

1-1-1998

## Editors' Notes

Stuart Love  
slope@pepperdine.edu

D'Esta Love  
dlove@pepperdine.edu

Paul Watson

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/leaven>

---

### Recommended Citation

Love, Stuart; Love, D'Esta; and Watson, Paul (1998) "Editors' Notes," *Leaven*: Vol. 6: Iss. 1, Article 2.  
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/leaven/vol6/iss1/2>

This Editor's Notes is brought to you for free and open access by the Religion at Pepperdine Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Leaven by an authorized editor of Pepperdine Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [bailey.berry@pepperdine.edu](mailto:bailey.berry@pepperdine.edu).



## *Editors' Notes*

### Stuart and D'Esta Love

The first issue of *Leaven*, Winter Quarter 1990, was entitled "All Things Praise Thee, Lord May We." Lynn Mitchell served as the guest editor and wrote that the wonder of joy he experienced as a child singing "O T'is Joy unspeakable and full of Glory" remained with him so that as an adult he could declare, "... the joy I experience in worship grows deeper as the assaults of joy become more serious and more profound." That first issue of *Leaven*, filled with thoughtful devotion, served Christians and churches of the Stone–Campbell Restoration Movement well. Requests for copies have exhausted our holdings, forcing us to ask, "Is it time for another printing, or for another issue on this vital theme?"

Our decision was to do a fresh issue so that we could address the ongoing opportunity, challenge, and assault, cultural changes have made on our lives and our churches regarding worship. Paul Watson, preaching minister of the Cole Mill Road Church in Durham, North Carolina, and a member of *Leaven's* Editorial Board, graciously accepted the invitation to serve as guest editor. We thank him and each writer! As you read, we believe you will be blessed! Our prayer, as a blessed consequence, is that "Joy unspeakable" will flow forth unto the God of our salvation!

D'ESTA AND STUART LOVE

### ISSUE EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

*Come, Thou almighty King,  
Help us Thy name to sing,  
Help us to praise!*

We are by nature creatures of worship—but we need help with our worship. The question is not, "Shall we worship?" but, "How shall we worship?" And that foundational question gives rise, in turn, to many other questions, both theological and pastoral: What does the Bible say about worship? What has been the historical understanding and practice of the Church regarding worship? How can we translate that biblical and historical information into current practice? Can we critique our own worship, past and present, without becoming hypercritical of that worship? Can we incorporate different modes, styles, and emphases of worship for reasons beyond their newness (or, for that matter, their oldness)? How can we honor one another's convictions and feelings about worship while still claiming our own?

Worship that is full, rich, and truly biblical will honor God and will nourish our souls by satisfying our "holy hunger" for his presence. In this issue of *Leaven*, we will explore both the opportunities and the challenges presented by such worship. In our introductory article JOHN MARK HICKS makes it clear that, for the Christian, *all* of life is worship. Nevertheless, "there is still a special sense in which worship takes place in the corporate assembly of God's people"; in the assembly, "we experience the presence of God." We next turn to the biblical materials that deal with worship. PHIL McMILLION reminds us that "when we begin to consider worship from a biblical point of view, we must begin first and foremost

with God,” whose nature and acts are revealed in the Old Testament. McMillion then points us to the Psalms as a guide for expressing the diverse moods and themes of our worship of this God. **ALLEN BLACK** surveys the New Testament evidence on the nature and practices of the early Christian assemblies and distinguishes four purposes of those assemblies: edification of the church, praise of God, evangelism, and the fulfillment of institutional needs. Black concludes, “We need not replicate every aspect of those early assemblies. But we do need to accomplish what they accomplished.” **RICK OSTER** focuses our attention on Paul’s corrections of the worship practices of the Corinthians. Oster then helps us cross the bridge from such biblical texts to our current situation by showing how a full understanding of Paul’s corrections can “give us direction in examining and evaluating our own worship practices—both comfortable customs of long standing and attractive new forms.”

**EVERETT HUFFARD** calls our attention to the impact that culture inevitably has on our worship by looking at two distinctly different contemporary worship situations. He concludes, “We simply cannot worship without the communication, values, and symbols of our culture. What we need to learn is how to relate to one another based on our relationships with Christ rather than our particular cultural styles.” In “Renewing our Worship,” I attempt to bring those biblical and cultural concerns together by defining worship as our *communion* with God and with fellow believers. Turning to ways of renewing our worship, I urge us to concentrate neither on the content of our worship (which is fixed) nor on the style of our worship (which is ever changing), but on the structure, or shape, of our worship—the narrative flow of the service, which gives context and significance to our actions in worship. **ELMER PROUT** takes up the discussion of evangelism in worship by interacting with Marva Dawn’s new book, *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down*. Prout points out the limitations of methods and programs, with their tendency to focus on “human thought, skill, and action.” True relevance in evangelism, he asserts, will spring from an “unshakable determination to know nothing but Jesus Christ crucified, risen, and exalted.” **RALPH BECK** helps us to consider the matter of style in worship, providing us with a fascinating narrative of the experiences of one congregation that undertook to develop “a more informal, celebrative atmosphere” in its worship assemblies.

We then look back to our early leaders in the Restoration Movement: how seriously did they take worship, both private and corporate? By giving us multiple examples of the deep, sincere piety of those leaders, **DON KINDER** shows us that they conceived of “restoration” as a matter of both head and heart. **DAVE BLAND** carries Kinder’s thesis forward to today and insists that the spiritual formation of the preacher is the place where preaching must begin. Then, in a condensed version of a sermon preached last fall, **BOB SHANNON** gives “A Call to Worship,” inviting us to experience worship at its deepest level and to see our worship as a rehearsal for worship in heaven. We conclude the issue with some practical aids for enriching our worship. **BRUCE SHIELDS** gives us a most helpful guide to a variety of literary resources on worship. Finally, we have a series of book reviews that deal with various topics related to worship.

It has been a pleasure working on this issue, thanks to the timely efforts and generous cooperation of all the writers. I would like to acknowledge the faculty of the Harding University Graduate School of Religion in Memphis, whose contributions to this issue are reflective of the comprehensive course on worship that they teach each year. I would also like to thank **ELEANOR DANIEL** and **MARKUS MCDOWELL**, our book review editors, and **MARK** and **NANCY LOVE**, our layout editors, for their respective contributions. A special word of thanks is due **CAROL SHOUN**, whose efforts went well beyond her duties as copy editor. Carol’s sensitive insights and suggestions have contributed greatly to the substance of this issue. Finally, thanks to **STUART** and **D’ESTA LOVE** for their unfailing support.

PAUL WATSON  
Durham, North Carolina