

# OPEN FORUM

Greetings in the name of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! I just finished reading *Circuit Rider* for the very first time [Nov/Dec CR]. It's great! The writers are bold and to the point! No wimpy, "religious" stuff here! The writers seem to reflect true Christianity! Thank you, thank you, thank you!

*Claudia Anne Robinson  
Cartersville, GA*

I want to commend Lovett Weems, Jr., for his guest editing of the Nov-Dec. issue of *Circuit Rider*, and its very provocative articles. But I want to highlight his obvious and intentional inclusiveness of women as writers, and especially the choice of women for "When the Associate Pastor Becomes the Senior Pastor." If some bishops pay close attention, it will be of assistance to both women and men. However, for some reason, it was a woman who was the only writer neither identified nor pictured in that issue. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl is the Bishop of the South Dakota Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, a strong supporter of "ecumenical shared ministries" with United Methodists in the Dakota Area and a delegate to the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Zimbabwe in 1998. Here was a splendid opportunity to remind our denomination that women bishops are present in the larger ecumenical community, at a time when Southern Baptists are claiming that they shouldn't even be ordained. So, *Circuit Rider*—three steps forward, one step backward in your effort to see more women writers of your articles!

*Jeanne Audrey Powers  
Minneapolis, MN*

I am writing to commend you on this excellent issue of *Circuit Rider* [Jan/Feb]. This is one of the very best I have read! The articles were well written and interesting. I found several ideas that were helpful in practical ways and stimulating in thought-provoking ways. Addressing the issues around Easter in sermon preparation and accommodation of Easter crowds strikes my heart, and I imagine many other pastors' hearts as well. The suggestions about Lent were also helpful to think about NOW. Thank you for this GOOD issue.

*Judi Jacobson  
Evansville, IN*

I know that Lent begins before your next deadline, but did we have to get all gory and gruesome on the *Circuit Rider* cover on the day after Christmas? In my pre- "e-file" days, I used to have to prepare for my IRS forms arriving. I hope I won't have to dread the January issue of *CR* each year!

*Steve Butler  
Glen Falls, NY*

I would like to respond to an article in the *Circuit Rider*, "Preaching the Easter Message" by Joseph W. Daniels, Jr. Appreciation for his writing is my initial thought, but it needs to be expanded. Since retirement, I have had long periods of reflection, but unfortunately only a few opportunities for public expression.

When beginning ministry, a very wise DS took me to lunch for the purpose of finding how I was coping with trying to find new ideas for sermons. Beginning with that moment, I used a conscious effort to be aware of the sources. Please allow me to give one bit of advice. A preacher must proclaim the Word with confidence. This is gained not just at Easter time, but every Sunday through: 1) Careful exegesis of the Scripture lessons 2) Prayer 3) More study 4) Prayer 5) Pondering the needs of the people. And finally—MORE PRAYER. We are constantly rewarded with the great and mysterious ways in which the Lord works!

*Stacy S. Hance  
Winchester, OR*

I really like this magazine, but unfortunately it rarely deals with me. I'm a part-time local pastor who lives 80 miles from a two-point charge. I work 50 plus hours weekly on my job that pays the bills. I work on commission and get 0 weeks paid vacation, and my day off is Sunday. From time to time, think about those of us on the bottom of the food chain when you plan the magazine.

*Max Miller  
Erie, PA*

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