Col 1:20-21.
[106] . Rom 5:7.

his will; he graciously "died for us"[107] as an "act of righteousness" and "obedience"[108] and as a demonstration of self-abnegation and self-surrender.[109] The crucifixion of Christ is therefore an event to be "proclaimed" as a demonstration of God's power and God's wisdom,[110] as well as an event to be shared in and emulated by others.[111]

None of these texts requires a satisfaction theory of atonement. But the cumulative weight of New Testament evidence does strongly suggests that Jesus' death is understood to be, in some sense, an act of God that demonstrates God's love and faithfulness, exemplifies Jesus' utter self-giving for the sake of others, and clarifies and fulfils the biblical testimony to God's saving purposes. This feature cannot simply be ascribed to the rhetorical tendency of the biblical writers to see God as responsible for everything that happens, even while not holding God responsible for sinful actions. God's initiative behind and saving achievement in Jesus' death is positively celebrated. The crucial issue is not *whether* God intended Jesus to die, but *why* he did and whether doing so is tantamount to God underwriting sacred violence.

A BRIEF PROPOSAL

To accept that God *did* will or need the death of Jesus is not to say that God wanted or required it to satisfy his own holiness, as satisfaction atonement maintains. God willed it for a different reason. **God willed it because he willed our salvation, and the only way to achieve our redemption was for Jesus to tread the path of suffering and death, for only thus could sin's power be broken.**

I began by suggesting that violence is the foremost social manifestation of sin; it is all-pervasive in human experience. Sin has usurped God's loving rule over humanity, and violence is the principal external evidence of sin's deleterious lordship. "Sin came into the world through one man," Paul writes, "and death came through sin."[112] Through death "sin exercises its dominion."[113] Death destroys relationships, and the fear of death dominates the human psyche and governs human behaviour.[114] Significantly, the first recorded death in the biblical story is a violent death,[115] stemming from the envy or covetousness that most reveals sin's interior grip on the human heart.[116] Just before Cain struck out against his brother, God observed Cain's jealous anger and warned him that "sin is lurking at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it."[117] But instead, sin mastered Cain and he turned to violence. This connection between internal desire and external violence is highlighted in the epistle of James: "You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts."[118]

Because of sin, we seek to impose our will on others, and violence enables us to do so through engaging the fear of death and pain. Sin creates rivalry between people, and violence, or threatened violence, is the ultimate power sin employs to bring success. At the same time, however, the imposition of violence evokes in the victim a "pay-back" response, an intense desire to strike back in kind, to retaliate blow for blow, stripe for stripe, loss for loss. For victims this seems to be the only way to appease the pain they have suffered and the resentment they feel. But the pay-back instinct actually manifests the most terrifying characteristic of sin's lordship, its pernicious power to turn those who have been sinned against into sinners in their own right, to suck victims into a pattern of imitative behaviour that allows violence to spiral on forever.

So, in real sense, the power to inflict violent death, and the capacity to evoke counter-violence from victims, is the most potent evidence of sin's grip over humanity. If sin is to be defeated, then, violence must be overcome once and for all. This, among other things, is what Jesus sought to do. But to succeed in doing so, it was not enough simply to avoid inflicting violence on others, or to teach people to love their enemies. He also had to withstand the temptation to hit back; he had to break the cycle of violence and revenge, hatred and counter-hatred. He even had to endure violence himself-the supreme violence of an unjust execution-without seeking or desiring retaliation. He had to absorb the very worst that the powers could do. He had to go to the very limits of human desolation and at that point pray: "Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."[119] In so doing, Jesus deconstructed the power and logic of evil.

The power of sin was broken, then, not by some violent act of substitutionary punishment but through Jesus' own definitive refusal to perpetuate the cycle of violence and revenge. In his passion, Jesus adopted the position of supreme victim of human evil and depredation. Yet he refused to respond to his victimization by victimizing those who victimized him. Instead he absorbed the sin of human violence in his own bodily experience without retaliation. "When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that free from sins we might live for righteousness. . . ."[120] In so doing Jesus broke the mimetic or pay-back mechanism that lies at the heart of sin's power (something beyond the reach of any display of coercive power, even God's power) and unleashed the liberative power of forgiveness.

God sent his Son into the world for this purpose. It was God's will to make "the one who knew no sin to be sin for our sake, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him."[121] This highly compressed, shorthand summary of what happened at the cross does not mean that God made Christ into a sinner in order to punish him retributively for our sins. It means that God made the sinless one to bear the full consequences of sin's dominion over humanity, displayed most graphically in the inescapable logic of violence. In Christ, sin did its very worst and Christ died. But God raised him from the dead and in so doing triumphed over the power of sin and death. "The death he died he died to sin, once for all," with the result that "death no longer has dominion over him."[122] And those who by faith are united with Christ in his death share also in his liberation, "so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life."[123] Supremely characteristic of this newness of life is freedom from the fear of death, on which violence feeds,[124] and participation in a new humanity in which hostility is put to death and "the things that make for peace" are pursued.[125]

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[107] . Rom 5:6, 8; 1 Cor 15:3; 1 Thess 5:10; 2 Cor 1:5; 5:14; Gal 3:13, cf. Eph 5:2; Titus 2:14.
[108]. Rom 5:18-19.
[109] . Rom 15:3-4; Phil 2:5-8, cf. 1 Tim 2:6.
[110] . 1 Cor 1:20-25; 11:26.
[111] . Gal 2:19; 6:14; Rom 6:3-14; 2 Cor 1:5; 4:10; Phil 3:10; Col 1:24, cf. 2 Tim. 2:11. See further C. D. Marshall, "'For Me to Live Is Christ': Pauline Spirituality as a Basis for Ministry," in ***The Call to Serve***, ed. D. A. Campbell (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 96-116, esp. 111-13.
[112] . Rom 5:12.
[113] . Rom 5:21; 6:23; 7:7, 13.
[114] . Heb 2:14-15.
[115] . Gen 4:8.
[116] . Gen 3:6, cf. Rom 7:7-12; Mk 7:21-22.
[117]. Gen 4:7.
[118] . Jas 4:2.
[119] . Lk 23:34.
[120] . 1 Peter 2:23-24.
[121] . 2 Cor 5:21.
[122] . Rom 6:9-10.
[123] . Rom 6:4.
[124] . Cf. Rom 8:35-39.
[125] . Lk 19:42, cf. Rom 14:1-15:13; Gal 3:25-29; 2 Cor 18-21; Eph 2:1-22.

William Stringfellow:
Coming out of the closet

Anthony Dancer

About twelve miles off the coast of Rhode Island, on the United States eastern seaboard, lies a small rocky outcrop just eleven square miles in size. It lies exposed and vulnerable to the un-predictable forces of the North Atlantic. In 1661 the Dutch explorer Adriaen Block came across it, and in accordance with the custom, named it: this is Block Island. These days, outside tourist season it is a quiet and isolated retreat within short reach of mainland USA, in tourist season, the island is transformed into one of the most popular and exclusive resorts of the eastern seaboard. In death and life, it is the long time home to William Stringfellow.

There, in a small corner of the island, situated on a quiet cliff top a few hundred feet from its edge, is a plain stone wall covered thick with wild roses and raspberries. Atop the wall, a simple flat stone engraved with a single word: *Peace*. Anonymously, the ashes of William Stringfellow are buried at the foot of this wall. This ocean view is the place of Stringfellow's final rest. In a house nearby, which belongs to the Catholic priest and long time friend to Stringfellow, Daniel Berrigan, there is the only indicator of his presence: a plaque which reads: "Near this house the remains of William Stringfellow and Anthony Towne await the resurrection. Alleluia."

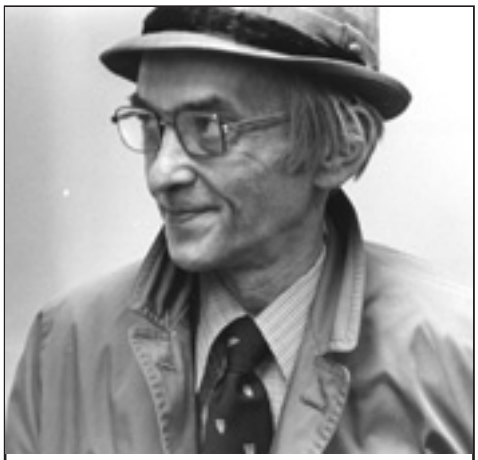


photo: Ed Spivey Jr

Once, the surrounding fourteen acres of land used to be a part of his home, Eschaton: a place of hospitality, humour, and grace. But now the land, along with the house, is sold off, and his books long out of print. So this nondescript wall and its obscure marker, are all that remain to remind us of Stringfellow's life and work. Here, they await the resurrection.

And in waiting, even now, Stringfellow reveals something about himself to us. For in death and life, what was important to him was a sense of place, and the grace of God expressed through in its ordinariness.

I never met William Stringfellow in person, but his life and work changed my own; one cannot read Stringfellow and remain unmoved. William Stringfellow (1928-1985) was one of the twentieth century's more enigmatic and elusive theologians; a precipitator of dreams, for sure. To some, his writings can seem a little unusual or foreign, and to some it would be fair to say that his life and his writings can appear something of an enigma. Little on him has been published, and his writings are fairly inaccessible, with little of his writing remaining in print (although some now thankfully back in print by Wipf & Stock). It is true that his writings can sometimes appear a little obscure; at first glance, any struggle might appear to be easily attributable to the seemingly alien polemic, rather than any apparent theological complexity in his language. It is precisely this rich polemic that makes him so distinct, and so engaging, and to miss that would be a sad oversight indeed.

Ironically, Stringfellow's writings represent one of the finest examples of Christian polemical discourse written *as* an alien and a foreigner in the twentieth century; he was a Christian living amidst 'the fall' and, in so many ways, amidst the marginalized. He echoed the biblical tradition of the prophets by calling the nation and the church to account and proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. Although he died young the historical tradition in which he stood is continued by many faithful Christian communities and individuals: all those who speak and live as aliens in a strange land. It is a tradition with which Anabaptist readers will be deeply familiar.

Stringfellow advocated a theology of freedom in his life and work. He explicated a theology whose freedom was grounded not in the (democratic) nation, but in the Gospel. He spoke, often critically, from outside the academy, located in the margins.

Although an American, the prophetic voice of Stringfellow was significantly influenced by continental politics, culture and theology, most especially through a post-war period of study at the London School of Economics (1947-1949), time stationed in Germany as a supply clerk with the American army (1950-1953), and extensive work and travels with the World Student Christian Federation and SCM. Through these travels he encountered the Confessing Church, the ecumenical movement and the ruins and resilience that characterized some of the context and culture emerging in the wake of the Second World War. It made a lasting impression upon him, and provided him with a critical distance upon the context of his life-work in America.

Stringfellow's life and work can be understood as an embodiment of a conversation between the Word and the world; or to think of it another way, a conversation between the freedom of God and the freedom of humanity, which he inhabited.

Inhabiting this space was an awkward thing, for as Stanley Hauerwas and Jeff Powell point out he didn't fit. Yet it seems always and everywhere it is the human precondition to try and make him do so, nevertheless. And so we hear tell of this lawyer, this theologian, this radical, this public speaker, this connoisseur of the circus, this politician, this advocate of the marginalised, and, by his own self-definition, this closet Anabaptist. Perhaps there are some things worth keeping in the closet even today – or perhaps he indicated the reality that many Christians face. That is, they find this tradition's story helps them to make some sense of their seemingly peculiar politics of faith; politics which seldom seem to fit easily into the tradition of which they are a part. I recognise that the more zealous of Anabaptists would shy away from such 'adoption'. Nevertheless, Anabaptism is the historical strand of Protestantism which sits most (un)easily with these more radical predispositions.

Stringfellow's life-work was eclectic and diverse in its gaze. Yet such diversity was unified by the simple and faithful desire to proclaim the Word of God, in the fullness of its political and missiological nature. Stringfellow's commitment throughout his adult life was to politics on the one hand, and the Christian faith on the other; they were the "twin pillars" of his life and work.

In some ways Stringfellow positively relished the angular and the awkward. Not simply out of some perverse human desire (although there was probably some of that going on at one level or another), but out of commitment to living an authentic and faithful life authored and shaped by the Word of God in the world, and a desire to encourage others to see and do likewise. It was the *angularity* or *asymmetry* of faithful living. The more one discovers about Stringfellow's life and work, the clearer this becomes.

It's this angularity, this refusal to be contained or constricted, diffused or dismissed, that drew me to Stringfellow. I like a person who won't be conformed to this world, nor its idol church. It gives me hope.

But when I came across him I was also desperately in search of something that I could examine for my post graduate research – something about which I would have enough passion to keep me going. As a decision, studying

Stringfellow was more than academic. In Stringfellow, theology and life collide. And so, in some strange way, I found echoes of my desperation, for a sense of Godly desperation can also be found in his writings and his life. Getting to know him has been one of the greatest and most transformative privileges of my life.

There is no easy way to introduce Stringfellow. Attempting to explain Stringfellow is a foolhardy exercise, too easily drawn to categories and pseudo-understandings. Yet sadly it is often all the academy is able to do – and it is all that space like this which has been afforded me here can achieve. If we want to know what Stringfellow was about, quite honestly we *need* to get to know him. We need to get to know this man for whom theology and biography were one; we need to spend time with him, his story, and his writings; for this is the place where desperation and intercession collide with the true political force of the Gospel and unmask the transformative power of the Kingdom of God in our very midst.

William Stringfellow Reading List:

Ethic for Christians and Other Aliens in a Strange Land (Wipf & Stock, reprint of 1973 edition).
Conscience and Obedience (Wipf & Stock, reprint of 1977 edition)
William Stringfellow in Anglo-American Perspective (Anthony Dancer, ed., Ashgate, April 2005)
Keeper of the Word (Bill Wylie-Kellermann, Eerdmans, 1994)
Radical Christian, Exemplary Lawyer (Andrew McThenia Jr, Eerdmans, 1995) ***Prophet of Justice, Prophet of Life*** (Robert Slocum, ed., Church Publishing, 1997)

Anthony Dancer is currently Associate Vicar and Cathedral Missioner of Nelson Cathedral, Nelson, New Zealand. He undertook his doctorate on the life and theology of Stringfellow (Oxford). Ever since reading his first theological book (Schreiter's ***Constructing Local Theologies***) he has been drawn to the margins, to context, and to the politics of faith – "I have, essentially, been drawn to unmasking the transformative reality of the Kingdom in our midst." He and his family moved to New Zealand in 2002.

Peter Kennett is a retired Congregationalist pastor living in Wellington, New Zealand. He is researching the connections between Congregationalists and Anabaptists and in the following article gives a progress report on his research.

Congregationalists and Anabaptists

What began as "Congregationalists' Debt to the Anabaptists; and why it was rightly denied, then, not now", has mushroomed to "Anabaptist Influence on the Congregational, Baptist and Quaker Movements." This is a progress report on the first part of the research.

First, two cautions. I fiercely reject the position of Troeltsch that all four "movements" are sects, as opposed to "Church." If you understand the Universal Church to appear, or be manifested, in the Local Church, and the Local Church is to be found wherever Christians are gathered for a Gospel life, then "sect" is any group that denies this, claiming that it alone is "the Church." Second, distortions appear whenever Anabaptist is included in Baptist, or Congregationalist in Reformed.

Historians have been divided whether or not Anabaptism influenced Congregationalism. Campbell wrote "When we find Browne ["father" of English Congregationalism]…preaching to his English congregation the doctrine of separation between Church and State, it seems needless to enquire whence it was derived."

Taking account of early Congregationalists' strong denials that they were in any way influenced by, or in sympathy with, Anabaptism, and the vehement criticism (much of it misrepresentation) by Lutherans, Reformed and English, of Anabaptist views and practice in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, most historians have concluded "no influence." Yet others have cautiously or enthusiastically endorsed influence.

I refer here to two ***Mennonite Quarterly Review*** articles. The first, by C. Norman Kraus (Jan 1960), looks at the relationship between the Dutch in England and the Separatists, and the Separatists and the Anabaptists in the Netherlands. He admits "similarity of thought," but "not of such nature as to suggest an immediate adoption from them." While conceding that Robert Browne would have been acquainted with Anabaptist works, he concludes, "the dissimilarities are of such a nature as to point to a minimum of direct relationship."

Twenty-seven years later, A. Sell, writing from a Reformed position, came to the conclusion that "to prove conclusively that the Brownists and others were indebted to the Anabaptists for their ideas is impossible." However, he went on to say that "Anabaptists and Separatists drew from a common well of ideas [the key difference being that the Anabaptists preceded the Congregationalists by at least half a century] and "as to whether or not the Separatists of the 1560s were influenced by the Anabaptists, we may never know."

Sell critiqued a book by the great Congregational Theologian P T Forsyth, ***Faith, Freedom and the Future***. [The writer declares an interest here. Forsyth was his theological college principal's principal's principal.] Forsyth judged Congregationalism to be a fusion between Calvinism, Anabaptism and the English people's desire for freedom. Yet Forsyth misunderstood Anabaptism, confusing it with Spiritualism.

Questions to be answered: Where did Robert Browne get his ideas from? Not from Cartwright or Greenham or Wycliffe. Whence came Forsyth's false ideas of Anabaptism, if not from German Lutherans? Was Forsyth right about Anabaptism's influence on Congregationalism, despite misunderstanding Anabaptism? Since they have so much in common - the Church's freedom from the State, the notion of the "fallen Church," restorationism, congregational autonomy, the democratic constitution of the Church, purity of communion confined only to the regenerate, Christo-centric and biblical theology, personal piety and the warmth of immediate experience - why have relationships between the two fellowships been so neglected, even after the 20th century renaissance of understanding of Anabaptism? Have relationships between Congregationalists and Presbyterians diverted Congregationalists from recognising their Anabaptist "mother"?

Peace Without Ecclesiology?

The task of Anabaptists in Australia and New Zealand

BY NATHAN HOBBY

Anabaptists have a treasure hidden in the field of their common life. It is a vision of church which has the stamp of the kingdom of God upon it. Even though its followers were horribly silenced, neither their work nor their vision is finished. I believe God has buried in the common life of these peace-loving people a vision to be preserved until the proper time. And it is their unique vision of church which lies at the core of Anabaptist identity.

- Walfred Fahrer, ***Building on the rock: a Biblical vision of being church together from an Anabaptist-Mennonite perspective***, (p.16)

The history of Anabaptism in Australia and New Zealand has been a history of unearthing the rich theological resources in the tradition. We might recall Josiah's rediscovery of the Book of the Law in 2 Kings 22. We have talked, learnt, and dialogued. It's taken scholars - the despised and ignored elite of our society - to rediscover, recover, and understand the ideas of Anabaptism.

Now is the time to put them into practice.

This isn't easy. But Anabaptism's not easy, and we're not cowards. Our ancestors were burned and drowned for their troubles; our founder was crucified. We can at least get uncomfortable.

At the 2005 AAANZ Conference in Canberra, we discussed a key aspect of Anabaptist thinking - pacifism. But let us not forget the context our peace witness comes in.

John Howard Yoder's ***Politics of Jesus*** is rightly celebrated as one of the most important theological works of the twentieth century. Yet Yoder wasn't just concerned with the social ethics of Jesus from an individual believer's perspective. Indeed, even this book, not to mention Yoder's body of work, testifies that once one believes that following Jesus means following his social ethics, one realises that Jesus' social ethics belong to the church.

Yoder wrote an essay called "Peace without eschatology?" (***For the Nations***) Just as importantly, he would ask rhetorically of AAANZ today: "Peace without ecclesiology?" And it is Yoder's less celebrated book that AAANZ needs to hear in all its prophetic urgency - ***Body Politics: five practices of the believing church before the watching world***.

For AAANZ, this book is more important than the ***Politics of Jesus***. It is here that we are going to be challenged and changed. Yoder outlines what the church should be doing if it takes its kingdom task seriously. Exciting, challenging questions come out of it, to provoke and inspire:

Is your church practising binding and loosing, exercising your duty and privilege to decide stuff on God's behalf as the body of believers? Do you bring decisions to the church, or do you just decide them on your own?

Is your church practising the common meal Jesus started where young and old, rich and poor are gathered around as Christ's body, eating food together? Surely as an Anabaptist, you're not convinced by the supernatural/ symbolic sidetrack offered by Catholicism and Protestantism?

Does your church practice the priesthood of all believers? "Abolish the laity," Alan Kreider argues!

Does your church allow everyone to bring something to worship, and to speak out in prophecy as the Spirit leads? When was the last time you interrupted a sermon with a question?

If the answer to these questions is no, are you encouraging your church to start these things?
If not again, why don't you leave and start an Anabaptist styled house church? You only need two or three. Jesus said so. Because the thing is, if we don't have Anabaptist churches, we don't have much to back our witness. Where is this new way of life we talk about it if isn't evident in our churches? What does the person who's read **Politics of Jesus** or done an alternatives to violence program do next, besides be suffocated by the contrary voices in our normal churches?

If we can't drive an hour to meet *at least* weekly with fellow Anabaptists, what is our name worth? The people whose name we claim - or, now, even wish to camouflage - risked death to meet together in forests and caves.

Those of us in full time jobs need to think about going part time so we can be full on disciples. Or else maybe we can give half our pay to a brother or sister so they can work for the cause.

It is an indictment on Australia and New Zealand and on us that up until now, we have only been able to provide about $5000 a year for the work of Mark and Mary! Let us wake from our slumber. If the claims of Anabaptism are true, we should be full on for it.

Yes, these are hard sayings. Yes, they will divide people. Yes, they mean business will not go on as usual. But don't blame me. Blame Jesus. Blame Menno Simons. My scandalous, foolish opinion is this: to grow, to flourish, and to be faithful to its own tradition, AAANZ needs to get church focused!

Nathan Hobby is a member of Perth Anabaptist Fellowship.

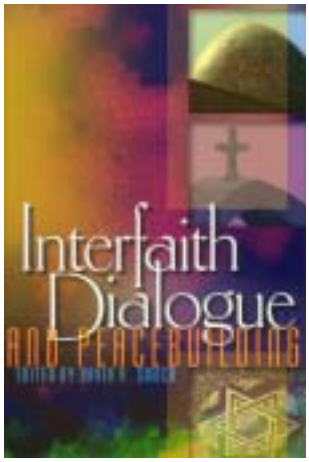
Church Renewal: A Counter-cultural Vision and an Eagerness to Celebrate
Norman Shanks, Iona Community, Scotland

The church's vocation in each and every locality is to be a worshipping, healing, learning, serving community, faithfully living by the values of the kingdom, modelling and embodying a counter-cultural vision, looking and reaching out beyond itself with a wider vision, to discover the light and love of God in engagement with the life of the world, standing up and speaking out against all that diminishes and disempowers humanity. In so doing it will dream and explore; it will be open, flexible and ready to take risks; it will be generous, hospitable and ready to celebrate; it will not be a ghetto but keen to co-operate and engage; it will be a transforming community – influencing others for good and being transformed itself in the process; it will be resilient and persistent, however hard the way, and it will be marked by joy and an eagerness to celebrate.

BOOKS AND RESOURCES

Interfaith Dialogue And Peacebuilding

EDITED BY DAVID R. SMOCH, U.S. INSTITUTE OF PEACE PRESS, 2002



In his talk at the 2005 AAANZ conference entitled "Terrorism, Religious Violence and Restorative Justice," Chris Marshall said one response needed by religious groups to deal with today's violence is "interfaith dialogue." This book written by practitioners in the peacebuilding field gives a number of helpful suggestions on how we go about doing it.

"Rarely is religion the principal cause of conflict, even when the opposing groups...are differentiated by religious identity. But religion is nevertheless a contributing factor to conflicts in places as widely scattered as Northern Ireland, the Middle East, the Balkans, Sudan, Indonesia and Kashmir."(vii) An Israeli author calls interfaith dialogue "the true spiritual adventure of our time."(7)

"Dialogue is a very dangerous business...Once opponents meet in a genuine dialogue setting, they will never return to the same positions or level of awareness that they had before."(15) Some accuse dialoguers of being traitors to their side or of giving up the fight for justice. "Dialogue is not a substitute for social action."(15) It is just one method used in the effort to bring about social and political change.

Spirituality, rituals, and scriptures are important to the process. Mohammed Abu-Nimer in his chapter entitled "The Miracles of Transformation through Interfaith Dialogue" warns about using "primary language" – "beliefs and terms that are unique to a faith group and often not used by others." He says, "most experienced interfaith dialoguers begin by using universal or religious secondary language to emphasize the virtues and ideals they share with others. For example, they discuss peace, love, harmony, charity, devotion to their beliefs, doing good, and so forth in a language everyone can understand and to which everyone can relate."(20)

Abu-Nimer says, "the uniqueness of the interfaith dialogue is that every religion more or less possesses a universal secondary language that can bridge the gap between participants and provide them with a vernacular with which to explore their differences at a later stage."(21)

Basic principles for effective dialogue include symmetric arrangements in the process and design, selection of appropriate participants, examination of both similarities and differences, inclusion of a collaborative task, a flexible process of interaction, healing and acknowledgement of collective and individual injuries, and unireligious preparation and forums.

Marc Gopin in his chapter entitled "The Use of the Word and its Limits" says "many people use 'dialogue' as the equivalent of 'peacemaking' and 'conflict resolution.' But this is a mistake."(34) Dialogue is just one peacemaking tool. He warns, "Most enemies cannot or will not articulate their true feelings through the use of words in dialogue."(34) We must use dialogue alongside other modes of reconciliation, "especially in terms of deeds, symbol, and emotional communication."(35)

Interfaith dialogue works best in small groups. "The more people in a room around a table, the more lies that are spoken, the more distorted the presentation of self, the more tribalistic the psychology of adversaries. With every decrease in the number of participants, the more truth that is revealed, the more we find emotional honesty, trust, risks taken, confessions made, apologies offered."(38)

"Engaging in interfaith dialogue does not in any way mean undermining one's faith or religious tradition. Indeed, interfaith dialogue is constructive only when people become firmly grounded in their own religious traditions and through that process gain a willingness to listen and respect the beliefs of other religions."(49) We experience this in workshops and classes we lead. People grow deeper in their own faith when needing to explain it, and sometimes defend it, to others.

"It is only when there is a true understanding of 'who we are' and what we bring to the process of interfaith dialogue that progress can be made toward constructively addressing 'what we do' through face-to-face interfaith peacemaking efforts."(58)

One of my heroes is Howard Thurman, the African American churchman who influenced many of the leaders of the U.S. Civil Rights movement including Martin Luther King, Junior. Thurman never shied away from interfaith dialogue *because* of his strong Christian faith. He once said, "They who seek God with all their hearts must, however, some day on their way meet Jesus."

Part II of the book deals with three case studies from the Middle East, the Balkans, and Northern Ireland. David Steele writes about what he learned about forgiveness in the process of dialogue in the former Yugoslavia. "Honesty requires admitting that guilt is not entirely one-sided...At the same time...there is a difference between personal confession of sin and acknowledgement of the wrongdoing by others in one's group. One should not take on personal responsibility for the sins of others."

"Forgiveness is not absolution. It is not an act that frees people from the consequences of their action. Forgiveness is not done for the sake of the other person, the victimizer. Instead it is a process by which the victim endeavours to free himself from the bondage of revenge. Forgiveness can be defined as giving up all hope of a better past. It is an act by which the victim moves out of the grip of the past and into an open and promising future."(82)

Steele describes justice as "the restoration of right relationships between people."(83) It is a view that moves beyond the need for punishment and allows for new possibilities in the future.

Part III describes a couple of organizations active in interfaith dialogue. The editor writes a helpful "Conclusion" where he sums up the important points of the book.

[A series of interfaith "adventures" being held throughout Australia this year are the Interfaith Alternatives to Violence Project workshops being held in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Adelaide, Brisbane, and Hobart. These weekend workshops bring together Christians, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, and others in a setting that seeks to break down the barriers that keep people apart. For more information, contact Mary Hurst at the AAANZ office, **aaanz@iprimus.com.au**]

Herald Press Releases:

Proverbs, Believers Church Bible Commentary Series

by John W. Miller

"Here is solid scholarship with certain unpopular twists and interpretations. In place of a pedantic verse by verse approach, this thematic treatment of Proverbs provides a surprisingly contemporary manual on some critical issues of Christian discipleship. Miller offers very helpful pastoral insights for the 21st-century preacher." -James M. Lapp, Franconia Mennonite Conference

The 19th volume in the Believers Church Bible Commentary series is unique for its detailed uncovering of evidence for two editions of Proverbs, a first in the time of Solomon and a second in support of King Hezekiah's historic religious reforms. In this light heretofore puzzling features of the book's design, purpose and message are clarified and the book's relevance for its time and ours is greatly enhanced. This readable commentary is for all who seek more fully to understand the original message of Scripture and its meaning for today-Sunday school teachers, members of Bible study groups, students, pastors, and other seekers.

"Proverbs is a treasury of God's wisdom, and John Miller is a gifted guide to its proper interpretation. He has given the church a clear, interesting, and insightful commentary on this important biblical book." -Tremper Longman, Westmont College

John W. Miller has combined an active life of scholarship, writing, university teaching, and pastoral leadership. He is professor emeritus at Conrad Grebel University College, an affiliate of the University of Waterloo in Canada.

Beliefs: Mennonite Faith and Practice

by John D. Roth

"Roth has a knack of communicating simply and clearly without becoming simplistic. He surveys core elements of Anabaptist/Mennonite perspectives on theology, ecclesiology, and discipleship." -***Anabaptism Today***

Ask any person randomly on the sidewalk what they know about the Mennonites and chances are their answer will include Mormons, black clothes and buggies, or general confusion. This short, engaging book gives a brief account of what Mennonites believe. From the beginnings of the Anabaptist (or Mennonite) movement in the 16th-century, to biblical interpretation, baptism, understandings of the church, ethics, and the complex question of denominationalism, John D. Roth provides a solid framework for on-going conversations about faithful discipleship in the Mennonite church today.

"John Roth has written a wonderful introduction to Mennonite life and theology. With admirable candour he exposes the controverted and undecided aspects of Mennonite ecclesial practices and theology. This book will serve not only to introduce Mennonite life to Mennonites but to anyone wanting to know what makes Mennonites Mennonites." -Stanley Hauerwas, Duke Divinity School

John D. Roth is professor of history at Goshen College where he also serves as director of the Mennonite Historical Library and editor of ***The Mennonite Quarterly Review***. He has edited and authored several books, including ***Engaging Anabaptism: Conversations with a Radical Tradition***.

Anabaptists Meeting Muslims: A Calling for Presence in the Way of Christ

edited by James R. Krabill, David W. Shenk, and Linford Stutzman

"This book is an expression of hope. We can meet Muslims; and meeting them as servants of the Servant, we can be a presence in the way of Christ." -From the Foreword by Jonathan Bonk, Overseas Ministries Study Center

Anabaptists Meeting Muslims reveals a rich diversity of Anabaptist engagement with Muslims around the world. Here are essays and reports from people who serve among Muslims, administrators at mission and service agencies, professors and scholars of mission, and theologians. Among these voices is a spirit of dialogue, questioning, agreeing, amazement, and sometimes, dissent. ***Anabaptists Meeting Muslims*** does not seek to present a homogenized view that flows through a predetermined Anabaptist ideological grid. Rather it is a forum for giving and receiving counsel and a place to share stories and reflections that will encourage and help to equip Christians for the calling to presence in the way of Christ.

About the Editors: James R. Krabill is the senior executive for Global Ministries at Mennonite Mission Network, the mission agency of Mennonite Church, USA. David W. Shenk is the global missions consultant for Eastern Mennonite Missions and the author of numerous books on Muslim-Christian dialogue and relation. Linford Stutzman is associate professor of culture and mission at Eastern Mennonite University.

Earth trek: Celebrating and sustaining God's creation

by Joanne Moyer

Based on the Genesis 1 story of creation, Joanne Moyer uses the seven days of creation as a basis for exploring the aspects of our created world, how it is threatened, what is being done to protect it, and further actions that individuals, households, and congregations can take to live more sustainably. Moyer also explores how ecological concern and justice relate to Christian faith, delving into the Bible and a broad range of thinkers and writers to discover and celebrate the ecological imperative of our faith tradition.

Joanne Moyer has degrees in theology from Canadian Mennonite University and in environmental studies from the University of Winnipeg. She is currently pursuing a masters degree in environmental studies at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Alan and Eleanor Kreider will be visiting Melbourne and Sydney this July. From the United Kingdom and Europe to Korea, the Kreiders have introduced people to Christ by teaching and living out the foundational beliefs of the Anabaptist faith. For 26 years, Alan and Eleanor, his wife, were mission workers in England, where they transformed the London Mennonite Centre into a teaching and resource centre on Christian discipleship in the Anabaptist tradition, urban mission, and conflict mediation. While in England, Alan served as director of the Centre for the Study of Christianity and Culture at Regent's Park College, Oxford University; as an itinerant preacher and speaker; and as a teacher at Oxford University and the University of Manchester. Eleanor taught worship and liturgy at Regent's Park College, and travels widely to speak on topics of worship and Christian discipleship.

Upon their return to the U.S. in 2000, Alan and Eleanor became mission educators for Mennonite Mission Network, an assignment that took them to Taiwan and Hong Kong in April 2004 as well as to churches and communities across North America. Alan served as an adjunct member of the AMBS faculty beginning in 1997, and became associate professor in 2004.

Alan's writings include ***Coming Home: Stories of Anabaptists in Britain and Ireland*** (Pandora, 2000), co-editor and ***The Change of Conversion and the Origin of Christendom: Christian Mission and Modern Culture*** (Trinity International, 1999). Eleanor has written ***Communion Shapes Character*** (Herald Press, 1997).

A special AAANZ evening is being planned for **Melbourne** on **7 July at Truth and Liberation Concern Coffee Shop, 265 Canterbury Road Bayswater 7.30pm**. The topic will be "Praying in the Anabaptist Tradition," exploring both the historical scene and what Mennonites/Anabaptists in North America are doing today.

In **Sydney**, AAANZ and Macquarie Christian Studies Institute (MCSI) are co-sponsoring a day with the Kreiders **Saturday, 16 July, 10am-4pm, Trinity Chapel Macquarie, Robert Menzies College**, Cost $60 and $40 concession. The topic will be "Worship, Mission, and Peace After Christendom."

The Kreiders will also be speaking **Wednesday, 20 July, 7.30, Trinity Chapel Macquarie, Robert Menzies College**, Cost $30 and $20 concession. Their topic will be "Is there life after Christendom? The relevance of the Early Church in a post-Christian world." Email: **integrating@mcsi.edu.au**

In a world of violence – PEACEMAKING AND EVANGELISM

What does Peacemaking have to do with evangelism?

Not much you think? Then come along and participate in an evening of storytelling and informal dialogue around the issue with mission leadership from the Mennonite Mission Network (MMN), an agency of the Mennonite Church, USA with ministries in 55 countries.

Present from Mennonite Mission Network and AAANZ will be:

- **Stanley Green**, Executive Director, MMN. Stanley has served as a pastor in South Africa, a missionary in Jamaica and worked in urban mission in Los Angeles.
- **James Krabill**, Senior Executive for Global Mission, MMN. James has worked in England, France and the Ivory Coast.
- **Sheldon Sawatzky**, Regional Director for East Asia (MNN) based in Taipei, Taiwan
- **Marietta Sawatzky**, Prayer Network Facilitator (MNN) based in Taipei Taiwan
- **Mark and Mary Hurst**, Pastoral workers for AAANZ

Where? When?

Canberra
Fred McMaster Lounge, Canberra Baptist Church, Currie Cres, Kingston, ACT
7.30pm – 9pm Monday 9 May 2005 - Followed by Supper
For further information on the evening contact:
Doug Hynd ph 6288 9191 Email: doug.hynd@netspeed.com.au

Sydney
Wednesday 11 May, 6pm, Home of Jim and Sally Longley,
71 Narrabeen Park Parade, Warriewood, NSW
9913 7871 (House on the Bluff with a tennis court)
A light meal of soup and rolls will be served.
Get there when you can.
Please RSVP with Mary Hurst at 9545 0301 or m5hurst@hotmail.com

The Anabaptist Association of Australia and New Zealand Inc.

The purposes of the Association are:

- To nurture and support the Christian faith of individuals and groups in Australia and New Zealand who identify with the Anabaptist tradition.
- To network and link individuals, churches and groups of Christians who share a common Anabaptist understanding of the Christian faith.
- To provide religious services including teaching, training, pastoral care, mediation, and counsel to its members and others interested in the Anabaptist tradition.
- To provide resources and materials relating to the tradition, perspectives, and teaching of Anabaptists to both the Christian and general public.
- To convene conferences and gatherings which provide opportunity for worship, teaching, training, consultation, celebration, and prayer in the Anabaptist tradition.
- To extend the awareness of Anabaptism in Australia and New Zealand assisting individuals, churches and groups discover and express their links with the Anabaptist tradition.
- To provide an opportunity for affiliation for churches and groups who wish to be known in Australia and New Zealand as Anabaptists.

What is Anabaptism?

Anabaptism is a radical Christian renewal movement that emerged in Europe during the sixteenth-century Reformation. Whilst Anabaptism was a grassroots movement with diverse expressions in its early development, its enduring legacy usually has included the following:

- Baptism upon profession of faith
- A view of the church in which membership is voluntary and members are accountable to the Bible and to each other
- A commitment to the way of peace and other teachings of Jesus as a rule for life
- Separation of church and state
- Worshipping congregations which create authentic community and reach out through vision and service

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