

CORNERSTONE

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

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Forgiveness Manifested

On Accented English 20
Our Own Promised Land

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Uniting the Church



Mission Statement

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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Letter from the Editor

Submission: The Cost of Unity

Nicholas Chuan

Submission is a frowned-upon word today, especially on college campuses like ours. In a world scarred by slavery, a verse like “Slaves, obey your human masters in everything” (Col 3:22, HCSB, and all following) reeks of abuse. In a culture which cries for gender equality, verses like “Wives, submit to your own husbands” (Eph 5:22) sound misogynistic, demeaning and oppressive.

On the other hand, unity is a celebrated concept that everyone seems to cherish and strive for. Be it across denominational, racial, political, or socio-economic boundaries, or even among the different campus ministries, we yearn for unity and constantly question why we appear so divided. The theme of this Cornerstone issue is unity, and in this magazine you will find pieces tackling different aspects of it. From unity among missionaries on the field, to among different cultural practices; from the covenantal union between Christ and the Church, to unity bridged by the everyday practice of forgiveness, the staff has compiled various takes on this subject. However, before you dive into all of that, allow me to provide a Biblical picture. In particular, I would like to contend that submission is a necessary cost of achieving unity.

Submission to whom, in particular? If you’re a Christian, you may be thinking that I am talking about submission to God. While that is definitely necessary, the call to submission goes deeper. We are called to submit to one another for the sake of unity.

To see this, I would like to focus on a particular passage, Philippians 2:1-11. This is part of Paul’s letter to the church in Philippi, after they heard about his suffering for the cause of the gospel.

This led to disunity within the church, which is one of the few things Paul sought to address. In the first four verses, he instructs them on how to seek unity, by “having the same love, sharing the same feelings, (and) focusing on one goal” (v2). Moreover, they are to “do nothing out of rivalry or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than (themselves,)” and look out not only for their “own interests but also for the interest of others” (v3-4). To exemplify this, Paul exhorts the Philippians to make their attitude like that of Jesus. He then writes a beautiful prose on Jesus:

Make your own attitude that of Christ Jesus, who, existing in the form of God, did not consider equality with God as something to be used for His own advantage. Instead He emptied Himself by assuming the form of a slave, taking on the likeness of men. And when He had come as a man in His external form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death—even to death on a cross. For this reason God highly exalted Him and gave Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow—of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth—and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:5-11)

Paul clearly points to Jesus as the ultimate example as to how the Philippians can consider others more important than themselves and look out for the interests of others. That is how the Philippians can have the same love, feelings, and goal. In a nutshell, they were to be united through Christ-like love for one another.

[We are called to submit to one another for the sake of unity.](#)

Let me unpack what “Christ-like love” looks like according to the passage. It is not self-seeking (v6), it is self-denying (v7), and submissive (v8). Submitting to God’s will, Jesus gave up His rightful place in perfect communion with the Godhead and took on

the form of man, even the lowest status of a slave. More than that, He obeyed the Father's will to the point of death on the cross, the most excruciating method of execution known to the 1st Century Greco-Roman world. Jesus did all of this not for His own glory (which He in fact deserved), but so that our sinful and broken relationship with God may be made right. In response, God exalted Jesus, bestowing on Him praise, honor, and glory from every being in creation. To put it plainly, God sees submission as something to be praised. In case one reads this as only being applicable to Jesus, verse 5 refutes that as Paul exhorts the Philippians to do so. In fact, this is not limited to a particular gender, race, or socioeconomic status.

All Christians are called to submit to one another, in the way that Jesus did for the church, in a bid for unity. This is why submission is a necessary cost of bringing about unity in various domains.

The Bible portrays submission as praiseworthy, glorious, beautiful, and not beneath the Son. Why then do we recoil at the mention of this concept? I posit that there are two main reasons. Firstly, we, in our sinful hearts, crave power and authority, and are not willing to give it up. Just as Adam and Eve were enticed by the prospect of being "like God" and bought into the serpent's questioning of God's authority over them (Gen 3:1-7), we selfishly yearn for power. On the other hand, perhaps on a more real and personal level, we see the abuse of authority and fear it being placed over us. If just one authority figure over us (e.g. parents, teachers, bosses, politicians, law enforcers etc.) abuses the power they have over us, we are scarred. Putting oneself under someone else's authority is then unfathomable. However, the Bible calls us to recognize those as instances of sin, and not diminish the value of submissive love which it calls for. This is not to devalue the sufferings anyone has experienced from abuses of power; rather, it pinpoints the issue at the heart of the perpetrator, not the system of submissive love.

In fact, this is not limited to a particular gender, race, or socioeconomic status.

How then does Paul's 2000-year-old letter speak to us today? In our bid for unity, let us learn to submit to one another in love. Practically, this can mean loving someone who looks different from you, who grew up in a completely different context from you, and who speaks differently from you. In the process, put their needs before yours. This may mean talking about a subject that may be boring to you but captivates them, or even supporting them in a crisis the night before your exam. Also, know that they will sin against you. As sinful human beings, all of us have the capacity and tendency to sin against each other. But that must not stop us in our love for others. Even as they misunderstand you, misrepresent you, or neglect you, the call to radical submissive love cannot be hindered. Jesus commands us to love our enemies (Matt 5:44); how much more should we love those we seek to be unified with us but who sin against us? And the best way to love them as they sin against you is through forgiveness.

The Bible lays out submission as the necessary cost of unity. If that still rings hollow to you, perhaps the question is whether you are even submitting to His authority revealed in His Word. I pray that as you enjoy the rest of the magazine, you will not see unity as a lofty, unattainable ideal, but rather, as a costly but precious state, achievable through practical, submissive love to one another.

In Christ,
Nicholas Chuan
Editor-in-Chief

Nicholas Chuan is a senior concentrating in Physics and Philosophy.



Niverville Tracks, Meagan Peters '18

Election Day

A Modern Day Psalm

Thomas Hale

Election day comes and goes
A day of judgement

The air is filled with the gnashing of teeth
Angry voices flood the market square

Why do you rage, oh peoples?
Your wrath is fruitless and your trust misplaced

The Lord our God is enthroned in Heaven,
He is seated on Mt. Zion.
The house of government is but dust
The rulers of the earth are like clay
He shatters them like pottery.
Who is like our God?

Remember the Lord is God and do not fear
Cease your grumblings for He is above all things

Surely the Lord will not forsake us
For the Lord is faithful to His people

*Thomas Hale is a sophomore concentrating in Computer
Engineering*

Christ and His Beloved

Hope McGovern



Surrounding mountains of Tai O Fishing Village, Ayisha Jackson '18

“And when I passed by again, I saw that you were old enough for love. So, I wrapped my cloak around you to cover your nakedness and declared my marriage vows. I made a covenant with you... and you became mine.” (Ezekiel 16:8, NLT)

The entire narrative of the Bible is encapsulated in the story of two marriages: God the Father to the nation of Israel and Jesus Christ to the Church. From Genesis to Revelation, matrimonial imagery is woven throughout scripture. It lives in the declarations of the prophets, in the poetry of Solomon, in the description of the Rapture; even the Last Supper is awash with matrimonial language and ritual.

In the Old Testament, God pledged Himself to Israel, but she proved an unfaithful bride. In her idolatry and sin, she played the harlot. Israel sought other gods, refused to obey the law, and turned away from the God who promised to be her protector. God used Hosea’s life to illustrate the broken marriage of the Lord to His people. Under His direction, Hosea married a promiscuous woman, put her away by divorce for the adultery she committed, then restored their union and became her husband once more. In the same way, the Lord has given Israel a certificate of divorce and sent her away for

her adultery, but He promises that their union will be restored through a new covenant.

This covenant is not with Israel herself but is of her house; it is the Church. As Israel is of the Old Jerusalem, so the Church is of the New. And God is no longer the groom; it is now Christ who pursues the bride, doing so in accordance with Hebrew custom.

In the Hebrew tradition, betrothal ceremonies were deeply ritualistic. Historically, a Jewish groom would travel from his father's house to that of his prospective bride to initiate the betrothal. He presented a marriage contract, or "bride price", to the intended bride and her father; if she accepted, she took a sip from a cup of wine the groom offered to her. After that, the groom would announce, "I am going to prepare a place for you," and take leave of his betrothed for months or even years.

In this time of separation, the groom built a dwelling for his bride as an addition to the father's home while the woman awaited his return in her hometown, her face covered by a veil to mark her as the betrothed. It was only through an intermediary that the bride and the groom could speak with each other. The engagement period was complete only when the father set his mark of approval upon the dwelling place; then, the groom would return to his bride, surrounded by a triumphant wedding party, and the bride, not having known the day or time he would return, would immediately leave her home and go to her husband. The groom would bring her to their dwelling for the consummation of the marriage, followed by seven days of feasting and celebration.

Any lukewarm devotion to the vestiges of religion vanishes when we view ourselves as the Bride, eagerly searching the horizon for the return of the One whom her soul loves.

And this is just how Christ, the Bridegroom, pursues His Beloved. Jesus left His Father's home to offer His own body as the bride price. He set this pro-

posal before his followers, the first members of His Church, saying, "this is My blood of the covenant" (Matt 26:28, NIV) and they drank from it. Then He declares, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am" (John 14:3, NIV). During this engagement period, the Church is given an intermediary, the Holy Spirit, to communicate with the Bridegroom while they are separated. And it is for none but the Father to know when the dwelling place is complete and the Bridegroom will return for the consummation.

Israel will be present at this wedding, fulfilling the Lord's promise of restoration. Just as Naomi, an Israelite, was restored to her lands through the marriage of Boaz to Ruth, a Gentile of Naomi's house, so Israel is restored to the New Jerusalem through the marriage of Christ to the Redeemed Church.

Viewing Christ as the Bridegroom is essential to a life of true faith because so often we imagine that it is we who pursue God. We feel a sense of religiosity when we, of our own volition, attend church regularly for a few months or listen to Christian radio in the car. Outward demonstrations of faith supersede discipleship, trading the costly suffering of the cross for a religion we can put down when it becomes an inconvenience. But it is poisonous to a true relationship with Christ to forget that it was the Bridegroom who first loved us, pursued us, set a proposal of marriage before us while we were still sinners. Any lukewarm devotion to the vestiges of religion vanishes when we view ourselves as the Bride, eagerly searching the horizon for the return of the One whom her soul loves. Dogmatic sacraments are transformed to joyous worship as the bride makes herself ready for the impending celebration of her union with Christ.

So, Church, consider the covenant set before you, and rejoice always in the waiting for the return of the Bridegroom.

Hope McGovern is a sophomore concentrating in Engineering-Physics.

Judgement

David Ferranti

Author's Note: Robin Hood was a legendary English outlaw famed for stealing from the rich and giving to the poor. He and his band of merry men, including Little John, Will Scarlet, and Friar Tuck, dwelt in the depths of Sherwood Forest, and clashed many times with their nemesis, the Sheriff of Nottingham. Robin's story ends with his death, but his friends and foes may have remained...

"You. Why are you here?" The world-weary voice echoed harshly about the interior of the desolate hut.

The newcomer shrugged off his bearskin cloak, the movement sending a cascade of snow to the ground.

"I've come to be shriven."

"I hear the pleas of the dying. Not the damned."

"Come now. Is that any way to address an old friend?"

The friar cast back the hood of his habit, candle-light giving his gaunt face a skull-like appearance.

"Friend or foe, Heaven's justice awaits you. You are not the law above, Sheriff."

The former Sheriff of Nottingham smiled. "Tuck. The good Friar Tuck. Will you not hear my sins?"

Friar Tuck rose from the woven mat he sat upon. In his youth and middle age, he had loved his food and drink more than most, and his body had been big and fleshy, layered with both fat and muscle. Now, long years of fasting and age had wrought their work upon Tuck, until he resembled a barren tree in the winter time, thin and pale and ever so deadened.

"Sins," Tuck repeated, almost to himself. The word rolled easily off his tongue, as if he spoke it often. "I have no need to hear your sins, Sheriff. I know them as well as the scars on the back of my hand. Even if you spoke until the End of Days, there is not

enough time to recount them. So no, I will not hear your sins."

The Sheriff shook his head. His own garments had once been made by the finest tailors in the kingdom from the richest materials available, but now were torn and stained with the passage of many years and long travels.

"I performed the duties of my office, good friar. Now I am an old man, seeking his final peace. Will you not give it to me?"

Tuck ignored the question, bending down to pick something from the cluttered earthen floor of the hut. He held it in his hands, a splintered longbow of yew, tip choked with cobwebs.

"Do you remember the light of Sherwood?" he asked suddenly. "The golden rays upon the leafy boughs, the smell of wildflowers in the springtime, the essence of life itself falling down from heaven into the forest." He dropped the longbow to the floor with a dull thud. "After Robin died and the band scattered, I left it too. I have never been back."

The Sheriff opened his mouth to speak, but Tuck continued as if he hadn't noticed. "I have thought of making a journey back there, but then I realized that even if I did return, the light of Sherwood would be cold and grey. I realized that its sun existed in no place but my own memory."

The Sheriff nodded. "I still remember that light too." Tuck stood. In the shadows of the hut, his face became dark and terrible, eyes smoldering within their sockets like dying coals. "Do you?!" he shouted. "Have you ever known what it means to be hounded and hunted like a piece of prey? To wake up every day wondering if the sun will set as crows and daws peck at your dangling corpse? To ride by your reflection in a pool and see it laughing at you?"

"I do," the Sheriff said softly. He remained sitting where he was, and his eyes were dull. "I lost a lot

chasing the merry men through the depths of Sherwood. I lost everything I held dear in the years that followed. I wish I could have acted differently. I wish I knew then what I know now.”

“Merry men,” Tuck sneered. “That’s what you think, isn’t it? That’s what your retainers and sycophants whispered in your ear at court? The men who came to Sherwood were anything but merry. They were debtors and vagabonds, the starving dregs of England following the last shadow of hope. Some had to be killed the day they arrived, so far had they fallen. It took years to meld them together into something that bore the semblance of a brotherhood, and even then, it was a hideous mockery. When Robin died, they scattered. The shepherd was stricken down, and the sheep were lost!”

“You must understand,” the Sheriff pleaded. “My office—my family, my house, my descendants’ future—all of it was at risk! Change was coming to England, and I knew that I would have been swept aside in its wake otherwise.”

“You could have left us be,” Tuck said softly. His face was human again. He sat down again, and struck the palm of his hand against the dirt in frustration. “That was all we ever wanted, to be left to ourselves. Just us and Sherwood, us and the deer, us and a few sacks of gold liberated from passing nobles who had never earned anything by the sweat of their brow.”

Tuck glanced up. “That is all I want now too, Sheriff. I want to be left here, alone. I perform the last rites for the local village—I, the crazy hermit who spends his days fasting and meditating.”

The Sheriff rose to depart, his steps immeasurably weary. Tuck stared at his retreating form for a second, noticing for the first time the limp in his former nemesis’ steps, the cruel scar that stretched its way down the side of the man’s neck, the streaks of ravaged skin on his arms that could only have been the result of a virulent plague.

“What happened to you?” The words were out of the friar’s mouth before he could stop them.

There was a bitter smile dancing on the Sheriff’s lips when he turned around. “A Crusade gone wrong, Tuck. A sickness and a betrayal, a cruel jest that heaven played upon me.” A thousand spiteful responses rose to Tuck’s mind, but he forced them down. This man was no longer his enemy, and even if he had been, did the Lord not preach to love his enemies? Did he not forgive those who crucified him? How could Tuck allow this shattered man to go forth without hearing his confession?

“Very well, Sheriff. Sit, if you will. I will hear your sins.”

“Without judgement?”

Tuck smiled sadly. “We all must eventually face our faults before the Lord. When that hour comes, I will embrace it. I will not have it said that Friar Tuck drank so deeply from the well of bitterness that he could not offer forgiveness.”

The Sheriff spoke. Tuck listened, gave absolution. The Sheriff left.

This man was no longer his enemy, and even if he had been, did the Lord not preach to love his enemies? Did he not forgive those who crucified him?

A year later, both men lay within unmarked graves. But they carried that peace within them before they died—a peace that makes broken souls whole.

David Ferranti is a sophomore concentrating in Biology.

More Heart, Less Attack

Jessica Zambrano

*“Be the light in the cracks
Be the one that’s mending the camel’s back
Slow to anger and quick to laugh
Be more heart and less attack”*

I remember the first time I heard these lyrics. I was walking up Brook Street, back toward campus. I could feel the warmth of the mid-May sun on my face, smiling as each new lyric rolled through my head.

A week later the song was a hazy memory; I couldn’t remember the name or the words, just the moment. May 25. It felt like summer for the first day of the year. The most beautiful day, the same feeling as a week prior. Campus was buzzing with the return of recent graduates and in anticipation of Commencement. It was the kind of warm summer night you spent with friends laughing, eating, and watching movies until way too late. I remember feeling overwhelmed with joy, peace, and love. God’s perfection.

I woke up expecting May 26 to be the same. But then the phone calls came in. The emails, too. I didn’t check them until my friend Gianna turned to me with this look of horror, only saying, “Jessie,” before breaking into sobs. The first email...

It felt wrong that we lost Ellynn on that perfect summer night. It felt right that the evening of her memorial service was ugly and cold, the sky crying with us. Her favorite songs played on loop, ringing through the church lobby and sanctuary. There were those words again.

*“Be the light in the cracks
Be the one that’s mending the camel’s back
Slow to anger and quick to laugh
Be more heart and less attack”*

Of course this would be one of Ellynn’s favorite songs. It’s how she lived her life: more heart, less attack. I couldn’t help but smile because in the midst of the cold, I could feel the warmth of the sun on the first day I heard these words. And I could feel the peace of the night, see the radiance of the sunset, on the evening of May 25. It all made sense. That’s how God is: He takes our brokenness and makes it beautiful.

He is our light in the darkness. He gives us peace in our confusion. In her life, Ellynn pointed us toward God, and in her death, she continues to do the same.

[That’s how God is: He takes our brokenness and makes it beautiful.](#)

Ellynn Koelsch, we love you, and you are missed. In your time at Brown, you were more than a mentor. You were an example to us of how to practice graciousness, humility, peace, compassion, generosity, grace, and every other good thing. Your life was love.



urgent sad news - Ellynn and Anthony Koelsch were in major car crash

Jessica Zambrano is a senior concentrating in Urban Studies.



Sunrise at Kyleakin, Gianna Uson '18

Interview with Jim Nooney

A Christian CEO

Nicholas Chuan

Jim Nooney is the CEO of Nooney Controls, a provider of custom valve system solutions. Jim is a Christian who firmly believes in integrating ministry in his company. Earlier this year, I had the opportunity to sit down with him for an interview.

Q: Where did you grow up and what is your faith background?

I grew up mostly in Southern Rhode Island. My father worked for a business here in Providence, building a career and working a lot. My mother was a seeker when I was small; she wasn't a Christian but she knew that there was a hole in her soul and she was looking for ways to fill it. She attended a few churches and then ultimately found a Presbyterian church, started to read the Bible and made that decision to follow Christ when I was about eight or nine years old. So I started going to church as a little kid, but it didn't mean much to me. In high school, I started to realize that she had a strong faith and it had a real influence on me. Our parents can bring us to church, can guide us, can give us information, but you have to make your own decision. So I made a decision to follow Christ in early high school and I began to be transformed by the Holy Spirit. Very simply put, I understood that I had a purpose. Following Christ wasn't just for me; it wasn't just that I was good and was going to heaven. It changes us and how we look at the world and how we look at our friends. I was a follower of Christ; not a very perfect one.

Q: How did your education shape how you view your faith and your career?

I went to Moses Brown High School and most of my teachers were communists and non-religious. I remember being there and realizing that I was alone. I then decided to go to a Christian college, and I went to Gordon College up in the North Shore of Boston. It was a great place that strengthened my faith. I think that one of the great things about Gordon is that its goal there is to teach you to integrate your faith with your learning and your career. It's not that you're this person on Sunday and then you're something else for the rest of that week. I think that the goal for every Christian is to be the same person, everywhere, all the time; this is who I am, a follower of Christ. Going to Gordon helped me to begin that.

Q: Tell me about the early years of your career.

I graduated from Gordon with a business degree right when my father left his big company and started a small company, basically because he accepted Christ. He felt like he had to compromise in the big company and that the best way for him to get away from that company was to start his own company. It was only two years old when I graduated and he offered me a job. It was my mother, my father, three other employees, and me. I worked out in our shop, doing hands-on manual labor and estimating sales, before I became an outside sales engineer where I dealt directly with customers, bringing in new business. That was the career I began and I've been doing that for 31 years.

The goal for every Christian is to be the same person, everywhere, all the time; this is who I am, a follower of Christ.

Q: When did you take over the company as CEO and how was that transition?

My father retired fifteen years ago when I took over, and I've been the CEO of the company since. We had about twenty-five employees and when I first

took over, I really had no idea how to do it. We were a good and growing company, really doing well but it was difficult because I really had no formal training in being a CEO. So I did some things well and some things not so well. I came to realize that running a business can be done by the secular book or by God's Word. It took me about four or five years to understand how a business can be a ministry. So you can do ministry in a business, that it's okay, not illegal. In fact, I think our calling is to do that if we're taking the Word seriously. And so for the last eight or nine years, I've been slowly understanding how that looks: caring for your employees, your community, and the world; taking the company's resources and not just keeping it, but doing ministry with it. This is not a new concept, it's pretty common in this generation, but not so common eight or nine years ago. I take it a step further and ask myself, "How do I further the kingdom of Jesus Christ through this business?"

It takes confidence that the promises of the Bible are true because our American culture is constantly telling us to keep business and religion apart. But what I have found is that you can put them together. You're not jamming it down people's throats, you're sharing it with them in word to some degree, but in deed and in action more than anything.

Q: What are some of the ways you incorporate ministry into your business?

We have employees that struggle in life with addictions and broken families, who don't understand how to live life consistently or productively. So we have a chaplain, he comes in for 3 hours every week. That was definitely a strange concept for employees using his services and in fact it was a strange concept for me. We outsource him from a company called Corporate Chaplains of America. They have a lot of chaplains in the south, but we're the first in the northeast.

We also have a ministry team of seven employees, not all of them Christian. The formal definition of the word 'ministry' is to give aid, even though it

sounds churchy. On average they are given about fifteen or twenty thousand dollars a year to do ministry, and it can be whatever they decide to do, as long as it is in line with its mission. For example, we just did a project at the Providence Rescue Mission in Cranston where we built a men's dormitory, underwrote that, and did some of the work. We're financially helping some employees that are struggling financially and also helping with some home projects, and that's caring for them in a Biblical way.

"How do I further the kingdom of Jesus Christ through this business?"

We have a prayer meeting on Monday mornings to start the week for anyone who wants to come; it's not mandatory. We have a little prayer request box. For the first year, there wasn't one request. And then, people put things in there. Basically over time, they realized they have nothing to be afraid of. That's really the culture here in the Northeast, that there's something bad about Christ and what He stood for.

Q: How do the employees, especially the non-believing ones, react to such policies?

I've had many conversations with employees who have voiced some objections over these things: chaplain, Christian ministry, my involvement in a Christian CEO roundtable group (C12), and I've learned over the years how to speak to those in a kind but honest and upfront way. And one of the things that I always remind people of is that whether you believe or not, you're benefitting from it because I share the profits of the company on an annual basis in a number of different ways. While it may not be apparent to them, I make the connection that if I wasn't a follower of Christ, I don't think I would do that. Also, even if I did, it wouldn't be to that extent. And the reason that I do that is not because I'm such a wonderful person, but because I feel compelled to. We use the word 'team' a lot in corporate

America, but if it's really a team, then we have to share the profits. So I tell them to at least celebrate that they are benefitting from my faith. Slowly but surely, employees have realized that they have nothing to be afraid of, and I just pray that God works through that. That's the ministry, sharing the Gospel as the Holy Spirit allows it to happen. But you have to take the fear of Christianity away; the misperception.

Q: Could you share a story of an employee coming to the faith?

We had a temporary skilled laborer who did very well for a year and we hired him full-time. Then, over the next six months he started showing some signs of unreliability, and you could tell something wasn't right. It turns out he struggled with alcoholism and deep psychological issues. For a small business like ours, you need reliable employees; there's no room for unreliability. So the choice was to cut him, or try to help him. We chose the latter, and over the last year, through many ways of helping him, he's just about recovered, very reliable, and happy. We could have let him go and would have been totally justified, but he's now a solid employee, and I think he will be with us for a long time. He comes to my church and prays with the chaplain every week, and although he's not quite there yet, I can see the veil of darkness slowly being removed.

But you have to take the fear of Christianity away; the misperception.

Q: How does C12 fit into this?

C12 is a group of about 20 Christian CEOs from Southern New England, who meet for monthly day-long meetings. It really serves as a community and encouragement to have the courage to be outspoken, to care for your employees. Employees are accepting Christ through these businesses, and for many of them before that, these businesses are as close as they get to a church. Now businesses are not

churches. I'm not advocating that. Rather, our intention is to steer people to want to know more. In each meeting, one member presents his or her business through a questionnaire, touching on your business life, your family life, and your spiritual life. The group then tries to speak to those issues. It's a really transparent forum that promotes the kind of vulnerability and openness which is difficult for CEOs to muster.

Nicholas Chuan is a senior concentrating in Physics and Philosophy.



Plaza de Espana, Seville, Spain, Rebekah Lee '18

on accented english

Amelia Khoo

my po po taught me to pray when i was six,
coarse hands fumbling over baby blue rosary beads.
in broken english,
she mumbles words she cannot herself fully understand.

(i think about the picture of Jesus that hangs on my auntie's wall -
we call him "Handsome Jesus",
light eyes, soft brown hair,
white as day,

and wonder out loud:
is there such thing as the Rice of Life?)

our prayers are a cacophony of joyful noise.
we sing. we dance. we knock things over,
exclaiming in chinese, or malay, or richly
accented english,
how great is our Lord.

(a scene:
my po po's church friends praying the rosary at my gong gong's wake.
words i cannot understand -
tin zhu seng mo ma li ya -
and wails i wish i couldn't.)

i begin to understand what it means to pray words you cannot fully understand,
to say nothing,
and everything,

and to be made
of sounds and smells and words and songs,
the death of a man
that means nothing,
and everything,

as i look around at the faces in my church -
at my family, brown and yellow specks on a colorless canvas -

Gentiles in our own promised land.

Amelia Khoo is a junior concentrating in Bio-Medical Engineering



Wu Fen Pu Street Market Seller, Ayisha Jackson '18

The Lausanne Covenant

Thomas Hale

Growing up as a missionary kid, I never really appreciated the extraordinary unity among missionaries overseas. My parents worked with people from across the world, spanning a number of denominations and creeds, and yet that was never an issue. The missionary community put aside their small differences in light of the greater goal: spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ. At the time it seemed perfectly normal to me, but having spent a couple years back in the United States I have really come to appreciate the extraordinary environment I grew up in.

What drove that unity? Curious, I asked my father if there was any reason I never noticed denominational differences. Forgetting that Dad went to seminary, I expected him to say that there was some unspoken rule, or that there wasn't time for denominational differences, or something along those lines -- that it simply wasn't significant. Instead he launched into an interesting, if long-winded explanation of the history of denominational division in missions.

The long and short of his comments was that originally, missions was heavily divided. One church would reach out to one region and a different denomination would reach the neighboring one in unspoken coordination, often along lines that reflected the colonial reality of the time. The only problem was that the Church doesn't obey regional lines, and as the new churches grew they would eventually overlap, leading to unnecessary conflict.

The Lausanne Covenant reminds us of all that holds us together; namely that Christ is above all.

All this led up to a theological document: the Lausanne Covenant. In 1974, at the first International Congress on World Evangelization, a 2,300-strong international cross-denominational committee was formed to create a comprehensive statement of faith, putting down the very core tenets of Christianity as they relate to missions. The Lausanne Covenant brought together evangelicals specifically and Christians generally, reminding us of the core things we hold to be true and that these essential values hold us together; namely that Christ is above all. As a simple but thorough statement of faith the Lausanne Covenant allows the Church to have a united front in its outreach, prioritizing God's work over petty theological squabbles. Most importantly, the Lausanne Covenant is firmly grounded in scripture.

Although the Lausanne Covenant and the International Congress on World Evangelization is primarily an evangelical affair, I strongly encourage anyone to take fifteen minutes to read it as a reminder of the things that hold us together.



<https://www.lausanne.org/content/covenant/lausanne-covenant>

Thomas Hale is a sophomore concentrating in Computer Engineering



Portobello Beach, Gianna Uson '18



Loch Garry Berries, Gianna Uson '18

New Vision

Anna Delamerced

gone is my
20/20 vision
degrading each year
with irregularities and aberrations

the doctor gave me
a diagnosis of myopia

struggling to see
what really matters
all i can think about is
grades and school
work and deadlines
papers and resumes and
job applications

as i remove my glasses
rub my sore eyes
i think to myself
is this really all worth it?

straining under sharp light
yearning for clarity

this shortness of sight
hinders
makes it hard to perceive
the future
the present

i can't see beyond the horizon
is there something greater out there
is there more to life than this one?

my vision needs
correction

i need to take a step back
breathe
relax
let You take control
i'm tired of chasing after
the things of this world

help me to pursue
the things eternal
the things unseen

i don't know your plans
i don't know your ways
but spit into the mud
rub it into my eyes
do whatever it takes
to open them

help me realize
there's only one way to live

with You at the center
with You as my vision

Anna Delamerced '20 is a student in Alpert Medical School.

what i know about the wind

Kathy Luo

When I was thirteen, I said my first genuine prayers to God in response to three things: suffering grades, arguing parents, and a boy. Looking back, I would not call any of these prayers particularly eloquent or worshipful. They were awkward, confused, and often misguided, which was fitting, because I was also awkward, confused, and misguided. Nonetheless, that was the simple way my faith began. A few months later, I was baptized, never happier to be dunked in a tub of water in my life.

When I emerged from the water, there was music, applause, and a sense of certainty. What was there left to fear? My grades had improved, summer was about to begin, and I had literally just been welcomed into the family of God. His word was my shield, His promises were my peace. I couldn't imagine ever feeling like that was insufficient. But after changing out of my dripping robe and ascending the stage for an endless series of group photos, I felt a strange draft flow across my damp, smiling cheek.

The wind blows.

When I was sixteen, I learned that our enemies fall into two categories: the seen and unseen. The seen, under which suffering grades, arguing parents, and a boy would fall, were things I knew how to fight against. I could look to God for strength. I could pray for peace, for wisdom, and for calm amidst turbulent thoughts. But how was I to pray for the unseen? How was I supposed to pray about nothing?

The only name I can give it is apathy. It came over me silently and unassumingly, in a way not many

miserable things do. Only its symptoms proved its existence: a lack of emotion, a lack of passion, a lack of desire to do anything. It wasn't only happiness, excitement, or anticipation-- I even had trouble remembering how to feel sad or angry. Each day began to blend into the next in a predictable, listless blur. All the while, I was a "Christian."

As time passed, I realized that I had not thought about God for days, then weeks, then months. I used to believe that I lived for Him. Now, I barely lived at all. I wanted that to startle me. I wanted alarms to go off, sirens to blare, me to start feeling something, even fear, to shake me from my haze. But even then, it was all mechanical. I wanted because I knew it was the correct way to feel, not because I remembered what it felt like to want anything.

During those months, my Bible lay on the floor beside my bed like a bad conscience. It went untouched and undesired, covered by textbooks, pens, and empty bowls I didn't have the energy to wash.

The wind blows.

Occasionally, doubts and questions ran through my head. Could God dare to love one who had once prayed to him earnestly, and now questioned His will, His plan, His existence?

I searched for the fervor I felt at the beginning of my faith, the fearless belief that made me say "Yes, I do," in a warm, still tub of water. But my attempts were weak, and the enemy was strong. Day after day, I stumbled out of bed with goosebumps, trembled in the shower, and waited for the school bus in a dark, bitter cold.

The only good thing about apathy is that it is cyclical-- as much as it seems inescapable, it also ends as mysteriously as it comes. If I had to name a particular moment in which I started feeling better, I think I was sitting in church one Sunday, eating a donut from the welcome table, and looking forward to grabbing another. This would not be anything

spectacular except for the fact that I had not looked forward to anything in months.

Could God dare to love one who had once prayed to Him earnestly, and now questioned His will, His plan, His existence?

In the weeks that followed, I slowly remembered parts of myself that I had forgotten. But with the return of emotions also came the return of fear-- especially the fear of God. The first time I unearthed that book beside my bed and touched its leather cover with my fingers, I only confirmed my self-hatred for not giving it more signs of ownership and use. It felt meaningless to close my eyes, shameful to bow my head, senseless to send desperate words to a Father I had tried to silence for months. But eventually, an attempt at prayer came out of my lips.

“Hi, God. It’s me. I’m not who I used to be. I have lied and I am broken and I am afraid. Is it too late to come back?” He responded in a voice that, to this day, has not changed in its sound or promise.

The wind blows.

It’s in the very nature of life for things to change, fade, and even return. Through it all, God speaks to us where we are. He calls in our wandering, in our brokenness, in our incomplete, weak conditions. The fact is, lots of things can get in the way between us and God-- but I think shame should be the last of them. Christ died for us precisely while we were still sinners, not while we loved Him back. And in love, there is no record of wrongs.

Sometimes, I still look over my shoulder for a preemptive warning that the wind will come again. I used to fear it. I feared the return of apathy, I feared the final disintegration of my family, and I feared being wounded with permanence, in a way that wouldn’t heal. But each time, when I feared that the darkness would finally overcome, He overcame it in my stead.

He has made me strong enough to not fear the wind, but instead, wait on its arrival. I no longer shudder at its passing. I do not quake at its touch. I’m learning, bit by bit, to turn its way, open my arms in acquiescence, and breathe it into my lungs.

The wind blows.

Kathy Luo is a sophomore concentrating in English and Sociology.



View from Castle Moil, Gianna Uson '18



Prisons of War Exhibition, Edinburgh Castle, Rebekah Lee '18

The Prisoner Game

Javier Sandoval

Hissing of automatic contraptions. They execute the cycle of leaf: severed roasted hackled, tobacco. Crooked machines, like iron vultures, nip at their work. Groaning of iron. Fluorescence reflects off their necks into triangles of shadow. They corrode with each crank but grind forth, and they ignore the moment they'll steam their last screech, twitch with rigor mortis, and decay into rust, gurgling in the yard. Steel cables creep all around, sparking over slobbered oil, and crisscross this factory with the shock-touch cobweb of the metallic Widow, lurking near the rafters. It lures down, rattling its gadget legs. It ensnarls a carton of snuff, yanks it into a storage den, leaves a trail of grime. Hissing... Groaning...

After months of twilight, the mill-mumble swamps into our subconscious - it often lullabies us to slumber. So I startle not from the shop-noise, but because she unchains me from her waist and scoots to the end of our mattress, a special treasure in her hand. Our bed used to wear a sheet, but our after-hour ardor would wrench it from the corners and wrap our bodies in it, drenched and claustrophobic. So we tore it cold. Thick springs coil from the cushion like snakes, meaning if we're reckless, we scrape the flesh of our wrists and the fat of our palms. No bed frame. Flat on the factory floor.

In a daze, she tosses the object in her hand, a red ball, into the murk.

"Are you sick?" I ask, clutching for her in this dark drum of mindless motion.

Her gaze fades in from a wild place, then it floats over the litter of hydrogen peroxide and Visine bottles, hospital gauze and box cutters, minimart plastic

and liquor jugs. Her sight haunts about, manic. Then it settles upon what hangs many bodies away, many bodies above in the cobblestone: the only window. She moans toward the square moon. "Vomit if you got to," I say. "I can always mop it later." I sprawl behind her and kiss each lumbar lump of her spine. She flops her head and just squats there on the horizon of our trance place. "Do what you need to do," I say. "I love you too much to care." She slashes a hand to cut me short. "It's a nightmare."

"What? To hold each other here away from everyone? That's a dream to me."

"No, I had a nightmare."

"Let me guess," I say, smirking. "Your mother heard you with your vibrator then dragged you to confession again?" That dirty secret always makes us cackle.

She tsks. "I was in a jail yard, guarding a ring of death row inmates. They were playing some stupid game."

"You?" I ask with a chuckle. "You're so skinny, I worry you'll randomly disappear. Poof! What sort of convict could you stop?"

"Quit the jokes. The game was absurd. One man would point across the circle to another, who would have to jump as high as his quads could launch and belly flop dead on the ground. Head slam and hard thud like a corpse being dumped. The rest stood there just guffawing with tan buckteeth... but also smearing muddy tears across sharp cheekbones, or smacking dirt from their chests into dust clouds that choked their neighbors, or nursing wounded ribs - when they grimaced to roll up their shirts: mid-night-blue and bloodshot bruises. Point, leap shoulder-high, then face plant and wail, all just to mock the first quitter."

I yawn. "They were just bored. What else is there to do in prison? Hell, sometimes when we're beside your parents on the Goddamn pew, I distract myself by counting how long I can hold my breath. A minute twenty-one is the record. And when I'm tired of that, I pray that God'll save me and set me on fire,

right there beside your mom.” When she doesn’t laugh, I decide to grant her some space. I go scouring for the red ball. It’s special to me.

She says while I search, “One new inmate, alone and shirtless, sat far from the circle. He was doing something to himself. Something unusual - I had to find out what.

“When I snuck over, I noticed a tattoo on one of his arms. It said ‘Me’, and under it, [she peers up so even from within the dusk I see the crimson cracks in her eyes] seams of scars, like maggots crawling all over his bicep. I gaped at all the notches and asked what they were for. ‘To keep score,’ he said. ‘But against whom?’ I asked. He responded by lifting his other arm, this one free of marks, but also possessing a tattoo. It was the name of his opponent.”

“And who was this mysterious ‘opponent’” I ask, indistinguishable from the rest of the gloomy waste in this corner. I grope among piles of rope for the ball.

Crooked machines, like iron vultures, nip at their work. Groaning of iron.

“I couldn’t read it yet because I noticed a shank between his legs - I shivered. I felt my gut yell for help but my throat smothered the shout. I trembled stiff. He took the knife, and right before my eyes, carved a single tally under that second tattoo. The one bearing the title of his rival: ‘The Law’. Blood dripped from his bicep, smacked the land, veined across the dirt, and seeped into the sand.

“All I could do was stammer, so I told him, ‘Don’t worry, it looks like you’re beating it.’ But then a prisoner from the circle, having overheard, scoffed and said, ‘Not when you consider the Judge sentenced him to eternity. Sure, the rest of us will be executed soon, but death happens to everyone. That poor loser has to wither away here forever. What’s worse than that?’

“The marked man nodded and said to me, ‘Yes, but Sister, I no longer have to cut myself, so I ask you,

who’s truly free?’ Then he rose and faded to the edge of the yard, like an apparition. Even the other inmates enjoying the game paused to stare. They shook their heads and murmured together that ‘the craziest really are the ones that confess.’”

“The metaphor is obvious, babe” I say, giggling, and trudging from the dark. “Stop torturing yourself with these crazy thoughts.” I slither back onto the mattress and kiss a spoke in her rib cage. “Now that the lesson is over, can we have some fun?” I roll to my back, vigilantly so the bedsprings can’t bite me, and with a wink, I reveal the red ball, dangling it by one of its black straps that lock behind the jaw. The factory hissing. The factory groaning.

Author's note:

“The Prisoner Game” shows how people often ignore their self-destructive worlds and require disasters to teach them the truth. When the author describes his experience in a dangerous and corrosive setting, he does so bluntly and without negative reflections, which hints to the reader that he has come to accept this unusual and unacceptable place. He is also unaware of his own verbal irony when he declares that he’d rather die than spend time at church, a statement reflective of the prisoners in his lover’s nightmare. In contrast to the author, the female character has both physically and metaphorically woken up from her “nightmare.” She separates from the author, inches away from their dangerous bed, and stares toward the window, communicating her desire to flee. The story concludes with a sense that her disturbing dream has inspired her to leave him and their place of lust.

Javier Sandoval is a senior concentrating in Computer Science.

At the Foot of the Cross

Karina Rivera

I found myself staring down at the destruction
before me:
Soul-deep cracks scattered across the terrain.
Just what had happened here?
Jagged edges made it impossible to walk
Dust over the land made it impossible to
breathe.
Desolation stirred in me a desire
To bring this place back to life again.

I knelt by the edge,
Facing a crevice that was impossible to breach.
Challenged to build a bridge,
With only echoes of laughter, happiness, and
love,
I told myself these joys would be enough.
They had to be enough.
But time and time again,
These tools proved to be too fragile
For the task they had been assigned.

I knelt by the edge,
Facing a crevice that was impossible to breach,
But perhaps shallow enough to be filled.
I scoured every inch of the land,
Finding reason and knowledge in abundance,
Accomplishments and recognition in their wake.
But even these were not enough
For the depths they were called to fill.

Many years I walked along aimlessly,
Following fault lines that led me nowhere,
Searching for an edge to begin anew.

But time and time again,
Many years I walked along aimlessly,
Following fault lines that led me nowhere,
Searching for an edge to begin anew.
But time and time again,
The brokenness of this land
Echoed hurt, pain, and sorrow
That refused to be healed.
Weary bones brought me to my knees.
My feeble voice cried out
To a God I was wholeheartedly unsure existed.

And that was precisely where He found me.

He who had traversed this wreckage
As if there was something of worth to be found.
He who stooped down to meet me
As if there was anything of worth I could offer Him.
He who lifted me up
As if I were a tender child in His arms.

He had traversed this desolate land
With one goal in mind:
To lay down a hefty cross
Clear across this ravine.

There, at the edge of the rift
Was the first seam.
There, at the base of the bridge,
He held out an inviting hand.
And there, at the foot of the cross,
I took my first steps of faith.

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up
their wounds. (Psalm 147:3, NIV)

Karina Rivera is a senior concentrating in Public Health.



Path at Glencoe, Gianna Uson '18



A Prayer for Brown and RISD

Reverend Janet Cooper Nelson

We pray for the students of the world:
Those in refugee camps who are straitened by the
Vast uncertainties of all their waking moments.
Those in Egypt, Israel, South Africa, Europe and
All the centers of the earth where they live and
learn.
Those in our own land who are lonely, homeless,
Aimless, confused, dedicated.
We pray for the students of the world!

We hold ourselves and them steadily, quietly with
Great concentration before Your altar. Invade their
lives, their living contexts, their surroundings, not
Only with your wisdom and understanding but also
With your judgment and its vitality, to the end that
Something will become manifest in them and will
Make Your kingdom, Your rule, effective in the
Way that they take.

We do not ask. We do not plead. We do not beg.
We offer them and ourselves and we wait.
In Your presence we wait;
You will not reject our spirits or theirs. Amen.

This prayer holds special meaning for me for many reasons: it was offered by the young Reverend Howard Thurman*-- the first African American to hold the title of Dean of Religious Life first at Morehouse and then at Boston University; he prayed this for The World Student Christian Fellowship meeting at Union Theological Seminary; he prayed it on November 16, 1924, exactly 56 years before the day of my ordination in 1980; he prayed for students, an extraordinary blessing of my work. May Thurman's prayer be a blessing for Brown and RISD in 2016.

Howard Washington Thurman (1899–1981) led many social justice movements and organizations of the twentieth century as a principal architect of the modern, nonviolent civil rights movement and a key mentor to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Thurman's ministry in San Francisco established Fellowship Church and was deeply influenced by his experiences in India, Ceylon, and Burma, particularly meeting Gandhi. He brought together people of different faiths, races, and classes in common worship and fellowship. Fellowship Church is designated as a national historic landmark for its creative ecclesiology and pioneering social vision. This prepared Thurman for the invitation to become the Dean of Marsh Chapel at Boston University, the first African American to hold such a position.



Providence Skyline, Meagan Peters '18

Ministry Profile: Bridges at Brown

Vilayvann Ky

Bridges at Brown is a chapter of Bridges, a non-profit international organization, that serves the international students in the US and abroad. We build bridges between American and international students through social connection, service, and spiritual resources. Bridges is affiliated with Cru Campus Ministry, an interdenominational Christian non-profit that's open to students of all backgrounds and beliefs. We are committed to being a community that creates space for international and American students to process American culture, as well as learn from each other's cultures, in the context of an open and loving community. This takes on the form of fellowship time with each other every week to cook different cuisines, and exchanging stories concerning life, culture, and faith at Brown. We offer spiritual resources in many forms. One of them is our weekly Action Group meeting, led by a ministry staff member, where we learn about the life story of Jesus, and pray together. It's for everyone – the seekers, the followers, the disciples, and the critics. We also connect students to host families who host them during breaks, help them experience and enjoy Rhode Island, and act as a spiritual resource for them. We strongly believe that with Christ as our

foundation, international or American students alike can interact and celebrate our differences in the name of our Savior. We invite you for food, cultural exchanges, and a fun fellowship time. Please contact bridgesinternational@brown.edu for the cuisine and activities we do every week.

Make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love,
being one in spirit and of one mind.

Philippians 2:2 (NIV)

