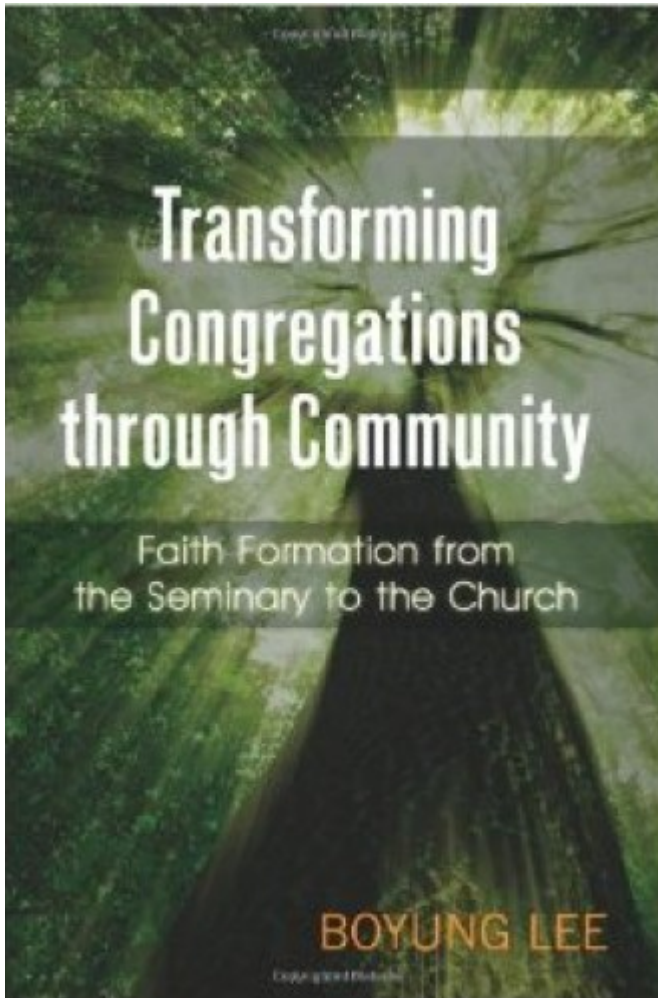


Practical theology

selected by [Sharon G. Thornton](#) in the [October 15, 2014](#) issue

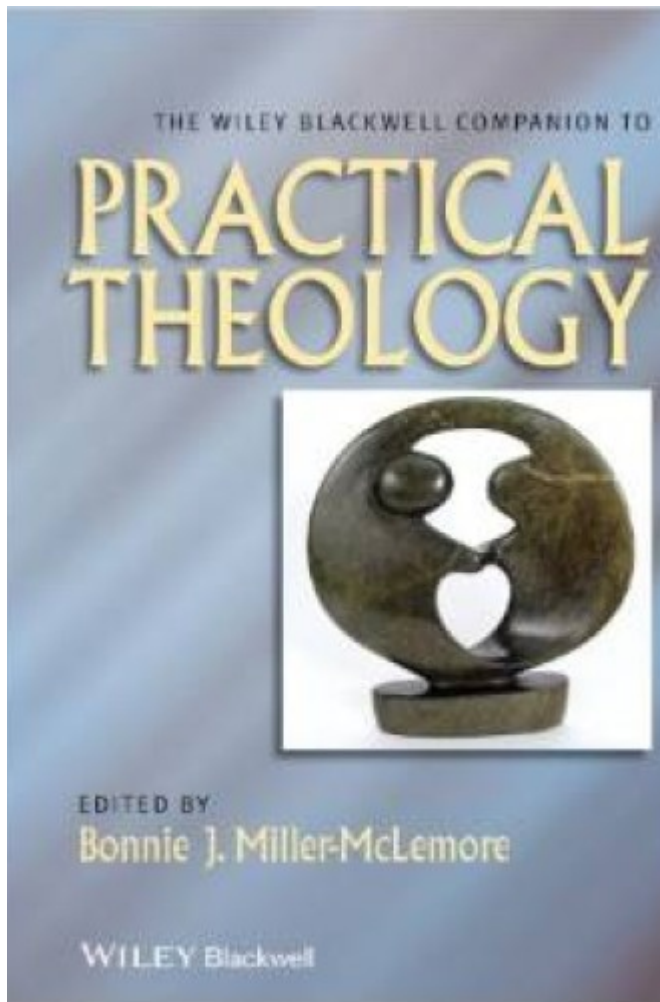
## In Review



## **Transforming Congregations through Community**

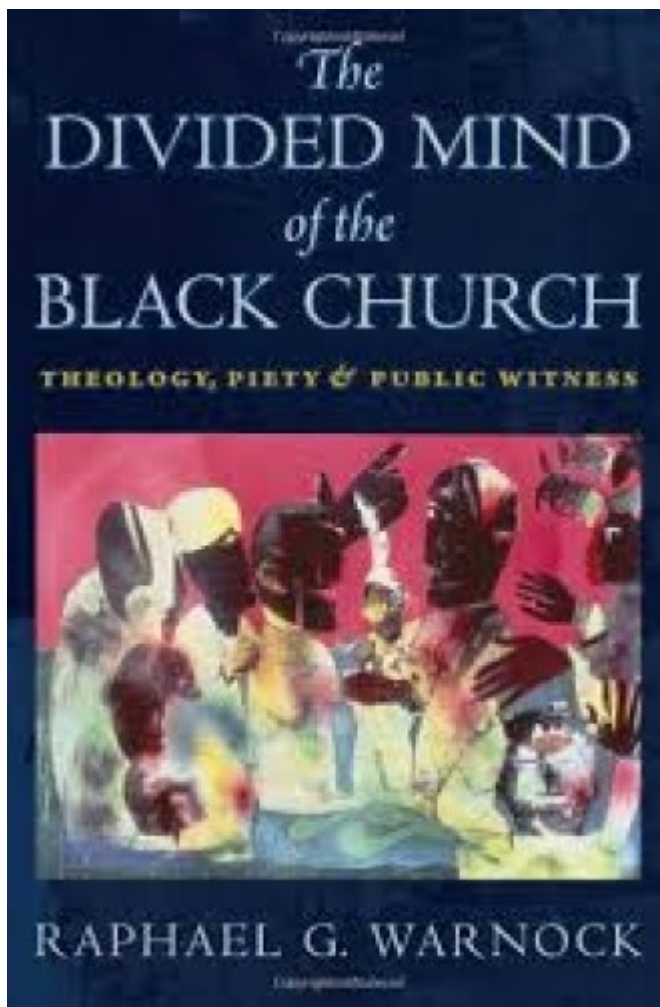
by Boyung Lee

Westminster John Knox



## **The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology**

edited by Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore  
Wiley-Blackwell



## **The Divided Mind of the Black Church**

by Raphael G. Warnock  
New York University Press

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JoAnn A. Post

## Steward of Stories

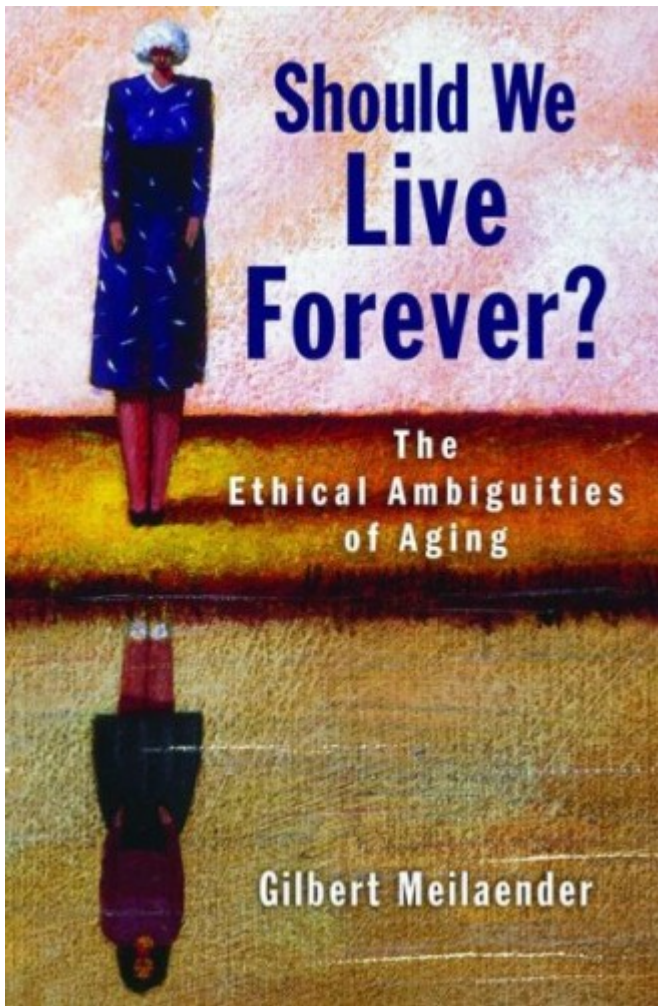
reflecting on Tensions  
in Daily Discipleship



### **Steward of Stories**

by JoAnn A. Post

Resource Publications



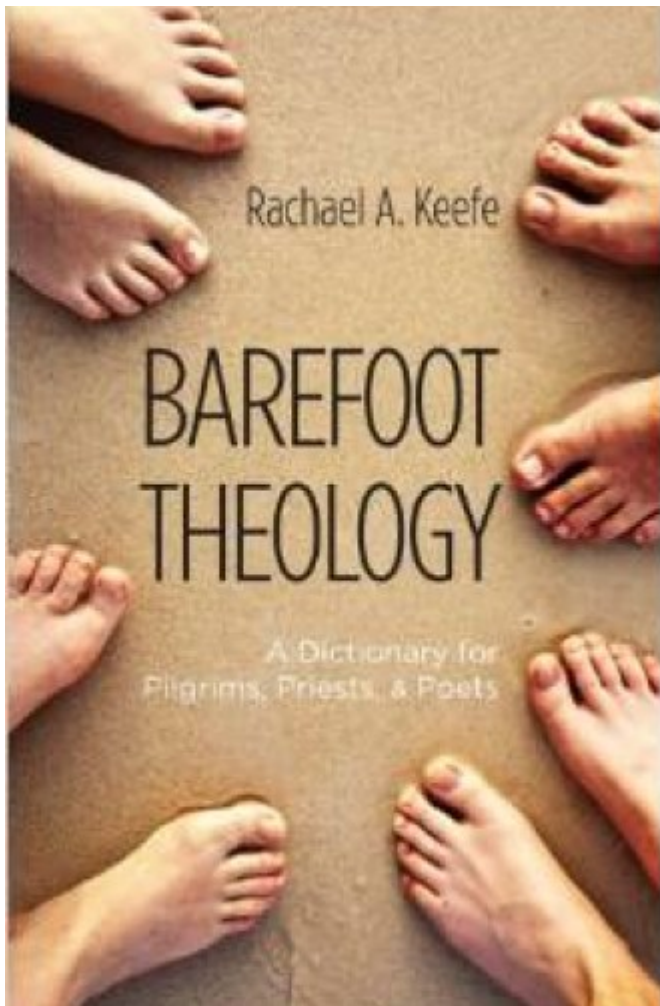
## **Should We Live Forever?**

by Gilbert Meilaender  
Eerdmans



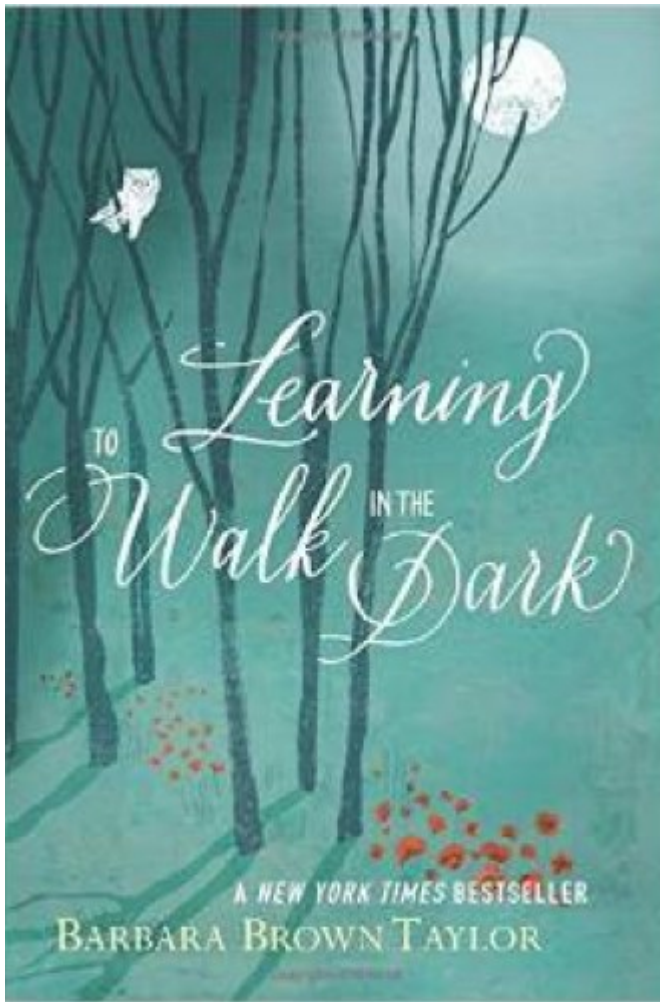
## **Sabbath as Resistance**

By Walter Brueggemann  
Westminster John Knox



## **Barefoot Theology**

by Rachael A. Keefe  
Wipf and Stock



## **Learning to Walk in the Dark**

by Barbara Brown Taylor  
HarperOne



"Gorgeously, gritty, profound . . . I love everything she writes,  
but there is something special about this new book."

— ANNE LAMOTT

# city of god

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faith in the streets

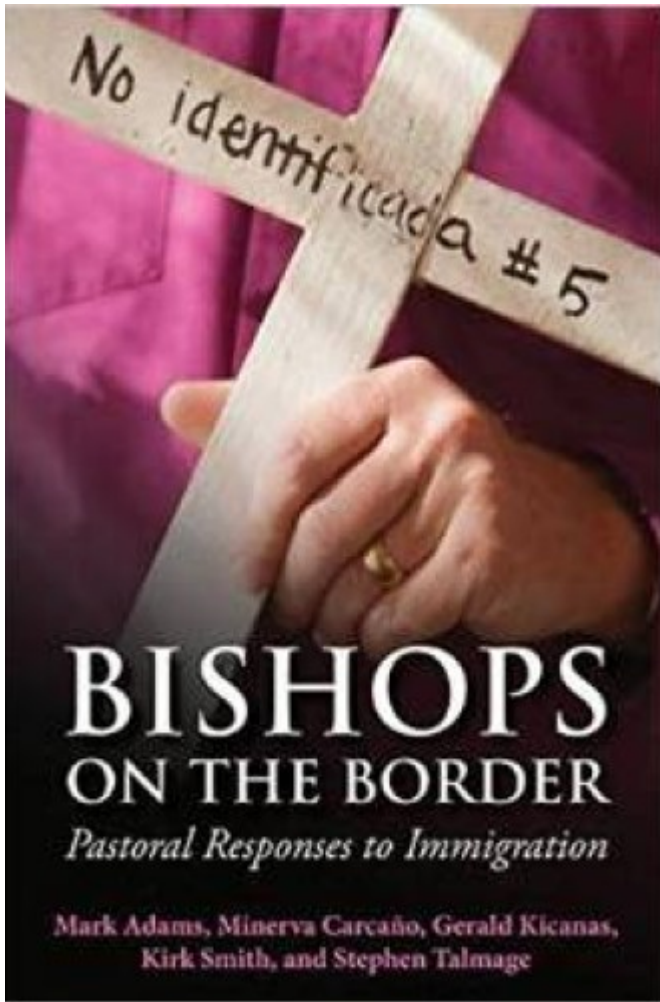


SARA MILES

## **City of God**

by Sara Miles

Jericho Books



## **Bishops on the Border**

by Mark Adams, Minerva Carcaño, Gerald Kicanas, Kirk Smith, and Stephen Talmage  
Morehouse

*Transforming Congregations through Community: Faith Formation from the Seminary to the Church*, by Boyung Lee. In this highly accessible work, pastor and seminary professor Lee offers readers a vision, plus practical guidance for helping mainline congregations become vital and faithful communities in the 21st century. Central to her project is the call to build authentic community as an alternative to the excessive individualism that is choking relationships among God's people. She engages multiple disciplines, including congregational studies, religious education, theology, and postcolonial critical theory, to make a sound and compelling case for the future of religious life.

*The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*, edited by Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore. Drawing primarily on North American and northern European viewpoints, the contributors to this edited volume address topics ranging from methods for doing practical theology to the lived experiences of believers that embody it. Educators will find a valuable framework for engaging students in the discipline of practical theology, and leaders of faith communities will recognize their indispensable role in articulating religious experiences and the theology that emanates from particular settings.

*The Divided Mind of the Black Church: Theology, Piety, and Public Witness*, by Raphael G. Warnock. This well-written and meticulously researched treatment of black church piety and social engagement is a timely and pivotal assessment as we head into the next chapter of American religious life. Tracing the history of and tensions among black theology, pastors, and congregations, Warnock contends that it is urgent that the aims of piety and protest move into full dialogue in various academic and ecclesial communities. Warnock's acknowledgment of womanist theologians and their offerings to this discourse is a welcome highlight of the book. Although he focuses on the black church, Warnock is writing for a broader audience in order to motivate all people of faith toward a deeper engagement in public theology and to forge a more sustainable, just, and peaceful world.

*Steward of Stories: Reflecting on Tensions in Daily Discipleship*, by JoAnn A. Post. A seasoned Lutheran pastor honestly and vulnerably reflects on various pastoral situations she has encountered during her thirtysome years on the job. This lively, spirit-filled reading of a pastor's daily life will inspire and encourage readers in all facets of congregational work.

*Should We Live Forever? The Ethical Ambiguities of Aging*, by Gilbert Meilaender. With the baby boomers fast becoming the aging boomers, Meilaender has written a timely reflection on the question of whether humans should live forever. In this thoughtful and comprehensive exploration of ethical ambiguities related to growing old, he examines popular orientations to aging, life prolongation, and age retardation and reaches the conclusion that despite the unavoidable losses that aging brings, a certain patience infused with hope in God can bring the believer to the close of life with a deep sense of gratitude.

*Sabbath as Resistance: Saying No to the Culture of Now*, by Walter Brueggemann. A well-timed word from a familiar sage. Short and to the point, this bit of vintage

Brueggemann lifts up the commandment to observe the sabbath so as to reimagine and restore right relations, or covenant, between neighbors and God. Sabbath rest invites us to imagine an alternative to endless and mindless striving, producing, and consuming. Drawing primarily on the Exodus narrative, Brueggemann reveals uncanny parallels with the current economic reality in the United States. Here sabbath rest is not a luxury or an escape, but a chance to resist the forces that would rob our lives of vitality and meaning. Sabbath as resistance says “enough is more than enough.”

*Barefoot Theology: A Dictionary for Pilgrims, Priests, and Poets*, by Rachael A. Keefe. This lovely volume is a unique blend of scripture, poetry, and theological reflection that will enter your heart, stir your soul, and speak to your mind. Keefe is a fresh voice beckoning from the horizons of faith, the daily rounds of ministry, and deep spiritual longings. She brings a keen mind, poetic flare, and unfailing compassion to her work, and she writes with passion, vision, and an accessible style that will appeal to a wide audience.

*Learning to Walk in the Dark*, by Barbara Brown Taylor. Taylor leads her readers off taken-for-granted and well-illuminated paths into dimly lit night regions of the world and of the soul. Through her stories, images, and courageous wanderings she articulates the doubts and worries that many experience. Taking seriously the real and imagined fears of both believers and nonbelievers, she coaxes readers to discover and explore the gifts of midnight—all the while holding them steady as a wise and competent guide.

*City of God: Faith in the Streets*, by Sara Miles. Through the lens of a service of ashes shared on the streets of San Francisco’s Mission District, Miles introduces readers to what she calls “heaven on earth.” She reveals a crowded heaven layered with many languages, multiple heartaches, and small victories in the face of great odds. Packed with stories of the faith and fortitude of real people, the book reads like a novel, but one too vivid not to be true. Writing with the expressive vocabulary of one who has discovered her faith firsthand, Miles weaves together stories of her discovery of God and her vocation, of the ministry of her home parish, and of the people she has met along the way.

*Bishops on the Border: Pastoral Responses to Immigration*, by Mark Adams, Minerva Carcaño, Gerald Kicanas, Kirk Smith, and Stephen Talmage. Catholic, Episcopal, Lutheran, and Methodist bishops tell of their experiences on the border between

Arizona and Mexico. After an extended introduction that recounts the history of this ever-changing region—its people, its politics, and the policies that have shaped the border’s meaning—the four bishops share how their lives and ministries have been affected and changed by their encounters. Their reflections are primarily autobiographical and are filled with vivid descriptions and powerful stories of the situations they have experienced and the people they have met. Their accounts invite communities of faith to recognize the deep suffering that is occurring every day on the border and to reexamine their mission and commitments in order to become involved in addressing the current crisis.