



Book Reviews

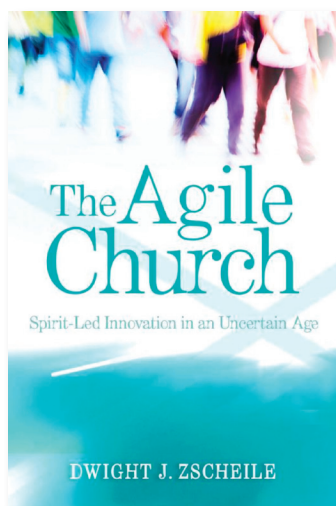
January 2019

Section Editors: Craig Nesson, Ralph Klein, Troy Troftgruben

Review a book!

Currents in Theology and Mission is seeking to expand its number of regular book reviewers. If you have interest, please send name, contact information, and areas of primary interest to currents@lstc.edu.

Ministry in Daily Life



The Agile Church: Spirit-Led Innovation in an Uncertain Age.
By Dwight J. Zscheile.
New York: Morehouse Publishing, 2014. ISBN: 978-0-8192-2977-9.
xiv & 158 pages. Paper. \$18.00.

In these challenging times, Zscheile offers the wise and provocative advice that the church does not need better

strategic planning but a deep theological grounding and spirit of rediscovery that invites us into a posture of learning, vulnerability, and creativity. Zscheile holds research from innovative companies in one hand, and in the other stories from the Bible. He does a masterful job of blending the two, showing that “innovation is a profoundly biblical and theological theme” (3).

Taking a lesson from the Babylonian exile, he reminds us that “there is no quick escape from exile, because [that] is where God’s people relearn what it means to be in relationship with God” (44). The work we face as a church is, in a word, conversion. Accustomed to being in a position of significance and influence, we are called as church to turn back to the God who calls us to continue blessing the world.

Combining recent work in business with God’s call to bless the world, Zscheile indicates that the way forward involves discerning the treasures of tradition by translating the good news into our context through innovative practices. The latter involves “making good mistakes” (x), that is, experimenting and learning from our mistakes, then experimenting again. He criticizes churches for being “primarily focused on their own internal life” (68), and for being “consumed with meeting the needs of the

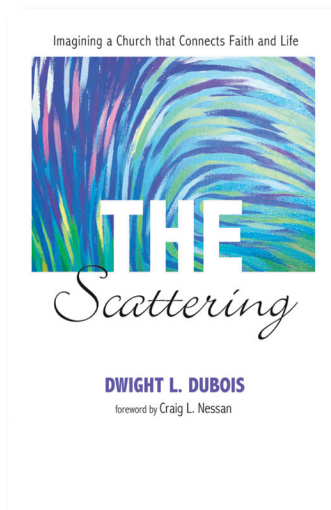
people already in their midst” (69). On several occasions, he debunks the notion that church is about inviting the neighbor to come in. Instead Zscheile calls us to meet our neighbors where they are.

I find Zscheile’s work to be especially helpful for the work of the Life of Faith Initiative. He challenges and encourages those of us who are seeking to support the saints in their varied ministries in daily life by making the following assertions:

- “Innovation grows out of close listening relationships with neighbors. ...it is ordinary people joining up with other ordinary people where they are in daily life and attending to the realities they’re facing” (65).
- “There are some women, men, and children who are connected relationally to neighbors outside the church and have found ways to engage those neighbors in conversation about the meaning and purpose of life” (74).
- “[P]reachers can preach all they want about how glorious God’s kingdom is, but until church members experience and learn to interpret its coming firsthand in the ordinariness of their daily life, little change will take place” (77–78).
- “Together, we have tried to redefine church membership less as institutional belonging and more as participation in the Way of Jesus in ordinary life” (80).

While I find the book to be both helpful and insightful, I fear that Zscheile’s use of the term “church”—especially where he calls the church to encounter the neighbor—will fall short of his intentions. “If God meets us where we are, the church too is led by the Spirit to meet its neighbors where they are in a posture of learning, reciprocity, and vulnerability” (36). The church’s encounter with neighbors happens both in congregational activities and in our individual lives, and both are well-reflected in the book. My fear is that the assumptions and values of most readers, informed by congregational realities, will limit the work of meeting our neighbor primarily to conventional understandings that buttress what he calls the “franchise model” of the corporate church at the expense of his call to stir us to participate in the Way of Jesus in ordinary life.

Dwight L. DuBois
Des Moines, Iowa



The Scattering: Imagining a Church that Connects Faith and Life. By Dwight DuBois. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2015. ISBN: 978-1-4982-2978-4. xxi & 155 pages. Paper. \$22.00.

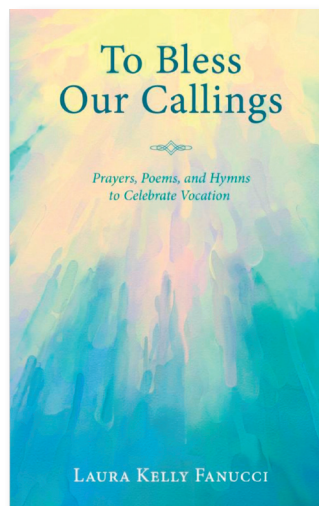
Craig Nessian observes in his Foreword to this important book: “The ongoing reformation of the church is

inextricably dependent upon the conversion of pastors to recognize and affirm that ordained ministry is to be directed entirely toward the vitality of a servant church lived out in the everyday lives of church members” (xi).

DuBois deftly avoids the trap of using worn terms and language to describe the church, coining instead the fresh terms “gathered church” and “scattered church.” In sharing the surprising results of his research, the author shows how both the Old and New Testaments, as well as the heart of Reformation theology, all point the church toward the world God loves. DuBois offers numerous examples of what this would look like in a congregational setting.

The author states in the conclusion of this provocative book: “My vision is of a community of believers that sees its purpose in terms of forming followers of Christ who are equipped and empowered to be his agents of love, care, and compassion in the world. It is a vision of a community that gathers on a regular basis to hear reports from the front lines, and to engage the ancient practices of the church (scripture, worship, prayer) around matters of relationships, calling, and culture. It is a vision of a gathered community that earnestly discerns how God’s presence influences what we do with our lives from Monday through Saturday, and then sends us back out into the world, in peace, to serve the Lord. This vision will expand our understanding and practice of ministry beyond our wildest expectations. This vision will make our congregations incredibly exciting and vibrant places” (147). I share this vision and heartily recommend his book. Why not invite church members, even a congregation council, to read it together and implement these strategies to revitalize your congregation?

*Rev. Greg Kaufmann
Synod Minister in the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin*



To Bless Our Callings: Prayers, Poems, and Hymns to Celebrate Vocation. By Laura Kelly Fanucci. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2017. ISBN: 978-1-5326-1578-8. xxi & 206 pages. Paper. \$25.00.

Laura Kelly Fanucci is on the staff of The Collegeville Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research in Col-

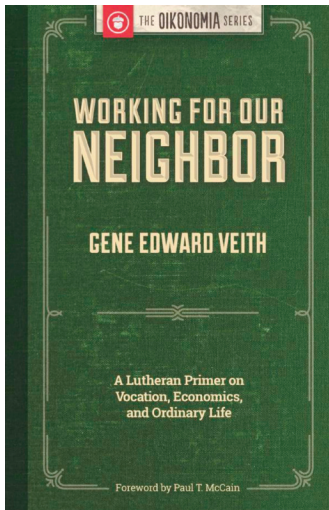
legeville, Minnesota. She currently serves as the Program Director of the Communities of Calling Initiative, a five-year project on vocation with fourteen partner congregations. She is the author of several books.

To Bless Our Callings is a broad collection of ecumenical prayers, poems, and hymns (as the subtitle indicates) for use in celebrating vocation. As such, the book fills a substantial void by providing a resource for those desiring to support the ministries of all the baptized in the arenas of everyday life. There are over 200 prayers, blessings, poems, and songs from a wide variety of Christian traditions. The materials in the volume lift up, affirm, and celebrate the richness of our everyday vocations.

The book provides usable resources for a multitude of occasions, including, for example, A Blessing for High School Graduation, Poems to Speak to the Callings of Children, A Prayer for Those Who Work in Social Services, or A Blessing after Losing a Job. The book is divided into three sections: Ages and Stages (prayers for all the stages of life), Work and Profession (blessings for traditional professions and overlooked occupations), and A Year of Blessing (resources for preaching about and praying for vocation throughout the year, both during the church year and the secular calendar).

To Bless Our Callings is a much-needed resource for congregational leaders and for all those, (parents, employers, and social service agency leaders) who seek to affirm and support the vocations of all God’s people.

*Dwight L. DuBois
Des Moines, Iowa*



Working for Our Neighbor: A Lutheran Primer on Vocation, Economics, and Ordinary Life. By Gene Edward Veith. Grand Rapids: Christian's Library Press, 2016. ISBN 978-1-9425-0329-3. xxv & 113 pages. Paper. \$10.00.

If you are looking for a resource to introduce Luther's understanding of vocation to members or a leadership team in your congregation, Gene Veith's book, *Working for Our Neighbor*, could be the perfect choice. This is a relatively brief book with nine chapters and a conclusion, complete with discussion questions for each chapter. The reading level might be challenging for some, but Veith's writing style is clear and concise.

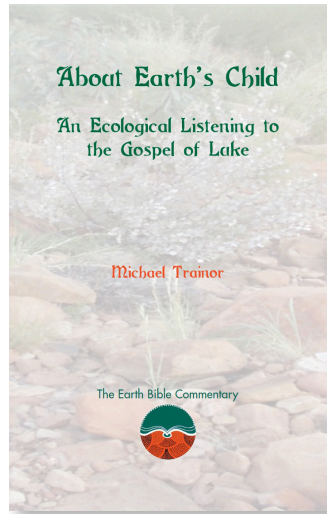
What appears odd is that both the back cover and the introduction set up the work of Max Weber (a nineteenth-century German sociologist, philosopher, and political economist) as the oppositional focus for the book: "Weber missed the ethical dimension of vocation, and so missed the ethical dimension that informed early capitalism. . . . [Weber] looked to Calvin as the theologian of vocation . . . [but he] should have attended to Martin Luther, the true theologian of vocation" (xv–xvi). While the introduction proceeds to "rescue the doctrine" of vocation from Weber, the rest of the book never mentions him again. The subtitle, *A Lutheran Primer on Vocation, Economics, and Ordinary Life*, together with the introduction, could lead potential readers to think the book focuses heavily on economics. While the book addresses that topic in a helpful way, overall it takes a balanced approach all three aspects referenced in the subtitle. In fact, it serves best as a primer on vocation and how vocation is lived out in ordinary life.

Readers will discover solid theological connections between justification and vocation: we are freed in Christ from sin, death, and the devil, which in turn sets us free for loving and serving our neighbor. Frequent quotes from Luther's work make this a useful primer. The astute reader (or leader of a discussion group on the book) will find connections to the Life of Faith Initiative. For example, what does Veith's statement, "Luther insisted that the Christian life requires not withdrawal from the world but rather engagement in the world" (28), mean for a congregation seeking to draw people in to participate in its programs? Readers and leaders of discussion groups will find many helpful points for discussion. Veith rightly claims: [A]ccording to the doctrine of vocation, the church is the place where Christians meet every week to find the forgiveness of Christ, feed on God's Word, and grow in their faith. Whereupon they are sent out into their voca-

tions—to their spouses, children, jobs, and culture—for that faith to bear fruit in acts of love" (29). This book could serve well as a resource for congregational members and leadership teams.

Dwight L. DuBois
Des Moines, Iowa

Other



About Earth's Child: An Ecological Listening to the Gospel of Luke. By Michael Trainor. Earth Bible Commentary Series. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2017. ISBN: 978-1-9109-2828-8. xi & 324 pages. Paper. \$24.50.

As the world reels from the disturbing conclusions of the UN's 2018 October report on climate change, Michael Trainor's rereading of Luke's gospel offers a much-needed perspective. As we enter Luke's year in the Revised Common Lectionary (2018–2019), this reprint of a more expensive hardcover comes at a convenient time and with a reasonable price that makes it accessible not only for teachers and pastors, but for use within the parish in group Bible study and personal devotion.

Locating Luke's account of Jesus within an eco-metanarrative of creation that stretches from Genesis to Revelation, Trainor joins an increasing number of biblical scholars interested in reading Scripture from an ecological perspective. In this volume, he highlights the eco-justice principles of intrinsic worth, interconnectedness, and environmental voice. As the subtitle suggests, Trainor masterfully engages a emancipatory rhetorical strategy of *listening* for the voices muted or even silenced by the gospel text and most traditional interpretations.

The first section, consisting of two theoretical chapters, provides a useful contextualization of this ecological reading from social-scientific and inter-textual perspectives. These chapters would be particularly useful for a biblical methods class studying ecological interpretation. For the average reader, however, they are not necessary in order to benefit from the ecological insights of the commentary proper.

Here it is worth noting: while Trainor avers the term eise-*genesis*, attempting to balance his ecological reading within the theoretical grounding of this first section, this blending instead demonstrates how purportedly objective methodologies are themselves subjective, relative to the ideologies and commit-



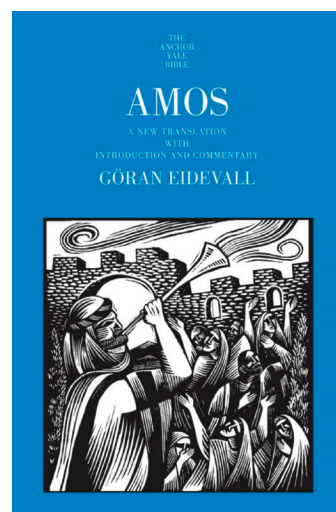
ments of those who use them. However, this is not a flaw, since it is true of all commentaries, whether they identify their particular interests or not. To his credit, then, Trainor carefully identifies his perspective as an ecologically concerned New Zealander, giving nuanced precision to his reading of both Luke's text and of the background theories he employs.

From this ecological perspective, the voices Trainor draws out in the second (longest) section of the book are those of non-human beings and all of creation. He achieves this by a two-fold strategy: first, highlighting ecological themes and images as he moves through Luke's narrative; second, creatively giving voice to the Earth itself in brief, meditative soliloquies based on a key scripture from each section of the narrative.

These chapters are laid out in traditional commentary form. But if you are looking for a detailed treatment of each chapter and verse, this commentary will disappoint. Trainor passes quickly over some portions in order to offer more detailed analysis of texts with the most ecological content. As a result, the commentary is much more suited to group study of key passages than as a general reference.

The final section of the book summarizes the ecological insights Trainor draws from Luke. Through several theses for contemporary application, Trainor concludes that Luke's gospel can productively contribute to an ecological theology with relevance for those answering, or perhaps just beginning to discern, the urgent call to care for the earth today.

Amy Lindeman Allen
Christian Theological Seminary



Amos. The Anchor Yale Bible 24G. By Göran Eidevall. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017. ISBN 978-0-3001-7878-4. xix & 292 pages. Cloth. \$65.00.

Eidevall, a professor of Old Testament at Uppsala University, shows wide acquaintance with the contemporary secondary literature on Amos and makes it available to pastors and other exegetes.

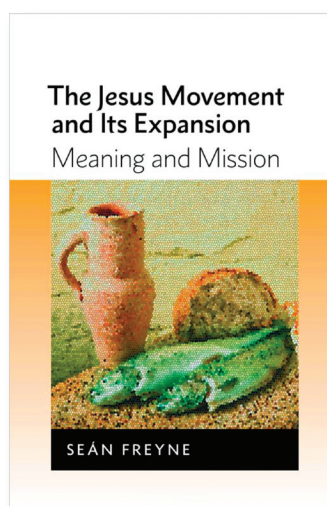
He emphasizes that we know very little about the prophet himself and departs from the common date assigned for the prophet in 760 B.C.E. Instead, he postulates three versions of the book, with the following dates: after 722 B.C.E., when the Northern Kingdom was conquered by Assyria to 587 B.C.E., when Judah and Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians; after 587 B.C.E.; and in the Persian period from 539–333 B.C.E. While admitting that

the book focuses on the oppression of the poor, he does little to explain the social and economic problems of the mid-eighth century when the prophet was active.

Eidevall identifies the famous confrontation between Amaziah and Amos in 7:10–17 as an addition to the vision cycle in chs. 7–9, coming from the exilic or early postexilic period and labels it as legendary, not biographical. In my opinion, this confrontation does function as a turning point in the vision cycle since the subsequent fourth vision leads to the verdict that the end has come upon “my people Israel,” but does that necessitate calling this a secondary word composed several centuries later? Amaziah is calling on the royal authority of Jeroboam II to dictate what can and cannot be preached at the Bethel temple and exemplifies how politics are often used to quell prophetic critique. Amos 7:9 is a bridge between the third vision and the Amaziah incident, and it corrects the false prediction of Amos that Jeroboam would die by the sword to the verdict that Yahweh would rise against the whole dynasty of Jeroboam.

In discussing the epilogue to the book in 9:11–15 Eidevall does not mention the provocative suggestion of Brevard Childs that this paragraph is suggesting to readers that the harsh words of Amos are not necessarily a good model for all those who carry on prophetic ministries. Rather, this paragraph reminds all subsequent prophets that God's final word to his people is always “Yes.”

Ralph W. Klein
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago



The Jesus Movement and Its Expansion: Meaning and Mission. By Seán Freyne. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014. ISBN: 978-0-8028-6786-5, xii & 383 pages. Paper. \$35.00.

The Jesus Movement and Its Expansion is in many ways a culmination of the long and distinguished career of Seán Freyne. The book was published posthumously in 2014 as a revision and expansion of the Shafer Lectures he delivered at Yale in the fall of 2010. Many of Freyne's significant contributions to our understanding of Roman Galilee and Jesus' ministry there are found throughout this quite fine volume. The book is explicitly written with a broad readership in mind. That said, Freyne is well-read, and his detailed footnotes deeply engage both primary and secondary sources, making this a book for people already somewhat aware



of the landscape of Historical Jesus scholarship.

Freyne's stated intent is to offer a corrective to recent scholarship on the early Jesus movement that puts Galilee at conflict with Jerusalem. His argument moves in three stages. The first stage, comprised of chapters 1–3, explores the cultural background of Roman Galilee, or what Freyne calls the *matrix* of early Christianity. In this section, Freyne's knowledge of both the literature and archaeology of first-century Palestine is especially noteworthy. His treatment of Hellenization and subsequent Roman occupation of Judea, as well as his treatment of the Palestinian economy, is careful and nuanced. The second stage, comprised only of chapter 4, seeks to offer a sketch of the *ministry* of Jesus. There are many challenges with reconstructing a "historical" Jesus and this short chapter (for better or worse) avoids some of the thorny methodological questions by instead simply offering a thick description of how the New Testament authors imagined Jesus in history. The final stage (which also receives the longest treatment, chapters 5–8) explores the *mission* of the first followers of Jesus from the mid-40s into the second century C.E. The organization of this section is curious—it begins with Jerusalem (taking Luke–Acts as more or less reliable), then moves on to Galilee (with the hypothetical document Q, the *Gospel of Thomas*, and the *Didache* as essential sources for his reconstruction) before discussing the Gospels of Mark and Matthew. The final chapter explores broad trajectories in second-century Christianity. It should be noted that in these final chapters, which explore the mission of Christianity, instead of using the Gospels and other early Christian literature to mine for information about the "historical" Jesus, Freyne uses the sources to help us understand early Jesus movements in the first and second centuries.

In sum, *The Jesus Movement and Its Expansion* is carefully erudite. As such, it is especially useful to those who are already participating in conversations about the historical Jesus. It is not really a sourcebook, but after reading it once through, pastors and teachers may want to return to certain chapters or sections for the wealth of primary and secondary sources engaged throughout.

David Creech
Concordia College, Moorhead

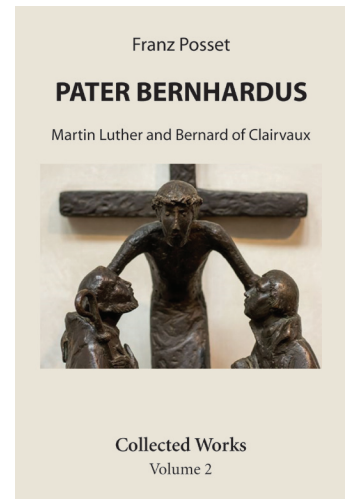
***Pater Bernhardus:
Martin Luther and
Bernard of Clairvaux.***

By Franz Posset. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2018; ISBN: 978-1-5326-4590-7. 426 pages. Paper. \$47.

Franz Posset is a German-American independent church historian, lay theologian in the Roman Catholic Church, and an internationally recognized ecumenist, who specializes in the history and theology of the Renaissance and early Lutheran Reformation. This book is one of several reprints by Wipf & Stock of Posset's contributions toward Catholic-Lutheran ecumenical studies. It retains the twenty-six illustrations in the original publication of 1999. They are worthy of the reader's meditation and enhance Posset's investigations into Bernard's impact on the young and the old Luther. According to Posset, "Studying Luther means to view everything during the Reformation in the light of the Middle and the Late Middle Ages, and also in the light of Renaissance Humanism. The 'Bernard Renaissance' around 1500 needs to be recognized and utilized as an important part of the historical-theological context in which the historical Luther operated" [personal interview]. Posset has discovered more than 500 instances where Bernard's name is mentioned in the critical edition of Luther's works.

Posset illustrates that Bernhard's theological concerns emerge in Luther's theology. Luther's attraction to Bernhard lies in his ability to interpret and preach scripture. As a young Augustinian friar at Erfurt, Luther was directed by his novice master to read Bernard's *First Sermon on the Annunciation*, something with which Luther complied and later on reported to his good friend, Philipp Melancthon. In Bernhard, Luther became familiar with *sacra pagina* (biblical meditation), which developed Luther's appreciation for human experience in relationship to text. Through Luther's encounter with the biblical theologian Bernhard, Posset maintains that the monastic tradition merged with the humanistic interests of the Renaissance.

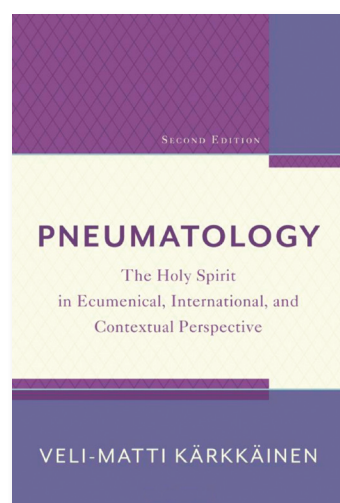
Posset locates the link between Luther's Augustinian-Order-tradition and Bernhard as he connects Augustine's saying, "The heart is where it loves rather than where it lives," with Bernhard's focus on Christ changing the human heart. Posset writes at length on Bernhard's use of prayer with scripture as the tools that lead one to conversion from sin. Here we find Luther's "justification by God's grace" at work. Bernhard spoke in his first Easter Sermon of faith as making room in one's heart for the Word. Similarly, Luther in his 1527 lectures on 1 John 5:4 speaks of faith making room for Christ in one's heart.





Those familiar with Lutheran tradition will discover Bernhard's "Two-fold Knowledge of Self and Knowledge of God" resonating with law and Gospel, knowing the self as sinner and knowing God as grace. In Bernhard's treatment of the incarnation, you will find Luther's explanation for the meaning of baptism that is used in his Small Catechism. Posset notes Luther's departure from Pseudo-Bernhard's "abuses" of Mariology (Luther thought he was reading the authentic Bernard), while maintaining Bernhard's incarnational focus on Mary who becomes the bearer of God's grace for us in Jesus Christ. Posset also treats Bernhard's attempt at reforming the church in his *On Considerations*. When the printing press was invented some 400 years later, Martin Luther carried out such reforms.

David Froemming
Christ Lutheran Church, Lancaster, Wisconsin



Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective.

By Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen. 2nd edition. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-8010-9946-5. viii & 199 pages. Paper. \$26.00.

As the title suggests, this book is a survey of various perspectives and approaches to the doctrine of the

Holy Spirit, and, as such, it is more descriptive than constructive in nature. This does not mean that the author does not offer his own views, but that, when he does, it is mostly in passing.

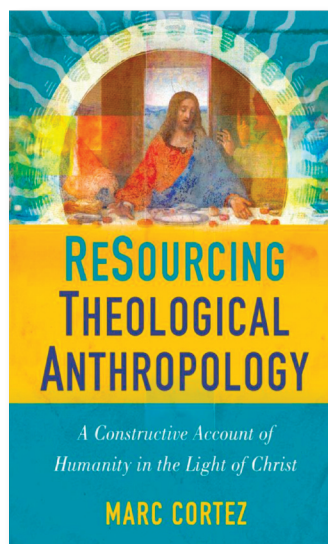
The first chapter gives a helpful survey of the place of the Holy Spirit in contemporary theology, which sets the stage for the remainder of the book. The second chapter explores biblical perspectives on the Holy Spirit, treating imagery connected with the Spirit in biblical literature, the Spirit in the Old and New Testaments, offering, in turn, some theological implications of the biblical data. The third chapter surveys in some detail developments regarding the Holy Spirit in the patristic era. The chapter of greatest length, the fourth, covers a vast terrain, moving from the medieval period to the modern, touching on Western and Eastern articulations of the Holy Spirit, the *filioque* debate, the views of John Calvin and Martin Luther, as well as the Holy Spirit in modern liberalism and Neo-Calvinism, to name a few.

The two subsequent chapters move from historical survey to a survey of the contemporary theological landscape. The first of these gives attention to twentieth and twenty-first century

engagements with pneumatology, which includes a decisive turn toward the same. The second of these is a fascinating look at approaches to the Holy Spirit from contextual (e.g., feminist, liberation) and global perspectives (Africa, Asia). The global perspective, along with the seventh chapter of the book, which details pneumatology in other religions (this is perhaps the most unique contribution of the volume), is what sets this edition apart from the first edition. Kärkkäinen then ends his survey with an epilogue that amounts to a call to fresh engagement with the Holy Spirit.

It goes without question that the author is very widely read in theological literature, which his survey so clearly demonstrates; and, with this, he has the remarkable ability to clearly summarize differing and complex periods and perspectives of study. Yet, as with any survey, there are limitations. A pastor or Christian educator should not approach this text hoping to have an in-depth understanding of the Bible's teaching on the Holy Spirit or that of the Fathers or modern theologians. Rather, even with its relative depth and complexity at points, further depth in any of the areas covered would require this book to be supplemented by others that treat the area or period under question. To conclude, this book would be most helpful for the pastor or Christian educator who needs the breadth it provides to bring balance or perspective to works of more depth in the study of pneumatology.

Thomas Haviland-Pabst, Deacon
Emmaus Church
Asheville, North Carolina



Resourcing Theological Anthropology: A Constructive Account of Humanity in the Light of Christ.

By Marc Cortez. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-3105-1643-9. 301 pages. Paper. \$29.99.

In *Resourcing Theological Anthropology*, Marc Cortez supplies those who assume that understanding Jesus has something to offer to anthropology with theological fodder to support that assumption. Cortez lays out an excellent comprehensive (though not exhaustive) Christological anthropology that considers the gospels (particularly John), Paul's letters, and the letter to the Hebrews. He demonstrates what each of these works has to offer to the understanding of the human person. Cortez then applies his insights to important anthropological issues.

anthropology with theological fodder to support that assumption. Cortez lays out an excellent comprehensive (though not exhaustive) Christological anthropology that considers the gospels (particularly John), Paul's letters, and the letter to the Hebrews. He demonstrates what each of these works has to offer to the understanding of the human person. Cortez then applies his insights to important anthropological issues.



In his New Testament survey of Christological anthropology, Cortez begins with John. Though hailed for its depiction of Christ's divinity, Cortez believes that John establishes Christ as the true *Anthropos*, who fulfills God's creational purposes for humanity (see John 19:5). Jesus exemplifies the human *telos* and stands as a representative figure for what it means to be truly human. Cortez's interpretation of 1 Corinthians 15:35–39 "suggests that Paul views the Adam/Christ typology as relating to Adam before the fall" as well as after the introduction of sin. If this is true, it elicits the possibility of an "incarnation anyway" situation in which Christ would have come not merely as a victor over sin, but as a fulfillment of humanity's destiny. While Cortez argues for this position, he does not believe it is essential to Christological anthropology.

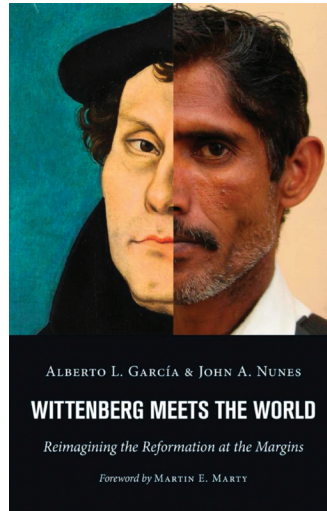
Cortez furthermore argues that Colossians 1:15 invokes the *imago dei* in an effort to teach that Christ is the one who perfectly represented God's presence in the world—primarily in his incarnation, though also in his preexistent state. Finally, Cortez discusses how in the first two chapters of Hebrews the author teaches that Jesus reveals truths both about humanity and true humanity. Though "unfallen," Cortez argues that Christ makes compelling anthropological revelations as he "immersed himself in our fallen condition in all the ways that matter." Though Cortez is to be commended for his comprehensive survey and careful attention to potential and secondary issues, one wonders why certain works were left out of the discussion. For instance, might the Christology of Revelation have something to offer our understanding of the human person, especially since John's Apocalypse foreshadows Christ's eschatological victory and humanity's ultimate destiny in the new creation following a resurrection?

Cortez delineates how Christology applied to anthropology informs issues of gender, race, and death. Cortez believes Christology is capable of challenging gender stereotypes, calling humanity to a "new story" (in which the "logic of the racialized self" is replaced with a celebration of embodied differences, the likes of which is found in the incarnated Jesus), and informing a theology of death. Again, Cortez is to be commended for his careful and irenic tone when entertaining various opinions. However, the reader is left asking why other anthropological issues were not analyzed. Might Jesus' consideration for the poor and his own socio-economic situation have something to offer one's understanding of the under-privileged? Such discussions would require Cortez to explore the Gospel of Luke in addition to John and potentially add other additional chapters.

Cortez' work is careful, comprehensive, and compelling. It advances important discussions and should be appreciated by students and scholars alike in the search both to understand themselves better and appreciate how the person and work of Christ can aid in that pursuit.

Jeffrey R. Dickson, Ph.D.

Liberty University Rawlings School of Divinity



Wittenberg Meets the World: Reimagining the Reformation at the Margins. By Alberto L. García and John A. Nunes. Foreword by Martin E. Marty. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017. ISBN: 978-0-8028-7328-6. vii & 188 pages. Paperback. \$22.00.

This very fine work reinterprets the theology of the Lutheran Reformation for contemporary global contexts, especially the challenging situations faced by many people of Latino decent in the United States. Chapters include rich reflection on the theological meaning of borderlands, colonialism and postcolonialism, *diakonia*, and *koinonia*. Frequently, complex concepts such as the theology of the cross or an "eschatology of faith" are connected in beneficial ways with concrete topics such as care for the environment, service to neighbors, and building lively communities. Overall, the book makes a strong case for the ongoing relevance and value of evangelical Lutheran witness around the world today.

The book contains eight main chapters, which can function either as worthy stand-alone essays or as valuable companions to the others. Dr. García wrote the odd-numbered chapters and Dr. Nunes wrote the even-numbered chapters. Despite the alternating authorship, the tone of the book remains consistent and the essays flow smoothly with each other. Thematically, the earlier chapters introduce concepts in theology and postcolonial studies that successfully prepare the way for later pieces on service, eschatology, and future possibilities in theology and mission. The rhetorical and theological unity of this jointly written book is a testament to the authors' ability to identify a common theme and explore it together.

Readers who are not familiar with liberation theologies, postcolonial studies, or Lutheran theology will find this to be a valuable introduction. Chapter 2, for instance, "proposes a Lutheran framework for interpreting conditions of communal exteriority among humans searching for divine justice in post-colonial settings of poverty" (31). Despite the abundance of big words in the previous citation, these complex ideas are usually described in accessible ways. In addition to rich reflection on Latin American perspectives, multiple chapters also include the situations and insights of the global church, especially African Christianity.



But this book is not just an introduction. Readers who are already familiar with Reformation history and global Christianity will enjoy the apt blending of liberation and Lutheran perspectives. Ample depth and sustained reflection appear, for instance, in the chapters “Justification and Eco-Justice: A Postcolonial Framework” by Nunes and “The *Koinōnia* of the Justified: Toward an Eschatology of Faith” by García. The authors not only identify key themes and explain them but also invite readers to explore the potential expansion of these ideas, as in Nunes’ concluding chapter, “*Koinōnia* and Diversity: Postcolonial Poetics of the Possible.”

In a work about connecting faith and liberation, one might hope to see more discussion of gender justice and equality; after all, liberation theologies are not immune from patriarchal assumptions. On that point, this book’s silence about gender justice is notable. Hopefully, future works by these authors or by other scholars will address such important themes more directly.

In conclusion, this book makes a valuable contribution to conversations about the future of Lutheran theology and witness. *Wittenberg Meets the World* would provide a welcome contribution to college or seminary courses on justification and justice. It is accessible enough for interested lay readers, even as it adds to the scholarly study of theology and mission.

Martin J. Lohrmann
Wartburg Theological Seminary
Dubuque, Iowa



2019 Ad Pricing and Specifications

The journal, *Currents in Theology and Mission*, is now accepting advertisements in our quarterly journal. Please see full details in the ad rate sheet at the end of the Introduction (page 4 of this issue).

Publication Dates and Deadlines

The journal, *Currents in Theology and Mission*, is published four times per year: January, April, July, and October. Ad deadlines for each issue are one month prior to publication (December 1, March 1, June 1, September 1). Late submissions may be published in the next issue. Issue-specific themes are available from the co-editors: [Craig Nesson](#) and [Kadi Billman](#).

Size and Placement Options

Full page ads are placed at the end of articles. Fractional page ads are placed within articles. You may specify an author, the Introduction article, or any of our sections: Book Reviews, Preaching Helps, Listening to Immigrant Voices, Currents Focus. For specific article or section content per issue, please contact the co-editors: [Craig Nesson](#) and [Kadi Billman](#).

Premium placements are: at the end of the Introduction article, within Book Reviews, within Preaching Helps. These are our most popular sections.

FORMAT AND SIZE	PLACEMENT	
	PREMIUM	REGULAR
• Full Page: 7.125" wide x 10" high	\$ 450	\$ 380
• One Column (vert.): 3.5" wide x 10" high	\$ 250	\$ 200
• Half Column: 3.5" wide x 4.75" high	\$ 135	\$ 115
• Half Page (horiz.): 7.125" wide x 4.75" high	\$ 250	\$ 200

25% discount for 4 consecutive placements from the same advertiser (content may change).

Billing

New advertisers must include payment with order.

Returning Advertisers: Bills are sent after publication.