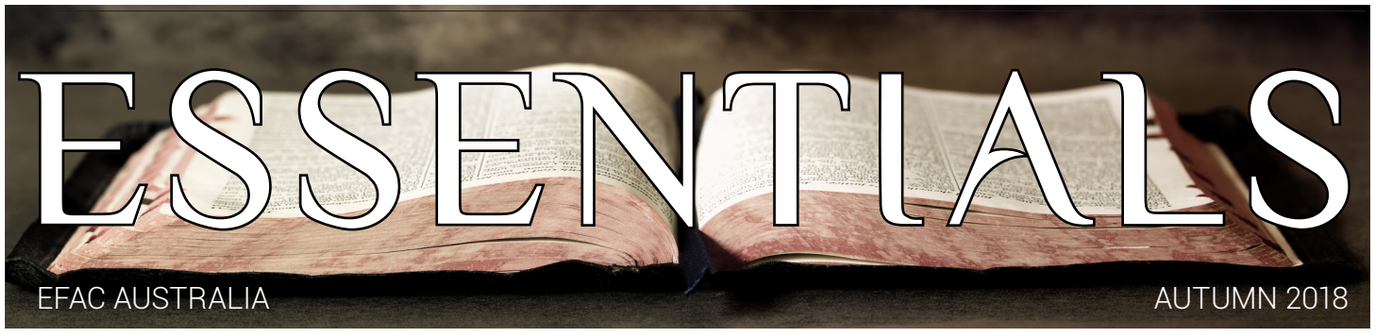

Bible Study: A confronting freedom

Gavin Perkins on Luke 4:14-30

Book Reviews

People of the Risen King
Together through the Storm
Liturgy of the Ordinary
All Things Made New

Essentials is the journal of the Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion. Promoting Christ-centred biblical ministry.

A year not quickly forgotten

I suspect 2017 is a year in our national life we will not quickly forget. The changes to the Marriage Act have been supported and passed, and I suspect all sides of the question have found it hard in various ways. The LBGTQI community and their supporters went in apprehensive that they would be bruised by the debate, but came out celebrated and celebrating. Those who wanted to keep marriage as received also found the debate confronting, it seems to me, and came out with their fears confirmed—that they are the minority, and their views are implausible and their arguments unconvincing to the majority.

2018 may bring its own significant developments. The status of religious conviction and the freedom of believers to conduct their public lives, as individuals and through their institutions, according to the convictions of their faith-formed consciences is now on the agenda, thanks to the Prime Minister's Religious Freedom Review. We can hope, pray and advocate for the continued embrace of such religious freedom, put together in our culture over such a long span, and so integral to the kind of society that we have enjoyed—a society that safeguards us against tyrannies large and small.

Our leaders by Rob Forsyth and Allan Chapple touch on these current affairs, and our first feature extends our engagement with these social concerns by hearing from Christians in the workforce as they encounter diversity training and the coming of corporately-adopted policies on diversity in the workplace. This can be a source of difficulty for Christians, even to the point that some Christians hear the message: 'conform or get out'. If you want some insight on how some Christians are finding it, read on.

The Canberra-Goulburn branch of EFAC has generously provided written versions of presentations at their 2017 Preaching Seminars, and in this issue we feature Jonathan Holt's analysis of the TED talk approach, and its grist for the preacher's mill. David McLennan writes about preaching in a Prayer Book context. If you enjoy these you might like to find out more at the Preaching Seminars website:jonathan6412.wixsite.com/preachingseminars.

Further along, Stephen Hale keeps our heads in the parish and looks to the changing nature of the ministry of small groups, and Gavin Perkins helps us meditate on the pronouncement of Jesus in the Nazareth synagogue: 'Today the Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing'. A clutch of book reviews and a railing against the poverty of philosophical materialism by Peter Corney rounds out the issue. But don't forget to block out September 6-8, 2018 and come along to the Anglican Future Conference jointly hosted by EFAC and FCA Australia in Melbourne. Spread the word about this too. It's not just for clergy. See the notice at the back of the mag.

Ben Underwood, Editor
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EFAC Australia membership (incl. Essentials)
$40 per year ($20 students, missionaries, retired persons). Essentials subscription only $20 p.a.

What is EFAC?
EFAC is a group of Anglican clergy and lay people who value the evangelical heritage of the Anglican Church, and who endeavour to make a positive, constructive contribution at local, diocesan and national levels. EFAC Australia is part of the world-wide Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion.

The purpose of EFAC is to maintain and promote a strong biblical witness in and through the Anglican Church so as to advance the cause of the gospel in Australia.

The aims of EFAC are:
1. To promote the ultimate authority, the teaching and the use of God's written word in matters of both faith and conduct.
2. To promote this biblical obedience particularly in the areas of Christian discipleship, servant leadership, church renewal, and mission in the world.
3. To foster support and collaboration among evangelical Anglicans throughout Australia.
4. To function as a resource group to develop and encourage biblically faithful leadership in all spheres of life.
5. To provide a forum, where appropriate: a) for taking counsel together to develop policies and strategies in matters of common concern b) for articulating gospel distinctives in the area of faith, order, life and mission by consultations and publications.
6. To promote evangelism through the local church and planting new congregations.
7. To coordinate and encourage EFAC branches/groups in provinces or dioceses of the Anglican Church in Australia.

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The New Situation

Robert Forsyth

Bishop Robert Forsyth, formerly Bishop of South Sydney, current senior fellow at the Centre for Independent Studies sees a testing time ahead for Evangelicals.

We are living in different worlds. Leaving aside for a moment the religious freedom implications of the passing of the *Marriage Amendment (Definition and Religious Freedoms) Bill 2017,* the process and events around it reveal profound differences in fundamental beliefs in Australia between the churches and much of the wider society.

Much of the disagreement about same-sex marriage reflected deeper disagreements about other questions of what is marriage itself, what is the moral status of same-sex relationships, and about how such questions are decided in the first place. The differences go all the way down. As ancient historian Kyle Harper recently wrote: 'In our secular age, just as in the early years of Christianity, differences in sexual morality are really about the clash between different pictures of the universe and the place of the individual within it.' [1]

This was unacknowledged in much of the debate and yet is one reason why neither side seemed to be actually talking to the other. The churches' campaign for the no case never really said why same-sex marriage should not be legal because, whether they realised it or not, the real Christian case for no is incomprehensible to those who share so little of the Christian understanding of reality. Harper captures this well.

An avowed secularist is as likely as a Christian activist to proclaim the universal dignity of all and insist upon the individual's freedom. And yet, however moralized the domain of sex might be, the vast, vacant universe seems to have left only authenticity and consent as the shared, public principles of sexual morality. These axioms derive from a picture of the universe different from the one imagined by Paul, who envisioned the individual—including the sexual self—within the larger story of the gospel and a created cosmos in the throes of restoration. That is why the no case was all about unwelcome consequences to same-sex marriage, not the issue itself.

Since then, not unexpectedly, the meaning and significance of the change in the law is deeply contested as well. In the second reading Attorney General George Brandis described the passing of the bill as saying 'to those vulnerable young people [who are homosexual or lesbian], there is nothing wrong with you. You are not unusual. You are not abnormal. You are just you.' The Prime Minister said that in amending the Marriage Act the clear message to every gay person was 'we love you. We respect you. Your relationship is recognised by the Commonwealth as legitimate and honourable as anybody else's. You belong.' Peter van Onselen writing in The Australian on 27 November likened those who voted no with 'people who wanted blacks to continue to ride at the back of the bus, or racial segregation of toilets, or bans on interracial marriage. When the laws changed they realised they were on the wrong side of history.'

If this rhetoric is to be taken seriously it means that in the eyes of significant thought leaders in this country those who voted no, and in particular those who continue to hold to a view of marriage that is not the one endorsed by the passing of the Act, must be saying to gay people; 'you are abnormal', 'you are not loved or respected', and that such non-cooperators are the moral equivalent to segregationists in America's deep South in the 1960s. In other words, it is not just that such leaders remain unconvinced as to our stance, they are uncomprehending, and, worse, regard us as immoral.

It is not easy so close to these events to know how long-lasting such attitudes are. Public debates have short half-lives. But the reality of incomprehension and disgust is lasting. We can be sure that the six in ten Australians, who, according to the Ipsos survey [2] released in October last year, believe that religion does more harm than good are not going away soon.

The implications for the churches are threefold. Firstly, we face threats to religious freedoms and privilege in a situation of diminished goodwill towards us. Secondly, we need to accept that, on any public issue other than those where we simply echo the majority culture, we have to start way back in the different picture of the universe and the place of the individual within it that informs our understanding. Thirdly, the churches face the Herculean task of maintaining the integrity of their own discipleship and culture down the generations in the face of a proselytising and persistent secularism, especially in matters of sexual behaviour. It will be a testing time indeed.

1. Kyle Harper 'The First Sexual Revolution' First Things, January 2018
2. https://www.ipsos.com/en-au/ipsos-global-study-shows-half-think-religion-does-more-harm-good

Photo: Yes Plait1 by Nic Mc Bride, used under licence, flickr.com/photos/thebotanistsdaughter/37119559325

Dear Mr Ruddock and members of the panel

Allan Chapple

Concerned to say a word in favour of religious freedom, Allan Chapple took the opportunity to write to the Prime Minister's Expert Panel currently tasked to consider the intersections between the enjoyment of the freedom of religion and other human rights in Australia. Here is the case he put. Allan Chapple is Senior Lecturer in New Testament at Trinity Theological College, Perth, WA

I believe it is crucial to be clear about the issue that is at the heart of the review you have been asked to conduct. In my opinion, the fundamental issue is not whether—and if so, how—religious freedoms are to be protected; it is whether—and if so, how—Australia is to remain a genuinely democratic society.

What are the defining characteristics of 'democracy'? While this is not the whole answer, I believe that the most essential feature of democracy is the protection of certain fundamental freedoms. And the clearest indicator of a nation's commitment to democracy is how well those basic freedoms are preserved when there are powerful reasons for disallowing any of them, at least for a limited period. So when we are at war, and must quickly build up military forces capable of defending us, conscription of able-bodied citizens is an obvious strategy. But when we are truly democratic, we have made provision for conscientious objectors, even when many believe that our national interest should over-ride their freedom of conscience.

That is what I believe is the most basic and important question we are now facing as a nation: are the freedoms that lie at the heart of democracy, and which have long been taken for granted in our country (even though they may not have been legislated appropriately), to be upheld? The freedom that is most at stake here is what has been known traditionally as 'freedom of conscience.' As in the case of the 'conscientious objector', the committed pacifist, this is not just a matter of holding private opinions; it is about living by one's fundamental convictions about what is good and right, even when doing so brings me into conflict with institutions and groupings in society and with key aspects of the national agenda. The majority of my fellow-citizens may disagree strongly with my convictions, and may well be very unhappy about the problems I cause by living by them-but in a democracy, my right to hold and live by my convictions is acknowledged and protected. [I understand, of course, that work needs to be done to distinguish genuinely held and proper convictions from fantasies and delusions, immoral dogmas and obsessions, and so on-but the big question is whether we do believe that this fundamental freedom must be granted and protected, even if it isn't always easy to work out the best way of doing so.]

Seen from this perspective, the key issue is not freedom of religion, for that could be understood as permitting people with religious beliefs to meet together: to go to the mosque or synagogue or church, and so on. But if that is all that this freedom involves, it necessarily defines religious belief as only private opinions to be expressed only in private gatherings and personal rituals. While some religious beliefs might be of this kind, the major religions in Australia have in common the fact that the convictions their followers hold are meant to be lived out, not only at home or at the mosque/church/and so on, but also in the public domain.

As a result, this matter has real personal consequences for me. I write as someone whose family was not religious, who became a Christian by conviction during my teenage years, and who still holds strongly, even passionately, to those convictions more than five decades later. Because of what lies at its heart, if I were to accept that Christian commitment is a merely private matter I would effectively be abandoning that commitment — and that I cannot do. So the question you have been asked to consider can be stated like this: will I be allowed to live out my Christian convictions, even when this means being a conscientious objector, out of step with majority beliefs and practices?

I thank you for the opportunity to put my views.

Allan Chapple
28 January 2018

Find out more about the Religious Freedom Review at - pmc.gov.au/domestic-policy/religious-freedom-review

Australian Government
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM REVIEW

Navigating the seas of diversity

In the following piece, three Christians share stories of what their experience of a push to embrace diversity has been like for them, and how they have thought about and responded to the various sides of the coming of diversity into their work lives.

Workplaces and corporations have lately become more and more reflective and intentional about their culture and values. They spend more time and effort identifying the environment they wish to foster and the values they want their workforces to embrace and work by.

One of the values getting plenty of attention is diversity, and one of the diversities of human beings that is an especially hot topic is the LGBTQI kind of diversity. What effect is all this having on Christians in workplaces where such diversity is being championed, and where there is sometimes an expectation that an endorsement of all these diversities is the way to be on board in the modern workplace?

The following three Christians are probably far from alone in having to figure out how to navigate these waters. Different workplaces no doubt expect different levels of conformity to particular views, and also different Christians feel that their Christian integrity requires different kinds of response. Perhaps we need gently to help each other find our way through the shifting and varied challenges and opportunities that the focus on diversity brings.

Roger Coetzer, WA

I have worked for the same employer for the past 10 years and over this time I have seen an increased focus on the topic of diversity and inclusion. The diversity and inclusion agenda has mainly been driven through training courses and in particular through senior leaders and executives promoting diversity and inclusion in a number of forums.

The communication and messaging I have received on a weekly basis from senior leaders and executives in a number of cases has had a section dedicated to diversity and inclusion. What I found interesting is that even though we are talking about diversity and inclusion the majority of this communication and messaging mainly centres on the LGBTI community, which also encompassed marriage equality. The marriage equality debate especially received a lot of airtime when the government confirmed the postal survey. There has also been a small focus on culture diversity but there has been little to no mention of diversity and inclusion around someone's beliefs or religion.

As a Christian in the workplace I have found this very challenging because I am fully supportive of promoting a safe work environment and having a better understanding of each other regardless of religion, beliefs, race, sexual orientation or cultural background. All communication and messaging came across that the only voice to be heard was from the LGBTI community. Now there have been some good aspects to the training—mainly getting a better understanding of the struggles and challenges that the LGBTI community face—but there has also been an assumption that off the back of this you will be an advocate and promote their way of life and this is where I as a Christian feel my integrity as a believer starts to be compromised.

I think a lot of godly wisdom is needed to navigate how we uphold our Christian values in a secular work environment and at the same time still have the confidence to share the gospel. The conclusion I have come to is that I will actively promote that everyone in the workplace, no matter what your background, beliefs or sexual orientation, must be treated with dignity and respected and that we cannot elevate one over the other. It is then through individual relationships, where questions are asked and respect is built, that I pray God will open people's hearts and minds and use me to share the gospel.

Adrian Fry, WA

In early 2017 my employer issued a range of workplace values, formalising a slow movement that had been gaining momentum over the previous two years. Over the previous couple of years the staff had been invited to participate in Aboriginal awareness, disability awareness and LGBTI ally training; and so when diversity featured as one the corporate values it was hardly a surprise.

Most of the values were innocuous, or generally positive: requiring staff to be diligent, provide excellent customer service and act with integrity are good values for any organisation, however the organisation's framing of their diversity value was a problem. The diversity value statement required all employees fully to accept and endorse the LGBTI sexual framework and ethics—as detailed to staff in the prior training. The LGBTI training had made it was clear that any act, belief or statement that did not accord with the LGBTI sexual ethic could be regarded as an act of harassment and discrimination—and any act found to be harassment or discrimination would be punishable by termination of employment.

As a Christian it seemed evident that there was an inconsistency between what I believe and the beliefs that were now required of me. The Christian faith already contains a robust sexual ethic, with such convictions as God creating people as male and female (which is an affront to the notion that people can create our own sexual identities—which is itself a key part of the LGBTI sexual ethic) or that sexual relations outside of a heterosexual marriage were sinful. Through the lens of the new value of diverity, such a claim or belief is seen

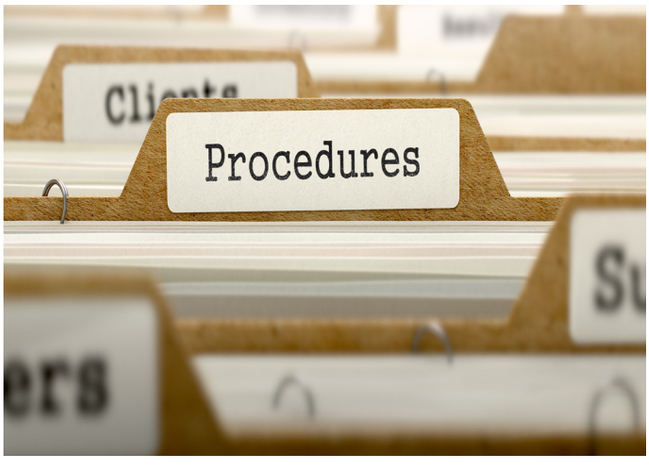
as an example of the worst kind of homophobia and should be self-evidently incorrect to any reasonable person.

In spite of the subtle change in culture that had happened over the pervious couple of years I was surprised that any organisation would set the bar so high, rather than at a pluralist 'live and let live'—which I would have been comfortable endorsing, as it would simply require respect for each other—rather than requiring all staff to take on a specific set of beliefs.

However, after confirming the precise details of the new values with the executive, it was made clear to me that any beliefs I had that did not square with the new values would be a problem for my ongoing employment with the organisation. So I found another job and quietly left the organisation about 8 weeks after my meeting with the executive.

After nearly a year after the events I have these three reflections:

1. When Jesus said not to worry about tomorrow and to trust him to provide for our needs, we need to take him seriously. It's terrifying to be threatened with job loss because of your faith in Jesus, and perhaps just as terrifying to trust God in the midst of it happening, but it's been amazing to see God provide for us over the last 12 months.
2. My greatest fear for other Christians facing a similar situation is that they will forget the gospel of grace as announced by Jesus, and choose silence and quiet acceptance over faithfulness to God. I fear that we will forget that God is capable of righting every wrong that is done to us, and instead we decide to defend our patch when really we're called to love sacrificially as the church. It's very difficult to tell someone that God loves them when you're busy sharpening swords and preparing to fight the culture wars or battles in court.
3. It's been a very long time since we had an obvious enemy anywhere, and I hope we don't stop praying for and ministering to those who hate us. It seems that as the gospel has receded from our culture, we're seeing the things that have always been there. In spite of my experience I'm not pessimistic about this change, for a long time it's been difficult to see any difference between a middle-class Christian and their middle-class neighbour, and I think that will change, and I think that will be a good thing for our witness to people about the kingdom of Jesus Christ.



Tam Jonker, WA

Workplace diversity and its aid, diversity training, are becoming more prevalent in our workplaces, and I had some experience of these while working for a multinational organisation. It was an experience that irritated me and gave me heart, made me think and notice things about others' reactions, led to conflict and started a longer conversation.

On the face of it, diversity within the workplace is a good thing. I know that studies show diverse workplaces are better able to make good decisions, have increased productivity, higher employee morale, greater innovation and creativity and the list goes on. Additionally from a Christian perspective, workplace diversity embodies a core Christian value of equality. If we naturally favour those like us and familiar to us, it does not surprise me that we would need to make a conscious effort to treat others with equity when they are unlike us and their ways might be unfamiliar and require us to learn and adjust to their diversity. And so I am basically well-disposed to diversity training, as it focuses on the practicalities of life in a diverse workplace, for example; the need for colleagues to be inclusive, understanding and patient with each other.

However, it is also true that many Christians feel threatened by diversity training. Why might this be, and and what can (and should) we do about it? Here are some observations that come from the diversity training that I attended in a multinational organisation.

My first observation is that there was conflict in the room in the training I attended. This conflict was caused by the change that the diversity training was aiming to bring about in the workplace. The changing nature of the workplace is no different to any other change – there are winners and losers with change. Some people were vocal about feeling threatened by diversity (if the company has gender targets, will I lose my job or miss out on the next promotion to a woman?). Others were vocal about the potential benefits (maybe I will get a promotion this year and won't be overlooked just because I have young children). This conflict was uncomfortable. But uncomfortable conflict is not always bad – in fact, in this situation it was positive that people could voice their opinions and be heard. Despite the conflict in the room, a longer conversation started that day.

The second and more prominent issue that arose for me was that the diversity training I did conflated diversity with an LGBTQI agenda. This included a harsh criticism by the diversity trainer of societies' failure to accept LGBTQI people in the past and was expressed as a rant against religion, particularly Christianity – whose teachings are the moral foundation upon which Australia has historically been built.

As I listened to the diversity trainer and watched people's reactions (again, some vocal in support, others more circumspect), I was irritated that the training was largely limited to the idea that all people should accept LGBTQI values. However, it got me thinking.

First, I strongly disagree with the idea that all people should accept LGBTQI values. Jesus calls us to love, accept all people and treat all people equally. He does not call us to accept all value systems. But, secondly, given that I disagreed with the trainer, I had to ask myself what diversity is actually about. I

walked away with an appreciation that, at its heart, workplace diversity encapsulates the core Christian value of equality. Jesus treated all people equally and instructed us to do the same. If I have a problem with treating all people, regardless of age, race, gender or sexuality equally, perhaps I need to examine my own heart.

Then, thirdly, in the situation where diversity was confused and conflated with a demand for acceptance of LGBTQI values and a corresponding attack on religion, I realised that I had to accept and take some responsibility for the fact that many things done in the name of religion are racist, sexist and elitist. This is not just a historical phenomenon, it continues today. It became apparent to me that it was only by accepting those things, and apologising for them, that I could have a voice.

I then took heart that equality and inclusivity were on the agenda! This gave me the ability to say that despite the terrible things that have happened and continue to happen in the name of religion, criticising someone for holding a religious view is the antithesis of what diversity training is about. Far from being inclusive, it is exclusive and shows a lack of understanding.

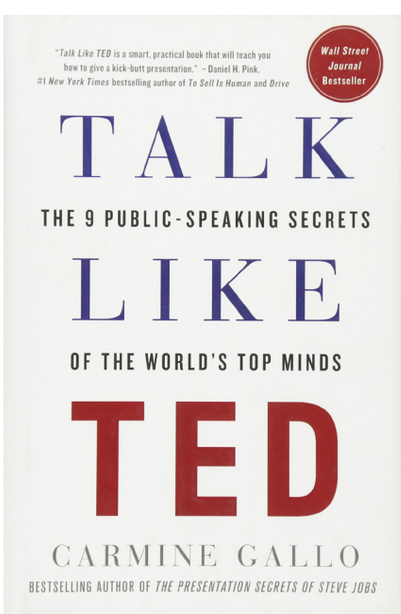
Lastly, I also spent time observing the reactions in the room. Often the most vocal people are also the most wounded. I made a mental note of people to strike up a conversation with at a later time – without the gaggle of onlookers.

What TED talks teach the preacher

Jonathan Holt

You have been under a rock too long if you have not watched a TED talk or two. In this paper, first presented at the Preaching Seminars run by EFAC Canberra and Goulburn, Jonathan Holt, Senior Minister at Lanyon Valley Anglican Church, summarises what makes TED talks tick, and what we might learn from them in preparing to preach.

Last year I was in Frankfurt airport coming back from a holiday in Austria. My wife had been at a work conference and we had visited our Church's Mission Partners, who are serving the Lord in Linz. While waiting for a connecting flight, we browsed in the airport bookshop and I saw the book: *Talk Like TED: The 9 Public Speaking Secrets of the World's Top Minds,* by Carmine Gallo, published in 2014.



One of the reasons why I picked it up was the thought I had, not long after encountering TED talks online, that the TED talk format was, in many ways, a secular sermon. In an age when the sustained monologue is regularly derided as no longer relevant, engaging or useful, TED talks stood out as an example of one place, one popular venue, where that sort of critique of the monologue might not hold up.

In the TED talk we can hear one person deliver an uninterrupted monologue, moving in the world of ideas; aiming to change attitudes and behavior; seeking to engage and inspire listeners. It sounds a whole lot like what I am trying to do in my sermons. I had wondered whether what was going on in the TED talk might be worth studying for the insights it could yield into how I might give a Christian TED talk at church on Sunday.

And now, in the airport bookstore in Frankfurt, I held in my hand the book that promised it had done all the research for me – and what's more, it was in English, and not German – which was going to save me heaps of time. Gallo writes in the Introduction: "After analyzing more than 500 TED presentations (more than 150 hours) and speaking directly to successful TED speakers, I've discovered that the most popular TED presentations share nine common elements."

Gallo is saying that there are transferable lessons from TED talks, you don't have to be Bono or Bill Gates, you don't have to have recovered from a massive brain injury or some equally inspiring story – if we join Gallo in his analysis we can dissect the great secular sermon and maybe learn something we can use Sunday by Sunday.

A Brief History of TED [1]

The first TED event was in 1984. The brain-child of Richard Saul Wurman, that very first, one-off event included a demonstration of the compact disc and the e-book. The event lost money and Wurman and his partner Harry Marks waited until 1990 to have another go. Back at the beginning not only were the speakers invited, the attendees were invitation only – and they still paid to attend.

The conference became an annual event and 2001 Chris Anderson, founder of the Sapling Foundation, bought the whole TED package. He continued what had grown up: a four-day event with 50 speakers giving nothing longer than an 18 minute presentation. In 2005 they went global with sister conferences around the world. One year on, TED got a dot-com domain and posted six talks as a trial to see if there was any interest. There was, and six month later 40 talks were available to watch, garnering over three million views. In 2009 The TED organization began granting licenses to third parties to run local, community-level TEDx events. By 2012 the website had hit one billion views and TEDx events are run in over 130 countries.

Purpose for TED and for Gallo

TED, as a not-for-profit, devoted itself to the spreading of ideas. Gallo argues, at the opening of his book, that ideas are the currency of the twenty-first century. Gallo writes that: "Ideas, effectively packaged and delivered, can change the world." TED envisions itself as a place for learning that leads to change.

Gallo references the 1915, Dale Carnegie book, *The Art of Public Speaking*, as a touchstone for this present work. He recognizes that much of the advice Carnegie gave is still the same (keep it short, use stories, etc) but now we have science to back it up. Gallo's claim is that: "The secrets revealed in this book are supported by the latest science from the best minds on the planet, and they work." Gallo reveals his benchmarks: science and pragmatism.

The Three Big Ideas

The TED talk and the Bible talk have this common goal: taking an idea in the heart and head of the speaker and transferring it into the heart and head of the listener. What will make my idea, found there in the Bible, be most likely to stick for the person who listens to me?

Gallo follows the 'Rule of Three' (p191) – that we humans can remember three things better than we can four or five things – and he groups his nine key elements into three groups of three. So let's consider the three big headings to see how Gallo answers the "what makes the talk stick in the heart and mind of the listener?"

Firstly, he says **go for the emotions** – aim to touch the heart. In this section Gallo spends time on the power of stories – how turning the idea into its story enables a connection. Gallo argues that this creates a lasting impression, because it is anchored in the emotion-mirroring of the listener. Gallo reports the scientific studies, which point to listeners experiencing the same emotions as those of the story-teller (this is why we cry in sad movies). Rather than leave it to chance, Gallo suggests that all speakers need to plan for and include stories – not merely for their illustrative power, but for their emotional strength.

How do we preachers use emotion in our preaching? Do we even show emotion while we preach? The Christian message comes as story – the gospel is a full flesh-and-blood human, with a story and with emotions. If we went to your church website and listened to the last five sermons, what emotion words would we hear? What would we hear in your tone that told us how you felt about the Lord Jesus?

Secondly, Gallo says that **something new** is more likely to stick. Here we are urged to unleash an emotionally charged event, or a jaw dropping moment. Our brains devour newness. Things that are familiar or commonplace will be quickly ignored by our super-smart brains, which filter out things we've already noticed and thought about.

In the TED context, Gallo reports those moments in talks that had the audience spell-bound. Either some fact that seems counter-intuitive or some information presented in a new way. The surprising newness engages the human brain, so that it takes notice, and is perhaps more likely to store that information away.

In this area the weekly work of preparing a Bible study or sermon appears to work against us. We certainly don't want to present the latest fad in theology, giving itching ears what they want, but we may find something new in the less familiar. It may be new content – like opening up a book of the Bible your listeners are unfamiliar with, or it could be packaged differently – approaching a familiar passage looking to reinvest it with the strangeness or surprising twist that it already has.

Thirdly, we are invited to **make it memorable**. Here Gallo promotes the use of multi-sensory tools – how we can see, smell, taste or touch the ideas we are hearing. Engaging multiple senses increases the likelihood of an idea sticking for the listener. If you use pictures during your sermon, then you already do this. If you take the time to invoke the smells and experience of the stories you tell, then you are already doing this.

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Gallo presents TED talk's eighteen-minute rule in this section of the book. As with the other tips this one is given some science, the first of which is that listening is draining. The longer the speaker goes for the harder it becomes for the listener to continue processing and staying engaged. We know this experientially when we hear the long-form sermon provide something lighter as a break mid-way through the sermon. On the flipside, Gallo observes that the constraint of eighteen minutes provides "…a focus and a framework for creativity to flourish." In aiming to avoid the meandering or convoluted presentation, Gallo favours the discipline of taking things out to fit the time constraint.

There is, most likely, a bigger conversation to be had here about the ideal length of the sermon (and whether such an ideal even exists), however it is interesting to apply Gallo's observations about the benefits of 18 minute talks to the work of preaching, and also the work of listening to the preacher.

Some concluding thoughts

What do you think are your best tools for making your sermon memorable? Is that something you're even aiming for? You probably know the old analogy that hearing sermons is like eating dinners – lots of them are not super-memorable, but they are nourishing – then there are a few, and because of the setting and meaning they stay in our memory. I wonder if this same analogy works for TED talks as well as it works for sermons?

One of the fundamental differences between the TED talk and the regular preacher is the reality that crafting an individual TED talk for maximum impact is different to regular Bible teaching. If you only had to deliver one sermon you might treat that one talk in the same way that a TED presenter does their talk. And yet Gallo often refers to the reader who is in the business setting, where Gallo coaches people in the art of presentation. In that setting multiple presentations would be expected, se we can presume that Gallo believes his advice is good beyond the one-off TED Talk.

A second significant difference is the level of pastoral relationship between the preacher and congregation compared with the relational expectations of the audience at a TED event. The larger work of discipleship-in-relationship, which takes place for us in and around our preaching is different to how a TED presenter hopes to change the world through ideas. Our goal is community-based formation (rather than event-based formation), and our power for change is the Spirit of Christ (instead of the unrenewed intellect). However there is overlap at the point of presenting the ideas, so let's learn whatever we can.

The existence of TED Talks is a powerful argument that the sustained monologue is not as dead as we were being told. However, the tools in our toolbox might be limited or under utilised. I know I have benefited from thinking more about the lessons from TED Talks in the development of my preaching.

1. This history has been compiled from Gallo's book and the TED website.

Preaching with the prayer book

David McLennan

Despite a (hopefully undeserved) reputation as the lowest of low church, pseudo-baptistical despisers of Anglican forms, plenty of evangelical Anglicans minister and preach in services shaped by a prayer book, even following a lectionary. In this paper first presented at the Preaching Seminars, run by EFAC Canberra and Goulburn, David McLennan shares some ways to preach effectively in this context.

'You might need to put up with it for a while, just to keep the 8 o'clock congregation onside. But obviously your ultimate goal should be to replace a liturgical service with something more contemporary.'

If you've been in evangelical circles for a while, you've almost certainly heard some version of this conventional ministry wisdom. Hostility to liturgical forms has become one of the curious hallmarks of Australian evangelicalism.

And it's a hallmark I've personally come to reject. As an Anglican minister who has benefited enormously from the likes of J.I. Packer, Charles Simeon and Thomas Cranmer (not to mention the church fathers); as a Christian who needs both word and sacrament, and as a person who is more than just a rational mind, I've come to see the Anglican prayer book tradition as a great ally to gospel ministry. It is theologically rich, pastorally wise and even, in our particular cultural moment, missionally powerful.

But what happens when an evangelical, nurtured in a sub-culture that has an allergic response to anything resembling a formal liturgy, finds themselves ministering in a more recognizably Anglican context? In particular, how might this new context impact their preaching?

For as any preacher knows, context is key. No homiletical approach is well suited to every context. My own sense is that evangelicals need to be very careful about assuming the preaching model they learned in their liturgically-sparse homeland can be transplanted into any context.

Because even if I'm right that an Anglican prayer book service is a good thing—a gospel-centred, orthodoxy-preserving and pedagogically effective thing—it is still a *particular kind* of thing. It makes sense that a prayer book preacher should consider not only the context of the passage on which the sermon is based, but also the context of the sermon itself.

For the best part of a decade, I've been worshipping and ministering in Anglican churches with a more liturgical bent, and now I find myself as rector of a parish with a strong prayer book identity. I've come to appreciate how the gospel shape of a prayer book service supports the gospel content we seek to proclaim. But it does require the cultivation of particular homiletical skills which are not always part of the evangelical's toolbox. So here are four lessons I've been learning (usually the hard way) about what works—and doesn't— in settings like this.

1. Small is beautiful

Part of the beauty of the Prayer Book is that the typical Sunday service includes a lot: up to four scripture readings, a creed, various prayers, a confession and absolution, Holy Communion, notices, some songs, and maybe a children's spot.

This is a lot of content, and time can easily blow out. This is really not the place for a 40-minute sermon. Nor a 30-minute sermon. Nor a 25-minute sermon. Personally, I think 20 minutes is the absolute upper limit, 15 minutes is a far better goal, and even 12 minutes is not necessarily something to feel guilty about.

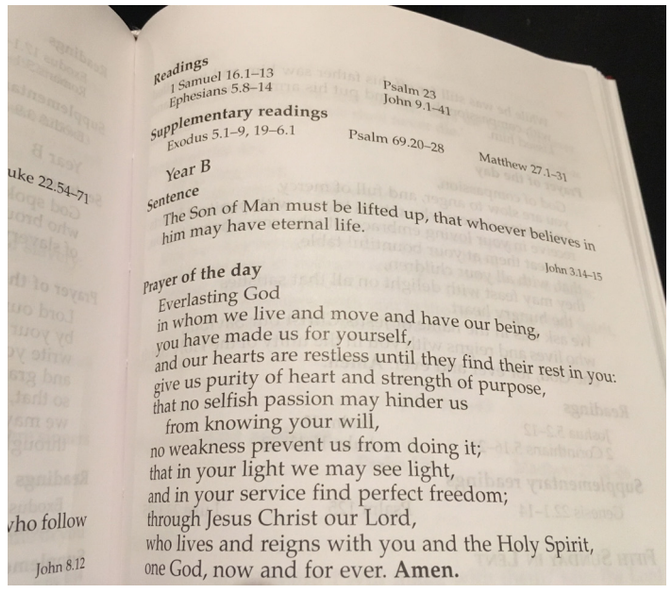
The mantra 'sermonettes produce Christianettes!' is likely to be deployed in response to such a claim, and there is much truth in it. But this can overlook two important things: firstly, that the Sunday sermon should not be expected to carry the entire burden of the church's teaching ministry; and secondly, that many a 'sermonette' has lasted 30 minutes or more.

Length alone is a poor way to measure the seriousness of a sermon. If a sermon is superficial and unfocussed, lacks biblical insight and human empathy and is meandering and insensitive, more time won't save it. It will just enhance its power to make the congregation dislike you more.

By contrast, I believe that reducing sermon length while maintaining impact is very possible. The real obstacle to shorter sermons is that they are very difficult and time-consuming for the preacher. They require more, not less, preparation.

I am suggesting that part of the burden we should carry in our preaching ministry is the burden of giving our sermons a very thorough edit: forcing ourselves to ruthlessly cut all that is not necessary for edification; focusing like a laser on one main point, and avoiding tangents. (Because economy of words is so important, I find a full text helps me to avoid wasting time searching for the right phrase, or repeating myself unnecessarily.)

Much of this is good practice anyway, but it also means that when the sermon ends, people may feel sad it is over, rather than sad it took so long.



2. Use the liturgy

Preachers are always on the lookout for examples that can make their point come alive to the hearer. One of the benefits of a prayer book service is that the sermon is nestled within a gathering that is full of such examples: words and actions that pull in the same direction as the preached word.

So, when looking for illustrations it's a good idea to consider the phrases and moments that are regularly (but not, always thoughtfully) repeated. For example, when preaching on our relationships with one another, why not use the greeting of peace to press the point home? When preaching on the ascension, why not refer to the words in the thanksgiving prayer: '*Lift up your hearts!*' When preaching about the centrality of the gospel, why not explain why we stand during the gospel reading?

And then of course there is Holy Communion. Is there be a better way to preach our dependence on Christ than to remind our people that we shall soon be nourished by him in the Lord's Supper? Is there a better way to speak of the Jesus' sacrifice than to remind them of the solemn night when he broke bread with his friends? Is there any physical act that provides a better experience of the gospel than coming forward with empty hands, and finding in Jesus' death and sacrifice the sustenance we need? Maybe there is, but I can't think of it.

When these liturgical or sacramental moments are integrated into our teaching, it can liberate them from the sphere of 'mere habit' to become discipleship tools that will continue to work years into the future.

3. The church year and lectionary are your friends

Most prayer book churches also preach according to the lectionary and observe the seasons of the church year. These are additional ways that the gospel story can be brought to the people year after year. Theologian Scott McKnight says that the church year:

> 'is all about the Story of Jesus, and I know of nothing – other than the regular soaking in the Bible – that can 'gospelize' our life more than the church calendar … Anyone who is half aware of the church calendar … will be exposed every

year to the whole gospel.' [1]

In this context it makes sense to locate the day's preaching emphasis with at least one eye on the bigger story that is being narrated each year.

Similarly, the lectionary, when used well, can be a great ally. While it's often said that sequential preaching through a book helps the preacher avoid hobby horses, my own observation is that no method guarantees this. It is disturbingly easy to preach through book after book and barely touch on the doctrines of the Trinity, or the two natures of Christ, or the virgin birth, or the sacraments – or many other things which our forebears thought essential for the Christian to understand.

While the lectionary is not a foolproof device, if used well (not slavishly and inflexibly) it provides scope for covering, each year, the great doctrines of the Christian life, while at the same time walking us through the life of Christ. And it still provides considerable freedom to preach through books – the pattern with which many evangelicals are more familiar.

Informed use is the key. For example, the seasons of Advent–Pentecost are ideally suited to more theological preaching, centred around the gospel reading. The Sundays after Pentecost are a good chance to return to sermon series through particular books. (For more guidance on wise use of the lectionary, see O'Day and Hackett, 'Preaching through the Revised Common Lectionary', Abingdon Press, 2007.)

It is also good to find ways to unify, as far as possible, the different texts – up to four – that are read during the service. Tim Keller insists that each text has a 'surplus of meanings'. So it makes sense to allow the church calendar and lectionary to bias our exegetical focus, so that the readings work in harmony with each other rather than at seeming disconnected.

The person who believes in the self-authenticating quality of Scripture will not feel compelled to explain every passage in detail. But where possible, passing reference to the various readings of the day helps demonstrate how Scripture's many different voices all testify in unison to the same bigger story.

4. Jesus (not the text) is the hero

Much evangelical preaching tenaciously clings to a single text, so that the structure of the text determines the structure of the sermon itself. While a good method in some contexts, this isn't usually well-suited to a prayer book service due to the shortage of time and the abundance of Scripture readings. It's worth remembering that the task of the sermon is to edify - not simply to explain a particular text. In the end, it's more important that our people are gripped by the hope proclaimed in Romans 8, than that they understand the structure and word choices used in Romans 8.

The best prayer book preaching, therefore, shows the sort of freedom we find in the apostolic preaching in Acts, i.e. preaching which regards the text as authoritative, but does not get bogged down in historical-grammatical exegesis or a desire to explain the text in detail. Other contexts (e.g. the Bible study group) are better suited for that. In the sermon, it's best to keep the main thing the main thing. The main thing is always centred on Christ and his saving work, and my advice is unapologetically to lift people above the weeds of detailed exegesis, and show them the wider theological landscape to which the text refers. It may feel a bit naughty the first time you do it, but it's worth persevering.

Conclusion

Besides being an expectation of Anglican clergy, our Anglican liturgical forms are a great gift to the gospel preacher when used thoughtfully. But they also require us to be reflective and open to re-evaluating how we think about ministry—including the preaching ministry. This can lead to the discovery that, when word and sacrament operate alongside each other, the minds and hearts of our people are saturated in the gospel in a more holistic way. And who knows? This saturating process might have the added advantage of drowning a few unnecessary evangelical shibboleths about liturgy. Your 8 o'clock congregation will thank you.

1. Scott McKnight, The King Jesus Gospel (Zondervan, 2011) p.155

The coming revolution in small group ministry

Stephen Hale

Bishop Stephen Hale sees small groups as poised to revolutionise church life again. Stephen Hale is the Chair of EFAC Australia

Way back in the 1980s a revolution started in thinking about small groups in the life of the church. The late John Mallison (my mentor for many years) wrote a classic book called Growing the Church through Small Groups. The whole focus was on growing disciples of Jesus through meeting in small groups to read God's word together, to pray and to minister to one another. This was about a revolution in how pastoral care was expressed. It was a discovery of the power and potential of mutual care. St Hilary's Kew was in the vanguard of this movement and offered significant leadership in this area. Steve Webster writes about this era in the book published last year *Excellence in Leadership: essays in honour of Peter and Merrill Corney*. At the book launch he told what a massive cultural shift it was back in the 1980s and 1990s to get people involved in small groups.

At present another revolution in small group ministry is taking place. This is a fresh discovery of the mission of God and how we participate in it together. At the heart of this is unlocking the mission potential of small groups. This is about growing in discipleship. This is sometimes captured in the 'Up' the 'In' and the 'Out'. 'Up' is reading God's word, listening and responding to him. 'In' is sharing each other's lives and praying together. 'Out' is sharing in mission together both as a group and as we support each other to live out our faith in all of our lives.

In our church we have renamed small groups as Connect Groups, as they are about connecting with God, connecting with each other and connecting in mission together. While continuing to study God's word and pray together, groups in the St Hilary's Network increasingly participate in some sort of missional endeavour in some real and tangible way. This may be an outreach or social justice activity, it may be linked to the everyday activities of your lives. It is about connecting with real people and sharing the love of God and inviting people to consider the Christian faith. Groups are not told what to do but supported to discover together the mission God wants them to participate in. We recognise this as a significant shift and expect it will take time to become a reality. We hope over time all groups will embrace an outward focus.

It is true to say that growth in maturity increases dramatically, when you get your sleeves rolled up and have to do something for others in some way. This is about seeking God's kingdom together and about us being a part of something bigger for the sake of others. I think we all know the sense of buzz that comes when we do that. For us this is about a revolution in how we see church and community. For us, this is about making our newly agreed mission (making, maturing and mobilising disciples of Jesus Christ) and vision (to transform lives and communities as we share the love of God through the love of God's people) a reality.

This is a topsy turvey view of mission. It isn't top down and program centred. It is releasing the whole people of God to share in the whole mission of God and to do it in the whole of God's world. That might seem a bit pretentious! But this is a vision for all God's people to share in God's mission in God's world and to share in it both when we're together and when we're apart. This is a vision for everyone and not just some people. This is for children and families as well as mature adults. This is about releasing the gifts of the people of God in the mission of God. This is about having a vision for church being a visible alternative community. This is about what Mark Zuckerberg recently called helping others to discover a sense of purpose (in God) for themselves.

This is also about each of us supporting and praying for each other as we seek to be kingdom people in all of our lives—at home, at work, in our street, in our communities, with our Mission partners—this is both local and global. If you think about the number of people in Connect Groups (or the equivalent in your church) and think about the number of places where we each hang out and share our lives, then you have tens of thousands of people that we have kingdom connections with. If we see this as part of the mission of God that we each share in together, then, as St Paul puts it: 'then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life.' (Philippians 2:15)

A Confronting Freedom

Luke 4:14-30

Gavin Perkins

'Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.' Gavin is the rector of St Judes, Bowral, NSW.

The small-town boy, now the talk of the whole region, returns to his home 'church' in Nazareth. This is the synagogue in which he grew up. His Saturday school teachers could probably think back to when this Jesus was a young boy in their care. What a morning to be in synagogue that particular Saturday!

Jesus has returned to Galilee after his temptation, and filled with the power of the Holy Spirit (v. 14) he commits himself to a preaching tour all around the synagogues of Galilee. His teaching has given him a reputation (v. 15).

Jesus tells his disciples that the reason he was sent is to be a preacher of the gospel of the kingdom (v. 43). Teaching is what the Spirit-filled Messiah focuses on, for it is the essential form of revelation from God.

Luke gives us just one of these first sermons, and even then he only gives us Jesus' opening sentence: "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." (v. 21). Let's consider that opening sentence word by word (slightly out of sequence).

"this Scripture"

They have just had the Scriptures read, and probably at the guest preacher's request the passage was a short reading from Isaiah 61 (see Luke 4:18-19).

Isaiah 61 is about a great reversal for the people of God, and for the holy city Jerusalem in particular. The prophet casts his eyes forward beyond the exile, to the redemption and rebuilding that will follow when they return. There will be a staggering reversal for God's people. They had been made poor under the judgment of God because of their sin. They had become broken-hearted captives imprisoned because of the covenant curses that had fallen upon them. To them Isaiah preaches a gospel of reversal, in which God by his faithfulness will restore his people and make an everlasting covenant with all those who mourn and grieve their situation and the sin that put them there. The poor are Israel, and the answer to their poverty is the kingdom of the Messiah.

"is fulfilled"

As the congregation stands around him, Jesus sits to preach (now there is a custom we ought to reintroduce promptly!), and he opens by telling them that this hope is fulfilled because he is here.

Fulfilment is one of the great themes of this gospel of Luke. The very first verse of the gospel then tells us that the whole book is about "the things that have been fulfilled among us." Luke wants us to have certainty about the significance of the events of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. He wants us to know that Jesus ministry fulfils and is in continuity with the Old Testament. Jesus' life, death and resurrection is the fulfilment of God's global plan of salvation.

Jesus says, "I am here, so this is now the year of the Lord's favour." The first word of the gospel is not a command or an exhortation to work harder, rather it is a proclamation of what God in his grace has already done in Jesus.

"Today"

If you are carefully comparing Luke 4 and Isaiah 61 you will notice that the Scripture reading that day stopped abruptly mid-sentence. In Isaiah verse 2 continues, "to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour and the day of vengeance of our God".

Why does Jesus stop before he gets to that last phrase? He does so because he wants to say that "today, this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing". This is not yet the day of God's vengeance. Today is the day of favour and opportunity.

There are three different fulfillment points of Isaiah's prophecy separated by centuries.

1.The fulfilment in the history of Israel for those facing the reality of coming exile. They are encouraged that God's Spirit will anoint someone who will liberate this people. This happens through Cyrus the Persian king.

2. This fulfillment on the 'Today' that is the coming of Jesus as the Messiah

3. The return of Jesus in power and glory to destroy his enemies – the day of vengeance.

"in your hearing"

The fulfilment of Isaiah 61 on that day is the preaching ministry of Jesus. His preaching inaugurates the age of favour and grace, but not yet judgment. It is a call to listening ears and responsive hearts.

How do they respond? The movement is striking; verse 14, everyone was praising him: verse 22, they are amazed at his words (with a tinge of condescension): verse 28, they are furious: and then verse 29, they turn into a lynch mob!

What can explain this shift? It is what Jesus adds to his sermon in verses 23-27 by telling two stories form the lives of Elijah and Elisha. Two stories that both teach that salvation is not limited to the Jews, but at God's initiative, Jews were passed over for the salvation of Gentiles. It is the Gentile question that leads to them turning against Jesus, just as Gentile inclusion leads to many of the Jews turning against Paul in part 2 of Luke-Acts.

They went from praising Jesus to trying to lynch him, because he told them that he had not come to bring vengeance on the Gentiles, but had come to preach forgiveness to them.

Jesus walks through the crowd, and keeps on preaching and seeking the spiritually poor and weak who know their need and respond to the call, even the Gentiles.

Today, even as many reject Jesus' offer of favour, we can still expect to find the most unlikely people responding to Jesus. This is the year of favour and salvation to all those spiritually poor and weak who know their greatest need.

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The Revd Frogg Orr-Ewing,
Latimer Minster, Beaconsfield UK
Frogg recently planted a 'minster' church as a resource hub for mission and church planting in rural areas. He is strong on evangelism and apologetics, and has a PhD in missional church planting.

Ms Justine Toh,
Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Public Christianity, Sydney.
Justine worked at Fairfax Digital before completing her doctorate in Cultural Studies at Macquarie University. She speaks and writes about freedom and individualism, the body as a project, and other trends in contemporary culture.

The Revd Dr Wesley Hill,
Associate Professor of New Testament at Trinity School for Ministry, Pennsylvania, USA.
Wes seeks to help his students understand how attention to Scripture formed the church's creedal heritage and, likewise, how that heritage can now help us to read Scripture afresh as the word of the Triune God for us today.

AFC | GRACE & TRUTH IN UNCERTAIN TIMES
Anglican Future Conference 2018

People of the Risen King:

A History of St Jude's Carlton, 1866-2016

Elizabeth Willis, St Jude's Anglican Church, Carlton, 2017

Encouragement and gratitude to God and his faithful servants: it was with these emotions that I closed this skilful interweaving of church and society through 150 years at St Jude's Anglican Church in Carlton. Carlton's socio-economic conditions and demography, clerical and lay personalities, theological emphases, liturgical practice, the Melbourne Diocese, and national and international affairs are colourfully integrated. Through testing times, diverse personalities and ever-changing ministries, the life and mission of the 'People of the Risen King' at St Jude's Carlton is brought to life. Carlton larrikins blocking the entry of worshippers, the decline in attendance following the First World War, the depression, bulldozing to 'clear the slums', the building of Housing Commission estates, the opportunity to welcome New Australians, university ministry, discipleship training, parish partnerships, new congregations and relations with the Diocese of Melbourne: throughout it all we see the faithfulness of men and women to the work of God.

The ethos of the times is well captured. By way of example, the loss of faith following the First World War is highlighted: 'subdued and grieving at the end of a horrible war when people were picking up the pieces and trying to make sense of a world where old certainties about progress and security had been shaken' produced stark challenges for the church. A 'Come to Church Sunday' in 1919 seemed to miss the mark when it 'exhorted people to go to church because it was a good thing to do, because it was a duty owed to God, and because their mothers would be pleased!'

Anecdotes tell amusing incidents and memorable characters. Vicar Lance Shilton in the early 1950s was challenged at his first Women's Guild meeting: 'We've heard that you don't believe in gambling. We want a "yes" or "no" answer. Can we have raffles at our fete?' The vicar concluded his 'no' with, 'I am confident that by not having raffles at the next fete, you will make more money than you would ever have made before.' The President replied, quick as a flash, 'Would you like to bet on that?' This reader could not help but laugh!

The parish's social work encompasses the 'free seats' of the nineteenth century and the Debt Centre of the twenty-first century: a wide embrace of society that is at no time loosened.

In the 1890s wealthier people moved away from Carlton and the Depression hit Carlton and the parish hard. 'In the winter of 1892 St Jude's began a twice weekly soup kitchen . . . On one Wednesday seventy-six families representing over 300 people were provided with forty gallons of soup . . . and 140 loaves of bread, as well as tea, sugar and a large quantity of clothing.' These impacts of changing demographics bring their own demands to parish priorities and possibilities. Hardly imaginable in 1866 would be the translation of sermons into Mandarin and Farsi in 2015!

The issue of liturgical changes and their cost to parishioners and clergy is not avoided nor the struggle to settle the culture of a congregation—and indeed of the parish. Would a congregation's services have robed clergy, hymns, public prayer, charismatic expression, expository sermons? Would it be family/children friendly, welcoming to the outsider, have lay or staff leadership or some combination thereof? (And all in ninety to a hundred minutes.) Change is costly: the cost not always appreciated. A gracious and poignant reflection in 2004 from a now senior member runs: 'Us young things took little notice of the cost of all this to the older parishioners, who had continued faithful through the hard times, and to whom we owed the continued existence of the church. We failed to respect the work of the Spirit of God amongst them.'

Insight is given to the significance of the gifting and emphases of the clerical leadership on the life and ministry of the parish. I appreciated the honesty of the personal challenges faced by clergy and the conflict within the life of the parish. In particular, conflict between staff is acknowledged without assigning blame or descending into a 'tell-all' narrative. This history is no hagiography, and praise be to God for that!

Photos add to the narrative. After viewing the impressive 1905 St Jude's Football Team, I looked in vain for recent vicars Boan, Adams and Condie in the football team pose of crossed arms, attired in football shorts and sleeveless footy jumper!

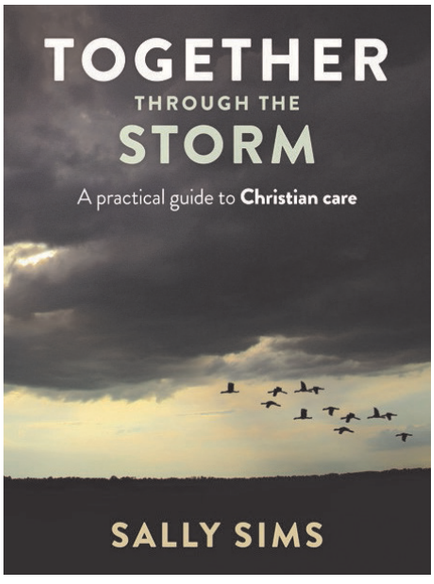
A deftly placed photo of a fully robed bishop, robed vicar, two women wardens in smart casuals and a male warden in shorts and thongs, delightfully illustrate the Vicar's words to the 1988 AGM, 'I think that St Jude's still retains a great deal of its off-beat, imaginative and risk-taking style. It is still fun to be part of and, despite the apparent order and sameness of our life, the erratic, the irregular and the very funny still occurs!'

The relationship between St Jude's and the diocese of Melbourne is honestly traced with its ups and downs - and current healthy state.

The irony of writing of the seemingly endless struggle to maintain the parish buildings fit for purpose at the very time it is uninhabitable due to a deliberately lit fire in 2014 is not lost on the author. A multimillion dollar building project is currently underway.

This truly is a stimulating read! Do leave time for reflection along the way, for this history is a reminder that through the changing circumstances of parish and societal life the church is the 'People of the Risen King'. Thank you, Elizabeth Willis, for your fine work in bringing this parish history to us, and to the faithful saints of St Jude's Carlton. Copies are available via St Jude's website. An insightful and inspiring history!

Bishop John Harrower, Vic.



Together Through the Storm:

A practical guide to Christian Care
Sally Sims. Matthias Media, 2016

The book is just as it is described in the sub-title: it's 'a practical guide to Christian care', in three parts. Part 1, 'Suffering and the God who cares', sets out the reality of suffering in this world and points us to the God who not only understands, but who can be trusted. According to Sims, Christian care aims to anchor the person in these truths as they deal with suffering. Part 2, 'Biblical Foundations for Care' explores how as God's people we share life together in all its suffering and joy, and how we are called to love one another. It then looks at what makes our care Christian, and finally turns to how Christian care can be structured across the church. Part 3 is about Christian care in action, with lots of very practical guidelines for visiting people, finishing with the specific context of visiting people in hospital.

Sims has achieved what she has set out to achieve: a practical guide to Christian care which is also well grounded theologically, and not afraid of using insights from the helping professions. This work would be useful for a care team in the local church as a basic training tool, or for any Christian keen to be better equipped for caring.

I think the title 'Christian care', rather than 'pastoral care', is helpful in practice, especially when the term 'pastoral care' is too open to the misunderstanding that all or most pastoral care should be done by the pastor. Also, as Sims points out, it helps us to hold onto the distinctiveness of Christian pastoral care, when the term is often used of general pastoral care in hospitals and schools and other settings.

This is a balanced book, encouraging the use of the Bible and prayer in Christian care while also underlining how we demonstrate our love by the way we listen, are sensitive to people's needs and provide practical care and support. The practical section, the last section of the book, covers some areas that those who are new to Christian care will find helpful—everything from how you might prepare to visit someone, what you need to keep in mind with hospital visits, to what to review when you come back, including discussing and praying about this with your team so you are encouraging each other in the work.

Overall this is a good and useful book. At times I wanted a bit more depth, but as a basic tool it is great. I especially appreciated the reminders about the importance of listening as a way of demonstrating love. These were repeated throughout the book, and I think Sims is right to imagine that we need to be reminded to listen. Her repeated reminders helped me finally to hear what she is saying, and—hopefully—correct the tendency to come up with a quick answer, seeking to solve people's problems. (See pages 66-68 and 92-93 on listening).

Chapter 8 on the body of Christ working together gave a helpful basic outline and description of how a church could provide structure to the ministry of caring. I'm always struck by how Christian care happens (without much organisation by a leader) as people are motivated by God's grace in their lives to reach out to love and care for others. Much of this is encouraged and furthered through small group ministry in a church. However, when circumstances are overwhelming or someone has long term needs, they

may need additional care that's part of a more structured and planned approach, including a care team of people who provide care at various levels and care leaders who co-ordinate care and who equip people for this ministry.

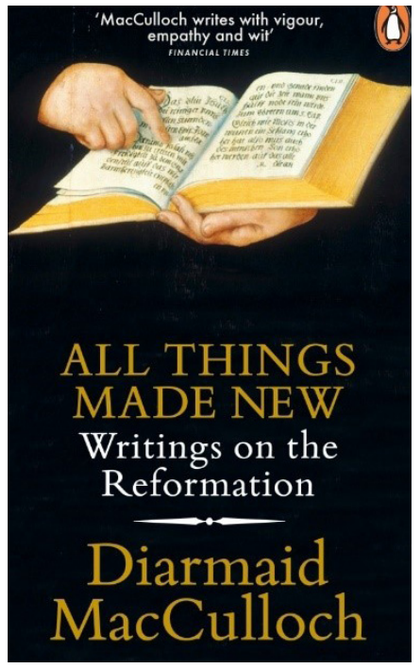
Together Through The Storm will help the reader to grow in their capacity to care for others, especially if Christian care is either new to them, or they need some basic training or a refresher on the basics of Christian care. Chapter 8 will also help pastors who have not thought through how to structure Christian care in a church, by providing a basic structure and description of that structure. Finally, there is a helpful reflection at the end of the book about how pain and suffering is often 'where the real work of life takes place', and thus how God uses our own pain and suffering to change us for the better and make us better carers. That's something every pastor or Christian carer ought to reflect on and give God thanks for, whether we read this book or not.

Roger Morey, WA.

All Things Made New

Writings on the Reformation

Diarmaid MacCulloch, Penguin, 2017



Alongside his larger works on various aspects of the Reformation, MacCulloch has also written smaller pieces, book reviews, and occasional lectures. Some of these are gathered together in this volume. He has a few themes which run through the collection. His common sub-theme of sexuality is a very minor part of this book. One of the bigger ones is his crusade against the rewriting of Reformation history by the Oxford Movement

The first part concerns the Reformation in Europe. He has excellent chapters on Calvin, the Virgin Mary, Angels, the Spanish Inquisition and a very thoughtful book review of John O'Malley's *Trent: What happened at the Council*. He regards this as the best history of the Council yet written.

The English Reformation is the second part and includes chapters on Tudor image making, Henry VIII, Tolerant Cranmer, the Prayer Book, the two Tudor Queens, and the King James Bible. A lot of helpful and new insights in all of this.

The third part is a look back at the English Reformation. It includes a number of chapters critical of modern studies on the Reformation. He critiques what he calls the "hegemonic narrative" of the twentieth century. The hegemony was Anglican – but specifically High Church Anglican. There had once been another narrative, the Evangelical Anglican Narrative but this had been lost in the Victorian era. So the "adherents of the Oxford Movement, or the wider world of Anglo-Catholicism, were dominant in the practise of religious history at university level ..." (240). This first chapter provides an excellent overview of the progress of historiography in the last century. McCulloch gives an example of the mythology of some history by recounting research into the removal of rood screens in certain parts of England. 30 – 40% disappeared in Norfolk churches in the nineteenth century, and 40-50% in Dorset, the work of High Churchmen who wanted the congregation to be able to see the consecration on the High Altar.

He has a similar critique of Thomas Cranmer's biographers. Perhaps the best chapter is the 42 page essay on Richard Hooker, and the various people who hijacked him for their own purposes, not least John Keble. This chapter I think is worth buying the book for.

MacCulloch's penultimate chapter concerns two reformation myths. He calls it a cautionary tale. One concerns the sermon Cranmer preached at Edward VI's coronation where he referred to the King as like King Josiah. The other is the story of Queen Elizabeth berating the dean of St Paul's for giving her a copy of the Book of Common Prayer adorned with devotional pictures. MacCulloch, says neither of these things happened although they have become part of the legend of the Reformation.

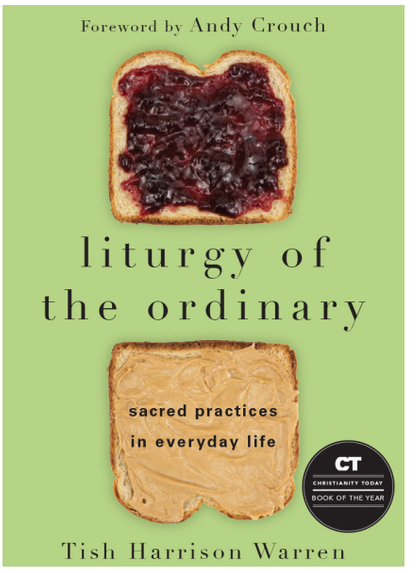
His last chapter is a potted summary of the history of Anglicanism underlining that it is really a Reformation church, but that in the face of too much dogmatism, it should be recognised as a "trial-and-error form of Christianity". And we should keep on debating in public and allow ourselves to change.

One doesn't need to agree with everything MacCulloch says to benefit from his many helpful insights and research. One of the great benefits of his writing is that he has challenged the narrative that the Reformation in England didn't really happen. And has provided lots of new evidence not just that it did, but what actually went on between 1533 and now.

This is a fascinating book and worth reading. It also contains eight pages of colour plates with important images to go with the text.

Dale Appleby, WA

Liturgy of the Ordinary:
Sacred Practices in Everyday Life
Tish Harrison Warren, IVP, 2016



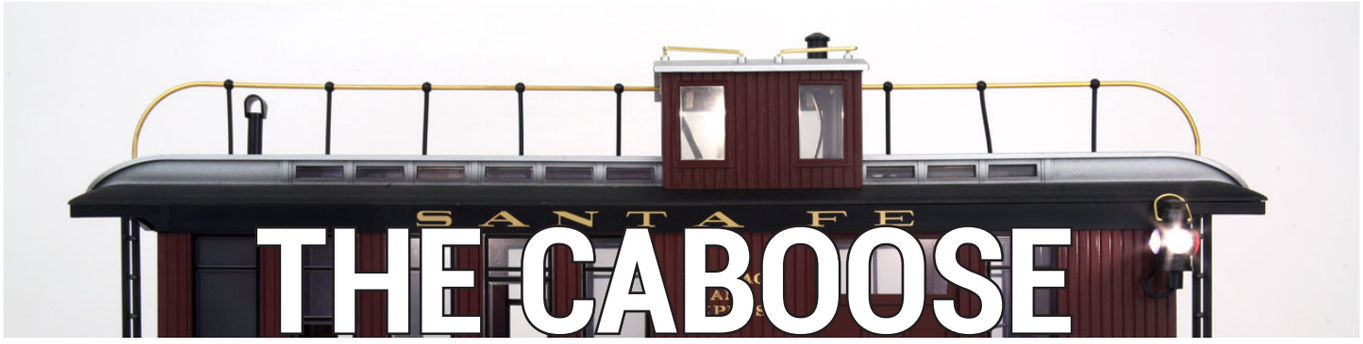
Liturgy of the Ordinary could become a contemporary classic. It was the Christianity Today Book of the Year in 2018. As a staff team we look over this annual listing and pick one book each as a summer read. This was my pick and it was surprising, refreshing and renewing. I'd go so far as to say it was the best book I've read in years. The concept of the book is unique and the writing is beautiful, honest and theologically rich. Being on holidays I read a chapter a day and it was a rich experience. None of that getting the book out with good intentions and finding oneself asleep an hour later!

Tish Harrison Warren is an Anglican priest (in the ACNA), a writer, a wife and the mother of two girls. When she wakes up each morning she faces a formidable to-do list. How does one find time to pursue holiness amid the rush of responsibilities?

The answer comes in this, her first book. Chapter by chapter, she explains how the most routine tasks, if done with an eye on the eternal, become extraordinary. 'We are shaped every day, whether we know it or not, by practices—rituals and liturgies that make us who we are', she writes. And that makes the 'small bits of our day . . . profoundly meaningful because they are the site of our worship. The crucible of our formation is in the anonymous monotony of our daily routines.'

The opening chapter begins with getting out of bed and then proceeds to look at the seemingly ordinary things that make up our lives. The chapter headings could make it all seem very mundane, covering topics like 'Losing keys' or 'Fighting with my husband'. But this is what makes it so refreshing. Each day we see that everything in life is touched with holiness. Warren's writing is very personal, honest and fresh, and each chapter takes you to surprising places. Some might be tempted to think this is a woman's book. Presumably many women will find this especially refreshing, seeing she is a young mum. However it shouldn't be boxed. It helped me to see my daily chores with fresh eyes and lifted my mind and spirit into new places in order to reflect on the extraordinary in the ordinary. I can't recommend this book more highly.

Stephen Hale, Vic



The Windowless Room

Peter Corney

Peter Corney points out the cramped and impoverished world that the modern materialist lives in. Peter writes, speaks, mentors and consults on leadership for various organisations

Materialism as a philosophy or world view is now the dominant framework of the Western mind, the lens through which most people view and understand reality. Materialism is the idea that the only reality is a material or physical one, there is nothing beyond the physical, no supernatural or spiritual, nothing that transcends the material: only particles, spaces and energy. At the biological level everything is explicable by the process of natural selection and the physical neurological activity of the brain.

One of the wonders of the times in which we live is that every day, it seems, we are discovering more and more of how all this material world works. We sit fascinated as the Professor Brian Coxes of this world explain it all to us via brilliant BBC documentaries and expand our minds and knowledge. We gasp amazed as some new and marvellous medical breakthrough is announced on the news.

But at another level our understanding is impoverished, limited and entirely enclosed in this immanent world of the material. It's as if, with the threat of rain, the roof of the Tennis Centre has slowly closed to the heavens as the game proceeded and we didn't notice. Now we are shut off from the transcendent and enclosed in this immanent mental framework. Indeed if you listen carefully, that is the view of reality that the charming and erudite Professor Cox assumes. Charles Taylor in his writing on secularism claims that this closure to the transcendent is what is at the heart of contemporary secularism.

To change the metaphor, it's as if we are locked in a windowless room which is brilliantly lit by the scientific method that enables us to see and explain more and more of our physical world but is paradoxically a profoundly reductionist space. It reduces and limits all explanations and descriptions to the material and physical. It has no windows onto wider and bigger explanations of reality. It provides no answers to our deepest and most important questions, like what the meaning and purpose of our lives is, how to understand right and wrong, the nature of justice, beauty, love, shame, guilt, honour, duty, evil and good, why we desire social and personal accountability. The list of enduring human questions it fails to deal with goes on!

The present prosperity of consumer Western culture and the distractions created by our technological mastery temporarily shield us from these deeper questions but they cannot be repressed for ever. The present crisis in the mental health of our young people—one in four in Australia are suffering some serious mental health issue—is a warning sign. The list of global problems grows daily and our present politics seems unable to solve them. It may be that the other wisdom that modernity has put aside for too long may be sought again. Let's hope and pray that it may be so!

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AUTUMN 2018