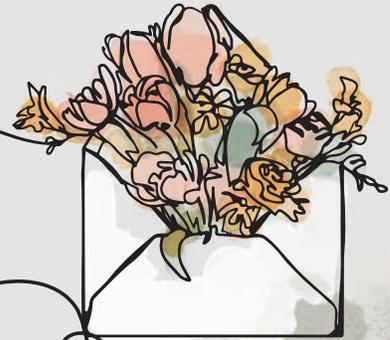


MINISTRY & LEADERSHIP

SPRING 2021



PRAYER & PRESENCE

HOW CHURCH FAMILIES
SUPPORTED THE MORGANS,
STONES, AND BAILEYS IN 2020

POLLY STONE: SAFE ON CANAAN'S SIDE

by Kelly Berkompas

DAILY FAMILY WORSHIP

by Dr. Craig Sheppard

NO MORE NORMAL

by Dr. Guy Richardson



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WHO WE ARE

Reformed Theological Seminary exists to glorify the Triune God and to serve his church in all branches of evangelical Christianity, especially Presbyterian and Reformed churches, by providing Reformed graduate theological education that is globally accessible. RTS equips its students for ministry, primarily through pastoral preparation, to be servant leaders marked by "A Mind for Truth, A Heart for God."

As such, *Ministry & Leadership* seeks to show how God is working through the ministries of RTS graduates, faculty members, and students. Our goal is that readers will become partners with RTS through prayer, financial giving, educational experience, and student referral, as well as providing placement opportunities.

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CHANCELLOR'S MESSAGE

A TRINITARIAN BLESSING

DR. LIGON DUNCAN

You have probably heard these words spoken to you by the minister many times at the end of a Christian service of public worship:

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all” (2 Cor 13:14).

This benediction — a scriptural prayer and pronouncement of blessing — is traditionally used to close the meeting of a Presbyterian General Assembly. Presbyterians know it as “The Apostolic Benediction,” though the Apostle Paul, in fact, gave us a number of benedictions, such as, “May the God of peace be with you all” (Rom 15:33); “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you” (Rom 16:20, 1 Thes 5:28); “Peace be to the brothers, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible” (Eph 6:23-24); and many more. These blessings are meant to be listened to closely and received and taken into our hearts. They are important for the Christian life.

This particular benediction is a Trinitarian blessing that emphasizes God’s love, the grace we enjoy because of the person and work of Christ, and the communion we experience because of the person and work of the Spirit: “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

This Trinitarian blessing ascribes specific blessings to the operation of each person of the blessed Trinity. As Charles Hodge noted: “The distinct personality and the divinity of the Son, the Father, and the Holy Spirit, to each of whom prayer is addressed, is here taken for granted. And therefore this passage is a clear recognition of the doctrine of the Trinity, which is a fundamental doctrine of Christianity.”¹ Christianity is a Trinitarian religion; that is, we believe in one, and only one, true and living God. We are monotheists, but we also believe that the one and only living and true God exists in three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three are one.

This is a mind-blowing truth, but it is also practical to the core. In fact, we can sum up Christianity with it: we come to the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit. Paul's blessing reminds us of the fullness of God in his activity of redeeming and blessing his people with grace, love, and communion. Our God is love. He is full of grace. And he created and redeemed us for communion with him and with his people.

This truth has many applications, but one of the most important is in our public worship. When we gather with our fellow believers on the Lord's Day, we come as those who were once beggars, rebels, and enemies, now made heirs, friends, and children of God, through the Father's love, the Son's obedience, death, and resurrection, and the Spirit's new birth. We come, by his grace, to give something to God that he alone deserves and that we can only give him through Jesus Christ, in order that we might be what he made us to be (worshippers) and enjoy what he made us to enjoy: the greatest, deepest, best treasure in all the world — the triune God himself, and communion with him.² Only through the triune God's love and grace can we enjoy true communion with him. This benediction reminds us of that.

We also notice the emphasis Paul places on the **grace** of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is something he had already done in 2 Corinthians 8:9: "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich." In Romans 3:24, Paul tells us that we are justified by grace as a gift through Christ Jesus. In Romans 5:17, he explains that we receive an abundance of grace through Jesus. In 1 Corinthians 1:4, he tells us that the grace of God is given to us in Christ Jesus. So, when Paul blesses us in saying "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ... be with you all," he is picking up on a familiar and

important theme in his writing. Indeed, Paul is entirely at one with John in this, who also proclaims, "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17).

Next, Paul draws our attention to the **love** of God (another thing that both he and John love to do!). In Romans 5:8 he says, "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us," which is almost the Pauline John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." No wonder Paul can say that nothing can "separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom 8:39).

Finally, Paul blesses us by invoking the **fellowship** of the Holy Spirit. Charles Hodge beautifully describes the significance of this part of Paul's benediction. "It is the gift of the Holy Spirit secured in the covenant of redemption by the death of Christ that applies to us the benefits of his mediation. As the gift of the Spirit is secured to all the people of God, they are joint partakers of the Holy Spirit and thereby made one body. This is the ground of the communion of saints in which the church universal professes her faith." In other words, Paul's benediction is reminding us that we only enjoy the fellowship or communion of the saints by the work of the Spirit.

In sum, this blessing stresses that "grace, love, and fellowship with one another come from God in Christ through the Spirit."³ I'm struck again at how God blesses us with precisely what we need most. He gives us himself in grace and love and enfolds us into the fellowship of his own family. Never alone again. Never apart from him. Always recipients of his grace and love.



¹ *An Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians*.

² Adapted from Dr. Duncan's foreword to Matt Merker's book, *Corporate Worship* (Crossway, 2021).

³ *ESV Study Bible*.

from the EDITOR

PHILLIP HOLMES



A NEW COMMANDMENT I GIVE TO YOU, THAT YOU
LOVE ONE ANOTHER: JUST AS I HAVE LOVED YOU,
YOU ALSO ARE TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER. BY THIS ALL
PEOPLE WILL KNOW THAT YOU ARE MY DISCIPLES, IF
YOU HAVE LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER.

...
John 13:34-35

Whenever it's unclear how it should look for Christians to faithfully live in a way that glorifies God and testifies to the authenticity of our message, I've always found Jesus' words to his disciples in John 13:34-35 clarifying.

To understand biblical love, we must be meticulous and careful to avoid cherry-picking when striving to live out Jesus' calling. Thankfully, any Christian who can read about and study the life of Jesus can adequately grasp what it means to love from Jesus'

life and ministry. As a matter of fact, Jesus explicitly points his disciples to the perfect illustration of love in his love for them.

But we shouldn't overlook the fact that, in John 13, Jesus' illustration was incomplete. Despite all of the love the disciples had witnessed up to this point, they had yet to experience Jesus making the ultimate sacrifice — "he bore the punishment and vengeance due for our sins," says John Calvin. Why? So that we would be reconciled with God.

Love and sacrifice are married and can't be separated without delegitimizing the other. Show me love divorced from personal sacrifice, and I'll show you an impostor masquerading as love.

For this reason, it brings me great pleasure to commend this issue of *Ministry & Leadership*, which delivers stories and messages of love and sacrifice page after page.

Our featured article, titled *Prayer and Presence*, highlights the stories of three RTS families: the Morgans, the Stones, and the Baileys. We explore how the Christian community shared the love of Christ by sacrificing their time and resources to care for other Christians in need.

We also remember the life of Polly Stone, who went to be with her heavenly Father after battling cancer for almost four years. Polly's final years were marked by love, sacrifice, and service. I experienced her love and sacrifice personally through our professional relationship as colleagues. Even when we disagreed, her love was evident in the time she sacrificed to try to understand, though it was clear that her time was most precious.

Next, Dr. Craig Sheppard provides eight principles and a plan for loving our families through worshiping together in his article, *Daily Family Worship*.

I had the pleasure of interviewing RTS faculty, staff, and current students who have seen the impact of the pandemic for believers worldwide. The interview features Karen Ellis, Dr. Gray Sutanto, and Chris and Heather Shepherd.

Dr. Guy Richardson pens a timely article titled *No More Normal*, where he shares what he and his wife have been learning throughout the pandemic. He shares important lessons that can apply to empty nesters and families with young children alike.

Mark Erickson covers one of our board members, Scott Maclellan, and the extraordinary generosity he's demonstrating through the Maclellan Foundation.

Our final article shares the story of alumnus Lemuel Rodrigues and his ministry in Charlotte during his time at RTS. Rodrigues helped to develop outreach programs with Starmount Church, ministering to refugees and immigrants in their community.

As always, it is our prayer that *Ministry & Leadership* will be a blessing and resource for the church. May the articles in this issue bring you joy, challenge you, and encourage you to love like Jesus — sacrificially — as you seek to live faithfully.

Sincerely,

PHILLIP HOLMES

Editor in Chief, Ministry & Leadership
Vice President for Institutional Communications
Reformed Theological Seminary

PRAYER *&* PRESENCE

COLLIN HUBER



This time a year ago, the novel pathogen COVID-19 had become known by name the world over. Governments issued lockdowns as citizens sequestered in their homes. Masks and social distancing issued unique challenges to fellowship and service among the body of Christ.

The Bible instructs Christians against neglecting to meet together for the sake of mutual encouragement (Heb 10:25), but what does that look like in the middle of a pandemic? How can believers serve one another without needlessly jeopardizing their health and that of those they serve? How should the body of Christ minister to those facing grief and tragedy in such an environment?

These make up only a handful of the challenges the church faced in 2020, many of which have bled into the present day. While no one can definitively say when the pandemic will end, the mission of the church has not changed. Believers are still called to bear one another's burdens (Gal 6:2) and aspire to demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22–23).

Hardship has a way of revealing what we truly believe. It drives us to what we worship, unveiling the fruit of our roots. Reformed Theological

Seminary endeavors to train servant leaders who are marked by sound doctrine and sincere love. By

God's grace, that truth-filled love has been on display through members of this community in creative and mighty ways, even in these uncertain times. Although difficult to choose from many examples, this article highlights the stories of three RTS families: the Morgans, the Stones, and the Baileys.





THE
MORGAN
FAMILY



On October 23, Step Morgan, Director of Admissions at RTS Jackson, crashed his mountain bike on the final section of a trail he had ridden dozens of times previously. A mechanical failure sent him toppling in a fall that severely broke his lower left leg and severed an artery.

Experiencing major blood loss, he was rushed to the hospital where doctors worked to repair the extensive damage. Step's wife, Jessica, raced to join him, leaving their children in the care of their grandparents. "It was such an immediate, no-transition tragedy... I left my home on Friday evening and did not return until Sunday morning in the middle of the night."

That's when the body of Christ stepped in. As word got out, their "Christian siblings," as Jessica calls them, began coordinating with the oldest Morgan son to identify the family's needs. Within a week, all of the Morgan children had rides to their regular activities, school meals planned for the remainder of the year, and groceries provided. "We didn't even have to ask," Jessica said.

After a week of surgeries and deliberations, the doctors determined Step's injured leg required an amputation below the knee, resulting in additional

surgeries and extensive physical therapy. While there's no escaping the shock of such news, the Morgan family was able to depend on their brothers and sisters in Christ.

Friends delivered meals, maintained their yard, and updated the family's home to accommodate Step's walker and crutches. Most importantly, they saturated the Morgans in prayer, even if it meant doing so from the hospital parking lot. The family's church prayed for Step corporately during services, and their loved ones recruited others to pray, whether or not they had any connection to the Morgans. Step still receives notes from a Baptist church in Cleveland, Mississippi, letting him know they are praying for him. "It's been such an encouragement and a real help," he shared.

The help hasn't stopped. People continue to check in and lend a hand whenever it's needed. COVID-19 has made bodily service challenging, but not impossible, as the Morgans have discovered firsthand. "We're meant to be together," says Step. "Not just able to see pictures of each other, but actually in the same space together... It's a reminder of what's meant to be and what will be when Christ returns."



"We're meant to be together. Not just able to see pictures of each other, but actually in the same space together... It's a reminder of what's meant to be and what will be when Christ returns."



For the Morgans, their needs continue primarily in the forms of medical bills and ongoing rehab. But many in the church have come to bear more abstract burdens, most notably that of grief. While such a need cannot be met with financial charity or medical surgery, neither can it be carried alone.

Losing a spouse is one of those invisible burdens. Whether or not it's expected, the shared routines of daily life shift dramatically when suddenly left to a party of one. That's where Bob Stone found himself in the latter months of 2020.

Bob and Pauline "Polly" Stone have been associated with the seminary since 1994. Polly earned her MATS and served in various staff roles there, culminating in the Chief

Institutional Assessment Officer position and a seat on the board of the Association of Theological Schools.

She and Bob were nearing 24 years of marriage together when she received a cancer diagnosis in 2016. The news came as a shock to her husband and two children, Amanda and Robert, as well as their place of worship, Ballantyne Presbyterian Church. Bob and Polly were founding members, devoting years of service to the church, with Polly serving as the Director of Christian Education and regularly teaching women's Bible studies.

Adding to an already difficult battle with cancer, COVID-19 arrived, and with it, additional precautions during Polly's treatment. Then, in August,



THE STONE FAMILY



Polly was placed in hospice care, the doctors giving her only weeks to live. Faced with these obstacles, the Stones' community got creative.

Loved ones delivered flowers, notes, and texts, as others spoke with Polly over video calls and in-person visits. Some of Polly's closest friends moved in with the Stones to take shifts throughout the night, watching over Polly and allowing Bob to rest. They would lie in bed with her, talk, and laugh together. They changed sheets, administered medication, and prayed over her.

Due to Polly's love of hymns, Ballantyne arranged for a string quartet to perform some of her favorites on the back porch of the Stones' home. Friends and family gathered in the backyard and worshiped together for hours. Missy Huss, one of Polly's dear friends, described the occasion as a "foretaste of heaven... The church was by her side until the end."

On August 31, Polly went to be with the Lord. While there's no replacing her presence, the body of Christ has continued to serve Bob in her absence. He shares, "You have no way to prepare for the loss of a spouse at an early age... There is grief, sadness, and loneliness that is not possible to prepare for. I am not sure how it would be without the church. They have loved me and shown me the love of Christ. It has not been easy, but it has been good to be with people who loved Polly."



The Stones and their community have clung to Christ amidst the pain. Death has failed to steal the joy of those who gathered around Polly in her final weeks. She endured to the end, and those she left behind continue to persevere, in large part due to her faithful witness.

Bob Bailey can attest to as much. He and his wife, Amanda, were long-time friends of Polly's parents and knew her since the day she was born. Amanda and Polly spoke together over FaceTime only five days before Polly's death. Little did they know at the time that Amanda would follow Polly into glory less than a month later.

Amanda Bailey was no stranger to hardship. In many ways, her life was marked by it: widowed at age 27 and preceded in death by her daughter and two of her grandchildren. Yet, the Lord continued to meet her with provision.

Shortly after her first husband's death, she met Bob Bailey who became a devoted father to her children and her husband for the next 53 years.

Amanda poured herself into ministering at First Presbyterian Church Yazoo City where she taught Sunday School, led women's Bible studies, and regularly spoke at functions around the area.

A lover of the Word, she began auditing classes at RTS in the mid-1980s, a habit that became so consistent she went on to earn the unofficial title of completing the most classroom hours with the least credit hours of any student. In 1995, Bob joined RTS as Vice President for Development, later to become Chief Operations Officer and Assistant to the Chancellor, a position he held until his retirement in 2008.

Amanda passionately shared what she learned in her RTS courses as she taught Bible studies and Sunday school classes and coordinated women's retreats in Mississippi. She felt particularly drawn to junior and senior high school students, a calling that bore generous fruit as many of the students' "lives reflected what they credited her with teaching them," says Bob.

AMANDA & BOB BAILEY



Following the unexpected death of their daughter in 2013, Amanda's health began to decline gradually. She suffered from severe back pain that surgery could not correct, which limited her mobility. Bob devotedly cared for her along with a hired housekeeper, and several women from their church checked in on her. Eventually, her mobility declined to the point that she was unable to continue teaching. So she took to a ministry of texting, composing digital birthday notes, encouraging reminders, and biblical truth.

Still, time took its toll, and with her health in decline, Amanda contracted COVID-19 and died of complications related to the virus in September, welcomed into her Savior's embrace at the age of 82.

Friends from First Presbyterian have continued to care for Bob over the past months. He has appreciated friends who reach out to let him know that they're thinking of him and praying for him and those who have intentionally invited him to spend time together before and after his time as Amanda's primary caregiver.

Such is the call of the body of Christ. COVID-19 is only the latest challenge in the long history of the church, which has navigated countless travails to serve those in need and will continue doing so until Jesus returns.

There will always be times of celebration and sorrow within the church, and Scripture tells us to meet them with the ministry of presence — even if it requires a mask and six feet of separation.

Romans 12:15 says, "Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep." There will always be times of celebration and sorrow within the church, and Scripture tells us to meet them with the ministry of presence — even if it

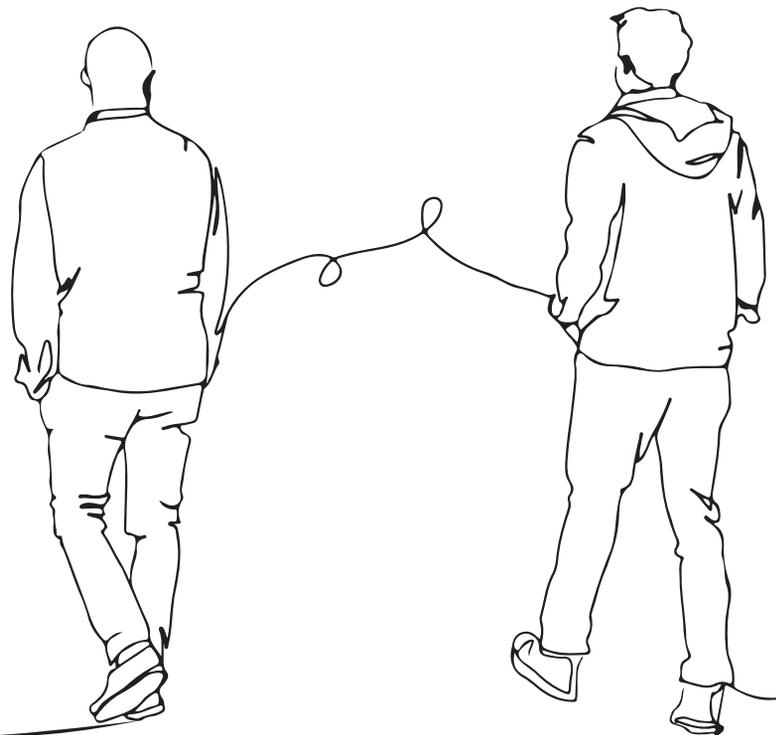
requires a mask and six feet of separation. As we look to Christ's return, may we live out our faith with love boldly on display, stewarding what God has given to us to care for our Christian siblings. May our lives be to those around us a foretaste of eternity in the presence of our Savior. ♥

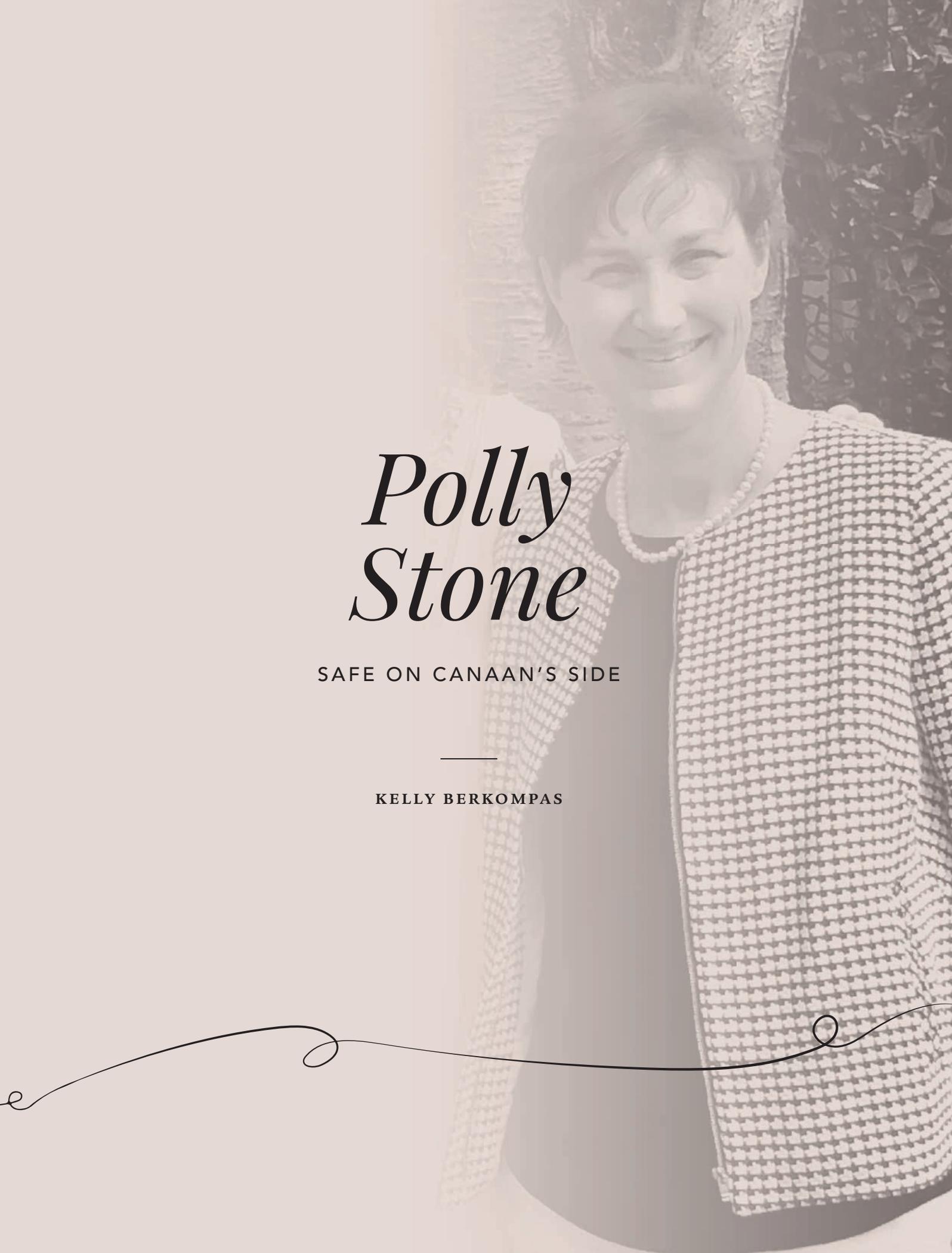


Collin Huber is a professional writer and senior editor for Fathom magazine.



Kelly Berkompas contributed material for this article and is the managing editor for M&L.





Polly Stone

SAFE ON CANAAN'S SIDE

KELLY BERKOMPAS



On August 31, 2020, after almost four years of battling cancer, Pauline “Polly” Stone, Chief Institutional Assessment Officer for RTS, was welcomed into the eternal rest of her heavenly Father.

In the weeks leading up to her death, Polly planned her memorial service and funeral with the help of friends and family. She and her friends went page by page through the *Trinity Hymnal*, picking the congregational songs for her memorial service. She asked that the congregation recite the first question of Heidelberg Catechism — proclaiming together that belonging to Jesus is our only comfort in life and in death. Her friends and family testify to the ways that Polly’s life magnified Christ.

After spending the first 10 years of her life in Yazoo City, Mississippi, Polly, her parents, Frances and Samuel McReynolds, and her brother, Sage, moved to Starkville, Mississippi, where Polly played basketball at Starkville Academy. She stayed in Starkville for college, earning an English degree from Mississippi State University.

During her time in college, she was very involved with Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) and also worked as a camp counselor at Camp DeSoto, where she met one of her lifelong friends, Allen Bradford.

“When I met Polly, I was in a particularly hard season after the deaths of close family members and hadn’t quite found a voice for my grief. Being at Camp, where I could slow down and sense God’s loving presence, was so healing for me. Polly was one of the ways God lent his listening ear to me — she was such a good listener, listening with her steady, attentive heart.

“Polly was such a clear, bright, precise thinker, and I relied on her to help clarify my experience with God and life. She always listened quietly, offering her thoughts only when asked, and never fretted if we saw things differently, which was often. She didn’t often waver in her thoughts and she appreciated when I didn’t waver in mine, even if my thoughts were different from hers. Her non-judgmental nature and vast knowledge created a safe space for endless authentic, life-giving conversations between us.”

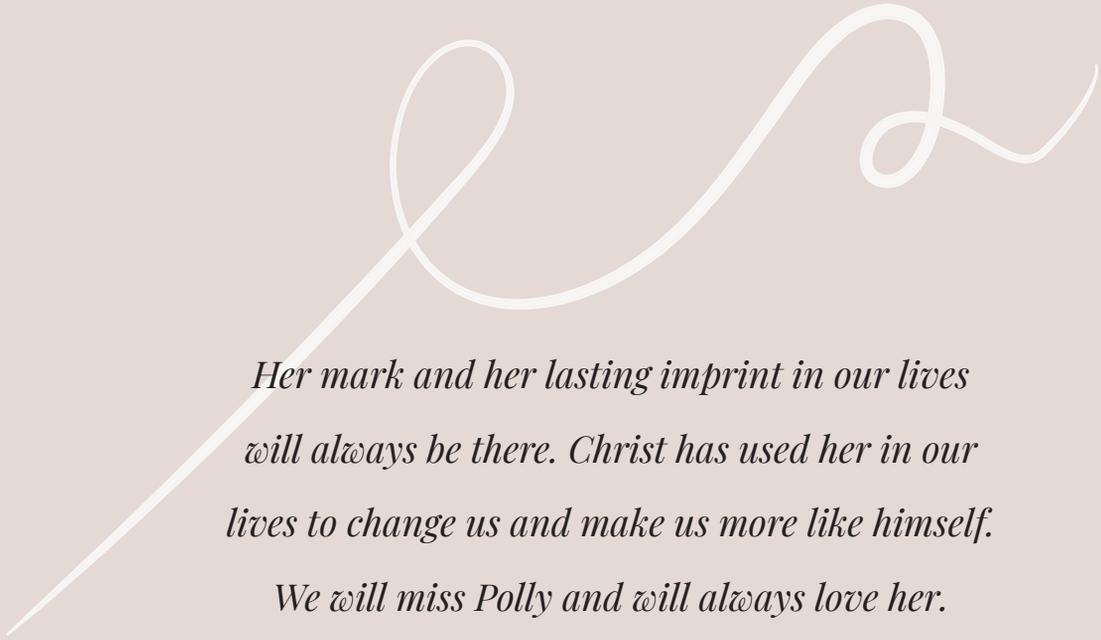
After graduating, Polly served with RUF at Clemson University, where she met Bob Stone, her husband of 27 years. After they married, the Stones moved to Charlotte, North Carolina, where they raised their children, Amanda and Robert. Polly was very involved in the lives of her children and husband. As one friend put it, she modeled “profound love for her family.”

Polly supported Bob in his roles as a ruling elder at Ballantyne Presbyterian, manager at Bank of America, and Clemson football fan, watching games with him and close friends every weekend. She and Bob also volunteered at Covenant Day School and cheered Amanda and Robert on at basketball and baseball games.

At Polly’s memorial service, Will Huss, a friend of the Stone family, read a welcome from Bob, Amanda, Robert, and Sage:

“While Polly touched the lives of so many, the children and I have been the most impacted by her life. Her mark and her lasting imprint in our lives will always be there. Christ has used her in our lives to change us and make us more like himself. We will miss Polly and will always love her. She fought the good fight, she finished the race, she kept the faith.”





*Her mark and her lasting imprint in our lives
will always be there. Christ has used her in our
lives to change us and make us more like himself.*

We will miss Polly and will always love her.

SHE FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT,
SHE FINISHED THE RACE,
SHE KEPT THE FAITH.

THE STONE FAMILY

Will's wife, Missy, remembers meeting Polly at Clemson and feeling intimidated by Polly's confidence, intelligence, and strong faith. Over 25 years of friendship, their differences made their friendship challenging, but they often balanced each other well.

"We would often frustrate one another in the ways that we approached all things in life. But the one thing we held closely from the beginning of our friendship was honesty. We accepted those differences and began to love them about one another. While often hard and uncomfortable, we managed to address and work through all that annoyed us and embrace what the other needed.

"Now that Polly is gone, I realize that these types of friendships are very rare. All relationships will be hard in this life, but few can truly sustain hurting each other, asking for forgiveness, and receiving the gift of reconciliation and fruit of restoration. Polly and I had a friendship that displayed, for us both, the faithful working of a gracious and loving Father."

Polly and Bob were founding members of Ballantyne Presbyterian Church, where Polly led the Christian Education Committee. Elder Mark Seeley shared about their work together and their friendship.

"She was tireless and focused... Polly initiated a children's catechism and Scripture memory program, put together a philosophy and plan of adult education that would cover a wide range of topics from biblical studies to apologetics to church history.

"My own reflections and memories of Polly aren't so much ecclesiastical or theological. I am a northern Ohio boy, so I'm a Yankee of sorts. Polly introduced me to cheese grits — the first grits I tried and really liked — and some of the notable southern writers like William Faulkner, Walker Percy, and Flannery O' Connor. One summer we discussed *The Sound and The Fury* over a couple glasses of wine."

Mark's wife, Nancy, reflected on Polly's knowledge and love of Scripture:

"Teaching the women's Bible study at Ballantyne was an endeavor that was truly close to her heart; Polly longed for women to develop a deeper love for and application of Scripture in their lives. She faithfully prepared week after week and that sound Biblical teaching continues to bear fruit in the lives of many women she mentored and taught."

When Helen Miller joined Ballantyne in 1999, she was a “young Christian going through a hard life transition.” Attending the women’s Bible study that Polly taught, she felt intimidated by the group of “biblically articulate women.”

“One of the most amazing characteristics that I came to know about Polly however, was her intuitive ability to understand people and situations. I know she sensed my discomfort, and in her quiet and unobtrusive way, she extended herself and, with the greatest sensitivity, made me feel not only comfortable but important and welcome.”

In Charlotte, Polly earned a Master of Arts (Theological Studies) from Reformed Theological Seminary and started working there in 1994. Over her years at RTS, she advanced through a variety of jobs to become one of the four chief officers, the Chief Institutional Assessment Officer.

Dr. Bob Cara, Provost and Chief Academic Officer, worked closely with Polly at RTS. In his message at Polly’s memorial service, he remembered:

“A lot of parts of Polly’s job were worrying about little details in academics and other things. And she, at her best, saw these as doing them for the glory of God... If someone didn’t submit their paperwork, Polly would remind them, ‘Paperwork to the glory of God.’ At Polly’s best, which was a lot of the time, she consciously thought, ‘I’m trying to do everything for the glory of God.’”

Angela Queen worked with Polly for years at RTS, where Queen serves as Director of Academic Administration. She called Polly her “friend, colleague, and mentor” in a letter she wrote to the Stone family shortly after Polly’s death.

“I met Polly as a seminary student... Her Ruth Bible study was the first study I ever led while on staff with RUF. She taught me how to appreciate wine. She helped me plan and test out the first meal I ever cooked for my now-husband. She directed my wedding. She trained me in all aspects of my work at RTS... I witnessed her generous service to RTS and the broader theological academy through her work with ATS and accreditation. She had such expert accreditation knowledge and could also dig into theological conversations, yet her knowledge was married with such warmth and humor. She carried herself with such grace and selflessness in these last years. She showed such deep faith and love for Christ, as we saw so clearly in her love of hymns.”

At RTS, a large part of Polly's role included maintaining RTS' accreditation with the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). She served on accreditation teams for other schools, and also served on the board of ATS for six years, where her attention to detail and love for learning served her well. Her colleagues from various institutions recall her as being helpful, knowledgeable, and caring.

Dr. Steven Sheeley is senior vice president at SACSCOC. He shared that one of his earliest memories from his time at the accrediting body was meeting Polly Stone.

"I had already learned of Dr. Cannada's characterization of RTS as 'winsomely reformed,' and Polly certainly embodied the 'winsome-ness' of RTS. She always made an invaluable contribution to the peer review team, and she often went about leaving the institution in better shape than we found it. Her attention to excellence combined with her evident caring defined collegiality."

ATS' Director of Accreditation Tom Tanner shared a story that he felt captured Polly well:

"When we were drafting a new set of policies and procedures in 2019, I asked a half dozen people at ATS schools to read the original draft and give me any comments they wished. Polly sent me 125 comments! And her comments were incredibly helpful. When I sat down with her later to review those, I was struck once again with just how thorough and how thoughtful Polly was in everything she did. But most of all, I was impressed with how caring she was. Even when we disagreed, her smile could melt you. She spoke her mind, but what you heard was her heart."

Dr. Ann Clay Adams, Associate Dean for Academic Administration at Columbia Theological Seminary, reflected on learning from Polly during their interactions through ATS.

"Polly and I served on my very first accreditation team together. Polly was intimidating at first, spouting off both ATS and SACSCOC standard by number, and clearly understanding any abbreviated reference to a standard. I was amazed, but before our time was finished, she and I had become friends. Then she was on my second accreditation team as well. This is when I really got to know her better and found out that she had a vast knowledge and love of red wine."

Dr. Elsie Miranda works as the Director of Accreditation at ATS, liaising directly with RTS.

“Polly had a love and mastery of assessment and evaluation processes. She had a gift for taking an intimidating evaluations process and simplifying it to create reasonable goals for a community. She knew her craft, and I think she engaged in it for the love of God. Polly was a woman of conviction and strength, with a joy for life and openness to understand other people and cultures. She was curious about my culture as a Cuban-American and open to my responses; she never assumed or passed judgement – maybe that is why so many people could call her ‘friend.’ I’m grateful for her generosity of spirit, her sharp wit, and her joy.”

There are many more testimonies to God’s faithfulness in and through Polly’s life than could fit in this article. As Dr. Ligon Duncan shared in his meditation on Revelation 14:13 at Polly’s memorial service, “Our confidence today is not in Polly, as wonderful as she was. Our confidence is in Jesus. ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.’ Polly died in the Lord... Even in the hour of death, God’s blessings await those who have been justified by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.” ♥

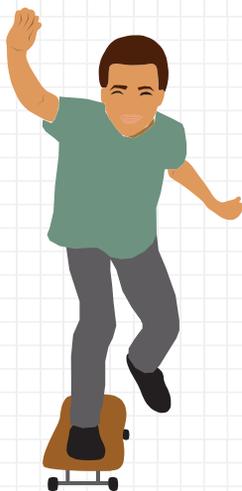
In honor of Polly’s life, the **POLLY MCREYNOLDS STONE SCHOLARSHIP** was established at RTS Charlotte. Each recipient of the scholarship will receive an award of at least 50% of their tuition. Speaking of the scholarship, Bob Stone shared:

“Amanda, Robert, and I are excited about this opportunity to continue her legacy at RTS, a place she loved so much. Our hope is that this scholarship will be used in the lives of future students to glorify our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as they pursue Reformed theological education and bless others for the kingdom for years to come.”

To make a gift toward the scholarship, you can give online at rts.edu/give – specifying a gift to the “Polly Stone Fund” – or mail a check to RTS Charlotte at 2101 Carmel Road, Charlotte, NC 28226 with “Polly Stone Fund” in the memo line.

For questions or additional information, please contact Ed Barnes, Vice President of Development at RTS Charlotte, at (704) 451-1637 or ebarnes@rts.edu.

DAILY FAMILY WORSHIP



DR. CRAIG SHEPPARD

In her biography of her martyred missionary husband, Elisabeth Elliot captures the biblical foundation Jim Elliot received in his growing up years. She writes that his father “read the Scriptures daily to his children, seeking to show them the glory of Christ above all else....[He] prayed with them as well as for them.”¹ God used this early spiritual nurture to lay an indispensable foundation for Jim’s life and ministry, and through him to call a new generation of missionaries.

Early in our marriage, my wife and I were impressed with the importance of building this same foundation in our family. Our great challenge, however, was figuring out how to do it, having had no models from our own families. Now, more than 33 years and five children later, we can testify to the twin values of simplicity and consistency as the keys to our sweet family times together with Christ.

¹Elisabeth Elliot, *Shadow of the Almighty*

My wife and I serve with RTS in Indonesia, the largest Muslim country in the world. Besides teaching, I have the privilege of preaching to hundreds of students, families, and Christian workers each week. By and large, even those who come from Christian homes have little understanding of the Scriptures or how to nourish their faith. This challenge has only grown more difficult with the COVID-19 restrictions placed on our community by governmental and living-community authorities. However, this context has also provided a golden opportunity for a “spiritual recalibration” for many families through family worship.

Perhaps you desire the same for your family, but, like us, do not know how to begin. With the typical hectic pace of life now interrupted by the pandemic, there may never be a better time to get started and establish new patterns. I prepared the following ideas for our church in Jakarta, based on our experience and lessons through the years. I begin with eight principles then suggest a plan.

01

There is more than one right way to have family worship.

Every family needs to find its own “rhythm.” The one non-negotiable element, however, is reading and discussing God’s Word together.

02

Just do it! If you wait until you have discovered the perfect method, perfect leader, perfect time of day, and perfect kids, you will never get started!

03

Keep it simple. It is better to have simple, imperfect devotions than to have no devotions at all.

04

Keep it short. Brief devotions are often more effective because there is one key concept under consideration. Some devotions will naturally last longer because the topic being discussed has touched a core interest, leading to a deeper discussion.



05

Keep it consistent. Seek to find a common time each day when the family can meet. We found that during the academic year, breakfast was the best time. During summer or school breaks, dinnertime fit our schedule better. For the toddler years, bedtime was best. Because children like routine, find a time that consistently works.

06

Keep it Bible-centered. The goal of family worship is the spiritual formation that comes from being rooted in God's Word. It is normal for you as the parent to not understand every passage you read. It is fine to say to your family, "I don't know the answer." We all need the help of the Holy Spirit and godly individuals to help us understand less-clear passages. It is also good for your kids to see that you, too, are a learner. Seek answers from your pastors or elders, or from trusted commentaries and study Bibles. You also model for your family how each member can individually study God's Word in his or her own personal devotional lives.

07

Where possible, be father-led. Mom often nurtures the kids during the day, so it is important for children to see dad leading the family spiritually. They need to know and hear his heart for the Lord. It's also helpful for them to see mom participating, answering questions, and sharing her thoughts, too.

I have often heard fathers say, "My wife leads devotions because she knows the Bible better than I do." She may indeed know the Bible better, but that does not mean that the husband is disqualified or should abdicate his spiritual responsibility. What qualifies him to lead is his love for Christ and his God-ordained role of headship in the family. It also encourages him to be diligent in his own walk with the Lord.

08

Gear it toward your oldest child. If families have a four-year-old, a six-year-old, and a nine-year-old, they tend to ask questions at the four-year-old level. With that approach, the older ones quickly become bored and their minds wander. However, younger children want to be "big" like their older siblings, so they stay focused even when tough questions are asked. We have been amazed at the depth of concepts younger kids grasp. Certainly, ask age-appropriate questions, but let your general level of discussion be directed toward the older children.

With these concepts as a foundation, I suggest the following simple plan:

READ

Pick a book of the Bible to study, for example, John, 1 Samuel, or the book your pastor is currently preaching at church. You may also select a book relevant to

On the first day of a new study, introduce the biblical book you are studying. A study Bible is a convenient place to find this information. For example: “Today we are starting our devotions in Philippians. The Apostle Paul is writing from jail in Rome to the church in the city of Philippi to encourage them to walk joyfully with the Lord even in the midst of their struggles. In fact, they had some of the same struggles in their church that we have in our family!”



a particular family need. For example, you may realize your family needs growth in godly living and the power of the tongue and consider the book of James. You may observe that your family needs help with godly decision making in the midst of strong peer pressure and consider Proverbs.

Set aside 10-15 minutes for your family devotions. If you are having devotions around a meal, wait until the end of that time, since stomachs are full, forks are quiet, and everyone is calm.

Read only a few verses. This may be a paragraph, a few sentences, or in some cases, a few words! Old Testament books that are narratives may be better read in longer sections since they are historical stories. It may be necessary to discuss a passage for more than one day. With a letter from Paul, one verse may be enough! Err on the side of reading too little, rather than too much.

DISCUSS



After reading the passage, discuss it by asking four basic categories of questions.

The first question checks understanding with an invitation to summarize. For example, “Sarah, can you summarize what I just read?” or “Did anything stand out to you in this passage?” You may need to read it again, which is normal. Be patient. Be affirming. Guide them.

1

The second question considers spiritual truths about the Lord. For example, “Nathan, what does this passage teach us about God?” (or about Jesus, the Holy Spirit, etc., depending on the content).

2

The fourth question focuses on application: “How does knowing Christ (or whatever the truth from the passage is) affect our day today?” Be sure to ask several people, and answer it for yourself, too. Look for specific applications. With older kids, you can go into more detail and expect deeper thoughts. For example, “How does this reflect God’s mercy and grace to us through Christ?” or “How is the Father’s love for us displayed?”

4

The third question similarly considers truths about man: “Abby, what does this passage teach us about us?”, “What does it say about our hearts?”, or “What does it teach about what is true of us as believers in Christ?”

3

PRAY

End your time in prayer (and singing a hymn, if possible). Pray for each family member and other needs at church or school. You may rotate the closing prayer or, if you have time, ask everyone to pray. Remember, it is good for the children to hear their parents, especially their father, praying. You also want them to be comfortable praying with and for others. The singing of hymns unites us with other believers through the centuries and trains our families for Lord's Day worship.



Here's a helpful guide to tear out and hang in your home!

In summary, read, discuss, pray (and sing). The above plan also works well for small group worship and discussion.

Each of us — individually, and as families — need to have our hearts and minds renewed regularly in worship, prayer, and study of God's Word. In fact, I have often found that our time of family worship also nourishes and guides me in my preparation for preaching and teaching. What better way to prepare our families for life in this world, and ultimately for eternity, than growing together in daily family worship? ♥



Dr. Craig Sheppard is Assistant Professor of Missions, Senior Fellow of Systematic Theology, and the Executive Director of the Center for Reformed Theology in Indonesia.

OUR FAMILY WORSHIP

THINGS TO REMEMBER:

There is more than one right way to have family worship. Find your own family's rhythm.

Just do it! Don't wait for perfection.

Keep it simple.

Keep it short. Brief devotions are often more effective.

Keep it consistent. Find a common time each day that works for your family.

Keep it Bible-centered. Our goal is the spiritual formation that comes from being rooted in God's word.

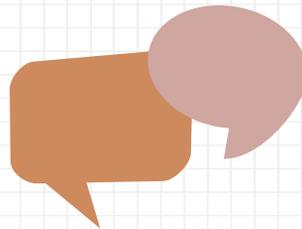
Where possible, be father-led.

Gear it toward your oldest child.



READ

Pick a book of the Bible to study. This could be what your church is studying or a book that is particularly relevant to your family. Set aside 10-15 minutes a day for your devotions. Read only a few verses at a time and it may be necessary to discuss a passage for more than one day.



DISCUSS

After reading the passage, discuss it by asking four types of questions.

- 1 **Check understanding with an invitation to summarize.**
"Can you summarize what I just said? Did anything stand out?"
- 2 **Consider spiritual truths about the Lord.**
"What does this passage teach us about the Lord?"
- 3 **Consider truths about man.**
"What does this passage teach us about us? What does it say about our hearts?"
- 4 **Look for specific applications.**
"How does knowing Christ (or whatever the truth from the passage is) affect our day today?"



PRAY

Pray for each family member and other needs at church or school. You may rotate the closing prayer or ask everyone to pray. It is good for children to hear their parents praying and you also want them comfortable praying with and for others. If possible, sing a hymn as well!

A LEAVENING INFLUENCE

The Pandemic's Impact on the Global Church

PHILLIP HOLMES

As we pass the one-year mark of the coronavirus pandemic, we wanted to include the voices of RTS faculty, staff, and current students who have seen the impact of the pandemic for believers worldwide.

In these interviews, conducted via email, you'll hear from **Karen Ellis**, the director of the Edmiston Center for the Study of the Bible and Ethnicity, who has worked in advocacy for global religious freedom. We also reached out

to **Dr. Gray Sutanto**, who has been teaching for RTS Washington since June 2020 from his home in Jakarta, Indonesia. Lastly, we emailed **Chris and Heather Shepherd**, current students at RTS Atlanta, who moved back to the United States after working with refugees in the Middle East.

Answers have been edited for brevity and clarity. Due to safety concerns, we have removed all indicators of location and names in the Shepherds' answers.

HOW HAS THE PANDEMIC IMPACTED YOU AND YOUR FAMILY?

Karen Ellis (KE) For our immediate household, the pandemic has given my husband and me the opportunity to slow down and be present for my mother-in-law's twilight years. She's 94 and lives with us. She's often said she's glad to be home with us during the pandemic.

As a teacher, I've seen the Holy Spirit work through technology to still create community in our online classes. When I hear my students praying, or discussing how to apply course materials with each other, I can hear that they've forged community and relationships that will last past the course itself. The Spirit moves, even in the Zoom room, and I know this is a grace!

Dr. Gray Sutanto (GS) I think the biggest way the pandemic has impacted us is that it has delayed our move to Washington, D.C. We were supposed to move back in May 2020, but unfortunately, immigration to the United States has been frozen even until now. I have been personally grateful for the patience and tenacity of our students as they have endured Zoom classes!

Other than that, day to day we have been quarantined at home, and occasionally, we've enjoyed spending extra time with our friends and family. Groceries and the like can be delivered, and so we have been grateful for that as well.

Chris and Heather Shepherd (CHS) We were still in the Middle East when the pandemic hit and our country was locked down. Their culture very much values the elderly and was concerned about protecting them. The emphasis culturally and politically is more focused on collective good over individual freedom.

People were allowed outside the house on certain days to get food or go to the store, but there was a mask law that was enforced by police. Children and anyone over the age of 65 weren't allowed out of the house for three months, which was hard! We had a small "backyard" that was all concrete and we would take our boys out there occasionally just to get some sunlight.

We were preparing to move to the United States in the midst of a lockdown, and it was hard to be able to connect with our friends on the team, in our church, and in our

ministries to say goodbye. One of the most essential things to cultural adaptation is to dive into community with local people. Thankfully, our church in Georgia meets in person and is very careful about COVID. That has helped us to build relationships, but we haven't been able to dive as deep as we would like.

HOW HAS THE PANDEMIC IMPACTED THE CHURCH IN YOUR COUNTRY?

KE The restrictions on travel have forced those of us who serve the global church to reframe how we interface with one another. On the positive, it's brought us together electronically — at least for those places where there is easy internet access. Many new connections are taking this opportunity to plug in our "local" family of God with the global family of God. I see electronic "pods" forming where we are strategizing together, learning from each other, praying together, supporting each other, returning to first things — together. It feels like a unifying moment.



GS I think the pandemic has forced us all to quickly adapt technologically since worship gatherings are not allowed to meet with more than 25-50 people. Even if the government has not issued lockdowns, we have kept a close watch on the rate of positive cases and most have deemed it still unwise to meet.

Speaking for our church, Covenant City Church, a lot of our members stepped up to assist in making weekly online services, taking turns with recording, editing, and posting the whole service every week on YouTube Live. We've also taken this opportunity to host virtual events, and progress has thankfully continued on our Indonesian-speaking church plant. We have also developed an internal relief ministry fund for our members who are impacted financially and stepped up on our giving for various mercy ministries.

We have seen other churches do the same – in many ways the pandemic has been an opportunity to get the gospel out to more people through the internet and social media as we find new ways to connect. Yet, there's also certainly a longing to get back to meeting in person as soon as we can.

CHS We were in the Middle East specifically serving refugees and refugee churches. So many refugees lost their jobs during the lockdown, which was catastrophic for them. During the pandemic, all of our in-person ministries were closed. Our team went full force into buying grocery cards and sending them to our refugee friends in need.

HAS THE CHURCH EXPERIENCED ANY (ADDITIONAL) FORM OF OPPRESSION OR PERSECUTION DURING THE PANDEMIC?

KE In some places, it's pushed the persecuted church further onto the margins. They are sometimes the last to receive food, aid, or medical treatment from their own governments, if they receive supplies at all, due to their social position as Christians or as people of faith. In societies where the internet is unstable or scarce, there is no such thing as a "pivot to online services," so local churches have faced challenges in meeting and making community.

At the same time, the church shines with her creativity and resilience, solving many of these issues while also tending the sick, caring for those inside and outside of the Christian community, and proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. I know of several closed countries where the church has stepped up in places where their own governments failed to deliver to their citizens. This has been a witness even to those who are hostile toward the church.

CHS The Christian population where we lived is 1%, so the fellowship is essential because otherwise, believers are very much alone. Many of our refugee church members suddenly found themselves without any Christian community.



Covenant City Church

“The fact that all of us entered into this same global moment, with similar realities and concerns, should bring to light our transcendent, invisible, Spirit-wrought connectedness.”

The persecution and oppression that refugee Christians face is most often from family members or the immediate surrounding community. Not being able to leave the house and being forced to stay home with the very people who are most hostile to their faith has caused extra pain and challenges.

One young man struggles with depression. His family is hostile to Christianity and regularly pressures him to turn back to Islam. He has found the pandemic to be an extremely challenging time because the church was his only community of faith and support.

Another young woman has had her brother pour boiling water on her while she slept because she converted to Christianity. Despite the danger, she doesn't want to leave her family because she is a young single woman; without a husband, she simply cannot move out or live alone because that would bring great

dishonor to her, culturally. She found solace in coming to our programs, so losing that has been very difficult for her.

WHAT CAN THE AMERICAN CHURCH LEARN FROM THE GLOBAL CHURCH DURING THE PANDEMIC?

KE The fact that all of us entered into this same global moment, with similar realities and concerns, should bring to light our transcendent, invisible, Spirit-wrought connectedness. We too often take for granted that the local and the global are connected. The assumption has always been (erroneously and arrogantly) that ministry knowledge “flows from the West outward.” We now have clear channels where knowledge is being exchanged, and we in the West are getting much needed, first-hand, on-the-ground perspectives from Christians in the rest of the world. When the pandemic ends, I hope we'll keep

our newfound connections as treasure.

GS Firstly, I think the American church would do well to really ponder their privileged position in even being able to make a case for meeting in person, or being tolerated when they do, when the government has issued a lockdown. If the government has issued a lockdown here, we do not feel that we have any way of negotiating. The church in America is still in a much more privileged state than churches elsewhere, and this is really a cause for soberness and gratitude.

Secondly, I've seen the churches in Jakarta really step up in their online presence, outreach, and quality without sacrificing but rather intensifying gospel proclamation. The churches here have used all their resources to see this pandemic as an opportunity to minister the gospel well.

CHS First, remembering that the entire global church is a community and family of believers. While there are radical differences, we have much in common: our hearts for worship, our struggles to rightly understand and apply Scripture. Regularly remembering that we are one might also have some real benefits for the American church and help us not to see our brothers and sisters abroad as “other” but as “us.”

There is so much access in America. The American church needs to realize how much it actually has, and also take a moment of deep reflection on the true nature of persecution. Sometimes the word “persecution” is thrown about lightly in the American church. There is a difference between experiencing true persecution versus experiencing a culture that is becoming less friendly towards Christianity resulting in loss of privileges.



Courtesy of Chris and Heather Shepherd

HOW HAVE YOU SEEN GOD'S FAITHFULNESS DURING THESE CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES? HOW HAVE YOU SEEN THE PERSEVERANCE AND ZEAL OF THE CHURCH CONTINUE?

GS We have seen the faithfulness of God in so many ways during this period. Without the pandemic, I personally would not have seen the patience and kindness of my colleagues and students at RTS the way I have — they have gone above and beyond in welcoming us even at a distance!

I've also felt close relationships with friends and family grow because we have spent more quality time together as gatherings are limited to just a few people. And above all, I'm grateful to spend extra time with my wife, Indita.

It has also been such a wonderful experience to witness our own church continue to grow through the internet, as members continually seek out one another. It reminds me of Kuyper's and Bavinck's comments about the organism of the church; it's a leavening influence no matter what context it finds itself in.

CHS Despite the pressure from home, our refugee churches haven't lost any members, and many members gather online every Sunday to worship and hear the word virtually. In the face of huge pressure to renounce their faith, they have not done so and remain faithful in prayer and worship, even in secret. Many of the more prosperous churches have pooled their resources to help pay for refugee groceries and medical bills which has been a huge testimony to many non-Christian refugees.

“
 The church
 is a leavening
 influence no
 matter what
 context it finds
 itself in.
 ”

KE I've been meditating on what constitutes blessing, from God's point of view. From Genesis to Revelation, the greatest and deepest blessing is his presence, no matter what circumstances are swirling around us. In contrast, of course, the greatest curse is losing his presence. The older I get, the more God's presence becomes more profound and precious; it's the foundation of what makes the people of God that other-cultural, other-political reality that indicts and also blesses the nations and cultures around it.

God is our strong tower in times like these; the righteous are hidden in him and are safe (Prov 18:10). And in Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, this immovable strong tower becomes a movable force for his people – protection, peace, and power wrapped up in the blessing of presence. He promises to go with us as we move about; blessed, to be a blessing, to the nations. This is how I want to move from this moment on. ♥



RTS Washington FACULTY PODCAST

Join the faculty at RTS Washington and their guests as they discuss faith, theology, and current events.

LISTEN AND SUBSCRIBE



Two miniature figures, a man and a woman, are standing on a page of text. The man is on the left, wearing a grey jacket and dark pants, holding a cane. The woman is on the right, wearing a red top and a grey skirt. The text on the page is blurred but appears to be a religious or philosophical passage. The background is a dark, out-of-focus gradient.

NO MORE NORMAL

DR. GUY RICHARDSON

We have all had to grapple with some level of suffering, grieving, and loss.

Can you believe that it has been only a little more than a year since the onset of the — worldwide COVID-19 outbreak? Seemingly overnight, the crisis threw our individual as well as collective lives into a surreal world of enforced separation and isolation, bringing about great frustration, fear, and, for so many, sickness and even death. In a matter of weeks, the life that we were accustomed to — “normal” life — was derailed, with the pandemic dragging our already full and demanding schedules into a whole new level of disruption. We have all had to grapple with some level of suffering, grieving, and loss.

As a minister, educator, and licensed counselor, I’d like to share a few things that my wife, Denise, and I have been learning in our marriage during this time. First, a word of context: we are empty-nesters. Our (wonderful) children are now grown and on their own, though — thanks be to God — we are all close and supportive of each other in spirit, if rarely in person. That plays into our roles and relationships during this time. The challenges may look different for those with different family situations.

Partners in the Pandemic

Depending on who you listen to, you may hear the pandemic highlighted as the worst thing for marriages in recent history or, in an unexpected report late last summer by the American Family Survey, a surprisingly positive boost to many couples. I think it has been both.



We can all agree that the upheavals have increased our stress. But even increased stress doesn't automatically break down a relationship; it only exposes any underlying weaknesses lurking below the surface. Tim Keller's book *The Meaning of Marriage* likens this to when stress cracks in a bridge give way to a collapse. The increased weight didn't create the weak points; it only exposed what was already faulty but perhaps unnoticed in the bridge's structure. The same is true in our relationships, and especially in times when our marriages are under stress.

The initial sequestering forced my wife and me to slow down, re-evaluate, and work to partner together. We sensed that if we didn't work to keep pulling together, the pressures could work to pull us apart. So from the first, we worked to have regular, intentional times together to talk – to process where we each were and what each of us was experiencing in order to help each other, our family, and our friends.

Research shows us that one of the critical aspects of healthy relationships is having “safe attachment,” which means having a place where we are consistently heard, accepted, and wanted. For us, that meant taking time to give each other a safe place to explore and express our concerns and fears. It included identifying and grieving over the sudden loss of so many familiar things – simple things like close proximity with others through everyday activities like in-person work relationships, time with extended family and friends, or the limitations on in-person worship and fellowship. We have rediscovered that letting each other explore and put words to our emotions, even negative ones, is a gift, especially when we provide each other the opportunity to speak and focus on listening and accepting.

Something we've always tried to do but have made more of a priority in this time is to encourage each other. Verbal appreciation – not just for special efforts, but for everyday, even mundane things – goes a long way to lubricate the friction points of life. The Gottman Institutes's research on healthy marriages has noted that a ratio of at least five positive contributions to every negative one is necessary to sustain healthy marital relationships. I personally think that the five-to-one ratio is too low, but it's a good starting place.

Doing Separate Things Together

Early on, Denise and I recognized that we each needed both mental and physical space in our daily schedule. Time apart as well as time together has become a healthy rhythm in our daily routines. We both have our revised routines for daily activities, which we have found gives structure to our responsibilities.

One of the surprising benefits of the “new normal” has been the opportunity to renew our friendship by creatively connecting with each other. In addition to regular morning visits over coffee, we’ve become more intentional about pursuing a variety of mutually satisfying experiences. We started taking long bike rides together, and when the weather changed, we switched to walking. We have carved out more time together in the evening, occasionally taking turns to read aloud to each other from new or old favorite books. That included C. S. Lewis’s *The Last Battle* from *The Chronicles of Narnia*, complete with character voices as we had done when our children were small, which brought back many memories. The reflective and rewarding conversations that ensued became catalysts to recollect God’s faithfulness through the years.

And last, since we realize that we feel the effects of isolation, we have intentionally worked to reach out to family and friends through regular phone calls or Zoom-type gatherings. We have especially focused on those who are more isolated and vulnerable to increased anxiety and depression – if only to assure them that they are not forgotten.





Rather than waste too many anxious hours working to avoid the storms, I hope I'm learning to trust God more as he takes me through the sudden upheavals in life.

"New" Normal or "Next" Normal?

I never seem to get comfortable adapting and accepting the unexpected. I'm not alone, and it helps to be reminded that this feeling is not new or unique. The Bible is full of unexpected events (even catastrophes) falling upon God's people — personally, in families, or as a nation. More and more, I'm accepting that hardships are actually necessary for our growth and maturity. It's always been the case.

Remember in the Gospel of Mark, chapter four, when the disciples are with Jesus in the boat in the storm in the middle of the night, and in the middle of the Sea of Galilee? Could anything have been more disruptive, unwelcome, or terrifying to their already-exhausted lives? The intensity and suddenness of the squall caught even these experienced fishermen off guard. But Jesus was still in charge, and the bottom line of the event was that it took yet another storm for his disciples to realize who Jesus was and their total dependence on him.

Jesus cared for them in the storm. But I also think that Jesus knew he was taking them into the storm, and he took them into it intentionally — not to scare them or punish them, but to teach them about their ultimate need for reliance on him and his ability to meet their needs.

Can you identify? I certainly can. At least for me, it often takes the "storm" of a new, unexpected, and sometimes terrifying disruption in my life to shake me out of my self-reliant security in my mindset of what is "normal." Rather than waste too many anxious hours working to avoid the storms, I hope I'm learning to trust God more as he takes me through the sudden upheavals in life. The "new normal" that I'm sensing is that there is really no such guarantee that life can be predictable — not in this life. The "new" normal is really just the "next" normal — if we can even call it "normal." To use the words of the American humorist Erma Bombeck, written years ago, "I think that 'normal' is just another setting on the dryer."

The experiences of this past year have given me a new opportunity to learn (or should I say, more honestly, re-learn) a timeless truth: God is in charge. I'm not. But it is actually centered in this truth that we can be secure and settled, knowing that our good God has us, in whatever circumstance and situation, for purposes that he is using for ultimate good. That encourages me to look at the disruptions in daily routines with an inquisitiveness and an anticipation as to what our good God is doing, and to be willing to flex.

Helen Keller famously said that “a bend in the road is not the end of the road, unless you fail to make the turn.” Adjusting to the new demands laid on us — a “next” normal — is not only necessary for this difficult time; it may well become a reoccurring requirement for as long as God has us here. Although that, too, may be a source of much good. I suspect we may find some surprising gems that weasel their way into our thinking and routines during the pandemic. These sorts of things become an opportunity to trust our God yet again, to see his faithfulness to carry us through this life as he brings us safely home. ♥



Dr. Guy Richardson is President Emeritus of the Jackson campus of RTS, Assistant Professor of Counseling, and Program Director for the Master of Arts in Counseling (MAC) program.

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We believe all truth is God's truth. We recognize the importance of integrating the study of God and the study of those who bear his image. Theology encompasses God's revelation of himself and his relationship to his creation; RTS' MAC program approaches counseling within this framework to bring healing change to the human mind, heart, and experience.



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rts.edu/counseling



SCOTT MACLELLAN

and the

FAMILY BUSINESS

of GENEROSITY

MARK ERICKSON

For his community, Scott Maclellan’s family name holds deep significance. The Maclellan legacy began with Scott’s great-grandfather, Thomas Maclellan, a native Scotsman who eventually landed in Chattanooga, Tennessee, in 1892. After Thomas’ death in 1916, the Maclellan family proceeded to have a profound impact on Chattanooga and the surrounding area for generations.

The fingerprints of the family’s generosity are seen all over Chattanooga, from the Dora Maclellan Brown Memorial Chapel on Covenant College’s campus atop Lookout Mountain to the wildlife sanctuary Maclellan Island in the Tennessee River that weaves through Chattanooga’s downtown. Since 1945, much of this work has been enacted through the Maclellan Foundation, founded by Thomas’ children, Robert J. Maclellan and Dora Maclellan Brown, and grandson, Robert L. “Bob” Maclellan — Scott’s father.

The family foundation work continues with Scott serving on the board alongside his son Reid Maclellan, his cousin Hugh O. Maclellan Jr., and Hugh’s son Chris Maclellan, the current chairman of the foundation’s board. In addition



“Generosity doesn’t necessarily pertain to money. It involves time, investment of what you have.”

to his role on the board at Reformed Theological Seminary, Scott previously served as past chair of the Maclellan Foundation and currently serves as board chairman at King University in Tennessee. Early in his business career, Scott was in the music and entertainment industry producing bands such as The Allman Brothers, Alabama, and The Doobie Brothers. However, Scott's first passion has always been the family business of generosity.

Scott has a particular passion for Christian education: "I love Christian education, and this is what the Maclellan Foundation has been involved with from the beginning. One of our first grants as a foundation back in the '40s was Bible in the Schools, which we still support in a large way."

In 1974, the foundation started the Christian Education Charitable Trust to deepen its investment in all levels of Christian schooling, including Christian colleges, universities, and K-12 schools all over the United States and abroad, including RTS. The foundation's history with RTS goes back many years, stemming from a personal friendship between Scott's father, Bob Maclellan, and Bob Cannada. "My father was involved in the beginnings of RTS," Scott said.

Beyond education, the Maclellan Foundation's scope of support centers at the local level — having founded Chattanooga-based nonprofits such as First Things First and On Point, and coming alongside others like Choices Pregnancy Resource Center — but stretches to a national and international scale.

The foundation's desire is to inspire generosity in others, and in 2000, they founded Generous Giving to do just that. "Generous Giving has really created an amazing network of high-value givers that we

connect with and bring together to do Journeys of Generosity. The people who attend it don't have to pay anything, there's no ask, but we just try to introduce them to what could be generosity." These 24-hour retreats are free and have been held in homes, hotels, and retreat centers around the country.

However, this effort does not stop at the border, as Scott explained. "We subsequently created Generosity Path, which is involved around the world, not just the US. It's interesting when you go to places like Vietnam, you don't find that many high net worth folks, but generosity doesn't necessarily pertain to money. It involves time, investment of what you have."

Through their generosity and investments, Scott wants the Maclellan Foundation to cultivate and strengthen organizations to flourish. This does not come simply from bestowing grants, but requires a holistic approach to do well. "We learned many years ago that giving organizations money isn't necessarily the best thing to do," says Scott. "It's the most perceived need by the ministry...but we've learned the hard way, because we have sunk ministries by giving them money when they needed to do something else." For this, the Maclellan Foundation partners with outside businesses and nonprofits to provide expertise and guidance to their grantees.

In the organizations that the Maclellan Foundation supports, what Scott wants to see most of all is a dependence on God. As he puts it, "A thing that makes a ministry worth its salt is hunger and relying on God to provide." Encouraging organizations to step out in faith is the core tenet that Scott hopes to instill in those within the Maclellan network, whether that be his neighbors

in Chattanooga or global ministry entrepreneurs spreading the gospel through their work. Furthermore, he is passing down this mentality to the next generation both within and outside the foundation. Scott's eldest son, Reid, serves on the board of the Maclellan Foundation, along with several cousins, nieces, and nephews serving in various ways.

Matthew Bryant, Senior Vice President of Development at RTS and Chattanooga native, lights up when asked about the impact of the Maclellan family. "When I think of the Maclellan Foundation, I think of them as being among the great shoulders on which we stand today. They are, simply put, giants among those who have helped institutions like RTS to flourish. We would not be

who we are today without them... May the Lord continue to use them in this generation and many thereafter to strengthen God's people." ♥

To learn more about the *Maclellan Foundation*, visit www.maclellan.net.

To learn more or to participate in a *Journey of Generosity*, visit www.generousgiving.org/jog or reach out to Matthew Bryant, Senior VP of Development, at mbryant@rts.edu.



Mark Erickson is the Assistant to the Senior Vice President of Development at RTS.

Photography by Rachel Douglass.

REFORMED
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EIGHT
CAMPUSES
+ ONLINE

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A MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITY

ALICIA AKINS

RTS seeks to equip students not just for the pulpit, but for servant leadership wherever their ministry sphere, be it the boardroom, civic square, their homes, or their communities. As a Master of Arts (Biblical Studies) student at RTS Charlotte from 2017 to 2019, Lemuel Rodrigues embodied just that.

Early in his graduate studies, Rodrigues became actively involved in an immigrant community at a local church. One of his classmates, Alex Lott, connected him to Starmount

Church, which was looking to enhance its community engagement through the launch of new ministries. They welcomed Rodrigues to join their efforts, and he proved instrumental in revitalizing Starmount's efforts to serve its community.



Located in Charlotte, North Carolina, Starmount Church had long focused on the needs of its surrounding newly-resettled immigrant population. Around 700 new refugees resettle each year in Charlotte, making it North Carolina's largest and most diverse refugee population. Senior Pastor Reverend Anthony Pizzuti sought to transform his small and aging congregation into a multicultural one more reflective of its neighbors, so they partnered in their programs with families, youth, and children from countries in Central and South America.

Rodrigues, who moved to Charlotte from Brazil to attend RTS, explained what drew him to the opportunity: "I was already an ordained pastor and had the desire to serve the city's immigrants, as there were no Reformed churches that had a great impact on immigrants." This closely aligned with Starmount's mission to introduce their neighbors to Jesus through relationships and be a catalyst of hope for their community. He eagerly got to work.



His involvement began with soccer, a favorite pastime of his, and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs, but gradually expanded to other areas of ministry within the church and other partnerships within the community. After assisting with soccer on Saturdays and ESL on Thursday evenings, he also began to lead worship on Sundays at Starmount. At the start of 2018, his ministry role expanded yet again as he launched community groups for Brazilians, a fast-growing population in Charlotte. These groups diversified the multicultural makeup of the congregation. Those community groups soon led to Rodrigues teaching Sunday School classes in Portuguese and offering simultaneous interpretation during Sunday services.

As his involvement in the church grew, Rodrigues reflected on how he saw his Brazilian background as a ministry asset. “Precisely because I was an immigrant was I capable of bringing a different view to the planning of the church to revitalize and become a multicultural church.” He also

saw support from his professors as an asset. Professors at RTS Charlotte helped to facilitate networking between students and local churches, which allowed students like Rodrigues to develop projects and get involved in activities in town. Some professors even had pre-existing relationships with churches through counseling or other ministry opportunities.

Not only did he get to learn in lectures alongside his classmates, but he was able to serve with them, too. Rodrigues explained, “My classmates frequently visited our church, helped us develop projects, and worked as volunteers, as well.” His whole RTS Charlotte community played an integral part in his work with Starmount and the broader community. The greatest benefit, however, came from his classroom instruction. “The training I received at RTS made a huge difference. I had the opportunity to apply what I learned almost at the same time I was learning it.” His service in the community was shaped by what he was learning in class.



“Precisely because I was an immigrant was I capable of bringing a different view to the planning of the church to revitalize and become a multicultural church.”

Before long, Rodrigues was included in Starmount’s preaching schedule and, over time, became involved in the leadership of the church. Eventually, he was hired as the Outreach Director.

Outside of the church, Rodrigues was also involved in Charlotte area schools through volunteering with an organization called CharMeck Responds Coalition, a coalition of faith partners, nonprofits, businesses, and other community organizations committed to ensuring all the members of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community were cared for during the pandemic.

Rodrigues helped distribute and deliver meals to students of Starmount Academy of Excellence. Many of the families and students he delivered meals to did not speak English, but for those who could speak Spanish and Portuguese, he was always happy to listen. When it came time to celebrate those who inspire others to serve for Volunteer Appreciation Month last April, CharMeck Responds Coalition recognized Rodrigues as an

example to follow. Rodrigues’ work with both Starmount and CharMeck drew on his prior experience working with immigrants, a population especially dear to him given his background and own experience having grown up in poverty.

In 2019, Rodrigues received a call to become a pastor at Starmount Church. He began the process but, after the pandemic hit early last year, the Lord redirected him back to Brazil. He recently accepted the role of senior pastor at Igreja Presbiteriana Guarus, in Rio de Janeiro, where he will continue to utilize the education, creativity, experience, and compassion that he shared with his community in Charlotte. ♥



Alicia Akins works in international education by day, is a part-time Master of Arts (Biblical Studies) student at RTS Washington, and is the author of the forthcoming book, Come Feast, with Harvest House Publishers.

NEWS

Over the past six months, we have been blessed to have students on campus at most of our locations and are thankful to all of the faculty, staff, and students for their hard work to maintain appropriate precautions.

Many campuses have also held virtual events, including the Paideia Center's annual Winter Conference in January. We've acquired new resources for students through ProQuest and produced the first season of our new podcast, *Mind + Heart*.

There have been several appointments and promotions among the RTS faculty and staff, including new roles for Angela Queen and David Veldkamp. In January, Dr. J.V. Fesko was promoted to a named faculty chair position at RTS Jackson, and Dr. Jordan Stone was hired as an assistant professor at RTS Dallas.



QUEEN, VELDKAMP, FESKO

PROMOTED

QUEEN & VELDKAMP

Angela Queen and David Veldkamp have been appointed Director of Academic Administration and Director of Institutional Assessment, respectively. Veldkamp will continue in his role as Vice President for Enrollment Management in addition to his role in the Provost's Office.

Queen graduated from RTS in 2006 with a Master of Arts (Biblical Studies) degree. She previously served as registrar at the Charlotte campus and later as assistant to the Provost's Office. She lives in Charlotte, North Carolina with her husband, Tom, and their three boys. They are members of Uptown Church (PCA).

Veldkamp earned a Master of Divinity degree in 2017 and has served RTS in various roles in administration and enrollment. He and his wife, Joy, and their four children live in Oviedo,

Florida. The family are members of Reformation Orthodox Presbyterian Church, where Veldkamp is a ruling elder.



"Given their previous work responsibilities, both Angela and Dave are already knowledgeable about RTS' nine campuses," says Dr. Robert Cara, the seminary's provost. "This broad knowledge of RTS is a must for the Provost Office. I look forward to working with them and learning from them."

Together with Dr. Cara, Queen and Veldkamp will work to ensure the seminary maintains its high standard of graduate-level academic and ministerial preparation. They will play key roles as the seminary seeks the 10-year reaffirmation of its accreditation through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Association of Theological Schools in 2022.

DR. J.V. FESKO

The RTS Board of Trustees has appointed Dr. J.V. Fesko as the Harriet Barbour Professor of Systematic and Historical Theology at RTS Jackson, effective January 1, 2021.

Dr. Ligon Duncan, Chancellor, CEO, and President of RTS Jackson, said, "RTS Jackson is blessed to have John Fesko as a professor. I am elated at his election to the Harriet Barbour Professor of Systematic and Historical Theology. John is a faithful and prolific author, and a wonderful theological educator and mentor, not to mention a delightful colleague."

This chair was previously held by Dr. Elias Medeiros until his retirement in May of 2020. The position is named for Harriet Barbour, who served the Lord as a missionary in Singapore prior to her death in 1976.

"John Fesko is the perfect candidate to take up this named faculty chair," shared Academic Dean Miles Van Pelt. "His experience in the classroom, numerous publications, and personal commitment

"His experience in the classroom, numerous publications, and personal commitment to the local church are distinguished by both excellence and humility."

to the local church are distinguished by both excellence and humility. We are exceedingly thankful to have Dr. Fesko as part of the RTS team."



Dr. Fesko joined the faculty at RTS Jackson in June 2019, after 10 years of experience in teaching at Westminster Seminary California as Academic Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Prior to his time at WSC, he served as the founding pastor of Geneva Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Woodstock, Georgia from 1998 to 2009.

Dr. Fesko completed his B.A. at Georgia State University and received his M.A.Th. at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. His Ph.D. is from

King's College at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland. His research interests include the integration of biblical and systematic theology, soteriology, and early modern Reformed theology. Some

of Dr. Fesko's most recent publications include *The Christian and Technology*, *The Need for Creeds Today*, and *The Covenant of Works*.



DR. JORDAN STONE

APPOINTED TO FACULTY

Dr. Jordan Stone joined the faculty at RTS Dallas as Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology in January 2021.



Dr. Stone earned a B.A. from Texas Tech University and his MAR from RTS. Most recently, he received a Th.M. and Ph.D. from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Dr. Stone has centered his research on Robert Murray M'Cheyne, with several works published on M'Cheyne. Dr. Stone's next book will be published by Christian Focus: *The Life and Legacy of Robert Murray M'Cheyne*.

After retiring from professional soccer, Dr. Stone began serving in vocational ministry in 2005. He is the senior pastor at Redeemer Presbyterian Church in McKinney, Texas, and will teach preaching and worship courses at RTS Dallas.

Dr. Mark McDowell, Executive Director of RTS Dallas, said, "I'm absolutely delighted with the appointment of Dr. Stone to the Dallas faculty. Jordan not only comes to us as a teacher of practical theology but also as a practitioner. Jordan serves as a senior minister and brings that experience and wisdom to the classroom. Our goal is to send out those called to gospel ministry, and I cannot think of a better tutor and model than Jordan, who is winsome, collegial, and demonstrates academic excellence. He will be a great addition to Dallas and the broader RTS community."

Dr. Stone and his wife, Emily, have six children. In his spare time, Dr. Stone enjoys reading, writing, and running.



RTS LIBRARIES ACQUIRE PROQUEST EBOOKS

The Reformed Theological Seminary libraries are now providing the ProQuest Religion & Philosophy ebook collection to all RTS students. The collection offers over 16,000 ebooks in full-text format, all pertinent to theological studies.

The RTS libraries already provide resources such as academic journal databases and EBSCO ebooks. The addition of the ProQuest ebook collection offers students

an excellent array of resources to augment RTS' on-site library collections.

John Crabb, Library Director at RTS Jackson, shared, "RTS students at all of the campuses have access to the thousands of scholarly ebooks from hundreds of academic publishers on ProQuest. This collection complements the print collections and other databases already available for student research."

ProQuest offers the largest high-quality, aggregated ebook subscription in religion and philosophy with anytime, anywhere access. Spanning topics such as philosophy, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, criticism and interpretation of The Bible, religious history, beliefs, ethics, culture, politics, and more, ProQuest provides a solid base of religious content that meets the research needs of students and scholars alike.

REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY LAUNCHES MIND + HEART PODCAST

On Tuesday, November 3, Reformed Theological Seminary launched a new podcast, *Mind + Heart*. Phillip Holmes, Vice President for Institutional Communications, hosted 10 interviews with RTS faculty and guests in the first season.

In the podcast, Holmes discussed past Wisdom Wednesday episodes with his interviewees, allowing them to revisit and expound on their topics. Beginning with Dr. Michael Kruger on apostasy, other guests included Dr. Ligon Duncan, Dr. Guy Richard, Karen Ellis, Nancy Guthrie, and many more. The episodes featured a wide variety of topics, including forgiveness, prayer, idolatry, technology, and loss.

"I'm excited to launch the *Mind + Heart* podcast. I hope this is the first of many seasons," Holmes shared. "God has blessed RTS with faculty and a

network of alumni and friends who have a wealth of knowledge and pastoral insight. The episodes we have lined up in the first season have encouraged, challenged, and blessed me spiritually and theologically."

RTS has a history of sharing Bible studies, articles, sermons, and other content with the church, seeking to assist believers with their daily quest to love God and love neighbor. The *Mind + Heart* podcast is making these resources even more available by distributing them on podcast apps.



To listen to past episodes and subscribe, visit rts.edu/mind-heart-show



RTS ORLANDO HOSTS THIRD ANNUAL PAIDEIA CENTER WINTER CONFERENCE

The Paideia Center for Theological Discipleship hosted its third annual Winter Conference online during the evenings of January 25-28, 2021.

The theme of the conference was “the Christian life.” Topics included the Psalms as a guide to the Christian life, death and the Christian life, Augustine on the Christian life, and public witness and the Christian life. Among others, the conference featured Todd Billings, Michael Horton, Scott Swain, Carl Trueman, Han-luen Kantzer Komline, Liam Goligher, and Mark McDowell as presenters and panelists.

The online format of the conference allowed participants to engage with the content at their own pace. Plenary presentations, panels, and interviews were available to participants for one month after the event.

Dr. Michael Allen, Academic Dean at RTS Orlando, said, “The current year has brought new sorts of challenges: financial and medical, social and ecclesiastical. We think that wisdom is needed for the tasks at hand, and we believe that such

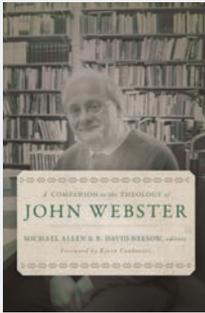
wisdom is best gained from engaging the best of the Christian tradition in productive, civil conversation.”

The Winter Conference is a complement to the regional reading groups of the Paideia Center. In the fall, each group read and discussed Augustine’s *Confessions*. In the spring, the groups are reading Calvin’s *A Little Book on the Christian Life*. Previous conferences focused on the Trinity (2019) and Christian soul care (2020).

Dr. Allen added, “The Paideia Center for Theological Discipleship continues to serve the wider church by helping equip men and women in cities around the world by providing spaces, groups, and resources to help foster study and conversation around great Christian truths and classic theological literature.”

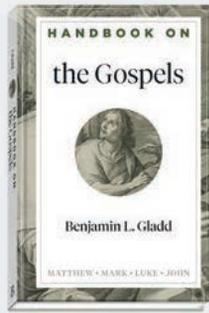


For more information about the Paideia Center, visit paideiacenter.com



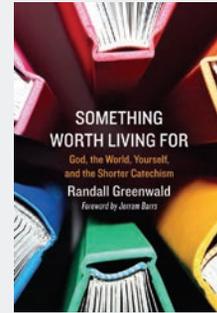
DR. MICHAEL ALLEN

A Companion to the Theology of John Webster with R. David Nelson (Eerdmans, 2021)



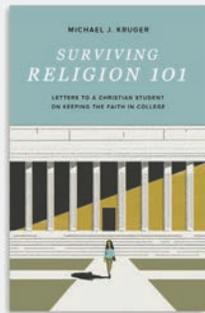
DR. BEN GLADD

Handbook on the Gospels (Baker Academic, 2021)



REV. RANDALL GREENWALD

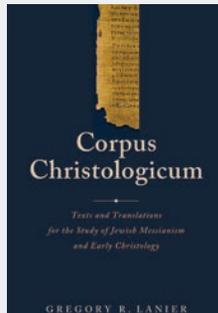
Something Worth Living For: God, the World, Yourself, and the Shorter Catechism (Christian Focus Publications, 2020)



DR. MICHAEL KRUGER

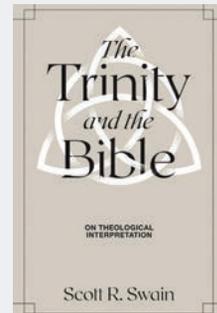
Surviving Religion 101: Letters to a Christian Student on Keeping the Faith in College (Crossway, 2021)

Hebrews for You (The Good Book Company, 2021)



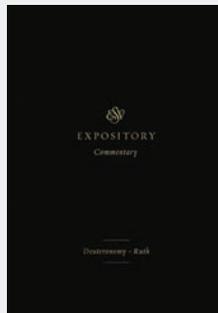
DR. GREG LANIER

Corpus Christologicum: Texts and Translations for the Study of Jewish Messianism and Early Christology (Hendrickson, 2021)



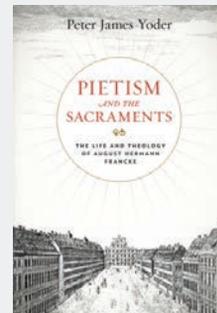
DR. SCOTT SWAIN

The Trinity and the Bible: On Theological Interpretation (Lexham Press, 2021)



DR. MILES VAN PELT

Judges: ESV Expository Commentary (Crossway, 2021)



DR. PETER YODER

Pietism and the Sacraments: The Life and Theology of August Hermann Francke (Penn State University Press, 2020)

TRAVEL AND SPEAKING



DR. LIGON DUNCAN

APRIL 11: Speaking at TGC Women's Conference, Indianapolis, IN.

APRIL 12-14: Speaking at TGC National Conference, Indianapolis, IN.

APRIL 20: Speaking at Belhaven University Chapel, Jackson, MS.

MAY 2: Preaching at Grace PCA, Peoria, IL.

MAY 7-8: Speaking at Geneva College's Commencement, Beaver Falls, PA.

JUNE 22-25: Attending EPC General Assembly, Memphis, TN.

AUG 11: Preaching at Independent Presbyterian Church, Memphis, TN.

SEP 12-15: Speaking at Sing! Global Conference, Nashville, TN.

OCT 4-8: Attending Brazil Fiel Pastors and Leaders Conference, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

OCT 24: Speaking at First Presbyterian Church's 175th Anniversary, San Antonio, TX.

OCT 29-31: Speaking at Reformation Conference, Audubon Drive Bible Church, Laurel, MS.



DR. BRUCE BAUGUS

JUNE: Teaching at China Reformed Theological Seminary, Taipei, Taiwan.



DR. J.V. FESKO

MAY 10-11: Speaking at Center for Christian Apologetics' Inauguration of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY.

OCT 15-17: Speaking at Omaha Bible Church Conference, Omaha, NE.



DR. MICHAEL KRUGER

APRIL 9-11: Speaking at TGC Women's Conference, Indianapolis, IN.

APRIL 12-14: Speaking at TGC Conference, Indianapolis, IN.

JUNE 1-11: Speaking at George Whitfield College, Capetown, South Africa.



DR. MIKE MCKELVEY

SPRING 2021: Teaching "Genesis - Deuteronomy" at RTS Houston, Katy, TX.

SUMMER 2021: Preaching at Second Presbyterian Church, Yazoo City, MS.

TRAVEL AND SPEAKING



DR. SCOTT REDD

SPRING 2021: Presenting a paper at the Fourth Fellows Program, Fourth Presbyterian Church, Bethesda, MD.

JUNE 5: Speaking at C.S. Lewis Institute, Washington, D.C.



DR. GUY RICHARD

SPRING 2021: Teaching “Theology of John Calvin” at RTS Houston, Houston, TX.

OCT 22-24: Speaking at Reformation Conference, Wayside PCA Church, Signal Mountain, TN.



DR. GUY WATERS

OCT 9-10: Lecturing at Cornerstone Christian Church, Medford, OR.

OCT 15-17: Speaking at Bible Conference, Westminster Presbyterian Church (PCA), Huntsville, AL.

OCT 23-25: Speaking at the Fall Theology Conference, Westminster Presbyterian Church (PCA), Huntsville, AL.

For up-to-date information on travel and speaking engagements, please contact the event organizers.

PUBLICATIONS

DR. MICHAEL ALLEN

“Heaven on Earth” in *Four Views on Heaven* (Zondervan Academic, 2021)

“Priestly Catholicity” for *International Journal of Systematic Theology* (2021)

“The Christian and Theological Education” for *Modern Reformation* (2021)

“Simply Trinity (A Review)” for *Christianity Today* (2021)

DR. ROBERT CARA

Reviewed William R. Osborne’s *Divine Blessing and the Fullness of Life in the Presence of God* for *Reformed Faith & Practice* (forthcoming)

Reviewed Gabriele Boccaccini’s *Paul’s Three Paths to Salvation* for *Westminster Theological Journal* (forthcoming)

DR. GREG LANIER

“Who Do People Say that I Am?” The Person of Christ in the Gospels” for *Primer* (2021)

DR. PETER LEE

“Worship: A Concept Study in Biblical Hebrew” in *Biblical Worship: Theology for God’s Glory* (Kregel, 2021)

DR. MIKE MCKELVEY

“YHWH’s Cup: the Psalms, Prophets, and NT” in *Reading the Psalms Theologically* (Lexham Press, 2021)

“The Creation of the Household” for *Tabletalk* (2021)

DR. GUY RICHARD

“I Am My Own Greatest Hardship” for *Reformation 21* (2021)

“Jesus in the Storm” for *Reformation 21* (forthcoming)

DR. BLAIR SMITH

“Catholicity in Presbyterian Perspective” for *Journal of Biblical and Theological Studies* (2020)

“Desperately Wicked Hearts” for *Tabletalk* (2020)

“A Brutal Lament” for *Tabletalk* (2020)

“The Trinity and Easter” for *Tabletalk* (2020)

DR. N. GRAY SUTANTO

“Religious Pluralism in Indonesia: Reformed Reflections” in *Reformed Public Theology* (Baker Academic, 2021)

“Gevoel and Illumination: Bavinck, Augustine, and Bonaventure on Awareness of God” for *Pro Ecclesia* (2021)

“On Maximal Simplicity” for *Philosophia Christi* (2021)

DR. SCOTT SWAIN

“Baptized Biblical Interpretation: The Place and Function of the Creed in Relation to the Bible and Its Interpretation” in *Hearing and Doing the Word: The Drama of Evangelical Hermeneutics in Honor of Kevin J. Vanhoozer* (Bloomsbury, 2021)

DR. GUY WATERS

Reviewed Will N. Timmins’ *Romans 7 and Christian Identity: A Study of the ‘I’ in Its Literary Context* for *Westminster Theological Journal* (2021)

Reviewed Ben Witherington and Jason A. Myers’ *Voices and Views on Paul: Exploring Scholarly Trends* for *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* (2021)

Reviewed Matthew J. Thomas’ *Paul’s ‘Works of the Law’ in the Perspective of Second-Century Reception* for *Westminster Theological Journal* (2021)

“Let My People Read! Encouraging God’s People to Read the Bible” for *Theology for Life* (2021)

EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



JACKSON

MAY 15: Commencement

AUG 25: Convocation

SEPT 21-23: John Reed Miller Lecture Series with Dr. Julius Kim

For more information, call (601) 923-1600



ORLANDO

MAY 5: Staff Q&A Panel Lunch

MAY 21: Commencement

SEPT 8: Faculty Q&A Panel Lunch

OCT 6: Preview Day

OCT 19-20: Hughes Preaching Lecture Series with Dr. David Swanson

OCT 23: Marriage in Ministry Seminar

For more information, call (407) 366-9493



CHARLOTTE

MAY 21: Commencement

For more information, call (704) 366-5066



WASHINGTON

MAY 22: Commencement

For more information, call (703) 448-3393

DR. SCOTT REDD AND DR. PAUL JEON WILL BE TEACHING THIS SPRING THROUGH THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES FOR THE WEEKLY RTS WASHINGTON WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY, HELD ON TUESDAY MORNINGS AT 10:30 AM.



ATLANTA

MAY 22: Commencement

For more information, call (770) 952-8884



HOUSTON

MAY 29: Commencement

For more information, call (832) 377-1675



DALLAS

MAY 8: Commencement

For more information, call (214) 295-8599

DR. GREGORY K. BEALE WILL BE JOINING THE FACULTY OF RTS DALLAS ON JUNE 1, 2021. DR. BEALE IS A RENOWNED SCHOLAR OF NEW TESTAMENT AND BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION.

RTS PRESENCE at GENERAL ASSEMBLIES

DUE TO UNCERTAINTIES RELATED TO THE CORONAVIRUS, PLANS FOR DENOMINATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLIES ARE STILL BEING FINALIZED. STAY TUNED TO RTS EMAILS AND SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS FOR UPDATES ABOUT RTS-SPONSORED ALUMNI & FRIENDS EVENTS AT THESE GATHERINGS.

Please contact David Veldkamp with questions related to RTS General Assembly events: dveldkamp@rts.edu



BENEDICTION
SPRING 2021

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Christ and the *love* of God and
the *fellowship* of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.



2 CORINTHIANS
13:14



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