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to transform the Anglican Communion's fortunes. But perhaps especially through its use of personal testimony, *Living Reconciliation* gently challenges its reader, whatever their prior theological convictions, to recognize the value of Anglicans meeting across their varied divides not merely for the good of the Communion but in response to God's reconciling call.

A nagging question remains, however, about who exactly this book is aimed towards: Anglicans, certainly – but probably not those in search of vigorous theological engagement with themes of reconciliation. The presence of 'questions to think about' at the end of each chapter, plus an accompanying website – http://living-reconciliation.org/ – promotes the potential for group study and debate at a parish level. The banner headline to the website, 'A book and a Bible study guide for transforming conflicts' perhaps offers a better description of the project's aims than 'living reconciliation'. No one would wish to disagree with the laudable aims of this project, including its determination to make its content widely accessible; and this book inevitably forms part of a much wider process. But Anglicans will need robust theological reflection as well as warmer human relationships if the further fracturing of their Communion is to be avoided, and this text only really advances the latter of those requirements.

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Christopher Brittain, *A Plague on Both their Houses: Liberal vs. Conservative Christians and the Divorce of the Episcopal Church USA* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015), pp. 280. ISBN 978-0567658456.

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Within three years of the confirmation of the election of Gene Robinson as bishop of New Hampshire by the General Convention of The Episcopal Church USA (TEC) in 2003, all attempts to construct a confessional movement of North American Anglicans centred on the Windsor Process had foundered. As conservative parishes and dioceses increasingly sought an exit strategy from the denomination, leaders of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh in southwestern Pennsylvania, whose bishop, Robert Duncan, would later be elected the first archbishop of a new denomination, the Anglican Church of North America (ACNA), played a leading role in that secession.

With *A Plague on Both their Houses*, Chris Brittain has provided the first of what will undoubtedly be many scholarly studies of the process of Anglican realignment in the Global North. Combining grassroots ethnography with practical and pastoral theology, Brittain's study, informed by no fewer than 53 face-to-face interviews with clergy and laypeople (including this reviewer), represents a valiant attempt to go beyond the public rhetoric of ecclesiastical confrontation and engage with the 'lived' embodied practices of ordinary believers. (For a study so dependent on the anonymity of its sources, it is unfortunate that the pseudonymous parishes and

individuals were not indexed to allow the reader conveniently to contrast different references to a particular parish or the various responses of a single individual.)

From the outset, Brittain's findings challenge received wisdom, whether on the existence of discrete 'Liberal' and 'Conservative' Episcopalian identities or the fact that the theological struggle within TEC during the 2000s was merely an extension of the secular 'Culture Wars'. Arguing that TEC has been racked by internal divisions since its inception in the late eighteenth century, Brittain nevertheless questions the reality of 'party labels' in the specific context of Pittsburgh, particularly the existence of an unambiguous Liberal 'type' (pp. 66–70). In discussing why TEC for the most part avoided schism until the 2000s, however, Brittain perhaps understates the significance of enduring diocesan and episcopal autonomy, although that is itself a matter of legal dispute.

As the focus shifts from the diocese as a whole to four specific congregations, the voices of rank-and-file Episcopalians and Anglicans come to the fore. Here Brittain explores the realignment process, the role of clergy leaders in determining individual parish responses and shifting patterns of religious identity, perhaps most dramatically in the case of 'St. Malkin's' (pp. 130–34), a divided parish whose rector – though a conservative Evangelical – proved unwilling to leave TEC and whose vestry ultimately voted 5–4 against realignment. Brittain also analyses the ways in which litigation over church property and the rise of the Anglican blogosphere have served to disrupt earlier patterns of ecclesiastical authority and traditional understandings of Anglican ecclesiology.

A Plague on Both their Houses concludes with a reflection on the value – and shortcomings – of contemporary theological models of church conflict in light of the messy realities of church divorce. Rejecting what he considers a false dualism between a model of the Church as something inherently holy (the ACNA approach) or as something structurally compromised by its connection with a fallen world (the TEC approach), Brittain maintains that both sides – while acknowledging the fact of their separation – have something to learn from the other, whether it be an openness to diversity or a commitment to sustained theological reflection. It might be noted here that the ACNA constitution today vests parish property in its member congregations and repudiates any national church interest therein, reflecting not only an appreciation of the fallibility of the human Church but perhaps also a desire to submit to doctrinal unity and discipline for its own sake and not out of fear of material deprivation.

There is much in Brittain's work for scholars of church history and pastoral theology to ponder, not least the dynamics of internecine theological strife. Brittain is to be commended for taking issue with any notion of realignment as something foisted on an unsuspecting diocese by ecclesiastical elites, even as he acknowledges the importance of loyalty to clerical incumbents in congregational decision-making. That he ascribes comparatively little importance to the influence of the extremely evangelical Trinity School for Ministry in the events of the mid-2000s is itself noteworthy (pp. 100–103).

While Brittain proves most effective in his discussion of the symbolic role of TEC Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori as a source of conservative angst (pp. 70–75), it is surprising that his comments on liberal attitudes towards Archbishop Robert Duncan are more scattered. Nominated from the floor of the

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diocesan convention in 1996 with the enthusiastic backing of many liberal clergy (who soon experienced buyers' remorse), Duncan quickly became the liberal embodiment of *disloyal* opposition to TEC. While an incident such as that involving 'Rev. Gino' (p. 132) would seem to bear out charges of Duncan's 'authoritarian' persona, liberal representations of Duncan have often been as stereotypical as conservative representations of Schori. The perception of Duncan as a conservative 'outsider' to the Diocese of Pittsburgh parallels that held by some conservatives of his liberal nemesis, Harold Lewis, former rector of Calvary Church, Pittsburgh.

Brittain's commendable concern with the local context at times has the effect of filtering out the global dimension. Given the significance of parachurch and missionary organizations in the Evangelical subculture, this would have been a good opportunity to test whether a growing sense of connectedness with the Global South informed attitudes to realignment and, for that matter, how the missionary connections of TEC-affiliated parishes differed from those affiliated with ACNA. As ACNA looks to the Global South for leadership, it will be faced with problems of cultural captivity that differ from those in North America but are potentially as troubling for a global communion.

At the outset Brittain expresses the hope that the Anglicans and Episcopalians of Pittsburgh 'will recognize themselves in my descriptions of their experiences' (p. 18). As one closely acquainted with the Diocese of Pittsburgh for the better part of a decade, I consider his account to be a remarkably balanced and enlightening one.

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Martin Spence, *Heaven on Earth: Reimagining Time and Eternity in Nineteenth-Century British Evangelicalism* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2015), pp. 324, ISBN 978-1620322598.
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It is thirty years since Boyd Hilton narrated the British nineteenth century as the 'Age of Atonement' followed by the 'Age of Incarnation'. Hilton suggested Victorian intellectual culture (and Anglican thought within it), shifted sometime around 1860 from a hegemonic evangelical view of God as an approaching judge, requiring atonement and recompense for sin, and animated about heaven and hell, to a liberal, 'Broad Church' view of a divine parent involved in redeeming the world through the incarnation, and rather vague on eternal destinies. To many since, this dichotomy has made sense of a host of Victorian proclivities and seemingly changed priorities: evangelicals are remembered for judging the poor as deserving or undeserving, and liberals for intervening to improve conditions; evangelicals gave out Bibles to save souls, but liberals gave bread to fill stomachs; evangelicals expected a messiah in clouds of glory, and liberals looked to build the Kingdom on earth.

Given time, all influential histories are exposed for their simplifications and inconsistencies, and Hilton's work has been no exception. But Martin Spence's work

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