

DIDACHE 16:2 INTRODUCTION

Dean G. Blevins, Senior Editor

Greetings and welcome to a new edition of *Didache: Faithful Teaching*. This edition emerges during an odd occurrence of the journal's publishing cycle, Fall 2016. Normally we would offer a January, "Winter" edition (and plan to do so with additional articles) but this mid-year offering reflects the same intent as our previous publication (also offered at a different time Spring 2016). This edition, like our previous one, actually serves a regional theology conference in the USA/Canada Region. As such, the edition follows the format of previous global theology editions by including papers that will serve as a resource for the conference that meets September 28-30, 2016 at Nazarene Theological Seminary.

The conference theme, "A Pilgrim People Living in Exile," serves as a backdrop to the program. The theme surfaced in part through a presentation by Scott Daniels to the USA/Canada Estes Park Consultation on Clergy Preparation considering the regional context for ministry and minister formation. Since that gathering, the theme has resonated with several presentations around the region. Exile reflects a change in perspective for many evangelical and "mainstream" congregations like those in the Church of the Nazarene. The feeling of exile surfaces in the face of cultural diversity, shifting assumptions of the world around the church (often associated with postmodernity as a cultural and intellectual shift), and the loss of social capital on the part of the church due to many recent perceived failures. Readers might want to review John Dickerson's book *The Great Evangelical Recession* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2013) for a snapshot treatment. Yet the church remains called to be God's people, even if congregants often feel they now represent a "pilgrim people" on a journey through unknown territory. Is Exile a helpful image for us, and what does it mean to lead theologically and pastorally in the face of these changes? The conference hopes to offer a conversation around that very question.

Conference chairs Dan Copp, IBOE Commissioner and Director of Clergy Development for the Church of the Nazarene, and Carla Sunberg, President of Nazarene Theological Seminary crafted the program reflecting recommendations from leadership around the USA and Canada. The resultant conference features five key plenary sessions listed below, with panel responses. In addition, the conference includes opening and closing sermons by Scott Daniels and Carla Sunberg, and a final panel discussion by the plenary presenters. Hopefully these initial papers will serve as a resource not only for the conference but also for a global audience as they reflect with the church in the USA and Canada.

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As always, please note the journal publishes articles along the themes of theology, culture, and education within a Wesleyan heritage. Guidelines for submissions are available at the website. Professors may also submit outstanding student papers (with student permission) as long as they will agree to serve as the reviewer.

I also thank Ernalyn Longcop Fausto, with the staff of the Asia Pacific Region, who works diligently in the formatting and maintenance of our website, and Dr. Tammy Condon, a consistent promoter of *Didache: Faithful Teaching*, and primary motivator in the development of the Wesleyan Holiness Digital Library (WHDL)