

**T.F. Torrance Theological Fellowship**  
**President's Letter: March, 2017**

Dear Members,

*Jesus Christ is not content once to have died for us and to have taken our place on the Cross. He insists on lodging permanently within us, within each of us, and within us as a Church.*

These words of T.F. Torrance have struck me as I meditate on a sermon I have to preach in a few weeks on Galatians 2:20. They come from his sermon on 'The Foundation of the Church', published in 1957 in his book of sermons, *When Christ Comes and Comes Again*. What could be a more appropriate thought as we work our way through another semester and through Lent? Not just Christ *for* us, and Christ *with* us, but Christ *in* us! Whatever our calling, as academics, pastors, teachers or students, we address our work as a calling, and Christ *in* us is our strength and gives us our sense of direction. And Christ is in his Church, his strength being perfected in our weakness.

I should perhaps say a word of introduction since I just began a three-year term as president of the T.F. Torrance Theological Fellowship at the beginning of the year. My link with the Torrances goes back to 1973, when I became a student at New College, Edinburgh. T.F. and J.B. Torrance were both still at New College at that time, and I sat under their tuition in the Honours Dogmatics class. T.F. retired from teaching soon afterwards, but with his guidance, I began research into the Greek Fathers (Gregory Nazianzen, to be exact) under the late Alasdair Heron. Then in 1982, T.F. came to the Nazarene Theological College in Didsbury, Manchester, where I was dean, to deliver the Didsbury Lectures which were published as *The Mediation of Christ*.

In later years, he was followed by his brother, James B. Torrance, whose Didsbury Lectures were published in 1996 as the widely influential little book, *Worship, Community and the Triune God of Grace*. Alan Torrance, J.B.'s son, followed some years later, and we eagerly expect the publication of his Didsbury Lectures. As it happens, Alan came to Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City last week (where I am at present) to deliver another series of guest lectures, on 'The Priesthood of Christ.'

That's enough by way of introduction. What you really want to hear about is the work of the Fellowship.

**Meeting of November, 2016**

First, a brief report on our last meeting, in San Antonio, last November. Our speaker, Dr Alister McGrath of Oxford, whose intellectual biography of T.F. Torrance you will know, gave a stimulating lecture on 'Why T.F. Torrance will be Remembered.' Among other reasons, Dr McGrath focused on his 'Scientifically Engaged Theology'. He recounted his encounter as a young scientist and historical theologian with the theology of Torrance, particularly through his several readings of *Theological Science*. Dr Greg Cootsona of Chico State University responded and an engaging conversation ensued with many questions from the audience. Before Dr McGrath spoke, our brief business meeting saw Jerome Van Kuiken elected to the committee as member-at-large. Paul Molnar and Gary Deddo serve as Vice-Presidents. Chris Kettler continues as treasurer.

Members of the T.F.T.F. who were not able to be present will also want to note the following points of information given at the meeting:

Membership now stands at 339

The need for a manager of the T.F. Torrance Fellowship website was announced at the meeting. In response to that announcement Kerry Magruder, Curator, History of Science Collections, University of Oklahoma Libraries stepped up and has already begun work on updating the website. Thanks, Kerry! Jerome Van Kuiken is managing a social network site for current T.F. Torrance Fellowship scholars on LinkedIn—go to <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/6804009> or search for the T.F. Torrance Theological Fellowship on the LinkedIn website, then message Jerome Van Kuiken requesting to join.

Dan Cameron is acting as a Resource Coordinator for members engaged in research  
Audio and Video recordings of many of our annual meetings are available at  
<http://tftfellowship.tumblr.com/> for viewing and download

Grace Communion International and its seminary, Grace Communion Seminary, hosts interviews with Torrance scholars in their “You’re Included” series – including Jeremy Begbie, Alister McGrath, Alan Torrance, David Fergusson, Fr. George Dragas, Paul Molnar, Myk Habets as well as N.T. Wright. Go to: <https://www.gci.org/yi>

In conjunction with the AAR/SBL convention in Boston our annual lecture on Friday, November 17, 2017 will be given by Jason Radcliff, who completed his Ph.D. at New College, Edinburgh under the direction of David Fergusson.

### **Participatio**

Since the meeting, the committee has received an excellent report from Todd Speidell on *Participatio*, our on-line journal. If you have not done so already, you should read Volume 6 which was placed on the website in January on ‘T.F. Torrance and Ecclesiology’. W. Travis McMaken wrote the feature article, ‘Actualism, Dualism and Onto-relations: Interrogating Torrance’s Criticism of Barth’s Doctrine of Baptism’. There are eight other substantial articles, eight book reviews, and two addresses.

Todd reports that plans are in hand for Volume 7, which will be the tenth volume when the three Supplemental Volumes are included. It will include the conference papers from Alister McGrath and Greg Cootsona along with other papers on Theology and Science. We are indebted to Todd and his indefatigable team. He particularly notes the number of younger scholars engaged in Torrance research as an indication of increasing future influence.

### **Looking Ahead**

Three things you might take note of, looking ahead:

First, there is no annual subscription for members of the TFTTF, but of course there are continuing expenses for the website, editors, and so on. Students should not feel under any obligation, but a contribution of around \$10.00 each year from members who are in employment would be quite sufficient to cover these. This may be given via the “donations” button on our website homepage: [www.tfttorrance.org](http://www.tfttorrance.org), or checks made out to “T.F. Torrance Theological Fellowship” sent to our treasurer: Dr Chris Kettler, Friends University, 2100 West University Avenue, Wichita, Kansas 67213.

Secondly, Robert Walker has announced the date of the biannual Torrance Retreat on 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2017, at Furbush Centre on Loch Tay in the Scottish Highlands. Prof. Trevor Hart of St Andrews is the main speaker on the theme of ‘Creation and New Creation.’ Why not consider a visit to the glorious scenery of the Scottish Highlands and enjoy an excellent retreat/conference? I attach a flyer.

Thirdly, take a note of the date of our next meeting in Boston at AAR/SBL on Friday, November 17, 2017. Dr Jason Radcliff will speak on ‘The Patristic Foundations of the Reformed-Orthodox Ecumenical Dialogue’

May you know the strength of Christ *in* you today as you read, think, write, teach, preach, or give counsel.

Thomas A. Noble,  
President,  
Thomas F. Torrance Theological Fellowship

# CREATION & NEW CREATION

## Jesus in incarnation and resurrection



Firbush Point Field Centre Loch Tay  
14 – 16 June 2017  
4.30 pm Wednesday – 2.00 pm Friday

### Speakers

Rev Prof Trevor Hart, St Andrews, "Creation, Eucharist and New Creation"  
Rev David Torrance, North Berwick, "New Creation: Romans 8 – 2 Corinthians 5"  
Dr David Thistlethwaite, Cirencester, "Beauty in Creation and Faith"  
Dr Robert Walker, Edinburgh, "Creation and New Creation in T.F. Torrance"  
Prof Thomas Noble, Manchester, "Christ and Human Response"

**Cost:** Residential £140, (students and E.U. staff £120); E.U. students £110

**Early bird discounts** (15<sup>th</sup> April) £12

**Day visitors** (including meals) £35 (students £30)

**Booking & enquiries:** Bob Walker [bob@hebrides.u-net.com](mailto:bob@hebrides.u-net.com) 0131 228 6431

### T.F. TORRANCE RETREAT

"No change for the creation could be more momentous than that the creator himself should become a creature, should condescend to enter into it from within and share its created existence and so redeem it."