

## Comment

---

*Paul H. de Neui, professor of missiology and intercultural studies,  
North Park Theological Seminary, Chicago, Illinois*

In this issue of the *Quarterly*, we first present Mary Miller's historical overview of chaplaincy within the Evangelical Covenant Church, specifically as it has grown with the ministry today known as Covenant Living Communities and Services. Caring well for the seniors within the denominational family has been a concern since the inception of the Covenant Church. In "The History of Covenant Living Chaplaincy," Miller outlines the progressive stages of growth of this important part of the collective Covenant identity, which today has expanded to serve twenty communities in ten states. Unique to this ministry is the fact that current chaplains within Covenant Living Communities are now the only employees who must be Covenant and ordained. As someone well-versed in the inner workings of the Covenant, Miller, who has served as a Covenant pastor, administrator, instructor, and now chaplain, provides a motivating and challenging perspective on one of the critically needed strategic arms of ministry within the Covenant.

In the second essay, Barbara Sartorius Bjelland, bivocational Covenant minister and chaplain at Porter Hills Retirement Community, provides a theological interweaving of a Pietist view of the atonement with the celebration of the Lord's Supper. In her article, "Communion: Roots and Wellsprings for Feeding, Filling, and Sending," Bjelland reminds us that this foundational perspective has birthed a liturgical tradition of worship expressed in Covenant hymnody and corporate ritual. Her essay calls us to re-prioritize communion in Covenant worship as a grounding for Christian witness to the world in participation with God's mission of reconciliation.

As the church moves into the new post-COVID period, readers will find Kendall Smith's essay, "Collective and Individual Trauma: How

Developing Intergenerational Connections Can Heal the Post-COVID Church (and Beyond!),” both timely and telling. As the church seeks to redefine itself amidst the aftermath of the global pandemic, clearly addressing issues of trauma must be a priority in the ministry of clergy, chaplains, and global personnel. Her focus on intergenerational aspects of ministry brings a refreshing angle to how the family of God must include all ages together if we are to be whole people.

In the midst of all that is happening in our world today it is not unusual for us to wonder, “Where are you, God?” In our fourth essay, “From Lament to Praise: How the ‘Seam’ Psalms Can Teach Us to Walk the Godward Path,” J. Nathan Clayton, assistant professor of Old Testament at North Park Theological Seminary, addresses this question. As a scholar of the Hebrew Scriptures, Clayton shines light found in the hymnody of the Old Testament that enlightens and restores the sense of our relational proximity with God in pastoral and profoundly practical ways. It is our hope and prayer that these essays serve to encourage and equip all participants in God’s redeeming and reconciling mission in the world wherever you are called to go and in the ways that only you can be.