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Editor's Notes

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Editors' Notes

D'Esta Love and Stuart Love

In our lead article, **LEONARD ALLEN** affirms that at the heart of the Christian *Great Tradition* is the doctrine of the Trinity. By this he means more than affirming faith in the Father, Son, and Spirit. What makes a difference for Allen is “to see the *function* of Trinitarian doctrine. Or to put it better, the *nature* of Trinitarian life.” Then he states, “For me this recast, even revolutionized, my understanding of what it means to be a Christian. . . . God leads a relational life as Father, Son, and Spirit. That life is characterized by submissive love, as each pours life and love into the other. So abundant is this life that it overflows, and we are invited to share in it. So wonderful and rich that joy permeates it. And so perfect that it reaches down into our very deepest desires. Call it Trinitarian life. For us, call it Christian life. Call it life in the Spirit.”

We have quoted Allen because we choose, borrowing his language, to call this issue *Trinitarian Life*. What we mean by that title and what Allen describes is closely akin to the title of his book *The Cruciformed Church*. However, like Allen, the writers in this issue, in their spiritual journeys, talk more and more like Trinitarian people called to Trinitarian living, the life of the crucified and risen Christ. Some may not use the explicit language (though some do), but all are calling us as God's people to be more intentional in following Jesus's call to the kingdom of God.

Let us now introduce the issue: We open with Allen's programmatic piece that summarizes his book and prompts us to follow the quest to be a Spirit-led people. We follow this with four articles presented at the *Leaven* Symposium during the Pepperdine University Bible Lectures in 2016. **JASON LOCKE** explores the “great weaknesses of legalism” in an excellent theological development of Ephesians 2.11–22. **LAUREN SMELSER WHITE**, reflecting on two passages from the Gospels, urges us as “sincere Christ-followers to take up a costlier manner of communicating with those with whom [we] disagree: a manner oriented towards service.” **ROBERT M. RANDOLPH**, out of over thirty years of experience as an administrator at MIT, calls our attention uniquely to the truth that “cruciformed living is not the American way of living and it is certainly not the way of living within the university.” Finally, **DON McLAUGHLIN** does a case study of Trinitarian living in a church, through “real problems, barriers, and traps” faced by the North Atlanta Church of Christ in Atlanta, Georgia.

Still utilizing materials presented at the 2016 Pepperdine Lectures, we feature a theological interpretation of Paul's apocalyptic notion of the “new creation” (Gal 6.15) as it relates to the status and utilization of women in the church today by **LEE SMITH**. Next, **JOSH LOVE** affirms that “sin is more than an immoral act, and addiction is more than substance abuse.” Rather, sin needs to be understood as a power at work in the world, a power Love refers to as “the spirit of this world.”

Two of our articles relate to the recent book by D'Esta Love, *Finding Their Voices: Sermons by Women in Churches of Christ*, reviewed at the 2016 Christian Scholars' Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. The first article is by **RICHARD HUGHES** and serves as a historical reflection on the role of women in Churches of Christ. The second is a rhetorical review of the book by **GARY SELBY**.

We close the issue with a sermon on the Ethiopian eunuch by **CLAIRE DAVIDSON-FREDERICK** given at the Pepperdine Lectures and two Lord's Supper meditations given at different times by a mother and daughter at the Montgomery Boulevard Church of Christ in Albuquerque, New Mexico. **LEE CROWDER**, an elder's wife, pursues the theme of “An Open Door” and **ANNA CROWDER** asks, “Why Am I Eating at Jesus's Table?”

Leaven is starting its twenty-fifth year of publication with this issue. Your editors will serve in organizing the second issue of 2017 and then we will turn the reins of leadership over to Mark Love of Rochester College and John Barton of Pepperdine University. We have a wonderful second issue planned. Thank you for supporting our efforts for over twenty years and please continue to pray for the new leadership of *Leaven*.

