



NEW WINE AND NEW WINESKINS

Issue No.: Vol. 11 Fall 2023

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*Newsletter of the North American Network of Charismatic Covenant
Communities (NAN)*



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From the Editor

By Mary Ann West, Editor

Covenant is about unity. A Memorandum of Understanding between community streams is about unity. May unity in all its forms conform us more intimately into Christ. Through Unity may we draw all humanity to relationship with its loving Father.



God in Scripture reveals Himself as the model of the perfect covenant keeper. It was His idea to make a covenant with man in the first place. And Adam and Eve were barely out of Eden! "...with you (Noah) I will establish my covenant..." (Gen 6:18). As history progressed, He demonstrated the extremes to which He would go to be faithful to His covenant of love and relationship with us.

When we failed to keep covenant with Him, God did not reject us, but dug in deeper, gradually revealing more of Himself and His character. He continued to act in ways to draw us back to Him right up until the time of Christ, when He revealed His love to the extreme and became one of us. Jesus is the perfect revelation of a covenant God - nothing held back, no walls between God and man, everything for the other. Covenant is all about unity and relationship and faithfulness.

My experience in living covenant life is based on

that foundation of God keeping covenant. God wants to spend time with me; He loves it. I enjoy spending time with my brothers and sisters, just wasting time with them. Covenant life provides natural opportunities to breakdown walls within myself so that I can live more freely and fully with my covenant family. There is a desire to strip myself of attitudes or fears that keep me separated in any way from my brothers and sisters. Covenant life affords me opportunities to speak and act for the good of others and our relationships. These opportunities are like natural burnt offerings of pride and selfishness. Covenant life is the particular way my Father has called me to live and love in joy. Covenant Life is a particular lived expression of unity, relationships, and love to the world.

For future editions we would like to include articles and/or pictures of community events, outreaches, announcements of opportunities for communities' members to participate in an event of another community, discerned prophetic words, songs that are meaningful to your community. What do you want to share to encourage your NAN brothers and sisters? THIS IS YOUR NEWSLETTER, BUILDING ALL OF OUR RELATIONSHIPS. Please email me: mawmaw4july@gmail.com.



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From the Desk of the NAN Moderator

By Peter Poppleton, NAN Moderator



Brothers and Sisters,

Recently, I was talking with a young member from one of the community networks. For him, a prophetic word from 1975 was a long time ago. He wondered how that would apply to today's reality. I paused for a moment and then presented a picture of biblical history. When Zechariah spoke his prophecy in Luke 1:67-79, he reached way back into history and mentioned Abraham and David and then opened the door to the future stating that (the Lord would) "give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Then the young man paused and said, "I see, biblical history goes back and then reaches into the future." So, also, must we go back and see the Lord's intent in the founding of our communities and from that perspective see how the Lord would engage us into the future.

Many significant movements of the Holy Spirit towards unity have seemingly

accelerated over the last few years within the broader context of the Charismatic Covenant Communities. This broader context has included the North American Network (NAN), European Network of Communities (ENC), Sword of the Spirit (SOS), and the Servants of Jesus (SOJ) in Australia. Articles in this issue of our newsletter detail the Lord bringing together these movements of the Spirit.

You will read what the Lord spoke to our communities beginning in 1975. This word, although never really dormant, resurfaced in 2017 – the year of the Jubilee. Then, in the autumn of 2022, some planning took place that led to a very significant meeting in London this past July.

I exhort you to prayerfully read this newsletter. The Lord is at work. He is calling us to enter more fully into discernment for our roles at the service of His Church and for the times in which we find ourselves. Yes, the Lord is calling us forward. Let us do all we can to give the Lord a full-hearted response. Come, Holy Spirit!





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The Formation of the IPECC

By Peter Poppleton, NAN Moderator

What is IPECC? It is the International Partnership of Ecumenical Charismatic Communities and NAN is a member of this new partnership. When and how did this happen? And how is it that we are once again part of a world-wide partnership of communities? It first began at a gathering of community elders from a variety of communities that took place in Ann Arbor, Michigan during July, 1975. Among this variety of communities were the well-known Word of God and People of Praise. During the conference a “prophetic word” was spoken by Bruce Yocum and it became a central and formative word for charismatic covenant communities. Part of that word follows:

“I have brought you together here to join you together and to give you a vision of what is to come. I am raising up other communities all around this world, and I will want them to join together with you and to be together with you in unity.... Yes, I will to do that as a source of strength for my church.

I will make you a bulwark to defend against the onslaught of the enemy those who are not prepared, those who are not ready.... I want you to be ready to join yourselves with others and to stand together with them in battle against the onslaught that is coming and to defend the weak, and to defend those who

are confused, and to protect those who are not prepared....

I tell you; you are a part and you are not the whole.... I want you to take your part seriously and to lay your lives down for it, but I want you to understand that only I see the entire plan, only I see every front of this

battle. I will raise you up together with others and bind you together to make you a bulwark.... Lay down your lives now for the things that I have revealed to you. Commit yourselves to them so that in the day of battle you can stand fast and prove

victorious with me.”



The Signing of the International Partnership of Ecumenical Charismatic Communities. Left to right: Jean Barbara, Sword of the Spirit; Peter Poppleton, North American Network; Johannes Fichtenbauer, European Network of Communities; and Joe Chircop, Servants of Jesus

It was in the late 1980’s that major communities began to take different approaches to community life. The Lord had called for unity among our communities but, at that time, we ended up divided. After 42 years the Lord began to bring us back together. During the Jubilee Conference in Rome in 2017, twelve leaders from several networks and communities met on the patio of the Ergife Hotel and Conference Center. It was during that meeting that the seeds of working together were once more planted in the hearts and minds



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The Formation of the IPECC (Cont'd)

of some leaders.

Also, during the Jubilee, a large gathering of charismatic communities took place at the Basilica of St. John Lateran. In the midst of that gathering a prophetic word was pronounced by Dan Almeter:

“Because of your humility and repentance, I will destroy the chains of division that have bound you and I will restore your unity.”

Over time, relationships continued to be restored among our communities. City of the Lord and Sword of the Spirit (SOS) were building relationships. Alleluia was in regular contact with the European Network of Communities (ENC). Also, the Servants of Jesus from Australia attended the North American Network’s annual conference. Yes, unity was being restored and relationships were strengthened.

During the CHARIS Conference of Communities in October of 2022, some leaders of the North American Network, Sword of the Spirit, European Network of Communities, and the Servants of Jesus met. Twice, the leaders came together for

very productive and relationship building lunches. During these lunches work was done on a memorandum of understanding for what was then called the Strategic Partnership of Communities. To continue restoring and engaging these relationships, it was decided that some key leaders would meet in the summer of 2023.

Anticipating that summer meeting, Jean Barbara, President of SOS, and I met during a Sword of the Spirit Conference in Orlando, Florida and wrote the first draft for the coming summer meeting.



Summer 2023 meeting in Kairos London Retreat Center - Back row, left to right: Richard Martin, SOJ, Australia; Manny de los Santos, SOS, the Philippines; Jean Barbara, SOS, Lebanon; Dominic McDermott, ENC, England; Marie Almeter, NAN, USA; Dan Almeter, NAN, USA; Peter Poppleton, NAN, USA; Front row: Joe Chircop, SOJ, Australia; Julie Chircop, SOJ, Australia; Andy Pettman, SOS, England; Aleks Myskow, ENC, Poland; Kevin Bridges, ENC, Slovakia; Sharon Poppleton, NAN, USA; and Johannes Fichtenbauer, ENC, Austria.

The summer meeting took place during the week of July 17th at the Kairos Retreat Centre in London. It was out of that meeting that the International Partnership of Ecumenical Charismatic Communities was born. Once again, the foundational word spoken in 1975 of working together was visibly set in place as we gathered as brothers and sisters in a deep spirit of collegiality. To read additional reports on the gathering in the London please read Dan Almeter’s and Sharon Poppleton’s articles in this newsletter about the foundational time in London.





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Personal Reflections at the IPECC

By Sharon Poppleton, City of the Lord

I have to say, when I discovered that I was invited by Jean Barbera to attend the IPECC meetings in London, I felt honored, excited, and very intimidated. I figured that the only way I could ‘measure up’ to the responsibility of this was to determine to listen closely to the Holy Spirit, rely on whatever discernment I was graced with, and speak only when I felt His prompting and go-ahead. I contributed what I could and received in return renewed hope and vision for the time ahead.

Below are my three biggest takeaways.

One of the attendees, Andy Pitman, a consecrated brother in the Sword of the Spirit’s community in London gave a teaching on the concept of “Bulwark”. (See the article written by Peter on the left). I don’t know when I first heard the word bulwark in its association with covenant communities. It could have been from the New Covenant magazine in early renewal days. Or perhaps I heard it when Peter and I joined City of the Lord Community in the late seventies. The word “bulwark” has always excited me and overwhelmed me. How could I help stem the tide of evil when I can’t even get a hapless cricket out of my kitchen by myself!

Well, Andy projected a photo of Stirling Castle in Scotland. Behind this massive structure were dark, foreboding storm clouds. Yes, I thought, that is my concept of bulwark. And the dark clouds look bigger than the building. It seemed to scream to me: Be afraid! But then, he showed a second picture of the castle from the other side. It was dusk. And all around the descending hill was a vibrant little city, with lights shining through many of the buildings, probably businesses and homes, etc.(pubs?) This,



he explained, was the vibrant life being lived and protected by the castle. People could come here and flourish in the culture provided; indeed, they could help build the culture. With this image, all at once the concept of Bulwark became alive and tangible, approachable and inspiring. Yes, I think I *can* participate in this, as long as there are not too many crickets. Well, there will be many others who have the gift of capturing and releasing them. A comforting thought.



I was inspired by the brethren from Servants of Jesus Community in Sidney, Australia, in their ability to activate the spiritual gifts. During the meetings, our times of worship were led by “Aussies”, which included founders Joe and Julie Chircop, and Richard Martin.

This community has immersed themselves deeply in moving in the Spirit. They shared how a troubling situation will not be resolved until it is resolved in the spiritual realm. They often pray for up to three hours at a time in tongues. My husband Peter and I asked them to pray over us during a break. We were both very blessed to witness their gifts and experience in action. With any area of expertise, it mostly boils down to



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Personal Reflections at the IPECC (Cont'd)

By Sharon Poppleton, City of the Lord (Cont'd)

'hours at the canvas', hours on the stage, hours in the classroom, etc. So, too, in the realm of the Spirit. These brethren have laid down their lives in response to a particular gifting that bears great spiritual fruit for the Kingdom.

On the last full day of the meetings, we were asked to share the two greatest strengths of one's network or community. Here is what was shared:

- > **European Network of Communities:** They have community block-building teams that they have so far sent to help communities in Croatia, Poland, Lithuania, and Bosnia. Also, they offer theological programs on-line for both Catholics and Protestants.
- > **Servants of Jesus in Australia:** They offer worship team formation and training, and, as mentioned above, are very skilled in spiritual gift activation. They host an open yearly conference on equipping people to move in the Holy Spirit.
- > **Sword of the Spirit:** They have developed a successful youth bridge program that assists the youth in maintaining their faith, especially in transitional periods. They also offer comprehensive community formation.



- > **Alleluia, NANCCC member in Augusta, Georgia:** They offer a Spiritual Direction school and are a strong witness for Ecumenism.
- > **City of the Lord, NANCCC member in the southwest USA:** They live a well-established Lord's Day culture which can function well in evangelism. Also, they offer a well-trained Inner Healing team that is available to members and non-members.

As soon as these were shared, I was a bit in awe regarding the variety of giftings; there were basically no repeats. But all together the strengths mentioned appeared to cover all the basics. One community cannot excel in everything. But united, in humility, in obedience to the Spirit, in generosity, etc... "nothing can stop the Lord Almighty" and His plan for evangelism and the building of the Kingdom! I couldn't help but think of 1 Corinthians 12:12 – "Just as a human body, though it is made up of many parts, is a single unit because all these parts, though many, make one body, so it is with Christ."

How often over the years have we heard, "You are a part, not the whole"? I can't help but think that in partnership, we are a much stronger part! Praise the Lord.





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Personal Reflections at the IPECC (Cont'd)

By Dan Almeter, Alleluia Community

*A Letter from Dan Almeter, Alleluia Community to Thomas Cogdell,
A leader in Christ the Reconciler Community, Elgin, Texas*

Greetings Thomas,

In answer to your question, “How did the meetings in London go?” Basically, we met from Monday night until Friday morning, July 17-21. The gathering consisted of 14 leaders from four Networks: Sword of the Spirit, European Network, North American Network and Servants of Jesus in Australia. The time spent together was warm and affectionate. Peter and Sharon Poppleton and Marie and I represented NANCCC.

As you may already know or recall, this was a culmination of 6 years of effort. In June 2017, twelve leaders from Sword, ENC and Catholic Fraternity met in Rome during the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. There was a public reconciliation that took place in St. John Lateran that weekend and the Lord spoke in prophecy that “because of your humility and repentance, I will destroy the chains of division that have bound you restore your unity.”

The leadership continued to meet, but because of the dissolving of the Catholic Fraternity and the establishing of CHARIS and because of Covid delays, there was a “wait and hold”.

But finally, all was in place and the International Partnership of Ecumenical Charismatic Communities was born on July 20, 2023 by written agreement.

You asked why this alliance was made. The basic purpose is to provide mutual support during these difficult times. We also want to support one another in our mission efforts, particularly among the youth. And we want to learn best practices from participating in each other’s conferences, visiting other communities, etc. We want to be able to share our gifts freely with one another, i.e., like receptive ecumenism. We also want to be a place for other like-minded networks and communities to eventually find a home.

Regarding the title: “Ecumenical” means that the participant community must be ecumenical or have an ethos working for ecumenical unity. In other words, not all member communities are ecumenical in the way we are here in Alleluia, but there needs to be a desire to engage in unity in ways that are possible. Also, I might add, that the word “Covenant” was excluded from the title, but it is part of the body of our vision.



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Personal Reflections at the IPECC (Cont'd)

By Dan Almeter, Alleluia (Cont'd)

The four Networks selected 2 leaders from each network to form an 8-person service council to help guide IPECC (International Partnership of Ecumenical Charismatic Communities). They will meet in Augusta after the CLF(Charismatic Leaders Fellowship) and NANCCC(North American Network of Charismatic Covenant Communities) meetings at the end of February. Peter Poppleton, Moderator of NAN and member of City of the Lord and Mark Wilby from Alleluia Community are the 2 NAN council members selected for the next 2 years.

Thomas, this gives you some idea of what happened. But we are very excited about all that is going on in your community, Christ the Reconciler. -

Blessings, Dan



A meal together at the Kairos London Retreat Centre
Left to right: Aleks Myskow, ENC, Poland; Dan, and Marie Almeter, NAN, USA



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Unity Through Repentance and Reconciliation

By Bill Kohler, City of the Lord

Editor's Note: Bill Kohler has provided us with a summary of the book Unity Through Repentance: A Journey to Wittenberg 2017 by Thomas Cogdell with Amy Cogdell. This book and Bill Kohler's summary dovetail with the topic of Unity, unity through repentance and reconciliation. Bill's book review is found in "Great Reads in the Communities".



Thomas Cogdell, with his wife Amy Cogdell, has written a book full of the "surprises of the Holy Spirit". It tells the story of the "Wittenberg Initiative 2017", largely conceived by Thomas under the Lord's inspiration to hold a 24-hour prayer meeting/reconciliation service with Catholics and Protestants, on the 500th anniversary of the

Protestant Reformation in Wittenberg, Germany.

The first part of the story concerns Thomas and Amy's preparation for and reception of the God's chosen work for them of reconciliation between various "streams" of Christians. This preparation time is divided into two periods of 10 years each. During the period from 1990-2000, they marry, start a family, and begin to experience the creative, charismatic power of God. They gradually learn to discern the Lord's voice and respond to it. The Holy Spirit manifests His power many times in this period. Under His influence, Thomas starts a 24-7

House of Prayer in Austin (AHOP), Amy converts to the Catholic Faith, and the seed for the 24-7 prayer meeting and reconciliation service in Wittenberg is conceived.

The second period from 2001-2010 is characterized by trial, testing, repentance, and learning obedience and experiencing its fruit. In 2010, while on a business trip arranged by the Lord, Thomas makes the meeting room reservation in Wittenberg. The Cogdells are now in position to serve, execute, and complete a work of unity through repentance and reconciliation.

That work involved the journey to and completion of the Wittenberg Initiative. Covering the period from 2010-2017, it begins with a fundamental teaching on what Cogdell calls "Identificational Repentance", and foundational scripture: "turning the hearts of fathers to their children and children to their fathers" – (Malachi 4:5-6). This work has grown into yearly meetings in key cities, including Trent and Rome, and the emergence of a clear set of leaders and advisors.

Participants have also grown to include Messianic Jews, Roman Catholics, Orthodox, and Protestants, including



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Unity Through Repentance and Reconciliation (Cont'd)

Anabaptists, Amish, and Mennonites. The fruits of repentance and reconciliation have started the healing of divisions between Messianic Jews and Gentile Christians, between Catholics and Protestants, and between Protestants and Protestants.



There were specific instances of repentance and reconciliation that were highly significant: (1) There was repentance by a Catholic bishop to the Protestants for rejection of Luther's prophetic word to the Church; (2) Lutherans repented to the Messianic Jews for Luther's (and Germany's) antisemitism; (3) Repentance was expressed by both Catholics and Protestants to the Anabaptists for persecution of them especially during the Reformation. In each case, repentance was received, and reconciliation

followed.

The final meeting in Wittenberg in 2017 featured the 24-hour prayer meeting which was occasionally interrupted by teachings and praying John 17 together. There were more expressions of repentance and reconciliation,

and participants were encouraged

to start new initiatives of reconciliation.

Then came the Shabbat service, songs, teaching,

dancing, and JOY. Although the meeting in Wittenberg, 2017 is finished, the work of repentance and reconciliation is continuing. (See Bill's book review on page 15.)



Prayer over Cogdells by Dr. Hawthorne (Left) and Prince Michael Salm (Right)





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Charismatic Covenant Community (CCC) and Church Renewal

By David Peterman, Sr., Community of God's Delight

Just what is a CCC, that is, a Charismatic Covenant Community? And how did this relatively new movement of the Spirit come to be a significant means of renewal for the Body of Christ?

Many adjectives describe the Body of Christ striving to carry out Jesus' instruction to his disciples. For all Christians the Creed gives us the most familiar as: One, Holy, catholic, and Apostolic. But there are many others, among them are Christian, Biblical, Orthodox, Roman, etc. But the last century has brought some new ones like: Pentecostal, Holiness, Evangelical...

Over the past century the Church has experienced a worldwide renewal movement (or current of grace) involving a transitioning from a dominant institutional way of thinking to an awakening of a personal experience of God as Triune. This understanding distinguishes the three Persons (relational beings) as One but also as three unique Persons. Although God had been generally associated with the Father (Paternal relationship) and the Son associated with Christ (Christocentric identity), the 20th century brought a revival of the biblical and Patristic tradition of the Holy Spirit's role as the source of a Christian's spiritual life.

This awakening to the Persons of Father, Son and Holy Spirit has resulted in Christians having more personal and experiential relationships with each distinct Trinitarian Person. Christians have grown in personally relating with God as their Father, their Brother, and as their Councilor, Teacher, or Advocate. Seeing ourselves as members of the Body of Christ, in conformity with Jesus as the Son of the Father and being animated and inspired by the Holy Spirit through His Gifts and Graces, has fostered a paradigm shift. This shift is from an impersonal institutional conformity to a spiritual experience of living faith and life as God's sons and daughters. Millions have responded by surrendering to the basic Gospel message or "call" to conversion and submission to the Lordship of Jesus and as their Savior from the bondages of our times.

This awakening was the result of the outpouring of God's grace in our time. The current of grace was initiated at the prayerful petition of Pope Leo XIII at the very end of the 19th century. At the dawn of the 20th century, this Grace was manifested in Topeka, Kansas and Azusa Street in Los Angeles. It grew into a tidal wave of grace impacting the





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CCC and Church Renewal (Cont'd)

whole body of Christ, especially after falling on Catholics in 1967 at a retreat for a few students and professors at Duquesne University. Supported by many inspirations from other Christians, its biblical focus led to a clear understanding of God's call to be His People, a people of His Covenant, a spiritual body of Christ that live together in animation of Acts 2 and 4. It has led many to seek a gifted, covenantal, communal life together according to God's Word in relationship with all three Trinitarian Persons.

This new expression of the Church added three new adjectives to more fully describe the Church that God wished to use to animate His Plan to save

mankind. The Church was to be, in addition to its prior descriptions, charismatic, covenant, and communal. So, each local expression of this new understanding was to be a Charismatic Covenant Community (CCCs) and their common participation in the Church's oneness, holiness, and apostolicity makes them local expressions of the whole Body of Christ.

Thus, God has moved in our time to revive and renew His One Holy catholic Church by providing CCCs as the divine Yeast that can leaven the whole Body of Christ into the food that the world desperately needs to survive the darkness of our day. Come Holy Spirit!

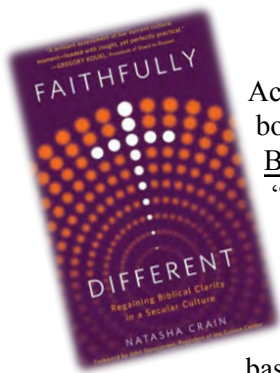




Great Reads in the Communities

Review By Anne Hamrick, New Creation Community

Faithfully Different: Regaining Biblical Clarity in a Secular Culture by **Natasha Crain**



What is a Biblical worldview? According to a study in Natasha Crain's book Faithfully Different: Regaining Biblical Clarity in a Secular Culture, "only 17% of Christians who go to church regularly and consider their faith important hold to a Biblical worldview." The measure for a biblical worldview in the study is basic Christian tenants. That small minority who wants to be "faithful" to Biblical truths is indeed "different" in today's culture.

Faithfully Different, is expressly written for those who already hold a Biblical view and want to hold fast to it while living submerged in a culture which promotes ungodly principles, principles that often sound good to undiscerning ears. News media, music, social media, books, entertainment bombard culture, that includes Christians, with anti-God and anti-Biblical messages, sometimes overtly, sometimes subtly. "As secularism becomes the prevailing worldview that Christians encounter at every turn, more and more of us are mixing these mainstream secular ideas with biblical views." Crain summarizes these secular messages into four prevalent principles, all of which revolve around the self as the authority. She then contrasts those principles with biblical truths.

Crain explains the techniques those with a secular worldview use to make their own views sound right and good. She also includes chapters on Christian apologetics, how to deal with doubts, a lengthy argument for theism versus atheism, advice on when and how to speak up against falsehoods, and extra resources and discussion questions after every chapter. Some of the other topics she deals with are Progressive Christianity, the argument against naturalism, false "Jesuses," and secular social justice versus the Christian mandate to help the poor. The book is full of practical information to help discern those sound-good, ubiquitous messages which are not Christian values and truths.

While the stats about Christians who live a Biblical worldview are small, Crain fills her book with encouragement to live counter culturally. Crain points out that Jesus never said "following Him would *ever* be the norm in the world," and she notes "the body of Christ will never die no matter how grim things look in a given place at a given time." Knowing that, we need to be armed with the tools to remain steadfast. Crain provides instruction for holding fast to and living the gospel.

Editor's Note: New Creation Community saw the subject matter of this book as so important, that it formed the basis for her community's teaching for several months.





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Great Reads in the Communities (Cont'd)

Review By Bill Koller, Ciry of the Lord

Unity Through Repentance: The Journey to Wittenberg 2017

by Thomas Cogdell with Amy Cogdell

We shouldn't be naïve or casual about this book. It raises a lot of big questions. I want to mention three: (1) What is the place of the Messianic Jews in our communities and in our Churches? Are we "gentile" Christians grafted into them? Are they the root? (2) Shouldn't we consider the depth and breadth of the wounds of the Body of Christ? Many of us, when we think about our divisions, think in terms of doctrine or church order. A book like this reminds us that our wounds are part of *history*. They involve nations and peoples, neighborhoods, and families. Our wounds are *deep and wide*. (3) Is there an imbalance between the Apostolic and the Prophetic? The apostolic and the prophetic constitute *the foundation of the Church!* (Eph. 2:20). Therefore, any significant imbalance may cause major problems for the Church. How "balanced" are we?

And as with any book, there are things that perplex. Again, I will mention three. (1) There is an incomplete accounting of the legacy of Luther and the Reformers. Part of that legacy goes totally unmentioned in the book – the fact that there are some 30,000-40,000 different Protestant churches in the world. That speaks to division, not unity. (2) At the yearly meeting of the participants in Rome (2015), there was no mention of the "purification of memory" the Catholic Church had engaged in during Jubilee 2000 in St. Peter's. There's even a document on the Vatican website about it. That event in 2000 involved repentance to Jews, Protestants, and others for the sins of the Catholic Church. It is odd that the Catholics in this book make no mention of it. (3) Rarely will I disagree with someone of the stature and caliber of the late Fr. Peter Hocken, but I do disagree with the

statement that Catholics could celebrate the Reformation because there was agreement on "Sola Christus, Sola Fide, and Sola Scriptura". While that *might* be true for some theologians in the Church, there is no formal agreement on these things, especially Sola Scriptura. There are Catholics who would say "Scripture First", but I know of no Catholic who would say and agree with "Scripture alone" or "Scripture only."



In the end, I read this book and recommend it because of Thomas' humility and Amy's great and fierce love for Thomas and the Lord. They are the *heart* of this story. I also recommend this book because of the reconciliation between the Catholics and the Anabaptists. For 400 years, the Holy Spirit and His gifts were totally blocked. Readers will read of repentance, reconciliation, and restitution. That whole part of the story is extremely important. It felt authentic and it really struck me. Unity is difficult. That is why it must be God's idea and not ours. God must open the way for us. He must be the author of every work of unity. And His presence is evident on the pages of this book.

