

Read. Share. Support the *Century*.

by [Peter W. Marty](#) in the [September 28, 2016](#) issue



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"Pastor," a man with a grocery bag full of Bibles said to me last week, "I have these old Bibles I want to donate to the church. They're not of value to me anymore. Nothing would make me happier than to think of the church putting them to good use."

As we talked pleasantly, I kept my arms crossed—a trick I learned long ago for avoiding the physical transfer of a bag for which I have no better use than the donor. Almost every month, some unfamiliar individual walks into our church office to donate a stack of old family Bibles. In lieu of filling up a warehouse or assuming the hassle of shipping dated translations of scripture to places in the world where English is not even spoken, I have taken to a different strategy.

I suggested to the man with the Bibles that he give them to some good friends and that he then encourage each friend to tear out and live with a fresh new page every day. He looked shocked at this irreverent suggestion, but I persisted. They could circle key words, highlight phrases that inspired them, and contemplate faith in God

at stoplights. Retrieving a page from one's pocket or purse a few times a day might constitute more engagement with the Word than those Bibles have ever witnessed.

I wonder if readers of the *Christian Century* need to do something similar. What if we were to tear out our favorite CC articles and give them away to friends? "Here, you oughta read this. It's good. I think it might bless your life and sharpen your already sharp mind even more!" This magazine has enthusiastic readers who read every issue with the delight of quiet contentment. I'm not sure what to call this phenomenon except *spiritual and intellectual edification in solitude*. Whatever its description, the personal joy that many of our readers receive every two weeks doesn't get shared with peers nearly as readily as news of their favorite new restaurant or movie.

The sharing of this magazine is a suggestion. Supporting this magazine is a necessity: the *Christian Century* is a not-for-profit ministry of journalism that relies on your donations. I'm dead serious about this need. Yes, subscriptions matter. But subscription revenue covers only 62 percent of our operational costs. Advertising revenue covers 18 percent. That leaves a sizable gap for you to step into. Please consider making a gift this year (or series of gifts) that fits your circumstance and matches your joy for the *Century's* work.

This amazing magazine, assembled online and in print with great intentionality and care, depends on readers just like you. If you wonder what it means to give of yourself to the *Century*, just as you receive insight from its pages, let me turn to the inspiration of our staff. These dedicated colleagues not only give their best energies to their work; they also give from their wallet. Every one of them is a donor to the *Century*. Won't you join them? I hope so. [Thank you for considering a gift today.](#)

*A version of this article appears in the September 28 print edition under the title "Read, share, support."*