



Finding God in the World: A Spiritual Revolution

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500 Year Jumble Sales

Every 500 years or so the church has a big jumble sale where everything is up for grabs.

Jumble Sale Examples

TIMES OF GREAT THEOLOGICAL TURMOIL AND DISCONTENT

- Building of the first Temple (David & Solomon)
- Babylonian Exile (destruction of the Temple)
- Jesus movement within Judaism
- Fall of the Roman Empire

“GAPS” PROMPTING REFORM
MOVEMENTS DEVELOP
BETWEEN RELIGIOUS
INSTITUTIONS AND THE WAY IN
WHICH PEOPLE EXPERIENCE
GOD

- Division of Eastern and Western branches of the Christian Church
- Reformation and Counter-Reformation
- Rise of the Spiritual but not religious

Today's “Gap” Situation (this is descriptive not proscriptive)

VERTICAL-ELEVATOR CHURCH

Christendom

- Institutional Maintenance
- Hierarchical
- Intellectual
- “Belief” Oriented
- Particularistic
- Individual

HORIZONTAL CHURCH

Emerging Church

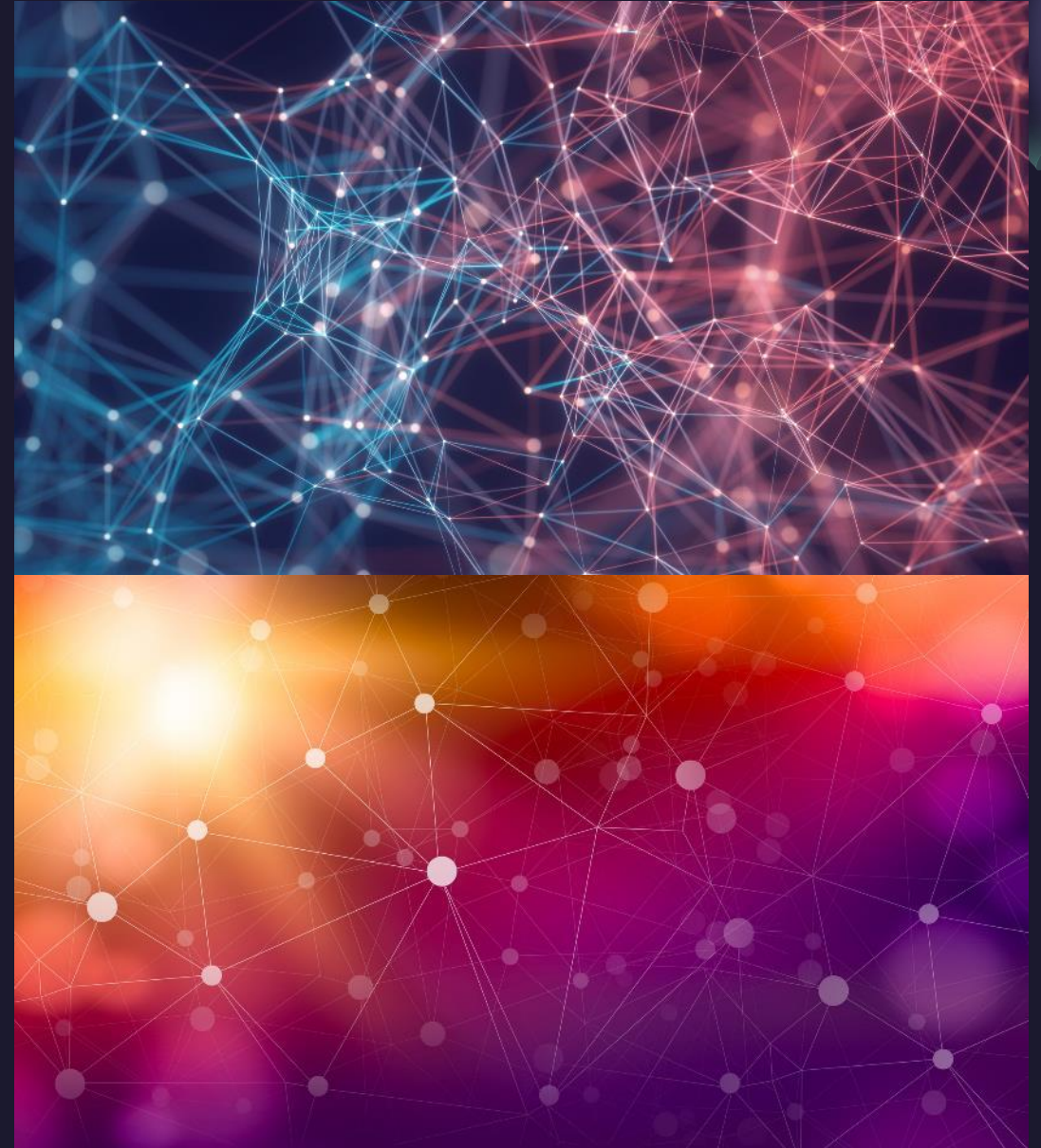
- “Jesus Centered”
- Post-Denominational
- Communal
- Inclusive (in conversation with other Religious Traditions)
- Early Church Focus
- Flat

What's Not Changing?

- The power of the gospel
- The centrality of Jesus
- The value of gathering for worship
- The benefit of the spiritual disciplines
- The significance of our offering
- The importance of spiritual gifts
- The practice of hospitality
- Local and global missional initiatives
- Loving your neighbor
- The leadership of the spirit

Guiding Principles for Upcoming Design and Build Decisions: (Dreamscape)

To live lives of Active Discipleship, to serve as Jesus served, and to provide the spiritual, intellectual, and communal nourishment to sustain this work, we value:



- Being fully present; listening and discerning God's calling;
- Continuing with forward-looking theology, uplifting music, and inspiring worship;
- Building lives of witness and service;
- Working for peace and justice;
- Deepening and investing in life-giving relationships, nurturing connections, and celebrating all stages of life;
- Being more and more ecologically conscious and mindful of sustainability;



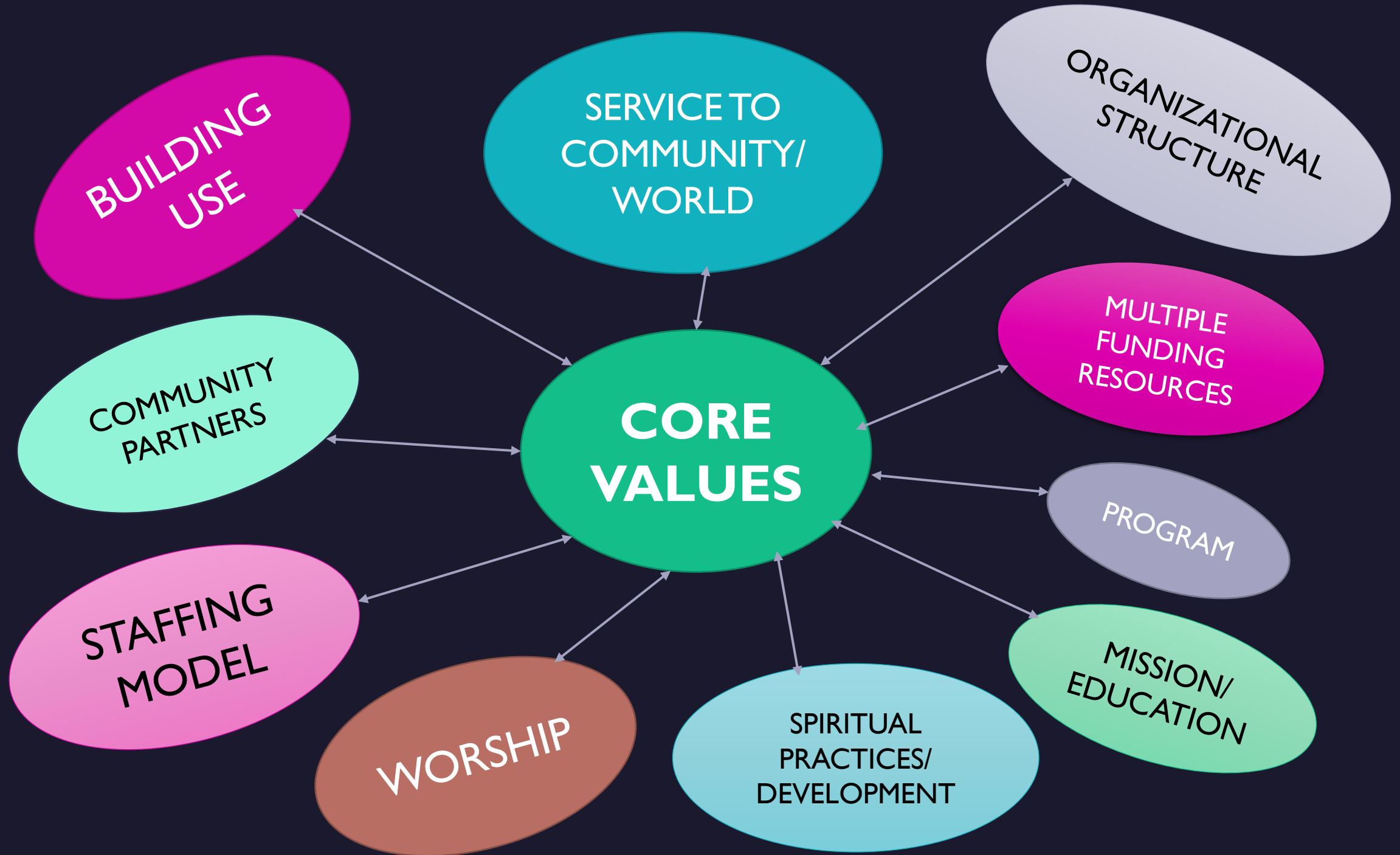
- Creating an effective organizational structure;
- Continuing practices of financial accountability and stability while moving toward fund-raising, development, and new financial models;
- Humbly respecting all people, actively serving neighbors and the broader community;
- Humbly serving *with* neighbors and friends and inviting them into planning and decision-making processes;
- Seeking intentional connection with individuals and organizations of different beliefs, life experiences, and backgrounds; and we seek to partner with other faith communities;
- And, therefore, seeking change, taking risks, and adapting our facilities to meet these needs and serve the greatest good.



We Value:

Openness,
Invitation,
Creativity,
Collaboration,
Thoughtful
Exploration,
Experimentation,
Flexibility,
Innovation







How are people experiencing God in the World?

- Nature/Earth Care, Art, Music, Loving Relationships, Neighbors, Work, Acts of Justice, Exercise, Mysticism
- People today are not looking for a church with “all the answers,” but a place where it is safe for everyone to ask the questions.

Who are the
spiritual but
not religious?

All of us!



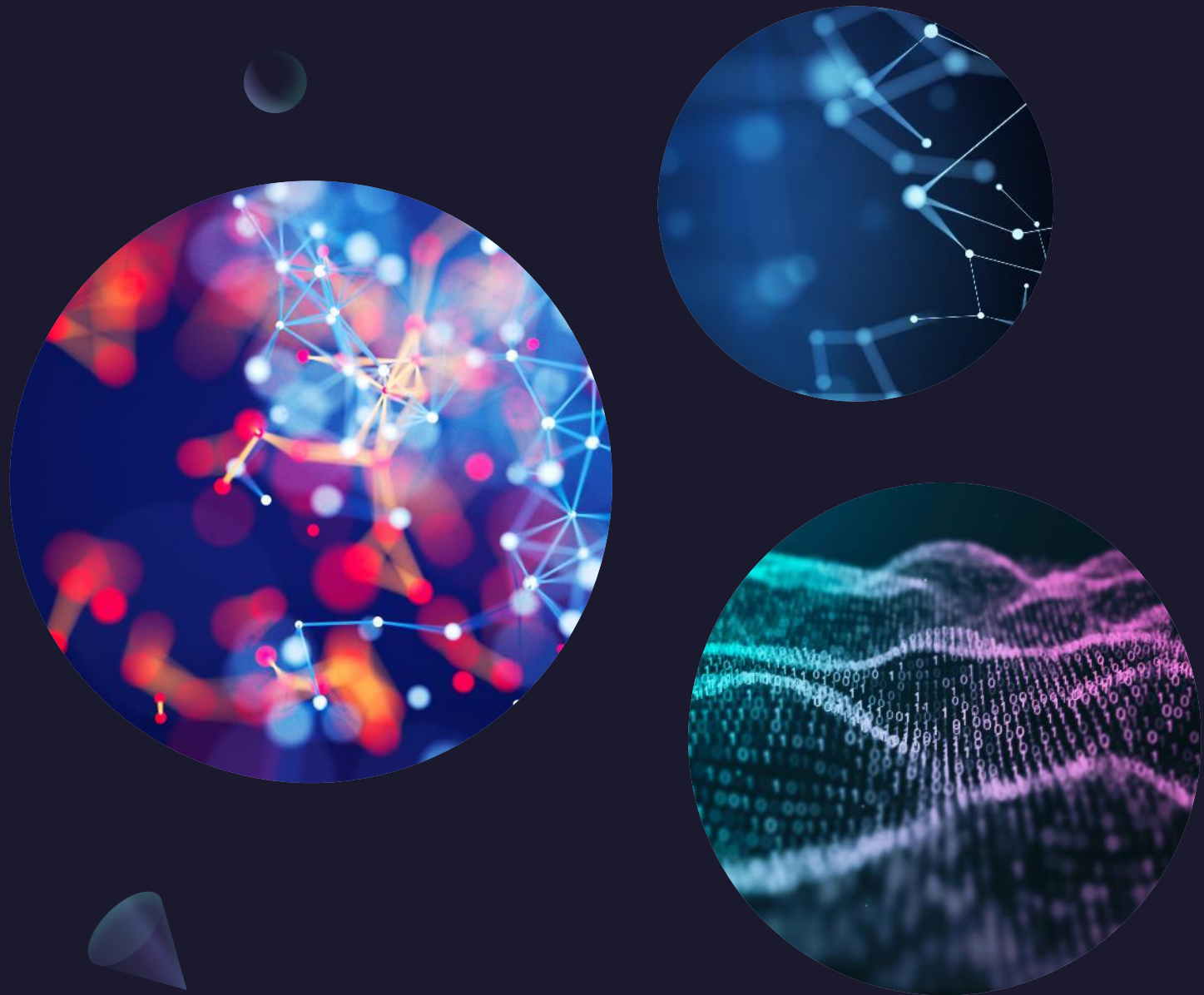
Implications for Hiring a New Pastor

from Jan Edmiston

Countless church people tell me that –
what they want in a pastor – are these
skills and gifts:

- Good preacher.
- Able to bring in young families*
- Approachable and friendly*
- Able to connect with the community*

This is a deceptive way to call a pastor.



Instead of asking “*What are we looking for in a pastor?*” the better question for a church to ask is:

What is the work our church needs and who is the person to do it?

If your church needs to work on:

- Trust
- Financial commitment
- Long term conflict
- Short term conflict
- Any conflict
- Worship refurbishment
- Corporate or individual grief
- Anxiety that “the church isn’t what it used to be”
- Replacing the roof
- Systemic racism
- Staff relationships
- Administrative organization
- Connecting with the community



Then – for the love of God – call someone who will do those things based on past performance in other positions. What every congregation needs most is a spiritual leader who will love them and who can shepherd them in doing the work that needs to be done for this time and context.

What work does your congregation need to do in order to be the Church God has called you to be? Be honest about that.

It's not fair to call a pastor under the false pretenses that *“things are great and we just want a solid preacher with charisma.”* Please don't do that.



Most pastoral leaders are called to serve God's people by creating community, bolstering spiritual growth, and expanding God's reign on earth as it is in heaven. It's heartbreaking to go into a church excited about a call that allows them to do those things, when – in truth – there is a list of recognized or unrecognized issues to address. Life has enough surprises. Please don't surprise new pastors with realities we could have shared before they moved in.

Also:

*It's not any pastor's job to 1) bring in young families, 2) be friendly, or 3) connect with the community. That would be the job of *the members of the church* led by the pastor.





Summary

The spiritual revolution is about two things: God and the world. It is about God, but it does not end up being other worldly. It is about the world, but it does not result in secularism. This is a middle-ground revolution, in which millions of people are navigating the space between conventional theism and a secularized world.

Diana Butler Bass