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Advancing *PSCF*'s Mission by Meeting the Challenges of Interdisciplinary Scholarship

With this issue, *PSCF* returns to its pre-pandemic practice of publishing four issues per year. As is the case for every non-themed issue of *PSCF*, the papers herein represent a sample of the rich conversations surrounding science and faith currently taking place both within the American Scientific Affiliation and elsewhere. Each in its own way advances *PSCF*'s mission to offer "original contributions that advance human understanding of science and Christian faith." That is to say that each article brings out something new about the relationship between Christianity and various aspects of science and technology, how they are practiced, and their effects on the world. Each also does so at a level appropriate for an academic journal, by applying the expertise of one or more recognized disciplines to clearly articulated problems in ways that other practitioners of those disciplines recognize as credible and valuable. They also engage the most-relevant scholarly voices at their most rigorous, that is to say, as far as possible, in the form of journal articles and academic books.

Among the four articles in this issue, W. Robert Wood examines physicists' longstanding efforts to explain the physical cosmos in ways that "see things whole" by thinking in terms of beautiful symmetrical states and "unreasonably effective" mathematical descriptions, an approach he calls the "unification paradigm." In particular, he argues that the success of the unification paradigm in describing nature and provoking awe and wonder points to a correspondence between the theological beauty of God, its outworking in creation and redemption, and the human search for beauty in nature as a manifestation of the true.

In the second article, two leaders within both the American Scientific Affiliation and the world of Christian higher education, Janel Curry and Dorothy Chappell, examine the spiritual and professional formation that takes place in programs for training undergraduate scientific research students at Christian institutions. As students in such programs perform research under the care of senior scientist mentors and in conversation with the wider scientific community, they are enculturated into the "traditions of science" and, distinctly, into ways

for navigating their dual status as practitioners of both science and practitioners of "the Christian tradition." Drawing on the work of Étienne Wenger and Alasdair MacIntyre, Curry and Chappell note parallels between the scientific training within these programs, and the process of spiritual formation taking place in Christian communities.

William Horst's article addresses objections to "local" flood interpretations of the Genesis flood narrative, which since the nineteenth century have been proposed as ways to reconcile that narrative with the absence of geologic and archaeological evidence for a worldwide deluge. Horst argues that one common objection, that the New Testament and 2 Peter, in particular, appear to assume a worldwide flood, is not a theological defeater of local flood interpretations. While the author of 2 Peter shared the "universal" flood understanding common in second temple Judaism, Horst argues that a universal flood is not necessary to the theology, logic, and rhetorical force of the text.

Ebenezer Yaw Blasu of the Akrofi-Christaller Institute of Theology, Mission and Culture in Ghana addresses the local and cultural dimensions of human efforts to respond to global ecological problems. His article is unique for applying insights from missiology to the need for coordinated human responses to global-scale ecological crises. Blasu notes the need for the development of Christians and churches that possess a habitual and instinctive care for creation. Noting the limited ability of Western Christian ecotheologies to encourage such, particularly in global contexts where there is disjoint between those theologies and local cultures' religious conceptions, Blasu proposes that Christians in Africa Christianize existing African local cultural practices that have been traditionally used to instill ecological sensibility and regulate human engagement with nature.

May these articles inspire, encourage, and stimulate your thinking.

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