

Comment

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This issue of the *Quarterly* presents three studies. The first piece calls for careful interpretation of the Beatitudes. The next two essays examine some aspects of twentieth century Covenant history: its engagement with charismatic movements, and its rich heritage of women employing the arts in mission. While the topics are varied, a common thread may be found in each of these articles, as they encourage us to listen, with discernment, to voices other than our own. Indeed, in our calling to advance the cause of Christ, we benefit by engaging with the perspective of others who have taken up this work at different times and in different places.

Rebekah Eklund, associate professor of theology at Loyola University Maryland (Baltimore), offers a nuanced exploration of what reading the Beatitudes “in the company of others” might entail, rooted in her extensive research in the reception history of the Beatitudes. Eklund reminds us that descriptive and prescriptive approaches to these biblical texts have, too often, been hermetically sealed from one another. She carefully explores the benefits of reading with an interpretive ear attuned to those voices—past and present—that have fruitfully engaged in the multiple levels of meaning and significance these crucial texts have to offer the follower of Christ.

With his “Open to the Spirit: Covenant Dialogue with Charismatic Movements,” José González, lead pastor of Northbrook Covenant Church (Northbrook, IL), shares from his research into the Covenant’s responses to charismatic currents throughout the last century. In so doing, González first provides a helpful overview of the movements themselves. Further, by looking at key sources that have preserved a variety of statements and discussions, González highlights those Covenant voices that thoughtfully

engaged with these charismatic movements. The themes that emerge from his analysis remain relevant—with calls to be biblical, to be Christ-centered, to renew our sense of dependence on the Holy Spirit, and to continually be open to the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit.

In her article, Alicia Guldberg Reese, pastor at Burr Ridge Church of Christ (Burr Ridge, IL), looks at a specific period of Covenant Women ministry and their use of creative arts for successful mission fundraising. Drawing especially on her work in Covenant archives, Guldberg Reese provides a synthetic analysis of the 1950s, '60s, and '70s—decades during which Covenant Women were especially active in creative mission support work. Guldberg Reese helps us hear the voices of these past Covenant women who faithfully and artistically executed a series of mission projects. Hearing those voices anew ought to encourage us to creatively engage in ministry efforts in our current contexts.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge Hauna Ondrey, associate professor of church history at North Park Theological Seminary. Ondrey faithfully and ably served as the editor of the *Quarterly* from 2015 to 2020, managing this publication with editorial excellence, theological acumen, and a consistent awareness of relevant ministry issues. May her good work from these past years continue to bear much fruit. With this issue, it is my joy to step in as the interim editor for the *Quarterly*.

