



He is risen!

*He is risen indeed!*

This spring issue arrives as we observe our graduating students, many of whom have become dear friends, awkwardly wrestling with their first call. Soon we will receive ordination and installation service invitations and perhaps even be asked to preach or give a charge or offer a prayer. In a chapter aptly titled, *The Next Thing I Knew, We Were Married*, Richard Lischer writes,

If I failed to miss the essential madness of the occasion, I also missed the goodness it represented. Who could have invented a job called *pastor*? What CEO would create a task force in which savvy and self-sufficient farmers subject themselves to the authority of a recent graduate student? The role was simply *there*, waiting to be filled. *Open Secrets*, p. 50

You have played a significant role in the formational process in these eager, gifted and trembling soon-to-be pastors. You are to be congratulated! Some of the more consequential literature that aided you and your students along the way is abstracted on the following pages.

We look forward to receiving your feedback and especially the professional contribution of an abstract. What book or article have you used or will use that you may share with your colleagues in Theological Field Education? Contributions should be approximately 200 words in length and sent to [matt.flooding@westernsem.org](mailto:matt.flooding@westernsem.org). The editorial board reserves the right to select and edit contributions to be published. An annual index will be published and printable copies of past issues of *TFEA* will be archived at [www.westernsem.org](http://www.westernsem.org)

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*The Art of Pastoring: Ministry Without All the Answers* by David Hansen. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1994. 178 pages. ISBN 0-8308-1669-0

“Pastoral ministry is a life, not a technology.” In that spirit, Pastor David Hansen provides a refreshing description of the art of pastoring; one which focuses more on the substance of ministry rather than on its forms. That substance, as described by Hansen, is bound up in the Christian minister living as a parable of Jesus Christ. According to Hensen, this is the central principle to pastoral ministry, and the one that integrates every pastoral duty.

Intensely narrative in style and content, this book reflects the author’s strong commitment to vital, loving relationships between pastor and people. Hansen relates many stories from his life and ministry, offering insightful reflections and helpful suggestions. While this is not a “how-to” book on Christian ministry, there are practical lessons to be gained from its reading.

Following the introductory chapter, in which Hansen presents his thesis, the remainder of the book is organized into chapters that mirror the life and ministry of Christ. These are: Call, The Holy Spirit, Temptation, Eschatology, Preaching, Prayer, Friendship, Sacrament, Leadership, and Leaving, Reward. Hansen’s honesty, as reflected in the book’s subtitle, as well as the genuine respect he has for the pastoral office, comes through clearly, as he instantly connects with anyone who has served a local congregation. This book should be a requirement for students in preparation for ministry. However, only those with some experience will appreciate the profound richness of this book.

-Thomas L. Fuller

*Calling and Character: Virtues of the Ordained Life* by William H. Willimon. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000. 164 pages. ISBN 0-687-09033-4

This book addresses the topic of clergy ethics, in an unconventional way. Rather than taking up the usual laundry list of pertinent subjects subsumed under the heading of clergy ethics, Willimon addresses the underlying question, “Who ought clergy be?” and then by implication, “What ought clergy to do?”(11) Clergy ethics is understood to be imposed upon clergy by their vocation (calling), of which ordination is an outward sign. More than a sign of professional status, Willimon promotes ordination as a promise of God’s character-forming work in the life of the vocational minister. Drawing upon Chrysostom and Augustine, he drives home the cruciality of character for faithful Christian ministry, stating, “I agree with Chrysostom’s exceedingly high view of the moral requirements for clergy, not because clergy are fated to be some upper crust of morally exemplary Christians, but rather because their vocation, as leaders of a countercultural community, demands certain morally strenuous attributes. Rigorous moral demands go with the territory.”(48)

Three of the five main chapters are organized around Richard B. Hays's framework for New Testament ethics; namely, three biblical images of community, cross, and new creation. These images give theological content to the discussion of ministerial character in more specific ways. With a blend of material that is biblical, theological, historical, and anecdotal, Willimon produces a worthy effort to "renourish the vision by which pastors are called."(21) The book has already proven to be a useful resource for addressing clergy ethics with theological students, and promises to encourage and correct many who are presently engaged in the practice of ministry.

-Thomas L. Fuller

*How Your Church Family Works* by Peter L. Steinke, Alban Institute: 1993. 128 pages. ISBN 1-56699-110-2

One of Field Education's most important contributions to seminary education is helping students gain a greater sense of their pastoral identity. A healthy understanding of vocation does not separate pastoral and personal identity. Pastoral relationships will closely mirror one's other relationships. Particularly, when dealing with conflict pastors shall function in the parish setting much in the same way that they have learned to function in their families. The purpose of this book is to offer a family systems paradigm for understanding the ways in which church relationships work. Based upon the work of Murray Bowen and Edwin Friedman, Steinke gives a brief and helpful introduction to the theory.

Writing in an accessible style, Steinke divides his work into two parts. Part I introduces the various aspects of family systems theory: the inter-relatedness of human actions; anxiety and reactivity; the human tendency to either fuse or with or seek distance from another; the great desire for stability; and the close relation between clarity and compassion. Part II then applies the theory to congregational relationships. Field Education students will benefit from conversations based upon Steinke's work. They quickly are able to apply the theory to their field settings and their own lives. This book is quite suitable for Field Education discussion groups and proves to be very effective in encouraging discussion of issues of conflict and change.

-Philip Jamieson

*Glittering Images* by Susan Howatch, New York: Fawcett Crestt, 1987. 434 pages. ISBN 0-449-21436-2

*Glittering images* is the first of a series of novels set in the Church of England during different periods of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Howatch trained as a lawyer, enjoyed commercial success as a writer of popular novels, then experienced a

spiritual conversion and set out to write a series exploring different issues of spiritual significance within the lives of Anglican clergy and laity. *Glittering Images* exposes the need of many theological students and clergypersons to receive approval and be perceived as successful. It is a fascinating blend of psychology, theology and spiritual direction. More than any other book I know, it offers a structure and vocabulary for understanding this vocational and personal hazard. The book contains one brief scene of sexual nature that may be problematic for certain individuals, and I offer an alternative choice of reading *Spiritual Wholeness for Clergy* by Hands and Fehr.

-Barbara Mutch

*Open Secrets* by Richard Lischer. New York: Doubleday, 2001. 241 pages. ISBN 0-385-50217-6

Lischer, of Duke Divinity School, has done theological field educators a wonderful service in writing *Open Secret*, an extended theological reflection on his first year or so of ministry. A newly-minted Ph.D., Lischer is placed by his bishop in the New Cana Lutheran Church. In twenty-two episodic chapters he leads the reader through his spiritual autobiography, a short-course in congregational studies and cultural discernment, and a realistic portrayal of life in the country manse.

The theological reflection modeled throughout the book is introduced in the story of his own call that came when he fastened on the phrase in Luther's catechism, *What does this mean?* "It was the question that got me, as if addressed to me and no one but me. Ask it often enough, and *everything* begins to mean and glow with discovery." (23)

Honest spiritual autobiography? Lischer describes his reaction to an experience with an African American family that befriended him. "The family dropped me off at the college to resume my theological education...except it could not be the same...thoroughly chastened by my brief course in segregation. I would never survey my lily-white life with quite the dumb satisfaction I had before. A whole new world of sin was opening before me and offering to educate me." (35)

Realistic? "My new parishioners were expected to welcome an inexperienced, twenty-eight year old stranger into a community that was as tightly sealed as a jar of home-canned pickles." (49)

Discerning? "It all begins with the symbols...Any cultural anthropologist would have warned me not to rearrange the furniture in our church." (89) I suspect you know the rest of the story here.

*Open Secrets* engages senior seminarians right in the existential angst of where they know they may soon live and serve. Discussions have never been so lively in the senior field education-related course.

-Matthew Floding

*Religious No More: Building Communities of Grace & Freedom* by Mark D. Baker. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1999. 187 pages. ISBN 0-8308-159-29

Mark Baker uses his experience as a Mennonite missionary in Honduras to engage in a critical analysis of North American evangelicalism. Through the lens of his experience, Baker identifies some *weak welds* in the gospel message as expressed in North American evangelicalism. He identifies distortions of the Gospel message as he looks to biblical resources to correct misconceptions and move Christian experience from an over-emphasis on individualistic, personal experience to one of developing and strengthening the community of faith.

Baker's analysis finds community that is created through its legalism/rules—a formal and/or informal understanding of who's "in" and who's "out". He names the inconsistent theological message of grace that requires adherence to rules to define individual, moral behavior at the expense of authentic community. Another important factor is its lack of recognition of historical and cultural factors that subvert Christianity.

Throughout his critique, analysis, connections, correctives and challenge he uses the word *religion* as a concept that is contrasted with biblical Christianity. Also throughout, there is a consistent call for the church to free themselves of religion and be a genuine, authentic community as opposed to a group of individuals who have given themselves over to be ruled by God rather than live in relationship with God.

As Baker turns to the scriptural resources, he first offers a description of the more common reading of Paul's letter to the Galatians as addressing false teaching about salvation with Paul responding to legalistic demands by emphasizing God's grace. In this reading, typically there is not reference to the larger community or unity of the church but rather the focus is on the individual Christian who needs to be free from legalism.

Baker's re-reading of Galatians provides a strong, corporate emphasis and looks at the implications for faithful community witness that is not bound by religion but set free through its relationship to God its members.

This would be a provocative and challenging book for adult Bible study and/or for committees engaged in the task of visioning for the future. The

challenge to be free from religion and part of authentic community is compelling and, I would say, necessary for the church of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

- K. Joanne Lindstrom

*Teaching from the Heart: Theology and Educational Method* by Mary Elizabeth Mullino Moore, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1998. 248 pages. ISBN 1-56338-253-9

This book is a revised edition of Mary Mulino Moore's original work of 1991. Faithful to the title, the heart of this book is teaching from the heart—a dream, which for Mullino Moore, points to the *quality* of teaching. Mullino Moore's dream is to engage people in significant conversation at the intersection of theology and educational method. The purpose of that significant conversation at the intersection intersection itself, is to address the questions and insights which inevitably arise when two disciplines intersect. Mullino Moore invites her readers to engage with this book as a dialogue partner in the on-going trans-formation and re-formation of theology and educational method.

Primarily founded on the discipline of process theology, as well as key insights from existential and liberation theologies, this book explores five educational methods: 1) Midwife Teaching: Case Study Method; 2) Integrative Teaching: Gestalt Method; 3) Incarnational Teaching; 4) Phenomenological Method; and 5) Liberative Teaching: Conscientizing Method. Recognizing that each of these educational methods is pertinent to teaching in a theological discipline, this particular abstract features some of key aspects of Midwife Teaching. In the case study method, the teaching act is an act of midwifery in that the teacher literally assists the student to draw insights from a case, or to give birth to new ideas. Important to note that the teacher intentionally assumes an assisting role working with the natural processes of the learner. In reflecting on a particular case, Mullino Moore demonstrates how practices and beliefs influence and shape one another.

-Lorraine Ste-Marie

*Transforming the Rough Places: The Ministry of Supervision* by Kenneth Pohly, Dayton Ohio, Whaleprints Publications, 1993, 168 pages. ISBN O-8146-2040-X

Pohly overviews the history of supervision, enriching the growing understandings by a survey approach which is multi-disciplinary. Resources for theological reflection on the ministry of supervision are offered and the endnotes and bibliography are excellent. Pohly names the ministry of supervision which is rooted in early Christian experiences, as a discipline

to be critiqued, compared, developed and loved. He claims that supervision offers an historic and effective means of equipping a person for ministry. He shows how supervision can be a transformative experience for individuals and for the whole church.

His chapter 4 on Method and Model has been especially helpful in our direct work with supervisors and students of ministry. The section on evaluation is challenging, and the possibilities suggested for transformation of present practices of supervision are hopeful.

The examples and case studies that Pohly offers as models of theological reflection on the experiences of supervision, identify well, the specifics of the various transformative steps of these methods of reflection. He claims that the supervisory conversation 1) clarifies the students self-understanding and gives focus to the differences in the congregation's self-understanding, 2) helps to acquire skills and insights to deal with future situations, 3) gains theological perspective so that what is done is consistent with pastoral ministry, and 4) gives new and empowering commitments to Christian faith as a principle of life. (128) This reflection is done mutually, with student, supervisor and other available assisting persons. This reflection is for the purpose of making life decisions about pastoral values, purpose and further actions for ministry. Faith deepens and the whole church is enriched in this process.

-Colleen Mahoney

*Under the Unpredictable Plant: An Exploration in Vocational Holiness* by Eugene H. Peterson, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1992. 197 pages. ISBN 0-8028-3705-0

*Under the Unpredictable Plant* is the third of three books by Peterson on pastoral work and vocation. The three books together are intended to provide a biblical orientation and theological understanding for pastoral ministry. Many theological students will be familiar with the first two books in the series: *Five Smooth Stones for Pastoral Work* and *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Work*. *Under the Unpredictable Plant* is a wonderful response for students in ministry formation used in companionship with the others or on its own.

Using the narrative structure of the Jonah story, Peterson makes a case for resisting cultural pressure to view pastoral ministry as a career to be developed. He suggests that the way forward lies in developing vocational holiness through understanding that pastoral work is not a glamorous vocation and, like farm work, consists of "modest, daily assigned work." Resisting the temptation to "jump ship" when the going gets tough allows us the possibility of becoming what we preach. By paying full attention to the tasks of ministry that we think are small and pretty, we have the opportunity

to be shaped and formed as pastoral people who see those chores as the very stuff by which we are being made holy.

I read this book for the first times as a pastor and it gave me the vocabulary for my deepest vocational longings. I now reread it every fall along with the senior M. Div. Students and watch it do the same for them.

-Barbara Mutch

“Where and How Religious Leaders Learn” by William Lord and George Brown in *A Lifelong Call to Learn: Approaches to Continuing Education for Church Leaders* edited by Robert E. Reber and D. Bruce Roberts. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2000. Pages 89-101. ISBN 0-687-07146-1

This chapter examines three focused studies of clergy continuing education—a 1984 study of outstanding clergy by Barbara Wheeler, Durstan McDonald, and Cameron Murchison; a 1993 study of clergy who did not participate in continuing education by Margaret F. Brillinger and Sharon Pocock; and a 1999 study of the spiritual needs of mid-career clergy by William Lord and John C. Bryan—and explores current research on adult learning. While the authors acknowledge the difficulty of assessing where clergy go for continuing education (neither the Society for the Advancement of Continuing Education for Ministry nor the Association of Continuing Education Schools and Seminaries have the means for gathering such information), they note that clergy tend to avoid denominationally-sponsored continuing education events and seek an environment where they feel safe sharing their personal needs and weaknesses. Highly competent clergy usually seek independent or self-directed study opportunities over events and formal learning opportunities planned by others. A wholistic approach to learning—which takes into account the complexity of ministry—is advocated.

[*Matt Floding*] Theological field educators might helpfully use the findings of the three studies as well as the conclusions of the chapter to encourage a commitment to a diversified approach to life-long learning and professional development.

-George Brown Jr

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