

The most-read *Century* articles

December 26, 2013

Here are the *Century* magazine articles that got read the most online this year. Thanks for reading.

- 1) [Singing from one book: Why hymnals matter](#), by Mary Louise Bringle.**
“Many churchgoers greet the announcement of a new hymnal with a single puzzled, even outraged question: Why?”

- 2) [Sticky faith: What keeps kids connected to church?](#) by Jen Bradbury.** “We youth ministers have often tried to make our ministries cool enough to compete. But every teen knows that the church is not cool.”

- 3) [Caught in the middle: On abortion and homosexuality](#), by Wendell Berry.**
“Nowhere has our callow politics asserted itself more thoughtlessly and noisily than in the politicization of personal or private life.”

- 4) [Spiritual cul-de-sac: How the church fails the divorced](#), by Carlyne Call.**
“Divorce is a time when we most need our brothers and sisters in faith. Yet churches and clergy often ignore divorcing people.”

- 5) [What's really killing the church](#), by Samuel Wells.** “I asked an older English woman who left the church long ago why she now wants to come back. Her response made the color drain from my face.”

- 6) [The purpose of dinosaurs: Extinction and the goodness of God](#), by Bethany Sollereeder.** “If God is both the author and lover of creation, why would God develop complex beings through a process that necessitates species extinction?”

7) [What's the text? Alternatives to the common lectionary](#), by Steve

Thorngate. "The *RCL* includes a few 'optional' readings, to be subbed in as needed. Of course, it's all optional—and there are other lectionaries out there."

8) [The Bible's violent God](#), by John M. Buchanan. "Most media representations of the biblical story are too literal. In the effort to get the story's details right, the storyteller misses the point."

9) [Why the cross? God's at-one-ment with humanity](#), by Charles Hefling.

"Some questions won't go away. The creed says Jesus was crucified 'for us,' but what do those two little words mean? What good is the cross?"

10) [R-rated: How to read the Bible with children](#), by Sarah Hinlicky Wilson.

"Much of the Bible is not fit for children—it's a book to ease little ones into, not drop them in cold. So what's the best way to go about this?"

11) [The Protestant: My first encounter](#), by Brian Doyle. "The Protestant was sitting alone at a table in the far corner. I assumed it was because no one else spoke Protestant."

12) [How to con a pastor: A few friendly pointers](#), by Benjamin J. Dueholm.

"So you've decided to make your way in life by bilking ministers. How can you increase your odds of walking away with some cash?"

13) [The good kind of liberalism: Reviving a theological tradition](#), by Theo

Hobson. "Liberalism's collapse was so dramatic that most theologians distanced themselves from the tradition, as if to avoid infection. But now the dust has settled."