

combating an atomistic individualism that has science take all the pieces apart and not see how to put them together. The third, which she only hints at and hopes for, would be more pneumatological than the first two. It would see a little more deeply into the interconnectivity between the physical universe and the Trinity.

The hope that has fueled this book, as Polkinghorne says, is that “just as physicists in their own domain have found relationality to be more extensive and more surprising in its character than prior expectation would have led them to anticipate, so philosophers and theologians should be open to the possibility of unexpected discovery and counterintuitive insight” (x). For theologians and physicists seeking a connection, this book will unveil it.

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RESHAPING ECUMENICAL THEOLOGY: THE CHURCH MADE WHOLE? Paul Avis. London: T. & T. Clark, 2010. Pp. x + 209. \$34.95.

“Our primary obligation to our fellow Christians is to be in communion with them” (142). This is the bold claim at the heart of Avis’s study. A. is General Secretary of the Council of Christian Unity of the Church of England as well as an experienced and skilled ecclesialogist. In this collection he revises ten previous papers and presentations into a coherent whole that revolves around three major concerns: a passionate commitment to the ecumenical movement and the restoration of the unity of the church; a methodological concern for an adequate theology of the church; and the particular concerns of a theologian and pastor working the current context of the fragile Anglican communion. To address these concerns, A. outlines a robust yet mature communion ecclesiology that harvests the achievements of the past 50 years of that discourse’s development, and exhorts the churches to receive this wisdom and put it into practice. After all, he writes, “if our unity does not hit people between the eyes it is not the unity for which Christ prayed” (193).

The greatest strength of the work is A.’s careful exposition of the utility of communion language in conceptualizing the ecclesial constants of diversity and unity, of apostolicity and catholicity, of centripetal and centrifugal tendencies, without hawking *koinonia* as a panacea for all that ill the church, or ecclesiological discourse itself as the solution to all ecumenical impasses. A. draws attention to the ecclesiological and ecumenical consensus that “taking diversity seriously” is crucial both to understanding the reality of the church and to developing responses to the divisions between and within the churches. While this idea has a longer intellectual pedigree, A.’s exposition of diversity as a recurring fact of Christian experience is clear and engaging; he connects ecclesial unity with mission, and proceeds to explore the working out of this understanding of ecclesial unity in relation to issues like episcopacy, ethics, and confessionalism that divide or threaten to divide the churches.

A. also carefully distinguishes taking diversity seriously from an indifferent pluralism; “diversity,” he writes, “can cover a multitude of sins” (24), and the history of the ecumenical movement demonstrates that glossing over or ignoring real differences is as dangerous to real unity as are mutual condemnation and excommunication. Adapting Bonhoeffer, A. argues that “we should not be satisfied with ‘cheap communion’. But if it is not cheap it must be costly” (152). And “costly communion” requires real judgments of one’s own positions and those of the other with whom one is in dialogue, whether that other is another church or another member or party in one’s own community. A. turns here to the advantages of the method of “differentiated consensus” in judging the possibilities of differentiated mutual recognition in matters of faith, order, and morals.

A. moves beyond simply restating communion ecclesiology, however, in his explorations of the methodological implications for ecclesiology of the reality that irreducible diversity, sometimes to the point of division, is a constant of ecclesial existence. If ecclesiology is the reflection of the church on its own reality, then the fact that “Christians are chronically prone to fall out with each other” (141) should caution both theologians and the churches in their attempts to outline definitive ecclesiologies. A. calls for “intellectual and moral humility” (148) on the part of the churches as a constitutive part of our theorizing and our praxis. Such humility need not shy away from taking positions, making arguments, and being serious about disagreements, but requires that we pursue those conversations with charity and courage. What makes communion “costly” and not “cheap” is the need to struggle to restore and maintain communion with our fellow Christians even in the face of seemingly intractable differences. While this effort has obvious existential significance for the author, given his location within the Anglican communion, his thought and prose also attempt to revive awareness that all Christians, in every church, ought to be as troubled by our divided churches as some of us are in churches currently threatened by division.

A.’s work is written with style and wit. It has the limitations and the advantages of a volume collected from previous essays. A. returns to the same themes in many of the chapters, and not all topics discussed will be of the same interest to the general reader. However, an advantage of this format is the ability to draw upon most of the chapters as discrete treatments, either for research purposes or for use in the classroom, adult education programs, or practical ecumenical encounter as a starting point for discussion of these issues.

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THE EMBRACE OF EROS: BODIES, DESIRES, AND SEXUALITY IN CHRISTIANITY. Edited by Margaret D. Kamitsuka. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010. Pp. xi + 356. \$35.

This multiauthor volume had its genesis in a 2006 conference sponsored by the Workgroup on Constructive Theology. Its 17 chapters are