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Editors' Notes

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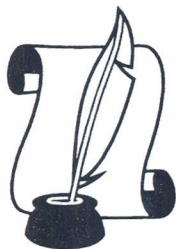


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STUART & D'ESTA LOVE

This issue of *Leaven* is devoted to the theme *Theology and Ministry*. Our aim is to demonstrate the importance of theological thinking for the understanding and practice of ministry. For some, this is a fresh undertaking. As you read, you will travel in a new land, virgin territory. One of the reasons for this is that the Stone-Campbell Restoration tradition has not been known extensively for theological reflection. My first exposure to a disciplined theological approach of learning was a class in Old Testament theology taught by Thomas H. Olbricht at Abilene Christian College in 1968. As I read and thought about the truth of certain themes and ideas in the Old Testament, I realized that as Amos proclaimed the Lord's word, he thought theologically about Israel's faith, as did Isaiah, Micah, Hosea, Jeremiah, and a host of prophets and teachers in ancient Israel. And such was the case in the New Testament for Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, and others. All these heroes of faith thought seriously about the truth of their ministries concerning God's service. We believe this is the case as well of Christians throughout the history of the church. So, as you read this issue, whether you are a preacher, elder, Bible teacher, missionary, husband, wife, or parent--or however you serve Christ--hopefully, you will develop a deeper appreciation of what it means to reflect on the truth concerning the practice of Christianity and why this is important.

Now, let us introduce Ronald Curtis Highfield, our guest editor for this issue of *Leaven*. Ron received his doctorate in religious studies at Rice University in 1988 and joined the religion faculty at Pepperdine University in 1989. Ron and Marty Highfield have two sons, Nathanael and Matthew. Dr. Highfield serves as an elder for the Malibu Church of Christ and teaches one of the congregation's most popular adult Bible classes. A number of churches have benefited from Ron's seminars on theology and the church. His commitment to the church is widely respected by his colleagues and fellow Christians. His students soon learn to love theological reading, thinking, and practice. We believe his articles and the authors chosen to write in this issue will pique your interest for theological reflection on the Christian faith as well.

Finally, some news and notes about the progress of *Leaven*. David Matson, a member of our editorial board, has recently returned from the World Convention of Churches of Christ in Brisbane, Australia. He believes a new door is open before us. Pray for our efforts as we encourage fellow Christians in Australia and the British Isles to read *Leaven*. Henry Webb has consented to write a report about the World Convention to our readers in the next issue of *Leaven*.

We are grateful for the appointment of five new editorial board members at our board meeting, at Pepperdine University in June. They include **CAROL** and **JOHN SHOUN**, **MARK MATSON**, and **C. ROBERT WETZEL** from our advisory board. Joining our editorial board as well is **RICK MARRS**, chairperson of the Religion Division at Pepperdine University. Future issues include *Romans and Ministry*, *The Family*, *Conflict Resolution and Ministry*, *The Canon and Ministry*, a special issue on a retreat of the religion faculties of Emmanuel School of Religion and Pepperdine University, and *Ministering to our Youth*.

Do you know someone who should be reading *Leaven*? Why not give him or her a year's subscription as a Christmas gift? Continue to pray and work for *Leaven's* progress!

STUART AND D'ESTA LOVE