

# THE MORNING STAR

THE WYCLIFFE COLLEGE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 28 2019 | VOL. 07



## *Providence*

BY MARK ELLIOT

“Providence” sounds such a heavy word. Portentous. If someone uses it a lot in conversation, we might think of them as self-important and smug, as if they are claiming that God is on their side.

But the first appearance in Scripture of the idea that the word providence conveys is as early as Genesis 22 when Abraham assures Isaac (with trembling voice and faith, I think we may safely assume) that God will see to it. Yet in this situation it looks as though, if God is not quite against them, then the best that can be said is that He is not making things easy.

### **Providential moments and milestones**

Another great story matching that of Abraham in scale, is Joseph’s (Genesis 37-50), which has the famous “you intended it [Joseph’s being trafficked] for evil, but God intended it for good” (Genesis 50:20). The story of Jacob also has moments of providence. Accidents will happen, but in Jacob’s case, they seem too special to be totally random. Jacob is a schemer who asserts his will even against God-in-the-form-of-an-angel. He will do rather than be done to. And yet, both Jacob’s and Joseph’s stories tell of men who found their slow and painful way to blessing, receiving and giving. It is more blessed to receive than to give. (*Continued...*)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Oct 27-29, Sun-Tue**  
*Lester Randall Toronto  
Festival of Preaching, p. 4*

**Nov 2, Sat**  
*Toronto Children’s  
Ministry Conference, p. 4*

**Nov 16, Sat**  
*Christian Vocation with  
William Willimon, p.4*

**Nov 19, Tue**  
*Being Christian: 12 Rules  
of Life? p.4*

**Nov 23, Sat**  
*Craft, Cost & Call book  
launch, p.3*

*(continued from page 1)*

Indeed providence stretches way back in the book of Genesis to all the points where God takes care and hence intervenes, almost always indirectly—whether through angels, other creatures or events—to steer the course of any long and winding narrative. What is clear throughout the Hebrew biblical witness is on the one hand (1) the constancy of the good order of creation and on the other (2) its changeability under pressure from God’s purposes and His reaction to human endeavour, for better or for worse.

### **Special providence**

Now it might appear that with Exodus we get something different—the saving redemption of a people, rather than providence as such. True, and John Calvin, for instance, read the Bible as suggesting that this “special providence” was what got individuals elected into God’s story so as to become a group, whether a people or church. Yet it might also be correct that this special providence was one part of the outworking of God’s providential plan, one that would keep creation, even while reshaping and remaking it.

The church is bigger than the individual in election and providence but both are but parts of the story of God with creation, human and otherwise. It is not that the church is

bigger than the kingdom. Yet we also know that providence cares for sparrows (Matthew 10:29/Luke 12:6): the various vulnerable details of the big picture, including ourselves and other weak and needy souls, give the cosmos its precious value.

### **Worth consideration**

The Bible does not use the term “providence” any more than it does the word “Trinity,” but the idea that God is actively in charge to maintain, enhance, and purify His creation seems pervasive throughout both the Bible and history seen from a believing viewpoint.

Moreover it might be something that even those who can’t believe in a fuller Christian gospel would do well to consider—that the world has meaning and purpose in God’s capable hands.

*For further thoughts on providence, watch for Mark Elliot’s forthcoming book Providence: A Biblical, Historical, and Theological Account (Baker, April 2020).*

### **ABOUT**

*Mark Elliot is Professorial Fellow at Wycliffe College.*



# From the Registrar



Hope you all have had a fruitful Reading Week.

The U of T service charge for outstanding fall fees is now in play. All accounts were assessed on Sept 30 and the first charge should have appeared on your invoice by October 15, 2019. For more information about service charges please see [http://www.fees.utoronto.ca/Assets/Student+Accounts+Digital+Assets/19+20+Fall+Winter/20199+20201+Reg+\\$!26+SC+Sched-final.pdf](http://www.fees.utoronto.ca/Assets/Student+Accounts+Digital+Assets/19+20+Fall+Winter/20199+20201+Reg+$!26+SC+Sched-final.pdf)

The last day to drop a fall class without academic penalty is Nov 8, 2019 however there is no tuition refund available after Oct 14.

For students looking to stretch those dollars there are a couple of programs offered by the UTSU that can help. These are available to any student in a conjoint program (awarded by both Wycliffe and U of T)

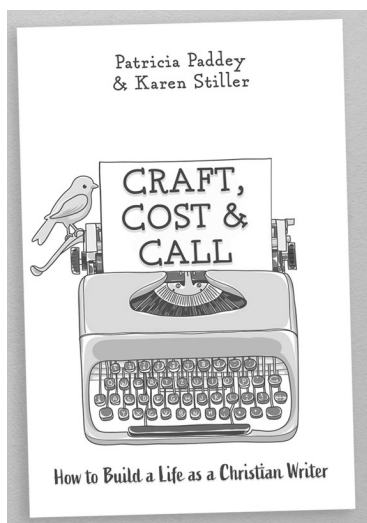
These range from discounted tickets for AGO, Ripley's Aquarium, Absolute Comedy, and Cineplex to printing and photocopying.

See <https://www.utsu.ca/services/> for a full list of what's on offer.

For more information about any of these initiatives email [services@utsu.ca](mailto:services@utsu.ca) or call into the UTSU office at 12 Hart House Circle.

Applications are now being accepted for Fall 2020 admission into the MA, ThM and PhD degree programs. The deadline for completed applications to be received by the Graduate Centre for Theological Studies (GCTS) Office is **4:30 pm (EST), December 13, 2019**. The online application form, along with application instructions and a list of necessary supporting materials, may be found at <https://www.tst.edu/prospective/how-apply-graduate-degree-programs>.

## Writers, we invite you...



**You're invited to the *Craft, Cost & Call: How to Build a Life as a Christian Writer* book launch!**

***Saturday, Nov 23, 7:00—9:00 p.m. at Wycliffe College in the Reading Room.***

Co-authored by Patricia Paddey, Director of Communications at Wycliffe, and Karen Stiller, Senior Editor of Faith Today Magazine, this inspiring and immensely readable book offers help to people of faith who want to write well and be published. For writers hoping to launch a career or simply yearning to grow in their craft, this guidebook provides a clear path forward filled with the hard-won wisdom of long-time and widely-published Christian writers. *(Learn more at: <https://www.craftcostcall.com>)*

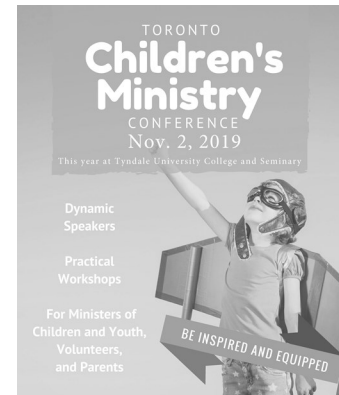
This is your chance to meet the authors and hear from guest writers who will share about their own writing lives. Expect an inspiring evening that will shine the light on writing as a vocation, a passion, and just plain fun. There will be delicious pie. *Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/craft-cost-call-book-launch-tickets-73358789113>*

# More Events & Announcements

## TORONTO CHILDREN'S MINISTRY CONFERENCE 2019

*Saturday, Nov 2, 9 a.m.—5 p.m. at Tyndale University College and Seminary*

The Toronto Children's Ministry Conference is a gathering of people who are dedicated to the spiritual growth of children—parents, church volunteers, ministry leaders, and anyone who has a passion for ministering to children. This year's conference will take place on **Saturday, Nov 2** at Tyndale University College and Seminary. Register at [wycliffecollege.ca/tcmc](http://wycliffecollege.ca/tcmc).



## Wycliffe Merchandise

Wycliffe pullover sweaters are available for purchase at Front Desk for \$50!



### 2019 LESTER RANDALL TORONTO FESTIVAL OF PREACHING

*Sunday-Tuesday, Oct 27- 29,  
Yorkminster Park Baptist Church,  
Toronto*

This is an annual preaching event, which consists of a mix of workshops, lectures, private and public preaching events, networking and fellowship, led by keynote speakers and other well-known clergy and professors of preaching from across North America.

**Professor Annette Brownlee** from Wycliffe College will also be giving a workshop at the event: "Playing Around Scripture." To register, visit [lesterrandall.com](http://lesterrandall.com).



### THE CALLING OF CHRISTIANS TODAY: CHRISTIAN VOCATION IN AN ANXIOUS AGE

*Saturday, Nov 16, 9:30 a.m. — 3:30  
p.m. at Grace Church on the Hill*

Internationally renowned preacher, writer, and church leader, Rev. Dr. William Willimon will speak on these two topics: 1. How can Christians live out our calling in the present age that is full of skepticism and anxiety? 2. How can clergy/the church help and guide Christians to find their baptismal vocation? Tickets (\$25 student rate incl. lunch) are available online at [gracechurchonthehill.ca](http://gracechurchonthehill.ca).



### BEING CHRISTIAN: 12 RULES FOR LIFE? A STUDY OF THE BOOK BY JORDAN B. PETERSON

*Tuesday, Nov 19, 7:00 p.m. — 9:30  
p.m. at Timothy Eaton Memorial  
Church*

Is Jordan Peterson's work compatible with Christianity? Join the conversation with Wycliffe Professor **Ephraim Radner**, Faith Today Senior Editor **Karen Stiller**, and Senior Minister **Andrew Stirling** to explore this self-help book by the controversial author from a Christian Perspective. Register at [temc.ca/beingchristian](http://temc.ca/beingchristian).