



Newsletter C.S. Lewis Society of Central Massachusetts

Exploring Mere Christianity in Science, the
Arts, and Culture

Spring/Summer 2011 (Volume 2, Issue 3)



Dear Reader,

We are pleased to share with you the Spring/Summer 2011 Newsletter of the C.S. Lewis Society of Central Massachusetts. The Society promotes the exploration of ideas from science, the arts, culture, and everyday life as they intersect with what C.S. Lewis called "mere Christianity." Our objective is to facilitate engaging discussion and reflection of topics of enduring value for Christians and non-Christians alike. To learn more, we invite you to visit our web site at www.lewisma.org. If you have any questions or comments, please email us at info@lewisma.org.

Newsletter Contents:

- I. Book Discussion Club to Resume in September
- II. News (Narnia, Lewis, Events, etc.)
- III. Books of Interest

I. Book Discussion Club to Resume in September

This September, the Book Discussion Club will meet at the Auburn Public Library at 369 Southbridge Street. The tentative dates and times are listed below. An email later this summer and the Fall 2011 Newsletter will provide details about the books that we plan to discuss.

Saturday, September 10, 9:00-10:30 AM

Saturday, September 24, 9:00-10:30 AM

Saturday, October 8, 9:00-10:30 AM

Saturday, October 22, 9:00-10:30 AM

Saturday, November 5, 9:00-10:30 AM, book to be determined by attendees

Saturday, November 19, 9:00-10:30 AM, book to be determined by attendees

II. News (Narnia, Lewis, Events, etc.)

[Silver Chair or Magician's Nephew next Narnia movie?](#)

[The Narnia Code DVD Trailer](#)

[The Narnia Code Author Interview](#)

[C.S. Lewis College Recruits Former Burger King CEO: Charles Olcott](#)

[Play about Freud and Lewis fictional meeting extends to Sept. 4](#)

[To Believe, or Not to Believe? \(Wall Street Journal\)](#)

[The Screwtape Letters and The Great Divorce movies in development](#)

[Local author inspired by "The Screwtape Letters"](#)

[C.S. Lewis Bible provokes debate about gender neutral Bible](#)

[The Journal of Inklings Studies is launched](#)

III. Books of Interest

Here we summarize a variety of books at the intersection of mere Christianity and science (S), arts (A), culture (C), and everyday life (L). We also include recent books on the life and work of C.S. Lewis (designated "Lewis") and books for kids (K). Unless otherwise indicated, summaries are from amazon.com or the publisher's web site. Please note that some of the books delve into controversial issues. While the books in the Newsletter are not officially endorsed by the Society, they can be good starting points for further discussion and reflection.

Surprised by Meaning: Science, Faith, and How We Make Sense of Things (S,C)

Alister E. McGrath, Westminster John Knox, 2011

In thirteen short, accessible chapters McGrath, author of the bestselling *The Dawkins Delusion*, leads the reader through a nontechnical discussion of science and faith. How do we make sense of the world around us? Are belief in science and the Christian faith compatible? Does the structure of the universe point toward the existence of God? McGrath's goal is to help readers see that science is neither anathema to faith, nor does it supersede faith. Both science and faith help with the overriding human desire to make sense of things. Faith is a complex idea. It is not a blind leap into the dark but a joyful discovery of a bigger picture of wondrous things of which we are all a part.

Mathematics Through the Eyes of Faith (S,C)

Russell Howell and James Bradley, HarperOne, 2011

In a new addition to the groundbreaking "Through the Eyes of Faith" series, the nation's top Christian professors approach mathematics from a Christian perspective. Co-sponsored by the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, *Mathematics Through the Eyes of Faith* addresses the Christian student's need to bring science into accord with faith. This deeply insightful and penetrating exploration of secular scholarship and spiritual pedagogy demonstrates how the discipline of mathematics penetrates the very core issues of human existence, and illustrates how math contributes to the construction of a consistent Christian worldview.

Science, Faith and Society (S,C)

Michael Polanyi, Maudsley Press, 2011

Many of the earliest books, particularly those dating back to the 1900s and before, are now extremely scarce and increasingly expensive. We are republishing these classic works in affordable, high quality, modern editions, using the original text and artwork.

Christians and the Common Good: How Faith Intersects with Public Life (C,L)

Charles Gutenson, Brazos, 2011

For too long, the question of faith in public life has centered on what the Bible says about government. Charles Gutenson, a theologian respected by both evangelical and mainline Christians, argues that we should first ask how God intends for us to live together before considering the public policies and institutions that would best empower living together in that way. By concentrating on the nature of God, we can move past presuppositions regarding the role of government and engage in healthy discussions about how best to serve the common good.

Reinventing Civil Society: The Emerging Role of Faith-Based Organization (C,L)

Cynthia Jackson-Elmoore, Richard C. Hula, and Laura A. Reese, M.E. Sharpe, 2011

Public debate on the appropriate role of faith-based organizations in the American political system has been extensive, and often quite heated, but accurate assessments of their impacts on key political issues have been difficult, due to a lack of reliable data on what FBOs do and how they do it. *Reinventing Civil Society* fills that need. It reviews and assesses what is known about the public service activities of FBOs, and poses and tests opposing models of faith-based service provision in the public sphere. The book focuses on the degree to which there is collaboration among and between faith-based and community organizations, other non-profits, and/or the government in providing services. It considers the possibility that FBOs can become integrated into governing regimes in the civil society, and finds that service provision serves as an entree to the political system for all types of non-profits, including FBOs, and that collaborative networks are critically important in both the provision of services and in their political roles.

More God, Less Crime: Why Faith Matters and How It Could Matter More (C,L)

Byron Johnson, Templeton Press, 2011

In *More God, Less Crime* renowned criminologist Byron R. Johnson ...[shows] that religion can be a powerful antidote to crime. The book describes how faith communities, congregations, and faith-based organizations are essential in forming partnerships necessary to provide the human and spiritual capital to effectively address crime, offender rehabilitation, and the substantial aftercare problems facing former prisoners. There is scattered research literature on religion and crime but until now, there has never been one publication that systematically and rigorously analyzes what we know from this largely overlooked body of research in a lay-friendly format. The data shows that when compared to current strategies, faith-based approaches to crime prevention bring added value in targeting those factors known to cause crime: poverty, lack of education, and unemployment. In an age of limited fiscal resources, Americans can't afford a criminal justice system that turns its nose up at volunteer efforts that could not only work better than the abysmal status quo, but also save billions of dollars at the same time. This book provides readers with practical insights and recommendations for a faith-based response that could do just that.

Contemplative Vision: A Guide to Christian Art and Prayer (A,C,L)

Juliet Benner, Intervarsity Press, 2010

While working as a docent in an art gallery, Juliet Benner began showing people how to meditate on Christian art treasures that are rooted in a passage of Scripture. She taught a way of encountering the Word behind both the words of Scripture and the artist's meditation on Scripture. This became a way of seeing art as an aid to contemplative prayer. This process resulted in her much-beloved "O Taste and See" columns that appeared in the spiritual formation journal *Conversations*, now expanded into this book. In each chapter you'll encounter a passage of Scripture and a corresponding piece of art. You'll be guided into deeper levels of meaning and reflection through the text and the questions at the end of each chapter. In the process you'll find yourself entering into a new experience of prayer and meditation in God's presence.

Business for the Common Good: A Christian Vision for the Marketplace (C,L)

Kenman L. Wong and Scott B. Rae, Intervarsity Press, 2011

Is business just a way to make money? Or can the marketplace be a venue for service to others? Scott B. Rae and Kenman L. Wong seek to explore this and other critical business issues from a uniquely Christian perspective, offering up a vision for work and service that is theologically grounded and practically oriented.

Jesus Christ and the Life of the Mind (S,A,C)

Mark A. Noll, Eerdmans, 2011

In "The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind" (1994) Mark Noll offered a bleak, even scathing, assessment of the state of evangelical thinking and scholarship. Now, nearly twenty years later, in a sequel that is more hopeful than despairing — more attuned to possibilities than to problems — Noll updates his assessment and charts a positive way forward for evangelical scholarship. Noll shows how the orthodox Christology

confessed in the classic Christian creeds provides an ideal vantage point for viewing the vast domains of human learning and can enhance intellectual engagement in a variety of specific disciplines, including history, science, and biblical studies. In a substantial postscript he candidly addresses the question How fares the “evangelical mind” today?

Redeemed by Fire: The Rise of Popular Christianity in Modern China (C)

Xi Lian, Yale University Press, 2010

This book is the first to address the history and future of homegrown, mass Chinese Christianity. Drawing on a large collection of fresh sources—including contemporaneous accounts, diaries, memoirs, archival material, and interviews—Lian Xi traces the transformation of Protestant Christianity in twentieth-century China from a small, beleaguered “missionary” church buffeted by antireligionism to an indigenous popular religion energized by nationalism and millenarianism. Lian shows that, with a current membership that rivals that of the Chinese Communist Party, and the ability to galvanize China’s millions into apocalyptic convulsion and messianic exuberance, the popular Christian movement channels the aspirations and the discontent of the masses and will play an important role in shaping the country’s future.

The Everyman Chesterton (L, Lewis)

G.K. Chesterton, Ian Ker (ed.), Knopf Doubleday, 2011

The first one-volume reader of the best of G. K. Chesterton’s writing in the full range of genres he mastered. Chesterton was a towering literary figure of the early twentieth century, accomplished and prolific in many literary forms. A forceful proponent of Christianity and a critic of both conservatism and liberalism, he set out to describe nothing less than the spiritual journey of humanity in *Orthodoxy* and *The Everlasting Man*, his most enduring books. He is famous as well for his beloved *Father Brown* detective stories, his satirical and comic verse, his profoundly witty paradoxes and aphorisms, and his penetrating studies of such figures as Charles Dickens, St. Francis of Assisi, and St. Thomas Aquinas. *The Everyman Chesterton* contains samples of his poems, stories, essays, and biographies, as well as the influential works of religious, political, and social thought in which he championed the common man and for which he is most admired.

C. S. Lewis's Lost Aeneid: Arms and the Exile (Lewis)

A.T. Reyes (ed.), Yale University Press, 2011

Reyes introduces the surviving fragments of Lewis's translation of Virgil's epic poem, which were rescued from a bonfire. They are presented in parallel with the Latin text, and are accompanied by synopses of missing sections, and an informative glossary, making them accessible to the general reader. Writes Lewis in *A Preface to Paradise Lost*, “Virgil uses something more subtle than mere length of time.... It is this which gives the reader of the *Aeneid* the sense of having lived through so much. No man who has read it with full perception remains an adolescent.” Lewis's admiration for the *Aeneid*, written in the 1st century BC and unfolding the adventures of Aeneas, a Trojan who traveled to Italy and became the ancestor of the Romans, is evident in his remarkably lyrical translation. *C. S. Lewis's Lost Aeneid* is part detective story, as Reyes recounts the dramatic rescue of the fragments and his efforts to collect and organize them, and part illuminating look at a lesser known and intriguing aspect of Lewis's work.

Speaking of Jack: A C.S. Lewis Discussion Guide (Lewis)

Will Vaus, Winged Lion Press, 2011

“Speaking of Jack” is the result of Will Vaus' experience in leading three different C. S. Lewis societies. Included here are introductions to most of Lewis' books as well as questions designed to stimulate discussion. These materials have been “road tested” with groups made up of young and old, some very familiar with Lewis and some newcomers. “Speaking of Jack” can be used in high school or college courses, an existing book discussion group or Sunday school class, to start a C. S. Lewis Society or as a guide to your own exploration of Lewis' books.

Imagination and the Arts in C.S. Lewis: Journeying to Narnia and Other Worlds (Lewis)

Peter J. Schakel, University of Missouri Press, 2011

Imagination has long been regarded as central to C. S. Lewis's life and to his creative and critical works, but this is the first study to provide a thorough analysis of his theory of imagination.... Schakel begins by concentrating on the way reading or engaging with the other arts is an imaginative activity. He focuses on three books in which imagination is the central theme—*Surprised by Joy*, *An Experiment in Criticism*, and *The Discarded Image*—and shows the important role of imagination in Lewis's theory of education. He then examines imagination and reading in Lewis's fiction, concentrating specifically on the *Chronicles of Narnia*, the most imaginative of his works...*Imagination and the Arts in C. S. Lewis* also explores Lewis's ideas about imagination in the nonliterary arts. Although Lewis regarded engagement with the arts as essential to a well-rounded and satisfying life, critics of his work and even biographers have given little attention to this aspect of his life. Schakel reviews the place of music, dance, art, and architecture in Lewis's life, the ways in which he uses them as content in his poems and stories, and how he develops some of the deepest, most significant themes of his stories through them. Schakel concludes by analyzing the uses and abuses of imagination. He looks first at "moral imagination." Although Lewis did not use this term, Schakel shows how Lewis developed the concept in *That Hideous Strength* and *The Abolition of Man* long before it became popularized in the 1980s and 1990s. While readers often concentrate on the Christian dimension of Lewis's works, equally or more important to him was their moral dimension.

C.S. Lewis for the Third Millenium (C,Lewis)

Peter Kreeft, Ignatius Press, 2011

Kreeft, one of the foremost students of Lewis' thought, distills Lewis' reflections on the collapse of western civilization and the way to renew it. Few writers have more lucidly grasped the meaning of modern times than Lewis. Kreeft's reflections on Lewis' thought provide explorations into the questions of our times.

C. S. Lewis and the Church: Essays in Honour of Walter Hooper (Lewis)

Judith Wolfe and Brendan N. Wolfe (eds.), T&T Clark International, 2011

This is a groundbreaking collection of essays on C.S. Lewis' ecclesiology. C.S. Lewis, himself a layperson in the Church of England, has exercised an unprecedentedly wide influence on the faithful of Anglican, Roman Catholic, Evangelical and other churches, all of whom tend naturally to claim him as 'one of their own'. One of the reasons for this diverse appropriation is the elusiveness of the church - in the sense both of his own denomination and of the wider subject of ecclesiology - in Lewis' writings. The essays contained in this volume critically examine the place, character and role of the Church in Lewis' life. The result is a detailed and scintillating picture of the interactions of one of the most distinctive voices in twentieth-century theology with the contemporaneous development of the Church of England, with key concepts in ecclesiology, and with interdenominational matters.

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