

## *A Note from the Editors*



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With immense joy, we, the editorial team, are privileged to introduce our second volume, *The Lord is Our Shepherd*. Reflecting on our previous publications, it has been astonishing to see the journal's transformation from a mere dream to a tangible reality. Though I was not yet involved in the journal's early days, I am grateful for the pioneers in attendance at the first meeting in spring 2021. Indeed, with that team's late nights, tedious copyediting, and faithful labour, they made the release of our inaugural issue not only possible but timed its publication to coincide with Vanguard College's seventy-fifth anniversary, a truly remarkable accomplishment. Over a year has now passed, and by the grace of God, our team has grown. We are poised to continue building; it seems we have found our footing and are set to begin the adventure ahead, moving closer toward the College's centennial, providing a space for scholarly and creative discourse. In this regard, I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to our editorial team who not only went above and beyond to make the present issue possible, but also went through the work of onboarding myself as Editor-in-Chief.

While our team was discussing the prospective theme for the present volume, the proposal was made to orientate the call for papers around Psalm 23. At the time of praying into the decision, I had never felt more insecure regarding the goodness of God. If I may use this space to speak candidly, this year has been difficult. I read of God's goodness in Scripture, I could articulate and conceptualize His goodness from a theological perspective, I could testify of His goodness in previous moments of my life, and I could rejoice with brothers and sisters in the faith who could share of God's goodness in their own lives. Yet, there remained a gulf between my head and heart which seemed to be an eternal chasm.

In a desperate attempt to come back to my first love, Psalm 23 became a plumbline. By the grace of God, I can now rejoice and testify that I have begun to see with new eyes the goodness of God in the land of the living. Although we are sojourners passing through a foreign land, our God is faithful, and more than faithful: He is the Good Shepherd. Reflecting on the present issue's content, I have been struck by the submissions, which have been for me, the collective community of saints testifying to the goodness of God. From the journal's conception, the desire has been to provide a space for practitioners, students, pedagogues, and alumni to enter the 'vanguard' of discourse through the scholarly forum. In practice, this has been a gathering of the sanctified, proclaiming that though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we shall fear no evil, for His rod and His staff, they comfort us. Through the concerted effort of undergraduates, practitioners, and alumni, the present volume contains six articles which elucidate the truth presented in Scripture; not just Psalm 23, but drawing on the rich repertoire of pastoral imagery seasoning the biblical cannon. Readers are invited to reflect again on the work of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Matthew, and others. Furthermore, the creative submissions offer raw, honest, and inspiring prose, which inevitably draw the reader's heart to worship.



I have been awestruck by how so many people can say the same thing in such a kaleidoscope of ways. If I were to identify a red thread uniting the present volume, it is that God is good. It is so simple, but in many ways, I believe this is what the Church needs at this moment, I know this is what I need at this moment. It has been a source of inspiration to engage with not only the intellectual nature of this issue's content, but the Spirit-filled authors who have undoubtedly brought to the public form what has been taught in the prayer closet. Psalm 23 is familiar to many, yet timeless; never old or irrelevant, a good word in and out of season. Though storms rage and the night is long, we know that joy comes in the morning, for the Lord is our Shepherd.

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