

Fall 2020 Volume VI Issue 3



CORNERSTONE

A Christian Journal of Literary Arts at Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design

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OUR MISSION

Cornerstone is a publication that celebrates the truth and beauty of the Christian Gospel in order to glorify God, edify the Church, and reach the non-believer. We aim to provoke spiritual thought on and around the campuses of Brown and RISD. We publish works of art, prose, and poetry of all denominational persuasions that exhibit intelligent and creative approaches to current events, history, and our Christian faith.

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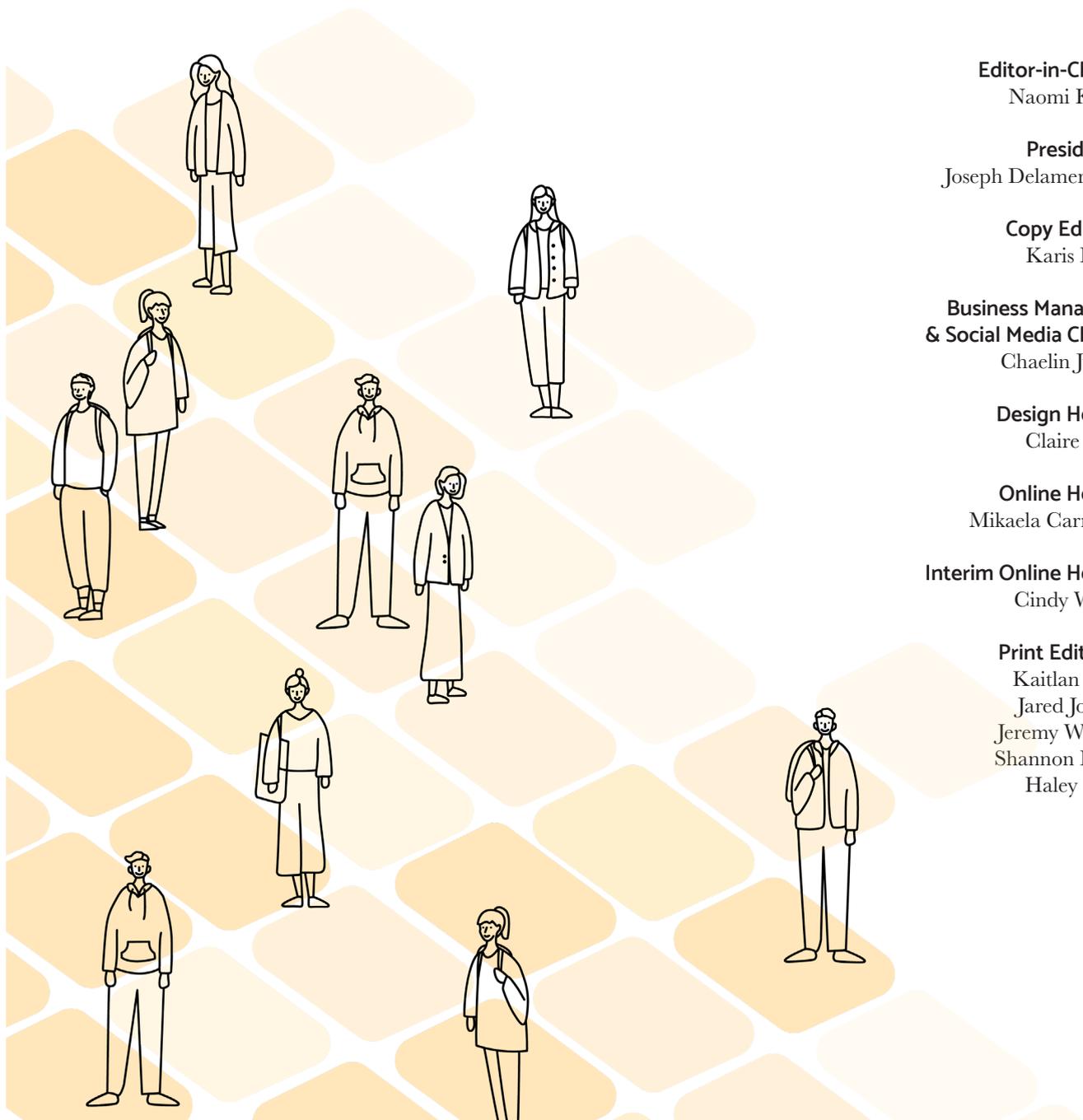
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Illustrated by Ashley Yae '23



Library, Ashley Yae '23

Letter

from

THE EDITOR

Dear reader,

When we chose “home” as the theme for our Fall 2020 issue, the spring semester was just starting. January was cold but full of promise: new beginnings, new opportunities, new classes. On a personal note, I was happy to be back at Brown after a semester abroad, and I was feeling optimistic about Cornerstone’s future.

At the time, we had no way of knowing that in just two months, we’d all be sent home due to COVID-19 concerns. All of a sudden we found ourselves packing up our suitcases in a hurry, booking last minute plane tickets, and saying goodbyes to all our friends in March instead of May.

So, for the first time, I find myself writing this letter at home, in my small town in southwest Georgia. Our staff, including our new design team, is scattered from coast to coast, continent to continent. Reader, if this issue is in your hands—thank the hardworking writers, editors, and designers who have been so willing to work from home under these unusual circumstances. I can’t say enough how grateful I am for such a wonderful community of people.

This sense of community is what makes Cornerstone meetings feel like home. But home can mean so many things. I feel at home talking with friends over granola bowls at Andrews. I feel at home laughing with my suitemates late into the night. I feel at home with my family in Georgia, speaking a jumbled hybrid of Korean and English. But there is a Home which is somehow more than all of this. A Home beyond any of our best imaginings. That Home is God—God, who hung on a cross and forgave us as we mocked him,

who called us home to his love even as we rejected him. Our hearts are restless, St. Augustine wrote, until they rest in him.

In this issue, our staff writers approach the theme of “home” in different ways, but every piece ultimately orients us to God. Join us in marveling at the goodness of God’s creation, which is our shared here-and-now home. Imagine the spiritual journey as a passage through mansions of the soul, the way St. Teresa does in *The Interior Castle*. Reflect on the role of the Church and the way it points us to our eternal home with God. Meditate on the sacredness of the ordinary in Marilynne Robinson’s novel *Home*.

This issue opens with “Always [September 2018],” a poem Kaitlan Bui wrote just days into her first year at Brown, having left home far behind for college. Waiting to welcome you home at the issue’s end (so to speak) is “Always [March 2020],” a response poem Kaitlan wrote in her sophomore spring. We hope that from the issue’s start to its finish, you’ll see that God is our always. He is the constant in times of uncertainty and chaos. He is the rock that is higher, the cornerstone upon which we stand.

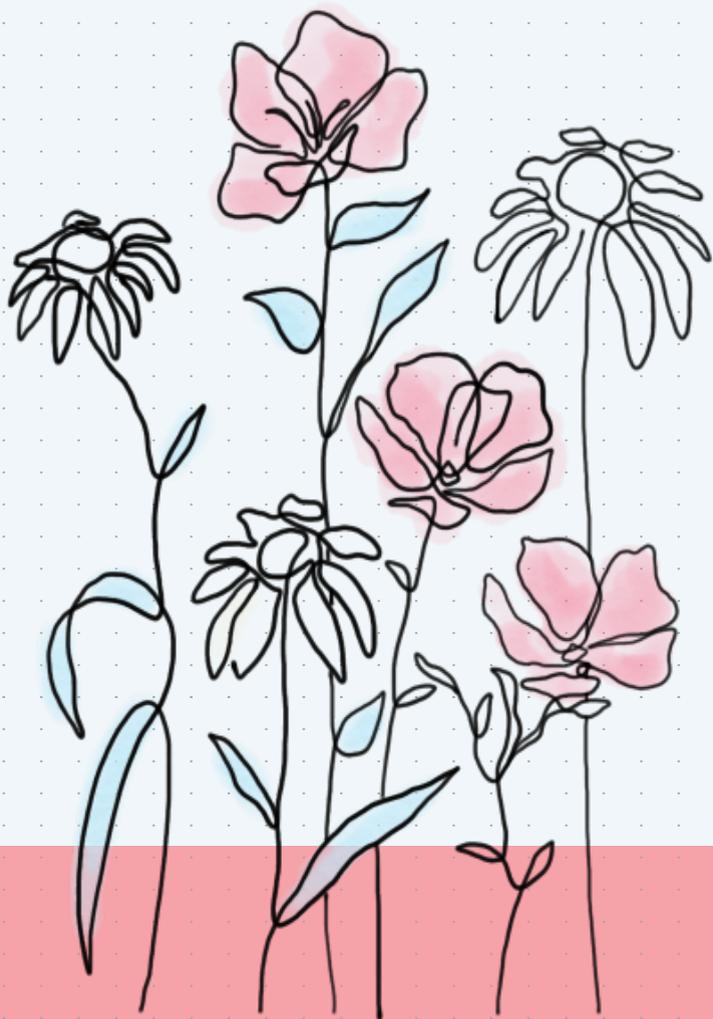
No matter where you are, no matter who you are, God is inviting you to come in. God is inviting you to come Home.

Yours truly,



Naomi Kim is a junior at Brown studying English.

Kaitlan Bui



ALWAYS

[september 2018]

I stepped onto this campus,
Light-hearted, not expecting
Such doubts and insecurities
To so soon be erecting,
Rising as high as buildings
So unlike the ones before,
So different from the place I knew—
What was “home” anymore?
There were so many faces,
Cardboard cutouts, bland and dry:
“Hello, my name is so-and-so,”
“Good day,” and then “goodbye.”
While other people smiled,
I began to feel alone—
While everyone was having fun,
I was just missing home.
There was so much opportunity,
So much I didn’t want to waste,
But I wanted to be able to
Savor, not just to taste.
And so I called on God to use
The soil in my heart
To grow a little seed, to let
A faithful patience start.
And as I let the burden go,
And as I simply breathed,
I realized that some prayer is
All that I really need.
For friendship calls for patience,
And true love requires time,
And comfort and self-confidence
Are all born in the mind.
There do exist good people,
And kindness is in the air.
There’s hope and opportunity,
There is wonder everywhere,
Sometimes it takes some patience,
But just put your hand in His—
He’ll lead you as your Shepherd
And you will not go amiss.
I’m learning that He loves me
And that He’s devised a plan,
That I simply must follow
And obey His guiding hand.
He looks after the sparrows,
So I know I’ll be okay,
That though the world assails me,
God will always make a way.

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

After my first official week of college, I could barely breathe: I was overwhelmed, tired, lost, lonely. Who knew that Brown would feel so much like an “in-between,” a place of inconstancies and impossibilities? I was stuck on a tiresome hamster wheel of insecurity: I would never find friends; I missed home; I didn’t know where I belonged.

But that weekend, the Lord reminded me that I need not fear. After my first meeting at Cornerstone—the publication that produced the magazine you now hold in your hands—I ran back to my dorm and scribbled down this poem in five minutes. I hadn’t known there was such a community of believers at Brown. So this was what it felt like to have a “lifted spirit.” I could feel it literally—a weight in my heart being replaced by hope. I was so encouraged.

This poem references prayer as “all that I really need.” While I realize that the Christian life is much more than just prayer, I was experiencing a prolonged “moment” of insecurity, rejection, and loneliness. I needed to remind myself that my ultimate source of strength is God—that He, not my friends or family, should be the first One I turn to in desperation. In the same way, the line about comfort and self-confidence being “born in the mind” is not meant to invalidate the realness of our hope in Christ, which exists independent of our emotions and/or our ever-doubtful thoughts. Instead, it speaks to the world-oriented perspective I had of myself, which I was constantly comparing to the people around me. Such a lack of confidence, I hoped to tell myself, was the result of listening to the negative voice inside my mind—not the truth of the Gospel. Bombarded by feelings of instability and the desire to autonomously plan out my future, I reminded myself that only God knows the plans He

has for me (Jeremiah 29:11). In other words, I “simply [had to] follow and obey” Him.

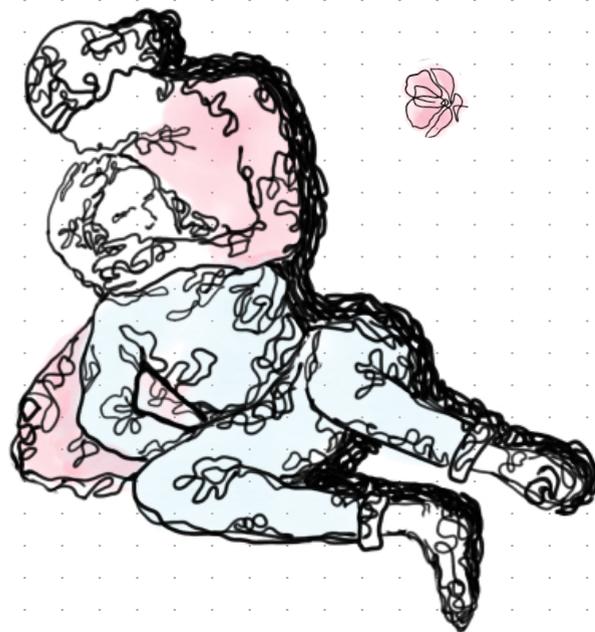
Ultimately, the poem was written as a self-reminder to seek God and surrender all to Him. “Always [September 2018]” is the first part of a two-part poem. Located at the very end of this edition is the second half, which is a response poem. Although many things have changed, God remains the Always.

The last line of “Always [September 2018]” alludes to a song that my mom shared with me before I left for college: “God Will Always Make a Way” by Don Moen. While it played on her phone, I sat crying next to my unpacked suitcases, cradled in her arms. “I won’t be able to be with you anymore,” my mom told me. “But God will, like He’s always been. I am not afraid because I know God loves you more than I do.”

And as mothers often are, she was right. God loves me infinitely. And because he is the One Constant in a world of such inconstancy, He is my Home.

As He is yours.

Kaitlan Bui is a sophomore at Brown studying English.



Illustrated by Claire Lin '23

guiding you home

Grace Kim



When we come home, the first thing my family does is take off our shoes: it's hygienic, freeing, and tradition. Plus, I can tell who's home with no exchange of words!

We see feet being mentioned in the Bible in many contexts, but "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" is a familiar verse. Psalm 119:105 is a much needed reminder that God has graciously given us a guide. If we seek His wisdom given through His word, we can reflect on our past steps and carefully discern what our next steps should be.

Because I'm with people I love when I'm home, I associate being barefoot with a safe haven and feeling comfortably vulnerable. Regardless of where I am or what I'm doing, my feet and I know that my final destination is home. Similarly, there's a constant force pulling me back to a spiritual shelter and to the path God wants me on. It's my responsibility to make my way back, take off my shoes, and know I'm home.

Grace Kim is a freshman at Brown studying Child Development and Visual Art.

HOMECHURCH

Chaelin Jung



Sunlight, Kristen Marchetti '22

I still remember the way my first church smelled—of old books, the mingling of flowery perfume and smoky cologne, the sweetness of the donuts left out at the greeting table. *Church*: Sunday-best clothes, tithe money from my parents tucked into the pages of my Bible, and many, many potluck lunches. Later, *church* was the building across from my high school, with a perpetually freezing sanctuary, the cold mandating we bring jackets even in the thick triple-digit degree Arizona summers. *Church*: a place we went to on Sundays for an hour or so, a small piece of our lives already neatly tucked away by the time Monday morning had arrived.

The word “church” may conjure up images of a gym that is rented for Sunday worship or a baroque-style cathedral resonating with the sound of an august organ. It may be the kind Sunday school teacher that gave you your first Bible or it may be the pastor triumphantly brandishing his Bible in the air to declare the glory of God. Indeed, our perceptions of church are closely entangled with historical and cultural context.

Today, church can also be digital, and we live with more theological content available at our fingertips than ever before. More and more churches are recording their sermons and making them available online, articles on sites like *Desiring God* and *The Gospel Coalition* discuss seemingly every topic a Christian could ponder, and, of course, we can listen to hours and hours of worship music ourselves—all in the comfort of our walk to class, commute to work, or anywhere with an internet connection. We live in a cultural moment that prioritizes convenience and independence over all else. So at this moment, what is the role of the church? Or rather, what *should* be the role of the church, and why should we love it?

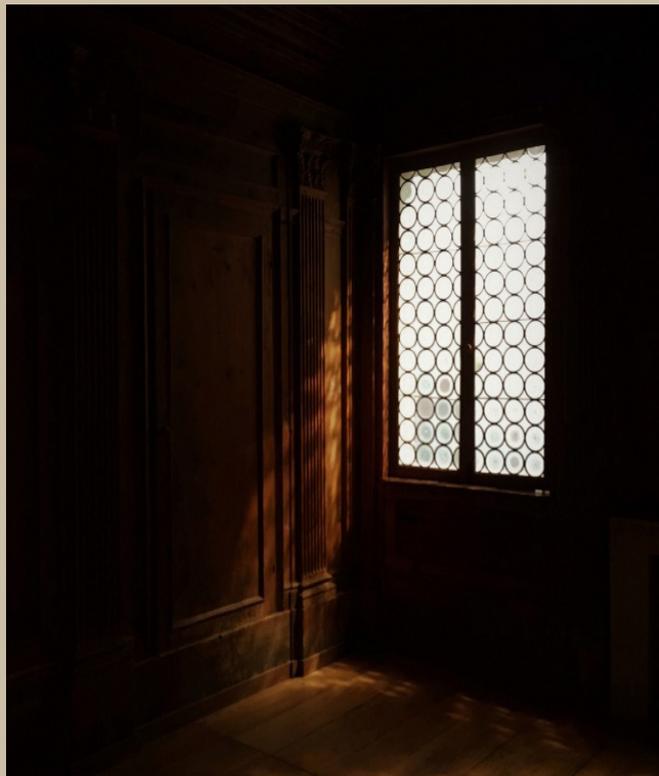
The Bible offers two pictures of the church: the body and the bride.

The Body

Christians are part of the body of Christ—both *body* as a single entity and *body* in the corporal sense—of which Jesus is the head (Ephesians 1:22-23). This metaphor is employed often throughout the New Testament, particularly in the Epistles, in which the Apostle Paul writes to various churches. For instance, in 1 Corinthians 12, Paul urges the Corinthian church to reject discord and embrace unity. Just as the body is comprised of multiple parts that each serve a vital purpose to overall function and health, the Church is made up of believers diverse in ethnicity, class, culture, and background who are made one through baptism by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13). We are equipped with diverse gifts, service, and activities—healing, helping, teaching, administrating—but are filled with the same Spirit and worship the same God, who also empowers those gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-6).

Insofar as the Church is the body and we are part of that body as Christians, we are called to love and serve it, not just for our sake but so that the world will see Christ. Paul says, “If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together” (1 Corinthians 12:26, ESV). This means Christians must serve their churches through time, energy, finances, and gifts. For many, this also means going through a church’s formal membership process—not to obtain some title or status but to mark both one’s commitment to the church and the church’s commitment to them. Christians must also practice global prayers: for the safety of brothers and sisters worshipping in China despite governmental persecution, for kingdom workers in Honduras striving to bring the hope of the gospel amidst gang violence and murder, for churches to be planted in an increasingly secular United Kingdom. It is through this love for each other and for this body, Jesus says, that the world will see his disciples (John 13:35).

Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. Ephesians 4:15-16 (ESV)



Window, Kristen Marchetti '22

The Bride

In biblical Jewish wedding tradition, after the groom and bride were betrothed, the groom would go away for an unknown length of time to prepare his house for his future wife. The bride would wait in anticipation for her groom to return, after which they would be in union forever. So then, the church is the bride of Christ. Jesus has ascended to heaven and is preparing the Father’s house for us (John 14:2). One day, he is returning for his church. Then, the church, in it all of its revealed glory, will be dressed in white robes before God as the “Bride, the wife of the Lamb” (Revelation 21:19, ESV); for the blood of the Lamb has washed away the crimson stain of our sin, rendering us pure and blameless before an infinitely righteous God.

The church’s identity as the Bride is also good news for us on this side of eternity—it is a promise of the full redemptive work of Jesus in justifying, sanctifying, and eventually glorifying his people through his blood shed on the cross. It pictures the truth that we ought to live

not in fear, but in perfect love, enjoying with Christ the same kind of intimacy and closeness shared by a groom and his bride. And it reminds us that we are sojourners in a foreign land who wait expectantly and eagerly for the day when Jesus returns for us.

Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure—for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. Revelation 19:7-8 (ESV)

This is the Church: the body and the bride of Christ. Christian life was never meant to be lived alone. During Jesus’s ministry on earth, he always sent out his disciples in pairs (Mark 6:7). Gospel-centered community is sweet and a tremendous blessing. But God’s church is more than a group of nice people doing nice things so people can feel nice about themselves: His church is the primary hands and feet through which He is glorified and made known in the world. Belonging to this church is a far greater calling than simply going to a building on Sunday mornings to sing praise songs and listen to a sermon. It’s a calling to *be* the church to each other—“stir[ring] up one another to love and good works” (Hebrews 10:24)—and to *be* the church to a world that so desperately needs to hear of the truth and beauty of the gospel.

At a university where the vast majority of students are from out of state, the sentiment of a home church—perhaps the one people grew up in or that their families attend—is particularly common. Also popular is the phrase “church home”; for example, when I went home for winter break after my first semester, I found myself saying, “Oh yeah at my church home in Providence...” Imbued in both of these phrases is the concept of home, of shared sense of belonging and familiarity. Without hesitation, I can say that my local church in Providence is my home for the eight or so months that I live here. I belong to them, and they to me.

The Church is ultimately a picture of the eternal home that we anticipate in heaven, where all God’s people will worship

in collective unity before His throne. But in the meantime, while we are foreigners in a land that we know is not our home, we seek solace and community in the church that God has provided us out of His grace. What glory that the intimacy of profound, late-night conversations about faith, the unrelenting intercessory prayers for overseas missions, the gleeful breaking of bread are all only momentary glimpses of the eternal home that is coming.

So we press on together in faith, serving and loving each other and the world. We praise God for this home away from home He has so graciously granted to us. And of course, the church is imperfect because it is made up of imperfect people. But much like the rays of light that beam through mosaics of stained glass in old cathedrals, His glory shines through our brokenness, and the Church—*His* Church—is being made beautiful.



Illustrated by Grace Kim '23

Chaelin Jung is a freshman at Brown studying Economics and International & Public Affairs.



AND HE SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD

Jeremy Wang

How should a Christian view the world? A simplistic answer: since the world is corrupted by sin and already passing, disregard it completely in favor of eternity with our perfect God. John the Evangelist makes this quite clear when he exhorts us to “not love the world or the things in the world,” since “if anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (1 John 2:15, ESV). Yet, if we flip back in our Bibles but a few hundred pages, this same John writes of our holy and perfect God: “He so loved the world that He gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16). What then are we to do?

We will explore here just a few of the many perspectives that Christians, those who believe above all that God deserves glory, take to address this problem, centered around the inherent goodness of creation and the corruption brought about by sin. Left untouched will be the thorny topic of the Christian creation story, which is undoubtedly important but is also, for our purposes, a distraction from the actual characterization of creation.¹ Having constructed a small bit of theory, we will also briefly discuss an application in the area of environmental stewardship, something which modern Christians often disregard.

Let us first cast our minds back to the last time when we consciously enjoyed life. For some this might be with friends at a dining hall table, enjoying the warmth of good company. Others might recall the startling beauty of gloomy Rhode Island when suddenly drenched in sunlight during golden hour.

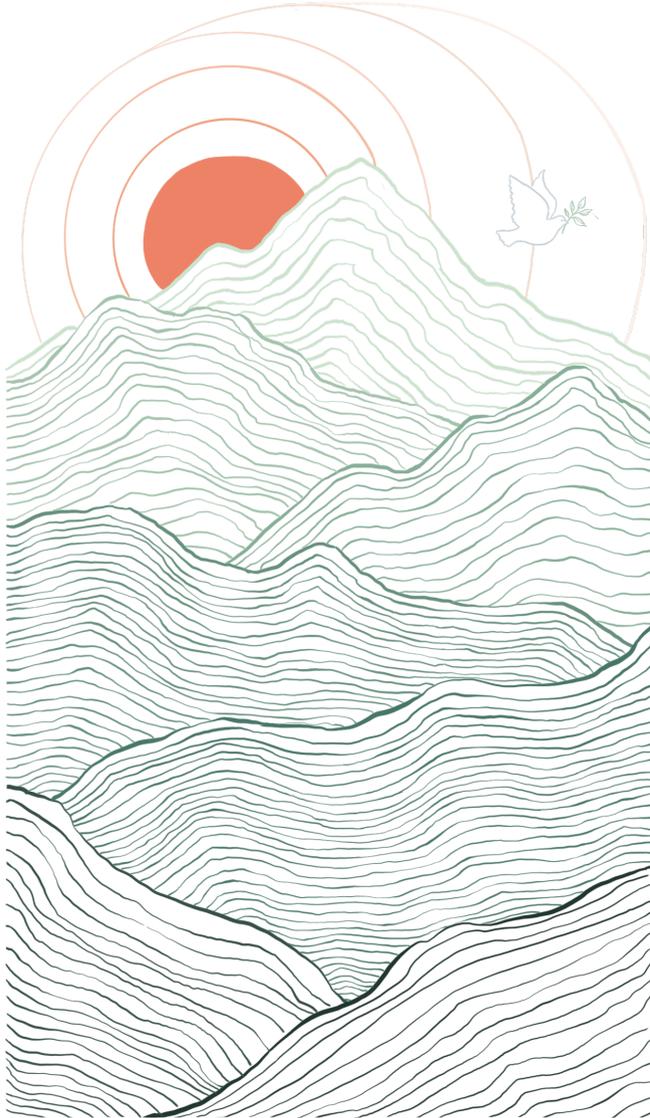
¹ The interested reader is encouraged to explore Hope McGovern’s “What the Bible Doesn’t Say about Human Origins” in our Fall 2019 issue.

Regardless, set aside for a moment the difficulties of life and the moments of mediocrity (we will come back to these soon enough), and remember that the world can be undeniably, irrevocably good. That this is true should not surprise the Christian; after all, God Himself approved of this creation even as He made it, saying again and again “it [is] good”. And once His work was done, He looked upon it all and proclaimed it “very good” (Genesis 1).

So we accept that the world can be good. But a question naturally arises: good...for what exactly? Does the world exist so that individual humans might enjoy the company of friends, live peaceful lives, and contribute to the betterment of humanity? While certainly noble and beautiful goals, these are insufficient and indeed not even the primary focus of God’s act of creation. For more complete answers, we may turn to just about anywhere in Scripture. Reveling in the presence of the Lord, David declares that “the heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge,” (Psalm 19:1-2). Elsewhere, the prophet Isaiah records the very angels of God singing, “the whole earth is filled with His glory!” (Isaiah 6:3). And even as the apostle Paul confronts God’s wrath, he stops to remind us that “His invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made” (Romans 1:20-21). Finally, the North African church father Saint Augustine summarizes the whole of Genesis in one beautiful sentence of worship: “For you, Lord, made the world from formless matter, and that formless matter that was almost nothing at all you made from nothing at all, intending to create from it all

the great things which fill us humans with wonder” (*Confessions* XII.8.8). This body of evidence should convince the Christian that the primary reason for creation, the purpose for which it is so good, is the greater glorification of God.

Stepping down from this high-level abstraction, we must ask ourselves: how exactly does creation glorify its Creator? Our senses and emotions easily provide us with a piece of the answer. Who among us will deny that the laws of nature are consistent,



that friendship is sweet, that little children are adorable, or that summer ice cream is delicious? Certainly a God who would think to place such things in His creation (and enable us to enjoy them) is good and worthy of praise, and we should worship Him because of these gifts. But thinking a step further, it cannot be that glorification comes only through humanity’s appreciation, or what reason would there be for every remote corner of the universe into which humanity cannot even see? Scripture acknowledges this as well, with Isaiah beseeching the very mountains and forests to break forth into song (Isaiah 42:8), and John the apostle describing “every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, ‘To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!’” (Revelation 5:13). Evidently, the mountains and forests cannot actually sing, and the creatures of the world cannot actually speak, but is it possible that their mere existence is a testimony to God’s nature, one that is wholly pleasing to Him? If God’s original creation was purely good, then perhaps simply being as God intended is a form of worship. And so, by heeding the laws of His creation, the nucleus of an atom, held together by the strong force, pleases God, as does the Andromeda Galaxy while it hurtles towards our home at 110 km/s.

Two objections quickly follow in the wake of this particular view of God’s creation. The first pertains to the truism that the world is not perfect, and this objection cannot be perfectly satisfied, though we will still spend some time acknowledging it. The second is the problem presented by a pervasive sense of mediocrity in the world, which breaks apart quickly under Christian theology.

Any person can look at the world and see plainly that the bad almost seems to outweigh the good. Wealth is so unevenly distributed that the world contains both those who must feed their families with mud and those who enjoy such abundance that their own bodies, adapted for scarcity, turn against them. This past year, we have watched disease burn across the entire globe, ravaging humanity’s most vulnerable. Long-standing racial injustices against America’s Black communities are still festering. And issues persist on a personal level as well. We fight with our friends and family for no better reason than to appease our fickle emotions, and even the best of us cannot eliminate daily hypocrisies and indignities.



All this seems to be very strong counter-evidence to the claim that the world is good, and indeed it is. Theologians throughout history have debated this so-called problem of evil,² so we will leave this topic to better thinkers and instead consider two simpler facts: the problem of evil should not be a surprise, and the problem of evil should not detract from the existence of goodness.

First, evil is so clearly described in Scripture that it seems almost counter-intuitive that we should only begin a discussion of it after two pages. In just the third chapter of the Bible, we are introduced to sin, which enters the world through Adam and Eve; exile from the Garden of Eden and the attendant difficulties of life follow (Genesis 3:23). Early Christian theologians extended this to a corruption of the whole natural world,³ a view supported by Paul, who describes the whole of creation groaning in the pains of childbirth (referring to the redemption of man, Romans 8:22). So the Christian acknowledges that the world is not perfect, that God is not a sadist who baked suffering into the nature of the world.

In the process of accepting this truth, however, we cannot forsake the world entirely. After all, it is still our home; recall that God loved it, and Paul does not even desire that we withdraw entirely according to 1 Corinthians 5:10. Instead, since we know first and foremost that the world is good, the evident existence of sin and brokenness should pain us even more and drive us even more towards a pursuit of return to that full goodness. Christians sometimes wonder why it is that God hates sin and suffering so much more than we do. Could it be that this is because we utterly fail to perceive God's full intention of perfection and so cannot even begin to fathom what is lost? We find it difficult to mourn as intensely as Scripture commands us (Matthew 5:4, James 4:8-9), not

because we have not witnessed or experienced enough adversity, but because we let that suffering pass by us while acknowledging neither its full horror nor the depths of beauty it

destroys.

And this leads us also to a sound critique of the perception of the world as neither good nor bad but perfectly average: mediocrity simply does not exist. When we pass our days staring into screens, building only shallow friendships (Delamerced, pp. 27-31), thoughtlessly eating, drinking, studying, and sleeping, we are guilty of a crime of ignorance. Having earlier argued that creation at every scope both sings soaring praises to God and staggers under the dark taint of sin, we cannot so much as brush our teeth without marveling at God who granted them to us and cursing the sin that brings them decay (1 Corinthians 15:42, 2 Corinthians 4:16). That is, the reason that we sometimes experience the world as relentlessly monotone is because we have lidded our eyes, willingly or not, to both beauty and brokenness.

So the Christian must passionately resist the lie that corruption and perceived triviality have stripped material things of their value, saying instead: each material thing has infinite value, but only because of the God which it glorifies. If we can accept this mindset, how ought we to live? We can find a particularly compelling application in human stewardship of the earth.

Christians have not been good at caring for our planet. Whether because of active opposition or mere indifference, evidence shows that the average Christian's concern for the environment has actually declined over the past few decades,⁴ mitigating any positive actions taken by figures such as Pope Francis. It is not for nothing that academics such as Lynn White consider Christianity's influence to be a primary impetus for modern exploitation of nature.⁵ But with our new theoretical framework in hand, we will see that critics like White actually deeply mischaracterize Christian perspectives on nature, and that our lack of concern for the planet gifted

2 Though not an academic theologian, C.S. Lewis wrote a great and well-known book on the topic, *The Problem of Pain*, which the reader is encouraged to use an access point for this debate.

3 Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa Theologia*, Question 85, Article 3.

4 Konisky, David. *The Greening of Christianity? A Study of Environmental Attitudes Over Time*. Environmental Politics (November 14, 2017).

5 White, Lynn. *The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis*. Science (1967).

to us by God is a tremendous failure on our part.

Criticism of Christianity's views on nature, of which we will take White to be representative, tend to focus on the so-called Dominion Mandate ("and let [mankind] have dominion over...all the earth," Genesis 1:26). and the perceived anthropocentric reduction of nature to mere tools for humanity.

Regarding the Dominion Mandate, we will speak only briefly. While it is plainly true that God has indeed granted us dominion over His creation, this does not give us free rein to do whatever we please. Only one chapter later, Scripture tells us that we were placed in creation not simply to have dominion but also to work *and* keep it (Genesis 2:15). And elsewhere in Scripture, our God actually provides explicit instructions for the management of land and prevention of its abuse (Leviticus 25:1-7). To say that Christianity grants us measure to exploit natural resources without concern for the consequences is simply an inaccurate depiction of God's intentions for humanity.

The claim that Christianity endorses a reductionist view of nature in which objects are only considered based on their practical utility to humankind is equally false.⁶ We have already seen that creation has intrinsic value to God and worships Him independently of human perception. Further, the Bible has an extensive record of imbuing nature with divine narratives, especially by building natural metaphors for various mysteries of God. We see this in examples ranging all across Scripture, from the burning bush and holy ground of Exodus to the mustard seed and fig tree parables told by Christ in the Gospels. Thus, a tree is neither simply a source of wood, nor a mere collection of atoms, nor a utilitarian carbon-scrubbing machine; its branches depict the shelter offered by the very Kingdom of God, its whole life helps us to understand the progression of God's work on earth, and its very essence is one which gives glory to God. Nature should be treated reverently, as a good and perfect gift from above, from the Father of lights (James 1:17).

Conservation of the environment must, then, be a major

⁶ Fundamentally, White and others feel that Christianity's categorization of humanity with God, which lifts mankind above the rest of nature, permits indifference during exploitation.

And so, by heeding the laws of His creation, the nucleus of an atom, held together by the strong force, pleases God.

priority for the Christian community. God has quite literally commanded us to do so, both for the sake of our personal understanding of His nature and for the sake of the worship it offers directly to Him. Hence, our warping of His created order through pollution, exploitation, and general destruction is a tremendous failure.

But as we conclude, let us be careful not to venture too far. We have taken a brief but dense excursion away from our core message that creation is good, so let us take a moment to reflect once more on all that is beautiful and enjoyable in the world. We should be able to convince ourselves that these things imply the world is worthy of our love (after all, it was worthy of God's love), but we must also impose some conditions. John warns against such love because it may overtake our love of the One who created it all, and we propose in this final paragraph a solution to this problem. Recall that Christianity is not about this world; rather, it cares primarily about the life, death, and resurrection of one man, Jesus Christ, who was also fully God, so that we might enter into a *new* world (Revelation 21:1). Even as we love this world, respecting and appreciating its wonders, let us never forget that all its good is perceived but as through a glass darkly. The day will come when the new world arrives and His grace permits us to step into the City of God, our true home. On that day, sin and suffering will be no more, and He will once again declare that all is good.

Acknowledgement: this was inspired by Justin Hawkins' lecture at the Augustine Collective Conference 2020.

Jeremy Wang is a sophomore at Brown studying Math-CS.

Illustrated by Jocelyn Salim '23.



hiding place

In this work I wanted to show the idea of being at peace and at rest in the midst of chaos and mess. While everybody else seems to always be working towards their next goal, I personally value a slow pace of life and find comfort in the pauses of a rapid and hectic lifestyle. Though my surroundings seem to be a mess, somehow I find the folds on the blanket and the mattress—as well as the clothes, books and bags strewn all over—comforting and cozy. Looking back at this work, perhaps it has a certain religious connotation about finding peace in God in the storms of life.

Jocelyn Salim is a freshman at RISD studying Illustration.





THE INTERIOR CASTLE

Kristen Marchetti

Hall, Kristen Marchetti '22

“I thought of the soul as resembling a castle, formed of a single diamond or a very transparent crystal, and containing many rooms, just as in heaven there are many mansions.”

St. Teresa of Ávila (1515-1622) was a Spanish nun and mystic known for her teachings on contemplation and austerity. She led the Carmelite Reform, promoting stronger adherence to religious practice in the Carmelite mendicant order of the Roman Catholic Church. In 1588, she wrote *The Interior Castle* in response to a vision she had about the human soul containing seven mansions. This major text in Catholic theology explores one’s spiritual journey with God and continues to be a meditative source for Catholics today.

In *The Interior Castle*, St. Teresa envisions the human soul as a series of mansions. The palace of mansions is a divine place to be, so rich in beauty that its true splendor is not fully comprehensible to humans. We cannot grasp the true magnificence of the castle because it is made by God and filled with His presence. Through the metaphor of the interior castle, St. Teresa suggests that our souls are beautiful and vast, imbued with God’s light. God is always close, contained inside each of our own bodies. Even if we cannot fully grasp the sublime within us, God is present in every soul. As the Bible teaches, “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16, ESV).

St. Teresa describes how the palace of seven mansions is arranged concentrically in the soul, such that entry to one mansion is gained only by passing through its antecedent. At the center of the interior castle is the seventh mansion, the most sacred dwelling. The mansions are organized above and around the seventh mansion in the form of a crystal.

St. Teresa’s meditation on the interior palace is fixed upon the idea that the seventh mansion is the ultimate destination of our spiritual journey on earth. In this mansion, we live in greatest harmony with God. The seventh mansion “is the principal chamber in which God and the soul hold their most secret intercourse” as in “a second heaven” on earth.

Before one can gain access to the seventh mansion, however, one must enter each of the preceding six mansions in order. Not everyone finds a way into the castle; some remain outside of the palace walls, distracted by temporal affairs of the world. It is through prayer and meditation that we shift our focus to God

and His teachings and thereby gain entry to the interior castle.

Once within the divine palace of one’s soul, one commences the spiritual journey to grow closer to God. The first two mansions constitute the purgative stage of this process, in which the journeyer actively prays to God and relinquishes sin to follow his Word. Time is spent in the rooms of self-knowledge and humility, two pillars of St. Teresa’s teachings essential to one’s relationship with God. Though individuals may still struggle to release worldly attachments to fully appreciate the sanctity of the castle, they grow closer to God in this stage. Entrance to the second mansion marks greater learning about God’s teachings such as the importance of prayer and abstinence from sin.

The spiritual journey becomes more contemplative as one enters into stronger communication with God through divine prayer after leaving the second mansion. The journeyer inhabits the third and fourth mansions in the illuminative stage, learning to become God-fearing and selfless in order to eventually develop a deeper relationship with God.

Finally, the pilgrim reaches the unitive stage, traveling through mansions five through seven. One practices the Prayer of union and of quiet in the fifth mansion, beginning to relinquish ephemeral affairs of the world and experience wonder at God’s kingdom. In the sixth mansion, the soul may undergo suffering out of increased desire to enter the final mansion. Those who surpass this inner struggle with persistent faith gain access to the seventh mansion to completely unite with God. In this mansion, as in heaven, God alone dwells. One may thus experience “a second heaven” on earth, witnessing great truth and revelation.

At the beginning of her book St. Teresa states, “I thought of the soul as resembling a castle, formed of a single diamond or a very transparent crystal, and containing many rooms, just as in heaven there are many mansions.” She envisions the soul as a crystal capable of reflecting God’s light, truth, and beauty. However, the temptation to sin may cause the crystal to blacken so that it can no longer shine. St. Teresa states that one can clean the diamond by asking God for His forgiveness. The soul need not stay dimmed; one can turn to God’s light just as one can progress through the mansions of the interior castle through prayer and intention.

Kristen Marchetti is a sophomore at Brown studying History of Art and Architecture and Visual Art.

THE HOLY ORDINARY IN MARILYNNE ROBINSON'S *HOME*

Naomi Kim



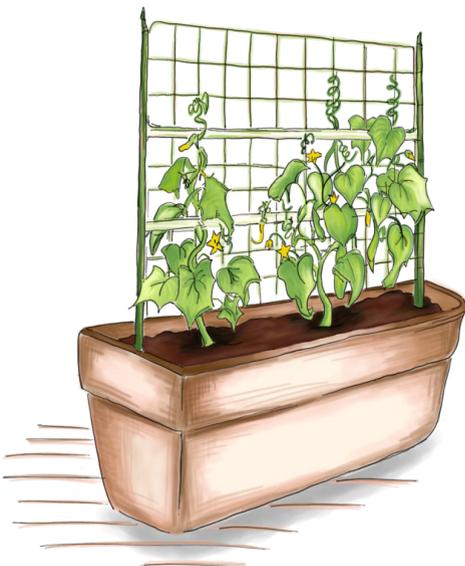
Patio, Kristen Marchetti '22

“What does it mean to come home?” wonders Glory, the youngest of the now grown Boughton children. For Glory, coming home is a type of failure, a disappointment: she has returned to the small town of Gilead because her engagement has been broken off. Gone are her dreams of marriage, of a house and a family of her own. Instead, Glory finds herself taking care of the old Boughton house and her frail father, the Presbyterian Reverend Robert Boughton.

But Glory is not the only Boughton who comes home in Marilynne Robinson’s novel. Glory’s older brother Jack, the misfit in his well-behaved and pious family, also makes an unexpected return to the family home. For years, Reverend Boughton has prayed for his wayward son to come home and to come to faith, while Jack has spent his long absence from home falling into various sorts of trouble. When he turns up on the doorstep at last, he is a “thin, weary, unkempt man...reluctant even to step through the door.” Yet Jack is met with warmth and grace just as he is, much as the prodigal son in Jesus’s parable is met with his father’s unconditional love and joyous welcome. The father in this parable embodies the Christian idea of grace: the unearned love and mercy that God freely bestows upon people.

Though there is certainly grace in the way Jack is welcomed home, there is also a good deal of graceless human imperfection. Reverend Boughton's fumbling attempts to connect with his son frequently fall short. Jack, despite his deep longing to belong, continues to feel out of place and sometimes relapses into destructive habits. Struggling with his seeming inability to believe in God, he grapples with the state of his soul and the disapproval of his father's closest friend, the minister John Ames. It is in Jack that Robinson shows the painful reality of sin and the way it stains our lives.

And yet, amidst this brokenness, Robinson illuminates something beautiful and holy in the ordinary day-to-day. Very little happens in *Home* by way of plot. No wildly dramatic events unsettle Gilead; no one moment serves as a startling climax. Instead, the rhythms and chores of ordinary life form the backdrop of the slowly unspooling story of family and grace—and these rhythms and chores are what slowly bring Jack and Glory together. At first, Glory finds that the intervening years since she last saw Jack have made her brother a stranger to her. But household activities provide a means through which Jack is somehow enfolded back into the family. Watching Jack at work, Glory realizes “[h]e used to live here, and he knew how things were done,” despite the fact that “it had somehow never seemed to her that the place had his attention.” He tends “with particular care” the overgrown garden where the Boughton children once played. He helps Glory care for their father, whose age and illness have left him dependent on others.



In *Home*, the ordinary is intimately holy, infused with a grace that draws two grieving, lonely people into empathy and love. Jack and Glory overcome their initial wariness and awkwardness as they meet one another in the midst of chores. It is while Glory gives Jack a haircut that



Illustrated by Claire Lin '23

In *Home*, the ordinary is intimately holy, infused with a grace that draws two grieving, lonely people into empathy and love.

he confesses, “I’m so tired of myself,” and she pauses to wipe away her battered brother’s tears. It is as Glory irons a shirt of his that she finally learns of the woman he loves. Everyday drudgery and housekeeping become moments to be fully known—and moments to fully trust—in brokenness, in sadness, in desperation.

This sense of togetherness and trust emerges throughout *Home* via another ordinary activity grounded in the domestic: the cooking and sharing of food. There is, of course, a dinner to welcome the prodigal son home, complete with roast, biscuits, and potatoes. But it is in meals far simpler, far more ordinary, that Robinson really illuminates family intimacy. Meals are a grace extended to the wayward and the wounded, telling them that they are not alone and that they are loved. “After every calamity of any significance,” Glory recalls, her mother would bake or cook to say, “This house has a soul that loves us all,” and to offer “peace...and amnesty.” And Glory herself ministers to both her brother and father through meals. She prepares chicken and dumplings when a particularly rough night for the family leaves Jack and their father “laid low by grief, as if it were a sickness.” There is no better way, Glory decides, “to announce the return of comfort and well-being except by cooking something fragrant.” Gathering at the table, despite everything, is a balm in Gilead for the wounded, for the sin-sick soul.¹

What does it mean to come home, then? For Glory and for Jack, coming home involves acknowledging grief and brokenness. It involves trusting and loving through the ins and outs of daily life. It is the truth that there is nothing too big and nothing too small for grace. And in this truth, Robinson gives us a glimpse

¹ This line refers to the refrain from the traditional African American spiritual, “There is a Balm in Gilead.”



Sun, Kristen Marchetti '22

Sun - Kristen Marchetti - 12/19/16

of the Gospel. The way *Home* is rooted in the quotidian calls to mind the way Jesus's ministry is also deeply immersed in the ordinary. To illustrate the kingdom of God, Jesus draws not on grand, fantastic imagery but on metaphors familiar to the everyday lives of his audience. He talks about sowing fields, throwing wedding banquets, and baking bread. He tells stories about a lost coin, a mustard seed, and a wandering sheep. Even some of his miracles address rather ordinary concerns. His first miracle, for instance, involves turning water into wine, providing a way for wedding festivities to continue and sparing the host the embarrassment of having run out of drink.

Moreover, Glory's use of food to minister to her family echoes the ways Jesus feeds the hungry both spiritually and literally. He provides food for the clamoring crowds that seek him out for healing, and later he fries fish on a shore for his

tired disciples. In eating with all sorts of outcasts, from tax collectors to prostitutes, he declares his love for them. Jesus's deep and sacrificial love is on full display in yet another meal: the Lord's Supper. He breaks bread, shares wine, and invites all to his table. Taste and see, indeed, that the Lord is good.

Jack and Glory, throughout *Home*, learn to be present with one another, living alongside one another and learning about one another. Jesus is very much God present among the people, God *with* the people, living alongside us so we might truly learn who he is. From Jesus's example and from Robinson's novel, we are reminded to be present with one another in the ordinary things. We are reminded that even the humble and the humdrum can truly be holy.

Naomi Kim is a junior at Brown studying English.



"Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them ... [they] are looking for the city to come."
Hebrews 11:16, 13:14 (NIV)

the City to come

Claire Lin

Claire Lin is a freshman at Brown studying Biology and Visual Art.



days we share

Days We Share

Joseph Delamerced

Share one fun fact about yourself!

Are you kidding me?

What you're supposed to be reading is a piece about friendship. I had hoped that what I wrote was a way to connect with others. There are many books and articles on the topic from authors like Aristotle and C.S. Lewis, but the most important ones are those we have penned in our hearts with our close friends. Yet what does that word "friendship" mean, and what purpose does it hold?

After much discussion with friends, coworkers, teachers, and mentors, I felt the need to write. I think that many people feel compelled to express their truths in the form most accessible to them, whether that be prose, paintings, or any other form of art. While I wrote, I felt that I was pushing a clear and logical form of what friendship meant—what it conceived of, who should be involved in it, how it should operate. The more I wrote, the more it seemed so clear, as if the complexity of friendship was unwinding before me. I found that God had much to say about the nature of friendship, and I began to incorporate verses from the Bible into the piece.

I finished writing, and then none of it made sense anymore. I hit a wall.

When I returned to the piece, I found myself at home. It was March, and I realized that the piece I originally prepared did not feel as applicable nor as helpful given the current pandemic. I must be honest even further: when I started writing, I did not think I was qualified to talk about friendship. That must sound contradictory, considering I've positioned myself as some kind of knowledgeable person on the topic and one who is eager to discuss it.

It's not exactly a good look for a writer who wants to expound

about friendship to admit this. It would be even worse if I begin to tell you that I might be hypocritical, that I might be able to provide sound advice yet be unable to apply it to my life. And it would be outright bad if I said that all of that was true. I hope your image of me hasn't become too tarnished, yet.

When my sophomore year began, my best friend from high school and I stopped talking. Yet I still thought it wise to write all about what friendship meant, using complicated words and fascinating ideas. In February, I had finished writing the article. I called it, "Biblical Friendship," and then I renamed it, "Is There A Good Way to Struggle?", and then, exasperated, I renamed it "Untitled." I read, reviewed, revised, and read it again. I didn't like it.

"This sucks," I whispered aloud. In the basement of a library affectionately called the SciLi, I expected people at the desks near me to react and say, "Oh, dude, stop that, man. It's good, for real." But it's a Sunday night, so everyone else has headphones or AirPods in and are busy studying for actual classes or accomplishing important tasks. I buried my face in my hands.

"Who would even like this?" Certainly not me, and I wrote it.

I wanted to call one of my friends and talk through the creative process, or maybe just complain that life has been hard as of late. A lot of my friends at Brown are, shockingly (this is sarcastic), involved in STEM, so I like to call people back from my hometown in Cincinnati when it comes to more creative projects. Now what was ahead of me was, truly, a mundane task. Not the writing—but the act of calling a friend. I needed to: (1) take out my phone, (2) unlock it, (3) open the Phone app, (4) scroll through my contacts, and (5) call someone. This was not a complicated process. I packed my things, got on the Brown shuttle back to my dorm, and put on my headphones.

I finished step 1: take out my phone. I saw the date on the lock screen. And I have one of those old iPhones because I get scared when a new iPhone costs the same as a new computer, so I have to use Touch ID to unlock my phone. I put my thumb on the home button, and my phone flashed, “Try again,” and I looked at my phone and groaned. I looked at my lock screen again and saw the date. Today was February 9.

Two days ago was February 7, and I had a busy Friday. Those days have typically been busy for me this semester, but on this particular day was my birthday. My friends celebrated with me, and it was a nice day. On Friday evenings, I go to a Christian fellowship called The Branch. I love going there, and they had something special planned for me. It was sweet.

It was a good day, and I was entirely upset. All I could think of is another special celebration that would occur in one week.

I’m jumping ahead too quickly. Let me go back to winter break.

In January, I visited a few of my teachers from high school. I love catching up with them and hearing what they’ve been up to. Walking through the halls, I passed by a younger student and she stopped and asked me, “Hey! How’s college?” I delivered my normal spiel, but she quickly followed up with: “How’s your best friend? You guys were inseparable.”



Way Back Home, Ashley Yae '23

How is she? I wasn’t sure. We hadn’t spoken to one another in six months.

“She’s doing well! College is hard, but I know she’s doing her best.”

And I moved on. I went home, and I read all these books and articles and all this other nonsense, hoping to understand what was happening. The more memories I reflected on, the more I realized how much I missed her.

That is why on February 9, when I tried unlocking my phone, seeing the date reminded me even more of this friend who shaped who I was. “Hurt” is not an apt word to describe what I felt, but neither is “frustrated.” It was a feeling of anxiety, of not knowing why talking to each other got so hard and of having an empty hope that things would improve.

On February 15, I sent her a happy birthday text. I told her that I hope all is well. I closed my phone, and I went back to writing about friendship, trying to figure out what it all meant.

Only a month later, I returned home to Cincinnati as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. I found it funny that after all that work, all my thoughts about friendship would have to fundamentally change. Relationships through a screen function and develop much differently than the ones we forge through personal interactions. I spent the next few days sleeping late and sleeping in, not having much to look forward to.

A few days later, I received a text:

Hey, just wanted to let you know my family and I are thinking about you rn. When I think of our memories together, I start to cry.

Please stay safe.

The notification felt so familiar even though I had not received a text from her in months. I smiled, and then I cried. I couldn’t wait to catch up with her. We picked up right where we left off.

I really miss you, dude. I’m really, really glad to hear from you.

There are many questions you might have, and there is not enough space here for me to share the significance and gravity of this moment. Allow me to begin the discussion: why could I not write my piece on friendship?

I kept writing as if one had an immense amount of control over how relationships are chosen. Indeed, we may become picky with our close friendships, desiring only to get closer to people we truly love spending time with. But how many stories do you have in which you've grown closer to others by accident? How did you expect to forge your relationships in college, and how surprised were you when they did not turn out at all in the way you expected? "Surprised" might not be the word that comes to mind—maybe grateful is a better one.

These wonderful, close friends become integral to our lives, like a sunspot that hits us on a cold day, warming us up amidst the frost. It's such a sweet feeling—one that we would rather not give up. Sometimes we're bad at making sure these relationships thrive, and sometimes we're bad at even starting any new ones at all. In friendship, it is easy to not know how to open up honestly with one another. We prioritize the wrong things to talk about. God calls us to have friendships that matter, but often we ignore this advice. When we do start to trek into that unfamiliar territory of vulnerability, we stumble. We overshare, we share too little, we do not engage with what the other is saying, we make up excuses of why we cannot meet up with one another, and then all of a sudden, we just stop listening all together. We're the only ones talking. So, our friendships crumble.

But crumbling does not mean that a friendship has ended. There is miscommunication, hurt feelings, unspoken words, but all of these and many more are resolvable. It takes time. It takes prayer. It takes a level of trust that is difficult to step into, but to receive a text like "I am thinking of you," is so simple yet filled with such remarkable joy. I missed talking to her. Amidst losing family members to COVID-19, struggling with online classes, and desperately scrambling to replace my cancelled internship, I found that having just one friendship open up once more was the best thing that could have happened during this pandemic. It is beautiful and cathartic to reconnect with someone that you should have laughed with and spoken to a long time ago.

God put people in your life for so many reasons. Every interaction you have had is no accident, and each one continues to build you up in unique ways—some of which we don't yet see. God desires and intends for all of us to grow up in fellowship and in community with one another. When God made us in His image and likeness, He wanted each of us to reflect

who He is. To reflect the character of our Creator is to reflect love. To put that into practice is to build meaningful connections.

Trusting God is a multifaceted idea that is simple in word, difficult in practice. A new facet that I have learned is trusting that He is even guiding my social life. Every person I meet is someone that matters deeply to God, and so I must trust that every friendship I build is guided by His hand. While we are flawed human beings with insecurities that affect our relationships, we must trust that God created each of us with the same spirit of giving, of loving, and of unconditionally caring for each other in the hardest of times. Times like these, perhaps.

It's always a good idea to reach out to someone and let them know they are loved. It is never wrong. More importantly, I'd

It is beautiful and cathartic to reconnect with someone that you should have laughed with and spoken to a long time ago.

like to stress further that you have always been loved and have always had access to a friendship that you may not have even been aware of. You have many friends and significant relationships, but there is one that is even greater and sweeter than a sunspot on a cold day.

There are many examples I like to share about the beauty of friendship, but my favorite ones come from the Bible. They feel unexpected, as if I somehow thought that a social life is not outlined in the Bible, but God knows how important and how fundamental it is for us to forge strong connections with others. In John 15, a man named Jesus Christ, the son of God, addresses His followers and calls them His friends. By calling them His friends, he endorses the nature of friendship and encourages them to pursue it. He is not talking to them in a static point of time; His words resonate to us in the present. He wants us to realize, in full, what being in a loving friendship is like. We find such fulfilling relationships with people from all walks of life, and yet Jesus tells us of a unique friendship that means much more: the one we have with our Creator.

The friendship we enter into with God has limitless patience, infinite love, and insurmountable amounts of empathy. That is the beauty of the ultimate friendship with Jesus. He is constantly available for us, constantly reaching out to us, constantly giving us advice, and He even left us a whole book outlining how we should pursue Him and get to know Him better. He cares for us, empathizes with us, hears us when we cry. At times, He will simply sit and wait with us as we talk. And He will remind us, in grand and small gestures, how much He loves us. God's love is, ultimately, outlined in John 15:13 (NIV), which says, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends."

Christ did this for us. He made the ultimate sacrifice to save us. There's something to apply here, but it is not to actively risk our lives all the time for someone else. However, there is one question to ask yourself: are you willing to sacrifice our most valuable resources for each other—your time and energy? Are you open to talking to someone else about a complicated idea for a while?

Or would you rather sit and work and ignore that?

We have obligations as students, as teachers, as caretakers, as sons and daughters, and as many other roles. Yet we cannot simply "pause" our obligations—whether as a Christian or, simply, as a good friend.

I encourage you: reach out to someone. There doesn't need to be a pandemic or other crisis to have an excuse to talk to someone. Strengthen the relationships you have. Do not let your mind drift to considerations and anxieties about your work, or your internship, or your classes. Let it drift to comfort and safety amidst the friendships that matter: the relationships with people we continue to hold dear, and the relationship with God, our Creator and our Friend. So I encourage you: go, and love your friends.

I'd like to impart one last piece of insight from what I originally wrote regarding friendship. While I found good ideas from this long, unpolished essay from a different time, it is still written by a man struggling to understand why friendship can be so beautiful to be part of yet heartbreaking to experience at times. I discovered something in it that warrants sharing, especially in as challenging and as complex of times like these. When I wrote this in February, I did not know how true it would ring today.





Bad days aren't just things of the past. They're always just in front of us, too. 2 Timothy warns that we shouldn't be naïve and that difficult times are ahead of us. We will continue to be thrown curveballs. It might be with our careers, or our families, or our communities. Things will change, and they will be hard to face. Long days are ahead.

But they are days that we will share. God does not want us to face the world alone. We can't do it. We're not able to overcome trials and pain and heartbreak and hurt and the whole mess of things by ourselves. Deep down, God planted that feeling to find friendship within us. It's an integral part of our humanness to not just want, but to need a shoulder to cry on after a long, long day. In Genesis, God first made Adam alone. And yet, God knew that Adam, who kept to himself every day for twenty four hours, lacked something so key in his life. He saw something that was not good. And so, He made a companion. It is clear, then, that to enter into and delight in friendship is to reflect how God made us.

Joseph Delamerced is a sophomore at Brown studying Health and Education.

ALWAYS

[march 2020]

Kaitlan Bui

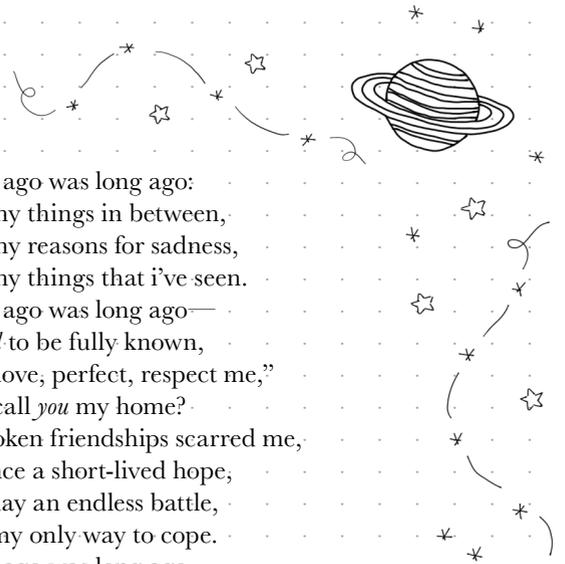


Lanterns, Hope McGovern '19

a year ago was long ago:
so many things in between,
so many reasons for sadness,
so many things that i've seen.
a year ago was long ago—
i *longed* to be fully known,
“like, love, perfect, respect me,”
can I call *you* my home?
yet broken friendships scarred me,
romance a short-lived hope,
each day an endless battle,
tears my only way to cope.
a year ago was long ago,
one year too much for me—
lost faith in the Impossible,
feet sinking in the sea.

then somewhere in the darkness
(i don't know when; i don't know how)
He said, “come, you of little faith,”
“come here and come right now.”
i didn't go, i didn't hear,
too weak and too afraid,
a thirsty woman at a well
who believed she couldn't be saved.
but in my wretched unbelief
He wrapped me in His grace,
showed me His nail-pierced body,
my impurities erased.

even darkness is not dark to You,
and the night is bright as day;
there is brokenness and yet such joy
only because You say
a year is but a mist to You;
You love eternally.
there are no pre-conditions and
there is no in-between.
i'm fully known *and* fully loved:
no matter where i roam,
i of such feeble, flimsy faith
can find in You my Home.



Luke 8:17
Matthew 14:30

John 6:44
Matthew 14:28-33
Matthew 11:28

John 4

John 20:27
Isaiah 43:25

Psalms 139:12

James 4:14
Jeremiah 31:3

Psalms 139

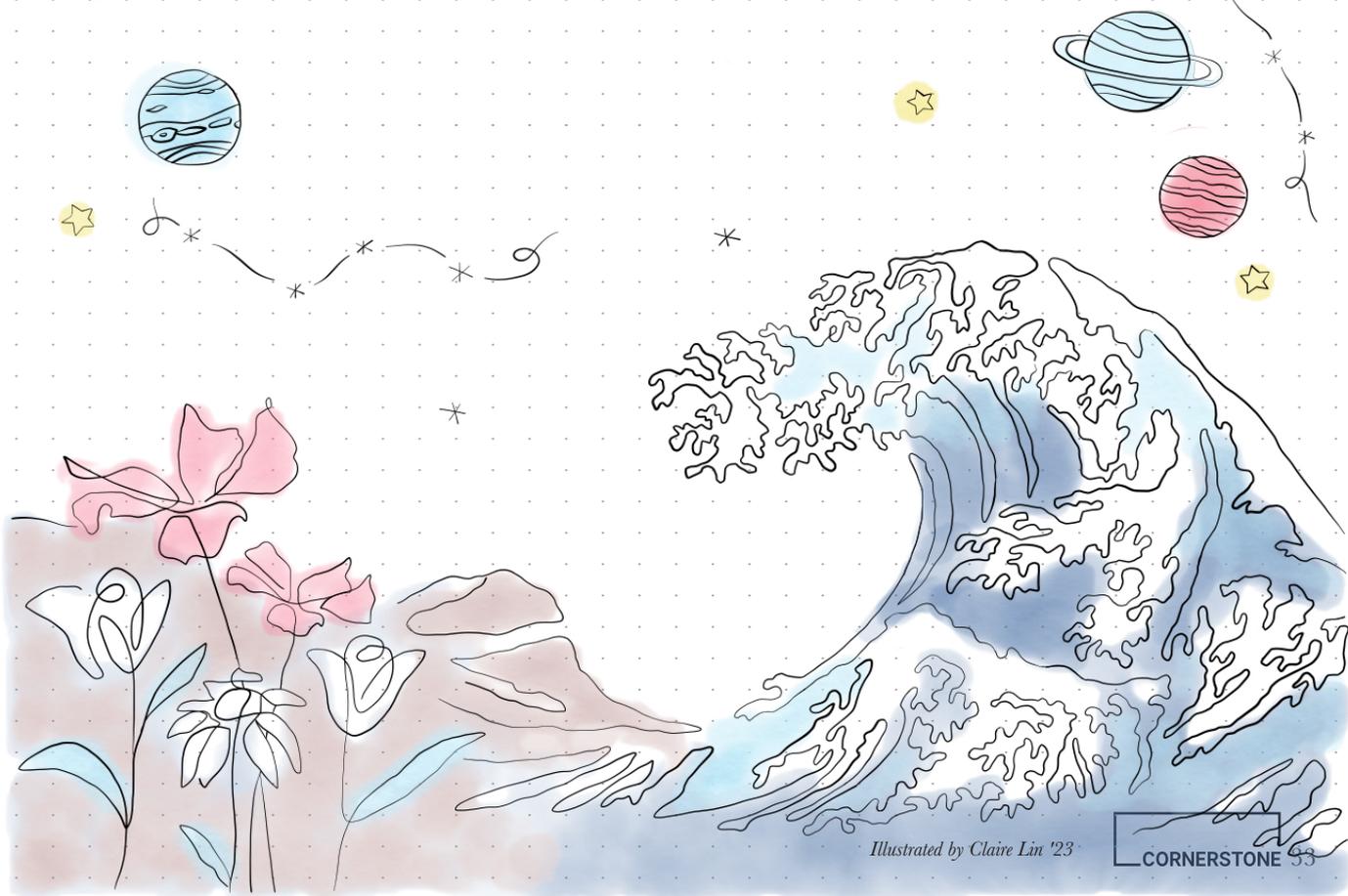
1 Corinthians 5:8

Kaitlan Bui is a sophomore at Brown studying English.

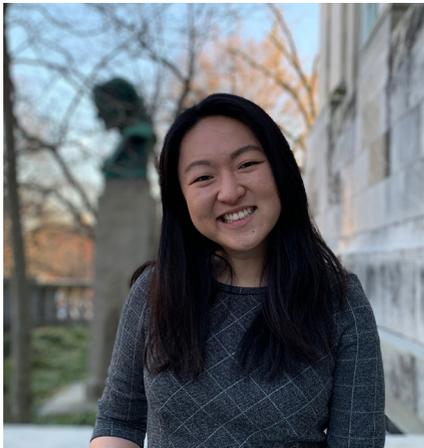


For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

1 Corinthians 5:1-8 (ESV)



SENIOR FAREWELLS



It's quite strange to be writing this back in my home in California, not in a shared space with my community. I wanted to share a set of verses that have brought me both conviction and encouragement: *"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does"* (James 1:23-25, NIV). Thank you to Cornerstone for being a space to share the joys and pains of college life, a place in which we can come to worship God and glorify Him! Thank you for being a community of believers who are both dedicated to share and act according to the beliefs of the Gospel; I pray for fruitful years to come for this publication!

- Cindy Won '20



Praise God for how this publication and staff have grown! The time I have spent with this community has been a joy, from meetings and retreats to taking over Shake Shack. Being part of Cornerstone has helped me to think critically about our shared faith, to celebrate the beauty of the Gospel, and to be creative with the ways we share our testimonies of how God has changed our lives and is continuing to sanctify us. I am grateful for those before us that began this good work and excited for those who will continue it after us. Glory be to God! *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them"* (Ephesians 2:10, ESV).

- Lisa Yang '20



I applied to Brown because my mom told me that she felt His presence around campus during a school tour. My friends have told me that this was a haphazard decision on my part, but throughout my time here, I have never regretted applying to Brown. Through all the people I've met, the courses I've taken, and the buildings I've sat in; from from all the tough conversations to the more-than-planned night-long cram sessions, God has been with me, and only by His help am I graduating. And through all four years, Cornerstone has remained just that: a cornerstone to my growth in faith. A word of encouragement for everyone during these uncertain times: *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid"* (John 14:27, ESV).

- David Shin '20



Let Us Go to the House of the Lord

I was glad when they said to me,
“Let us go to the house of the Lord!”
Our feet have been standing
within your gates, O Jerusalem!

Jerusalem—built as a city
that is bound firmly together,
to which the tribes go up,
the tribes of the Lord,
as was decreed for Israel,
to give thanks to the name of the Lord.
There thrones for judgment were set,
the thrones of the house of David.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!
“May they be secure who love you!
Peace be within your walls
and security within your towers!”
For my brothers and companions' sake
I will say, “Peace be within you!”
For the sake of the house of the Lord our
God,
I will seek your good.

Psalm 122 (ESV)

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!

Psalm 84:1 (ESV)

