

Editors' Notes

This is our first issue as the new Co-Editors in Chief of the *Anglican Theological Review*. There seems to us no better way to begin our tenure in that capacity and our first set of Editors' Notes than by offering our warm and sincere thanks to Ellen K. Wondra, Editor Emerita of the *ATR*.

Over the years, Ellen has served this journal in various key capacities with dedication and distinction. She has provided numerous book reviews that have been marked by her deep acquaintance with historical and contemporary scholarly debates and shaped by her keen critical eye. She has authored substantial scholarly articles on ecumenism and ecclesiology that have been signal contributions to the fields and disciplines these articles have engaged. She has been an active and passionate member of the journal's editorial board for more years than she likely cares to recount—and continues to serve in that capacity, much to our gratitude and benefit. And, above all, she has done not one, not even two, but three stints as the *ATR*'s Editor in Chief or as Interim Editor in Chief, before finally transitioning into her current role as Editor Emerita.

Ellen has long been committed to producing a journal that is of interest and use to a wide audience, including lay Anglicans, seminarians and others in programs of theological formation, educators, scholars in multiple disciplines, clergy, and lay and ordained church leaders. While the *ATR* has, informally but for many decades, been considered the “journal of record” for the Episcopal and Anglican seminaries in the United States and Canada, Ellen's leadership was instrumental in opening the pages of the *ATR* not only to readers throughout the Anglican Communion, but to authors from locales outside of North America on a more regular basis, as well. In addition, her long engagement with ecumenism is evident in the breadth of ecclesial perspective that has become especially pronounced during her editorships.

All of this is work Ellen has done from which the *ATR*'s readers can and do profit. It has resulted in a journal that is now moving into its second century on solid editorial footing. It is clearly reflected in

the journal's pages. What readers are not in a position to observe as directly is Ellen's fierce personal dedication to the continued excellence of the *ATR* and the care with which the transition from her final editorship to our new co-editorship was made. The two of us are deeply indebted to Ellen for providing us with a significant amount of training and guidance in the journal's processes, systems, and operations. Her orientation initiated us quickly and efficiently, reducing significantly our need to simply "pick things up along the way," allowing us to profit from insights gained over her many years as the journal's editor, and increasing our confidence as we begin to step out on our own. And she inspired us with her deep love for the journal and the task of editing it. In short, Ellen not only left the *ATR* in good shape for you, the reader, but for us, the new editors, as well. We owe her a profound debt of gratitude for that.

In this our first issue as co-editors, the opening article by **Drew Nathaniel Keane**, presents an argument for thinking anew about widespread debates in the Episcopal Church concerning the status and practice of confirmation. Keane examines the question in light of the historic Anglican formularies, the liturgical theology of the Book of Common Prayer, and the deep historical tradition of Anglicanism, and puts it in conversation with scripture and contemporary systematic and liturgical theological themes and concepts to offer a considered and thoughtful appraisal of the value of a separate rite of episcopally conferred confirmation.

Likewise, **Alexander J. D. Irving's** article explores the themes of eucharist, church, and world in the theologies of the influential Roman Catholic *ressourcement* theologian Henri de Lubac and former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams. The essay compares how, for these two theologians from different Christian traditions, eucharistic worship is understood to be the constitutive heart of the church, and eucharistic values are to be the determining factor in the relationship between the church and the wider world.

Frazer MacDiarmid offers an admirably researched and closely argued historical essay on the unifying role that liturgical singing played in the worship lives of early congregations. Here, however, the unity in question is effected within congregations rather than across denominations. The *koinonia* here is a localized rather than an ecumenical sort of communion. MacDiarmid claims just this was the case for Christian communities worshiping in the early centuries, when a gathering marked by difference and distinction among its members

was nevertheless understood to be and experienced as unified and directed Godward as one in the holy act of a congregation's doxological singing.

Along somewhat different lines, the article by **Neal McGowan** is the winner of the *ATR's* 2017 Charles Hefling Award, recalling an earlier editor in chief. Each year, students matriculated in master's-level programs at the seminaries affiliated with the Episcopal Church or the Anglican Church of Canada are eligible to submit an essay for consideration. The winning essayist receives a prize of \$750 and the paper is published as an article in the *ATR*. McGowan's essay argues the "excessive" language of poetry, like divine revelation, opens space for new responses to God, responses that can, if followed through, give rise to numerous diverse and creative theological projects.

This issue features two articles by two distinguished theologians, **Christine Helmer** and **Shannon Craigo-Snell**, reflecting on and honoring the complicated life and highly influential work of the late philosopher-theologian Marilyn McCord Adams. McCord Adams, who passed away in 2017, came to prominence first as the author of a two-volume work on the medieval philosopher-theologian William of Ockham and the debates in which he was engaged. She subsequently focused much of her writing on the question of evil. McCord Adams published extensively on this topic, in the process articulating a constructive theology centering on a scholarly and sophisticated, but also profound and personal, struggle with the so-called problem of evil: the conundrum of the existence of intense suffering and death (which she called "horrors") within the "good" creation of a likewise "good," as well as omniscient and omnipotent, God. In their own ways, Helmer and Craigo-Snell each detail the shape this project took as it traveled its long and varied trajectory throughout McCord Adams's distinguished career.

In the Practicing Theology section, **Heather Walker Peterson** describes how in her work as an educator of writers at an evangelical Christian college she has successfully brought the ethical framework articulated by the noted Anglican moral theologian Oliver O'Donovan to bear in helping her students think through the act of writing as a moral exercise deeply connected to their larger Christian vocations. Writing on another topic entirely, **Gwendolyn Grace** provides a concrete case study in which she explores how the biblical idea of justice is conditioned by the context in which injustice has been discerned, assessed through theological and scriptural criteria.

Finally, the review article by **Joel C. Daniels** returns our attention to the work of Rowan Williams. Daniels takes an in-depth look at a slim volume of Williams's on the theological character of tragedy, a book that in Daniels's view makes a valuable contribution to Anglican theological conversations about the applicability of the tragic perspective within a Christian understanding of reality. Are the two compatible? Some theologians believe they are, while others are less certain. Williams, for his part, carefully picks apart both positions, questioning their presuppositions and assessments while attempting to find a place for the artistic insights of classic tragedians such as Aeschylus and Euripides, Shakespeare and Racine. To do so, he employs a theological framework able to accommodate them without assimilating them—or, at least a particular perception of them. This extended review of a book by a major Anglican theologian on the relationship of the poetic and theological impulses, combined with the regular offering of poetry published in this issue, reflect the ongoing commitment of the *ATR* to literary texts and themes that has been a hallmark of the journal.

These articles exemplify three emphases of Ellen's work as a theologian and Editor in Chief. First, she is the kind of theologian who leverages good scholarship and a healthy regard for church tradition in order to open and further a conversation, without shying away from taking a position on a matter of great import to the worship practices of the Episcopal Church. Second, the ecumenical themes of the issue reflect Ellen's dedication to the pursuit of ecclesial unity and longstanding commitment to global ecumenism. She serves as a member of the World Council of Churches' Faith and Order Commission, and is a noted ecclesialogist with deep concern for the internal unity of both the Episcopal Church and of the wider Anglican Communion, a unity that is, for her, founded on a reconciled diversity. Finally, the ultimately artificial border between theology and practice is one Ellen has long sought to trouble. She instituted the Practicing Theology section in the journal, where writers demonstrate and model the inseparability of the "theological" from the "practical" in the lived life of faith, whether in the ministerial context or in another vocational venue.

Ellen's legacy as Editor in Chief of the *Anglican Theological Review* looms large in this issue, but she would be the first to add a note of thanks to the *ATR* team: Jackie Winter, Travis Ables, and all the other people who make the *ATR* happen, including those who give generous financial support. Ellen has done us all a tremendous service in building up this publication so that she can hand it on to us, a new editorial team for the journal's new century, in an even stronger, more vital condition than it was in when she took hold of its reins. While we look forward to adding our contributions to the *ATR* as our joint editorship proceeds, readers can rest assured that we will do so in a manner that honors the legacy that Ellen K. Wondra has bequeathed to us all.

JASON A. FOUT AND SCOTT MACDOUGALL
Co-Editors in Chief