

Zachary Guiliano and Cameron E. Partridge, eds. *Preaching and the Theological Imagination*. Studies in Episcopal and Anglican Theology, vol. 9. New York: Peter Lang, 2015. 345 pages. \$96.95.

This stimulating collection of essays opens up with an introduction that sets the terms for Guiliano and Partridge's investigation of preaching and theological imagination in the Anglican tradition. Through their very arrangement of the sections of the book, the editors give especially important attention to sacraments and liturgy for forming the Anglican theological imagination. As one would expect, the relationship of Word and Sacrament and the importance of liturgy for Anglican theological reflection are given pride of place throughout the whole collection. Elements of preaching practice also enter the dialogue, however—especially the history of Anglican preaching, the problem of preaching to “complex constituencies,” difficult theological topics, the problem of authority and power, as well as some concluding sermons.

On the whole, the collection is well-rounded. The essays by Ruthanna Hooke and Matthew Potts in the opening section, “Preaching Presence: Sacrament, Narrative, Embodiment,” were strong. Hooke builds on Carl Daw's work in relating Gregory Dix's four-fold structure of the Eucharist to an understanding of presence in preaching—and in the process adds an important reflection on performance, voice, and embodiment in this more sacramental vision of preaching. Potts uses the work of Adriana Caverero and Judith Butler on narrative, identity, and vulnerability to complexify notions of divine action in Barth, and Christ's identity in Hans Frei. Potts succeeds in drawing new insights on sacramental presence in preaching—especially with reference to Christ's own vulnerability in “allowing us to speak on his behalf.”

The editors' own essays are also quite strong. Partridge offers a “homiletic theology of the Christian year” that draws on the hinges of the calendar (e.g., Transfiguration) and in the process deepens our understanding of the same through an insightful use of anthropological and postcolonial theory. Guiliano makes a nice case for retrieving patristic allegorical preaching through Foucault and Girard, arguing that allegory can be a means of encouraging a kind of aesthetic imitation for the Christian moral life. I was not convinced that Guiliano adequately deals with the full range of problems that Christian supersessionism offers in the troubled history of such figural readings, but he anticipates objections fairly well and makes a strong, consistent case for his vision—and with a strong, compelling connection to Anglican theology.

The many essays that follow are largely strong. Denise Yarbrough's work in “Practicing the Theology of Companionship: Preaching an Interreligious Gospel” was an especially nice surprise. The section devoted to “Difficult Topics, Preaching Angles” was of special interest for anyone who wants preaching to deal more deeply with theology in light of the situations that call forth pulpit speech. I expect to be assigning a couple of these essays for my classes.

Naturally, some essays make the volume as a whole at least a little uneven. Occasionally the topic of “preaching and the theological imagination” fades just a little from view in this sprawling volume of essays. Nonetheless, the ongoing interest in linking preaching and Anglican theology comes through with great consistency and surprising vision.

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