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# The Pastor as Bearer of Hope<sup>1</sup>

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Karen Lebacqz's and Ronald Barton's book *Sex in the Parish* emphasizes that pastors are *professionals*. (And because they are, they have power whether they know it or not.) I want to continue this emphasis on the pastor as professional, and to explore the idea that what makes the pastor unique among professionals is that the pastor is fundamentally an agent or bearer of hope. Other professionals offer and support hope, but they do this as a part or aspect of other things they do. Pastors, I suggest, are *bearers of hope* by definition (or calling), and often this is *all* that they are. A reason they often feel vulnerable is the fact that they have nothing other than hope to offer, and hope is a very intangible thing.

Pastors are intuitively aware that they are bearers of hope. I support this intuition. However, I want to address the problem that while pastors know intuitively that they are bearers of hope, and may have some clear ideas about what hope is theologically understood, there isn't much that pastors can read about the *experience* of hope. What does it mean to hope? What is the experience of hope about? And, more specifically, what are the main elements or constituents of hope?

I will briefly comment on the developmental origins of hope, then set forth a model of the experience of hoping and the characteristics of hope, and then briefly discuss some new strategies in psychotherapy that are supportive of hope, strategies that pastors should find adaptable to the parish context. I have also given thought to our need to identify the allies and adversaries of hope, but space will not permit my going into that issue.

I should also note that the inspiration for this lecture came from John Bunyan's classic *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Hopeful

was the name of the companion who accompanied Christian, the hero of the story, throughout most of his journey to the promised land. When Christian was crossing the River Jordan, his last testing before his entry into the Celestial City, he began to sink and to cry out in despair. Hopeful was there to encourage him, to hold his head above water until Christian felt the solid ground beneath him. This is the image of the pastor that I wish for us to reflect upon.

### The Origins of Hope

Erik Erikson argues that *hope* is born in the earliest stage of life—in infancy—and specifically in the infant's relationship with the mother or mothering one. Hope is thus born in the experience of a reliable other who, as he says, provides "a convincing pattern of providence" in which "hopes are met and hopefulness is inherently rewarding".<sup>2</sup> As the infant grows into a child, hope becomes associated with the *will* and with the capacity to take *initiative*, so that the child becomes actively involved in realizing hopes. With increased agency also comes a greater capacity to renounce one's hope, to "transfer disappointed hopes to better prospects", and to train our expectations "on what promises to prove possible". Hope remains aligned with the maintenance of a stable, reliable and verifiable world, but it becomes increasingly identified with change, new prospects and widening horizons.

In infancy, hope is based on specific hopes and has not yet developed into an attitude or spirit of hopefulness independent of these specific hopes. But, in childhood, hopefulness becomes inherently rewarding. Hence, even when some or many of our hopes go unmet, when it would make sense for us to abandon hope, few of us actually do. This is because we have become hopeful selves, and hopefulness has become intrinsic to who we are.

### The Nature of Hope

Like those who write about love, those who have written about hope have frequently commented on the difficulty of defining or describing it. My own efforts to get at the phenomenon of hope suggest the wisdom of making a distinction between "hoping" and "hopes". "Hoping" indicates that we

are concerned with a process or form of experience, one that may be compared with other experiences, like "loving", "hating", "creating" and the like. "Hope" or "hopes", on the other hand, concern a phenomenon or thing, one that may be compared with other things, like "beliefs", "judgments", or "skills".

## Hoping

I suggest, as a working definition for hoping, that hoping "is the perception that what one wants to happen will happen, a perception that is fueled by desire and in response to felt deprivation."

1. *The perception that what is wanted will happen.* Alexander Solzhenitsyn, the Russian author, was arrested by the KGB in 1974 and forced into exile in the United States. Shortly after he came to the U.S. he told an interviewer, "I have no proof of it; but I have a premonition, a feeling... I think—I am sure—that I will return to Russia and still have a chance to live there." His intuition that he would someday return to Russia was an indication of hoping. He had no "proof" for it, and no specific plan for realizing it, and yet felt sure that it would someday come to pass. As it turned out, his hoping proved to be accurate.

I suggest that hoping is a particular kind or type of *perception*. It is the perception (or sense) that what is wanted will happen, and it therefore involves investment of self: "I think—I am sure." Without the sense that what we want to happen will in fact happen, there is no hoping going on. Of course, our confidence that what is wanted will happen can fluctuate over time. There are times when we firmly believe that a given hope will come true, and times when our confidence sags. Students who anticipate a major exam often go through this up and down cycle. One day, they are quite confident. The next day, they are close to despair. The very fact that hoping produces such fluctuating emotions tells us that emotions play a role in hoping, but hoping is not primarily a matter of emotions. The sense or intuition that what is wanted will happen can persist even when we do not "feel" this to be the case. This disparity between our current feelings and our longer range intuitions suggests that hoping is primarily a perceptual phenomenon. Emotions are involved, but hoping is primarily a way of seeing or perceiving.

2. *Fueled by Desire.* Because we are created in the image of God, we are desiring beings. We have longings and yearnings, and these grow out of perceived lacks or needs. Hoping is fueled by desire. We do not hope for what we already have. But hoping is a *persisting* desire. It is more intense than *wishing* but less intense than *craving*. Its intensity is expressed in its persistence, as it continues to strive until its object is realized or proven to be unrealizable. Cravings are more urgent but not as lasting. If we crave a certain food and know that we should not have it, we can sometimes talk ourselves into the notion that the craving may pass. We are not as willing to dispense with our desires. So too with wishes. We normally wish about those matters whose outcome we are in no position to influence, even by the simple act of entertaining the wish itself. But when we hope, we not only anticipate that the object of our desire will come about, but we also marshal our own energies and resources to make it so. Wishes have little staying power, little persistence, because they are not so invested with desire. When a wish becomes invested with desire, it is then on its way toward becoming a hope.

3. *Response to felt deprivation.* The third feature of hoping is that it is a response to felt deprivation. Oftentimes, what we lack is something that we have never had experience of, but toward which we have a strong sense of wanting and needing. We want the love we have never had, the recognition that we have never been afforded, the joyful life that has never been ours. Other times, what we lack is something we once had, but have since been deprived of. We long for the presence of our life's companion, now deceased. We are filled with nostalgia for our childhood home. Our sense of deprivation may also involve something we took for granted until we lost it: our health, our work, our freedom to move about. One reason our hoping is sometimes so difficult to identify or put our finger on is that the lack we feel is deeply personal and difficult to put into words. We sense that our lives are unfulfilled, or that our existence seems purposeless and devoid of meaning. Or we have a deep sense of personal inadequacy, of not having the capabilities we want or need. How talk about something that we know only by its absence?

Deprivations are not synonymous with loss, yet losses are a major cause of a felt sense of deprivation and are therefore

of great importance to hoping. The hoping against hope that occurs in the wake of a loss reveals how deeply related hoping is to deprivation. Death takes from us the one with whom so many hopes, large and small, were shared. It also makes us desperately aware of our deprivation. If we hope for our loved one to be restored to us, we hope in vain, and we face the stark and bitter truth that our deprivation cannot be erased however long we live. We learn instead that we must make do with secondary hopes, with the compensatory hopes to which we manage in time to orient our lives.

Hoping, then, is the perception that what is wanted will happen, a perception fueled by desire and in response to felt deprivation. Hoping involves all of these elements, and if any one of them is missing, we are probably witnessing something that approximates hoping but is something else (like wishing, or pining, or anticipating). On the other hand, this understanding of hoping reveals that it is not a rare thing at all. We are all creatures of desire, and all of us feel deprived in one way or another, so the necessary conditions for hoping are always present.

Yet, if this is so, why is it that we are so often despairing, so often lacking in the perception that what is wanted will happen? One obvious answer is that we cannot always have what we desire. Our desire is met by hard reality, and something has to give, and what gives, more often than not, is hope. There is another reason, however, that is more subtle and less frequently noted, and this is that we do not know what it is that we desire. If it is difficult to put our finger on why we feel deprived and what we feel deprived of, it is also difficult to know what it is that we really want. This brings us to the matter of our *hopes*: If hoping involves the perception that what is wanted will happen, what is the "what" that is wanted? What is the "object" of our desire?

## Hopes

I suggest the following working definition for hopes: "Hopes are projections that envision the realizable and thus involve risk."

1. *Hopes as projections.* Because hoping is primarily a matter of sensing or perceiving, we should expect that hopes

would express themselves in imagistic form and not as concepts or ideas. If so, this invites us to consider hopes to be projections. In psychology, a projection is the unconscious act or process of ascribing to others one's own ideas or intentions, especially when such ideas or intentions are considered undesirable. We may, for example, ascribe to another person sexual fantasies or aggressive intentions that are really our own. In photography, however, projection is the process of causing an image to appear on a screen. In a sense, both types of projection are based on an illusion, and are therefore inherently false. Yet, we generally view the photographic representation on the screen as artistic, whereas the ascription of ideas or intentions to another person is viewed as inappropriate, unacceptable and often pathological. Paranoia, for example, involves the false belief that someone wants to harm me.

One reason that we take a more positive view of the photographic over the psychological projection is that we understand the photographic projection to be the work of a creative mind, whereas psychological projection is the work of a mind that is mistaken, disoriented or disturbed. The psychological projection is based on a fundamental error, the erroneous ascription of ideas and intentions to another, and once we become aware of the error, no useful purpose is served by retaining the projection. So we set about the task of learning how to withdraw it, usually by putting something else—an accurate ascription of the other's intentions toward us—in its place. In photographic projection, the image has an artistic function not in spite of but because of its illusory character. Such projections continue to be valuable precisely because they are illusory, and thus allow us to imagine a reality other than our own everyday experience.

Hopes, then, are projections because they envision a future that is technically false and unreal, as it does not exist, and yet is profoundly true and real, as it expresses yearnings and longings that not only exist but are often more real than the objective world. When we hope, we envision eventualities that are not yet realities but nevertheless appear to us as potential realities. Also, because hope is a projection, and thus involves images that play against the screen of the future, hope is a certain way of seeing, of visualizing, of fore-seeing. We see or image forth realities that are not yet present to us, and yet are

made closer—almost within reach—by the images we project. In this sense, hopes are always a future projection, but through imaging they make the future more palpably real and present to us. Of course, the flip side of this is that our capacity to project a future can also cause us to despair. As Yogi Berra, catcher and manager for the New York Yankees, is reputed to have said, “The future ain’t what it used to be.”

Our images of hope are also *self*-projections. By hoping, we project *ourselves* into the future and envision our existence being different from what it is at present. The fact that hoping involves self-projections has inspired some psychotherapists to focus on their counselees’ current self-images and their images of themselves as future-projection (what do you see yourself being in the near and more distant future?). By helping their counselees identify these two self-images, present and future, therapists enable them to find ways to close the gap that separates them, usually by assisting them in realizing the future self, enabling it to become more real, more “present”, to the counselee. So, when we image the future, envision the not-yet, we place ourselves in this scene, for, after all, it is not some abstract or impersonal future that we are projecting and envisioning; it is *our* future, and thus our own involvement in the image can always be assumed. Even when we envision a future in which we are physically absent, as when we imagine a scene in which our families have gathered to mourn our own death, we have projected ourselves into this future, as we have envisioned ourselves as deceased and as witnessing the scene that stretches out before us.

Because the future is unpredictable and has its own reality, our hopeful projections rarely fit the future with perfect accuracy. This does not mean, however, that such projections should be discouraged or suppressed for, as Erik Erikson has argued, hope is often the decisive element in *changing* the world of facts. He writes: “Hope not only maintains itself in the face of changed facts—it proves itself able to change facts, even as faith is said to move mountains.”<sup>3</sup> We should also keep in mind that change is inevitable. The future will not be the same as the present, even as the present is not the same as the past. Basing itself on this known fact, hope chooses to anticipate the nature of the changes that may occur. It knows that such anticipations are risky and subject to error. Yet, future



projections are in fact realities, as they have impact on the current state of affairs. This is one reason why the capacity to hope was so vitally important to the prisoners in concentration camps during World War II. By projecting a future, hope alters the present. Physically, the prisoners were captives, but inwardly they achieved a margin of freedom to the extent that they were able to hope. To project hopes is to achieve some degree of autonomy in the present, and, by autonomy, Erikson means self-government rather than government by others. The margin of freedom that such projections effect may be slight, but it can be the difference between life and death.

2. *Hopes as envisionings of the realizable.* If hoping involves the perception that what is wanted will happen, it follows that our projected hopes will be envisionings of what is realizable. Hopes are not projections of what we believe to be impossibilities, as the very projection of impossibilities would not make for hope but for hopelessness, and would therefore be grounds for despair. When we hope, we anticipate the realization of what is projected.

If so, this does not mean that hope only envisions *realistic* possibilities. To say that hope envisions the realizable does not mean that it is bound by the practical, the sensible, the proven, or the tried and true. In many situations, we have no way of knowing on the basis of prior experience what is or is not realizable. Sometimes, we realize more than previous experience would have indicated is possible. In other cases, we realize much less. So, hopes are not based on calculations of what is realistic on the basis of prior experience. Instead, they are based on the view that the future is open, and that the future is to some degree amenable to our efforts to make a difference.

When we tell someone to be realistic, we often plunge a knife into hope itself, as such admonitions often create a spirit of quiet despair. Parents often tell their children to be realistic—about themselves, about their abilities and capacities, about their future prospects. Pastors often tell young couples who are about to be married to be realistic—about the problems they will inevitably face, about the dangers of relying on romantic love to see them through the crises of married life, and about the misplaced trust in marriage to effect change in their personalities, habits, attitudes and behavior. Certainly, children

and young couples need such admonitions, and, no doubt, parents and pastors are qualified to offer them. Yet the adoption of a realistic approach can erode a hopeful approach to life, as it may cause us to settle for a less full and vital life than would in fact be accessible to us. As already noted, hopes change the world of facts. They enable our children to accomplish more than *we* ever thought possible, and they enable young couples to experience marriages that may in fact be far happier than those of the adults who are cautioning them not to expect more from marriage than they can realistically hope to experience.

There are always more possibilities than a realistic assessment of our situation recognizes or acknowledges. The question then becomes, not "What is realistic to hope for?" but "What is possible *for me*?" One reason we resent admonitions to be "realistic" is that we suspect that they are not based on intimate knowledge of ourselves, but instead on a knowledge of humanity in general, or some group or category of humans with whom we are being identified on the basis of age, gender, race or cultural background. We feel that if the other persons really knew us, in our own unique individuality, they would not be voicing these admonitions, or would at least express them very differently.

The question "What is possible *for me*?" points instead to the role of self-knowledge in the formulation and realization of hopes. Based on what we know about ourselves, we may anticipate that certain things are possible for us and others are not. We weigh the possibilities that are in front of us in light of our understanding of ourselves, our temperament, our traits, our motivations, our values. What we envision to be realizable is thus profoundly influenced by what we understand ourselves to be.

We know, of course, that the realization of certain possibilities does not depend entirely on us. But we also know that who we are has a powerful influence on what we can anticipate in the future. If we envision ourselves becoming medical doctors some day, but also know that we do not have the personal motivation to endure years of medical training, or that we hate science or cannot stand the sight of blood, it should become clear to us, sooner or later, that the hope of becoming a medical doctor is not a real possibility for us. On the other hand, if we know that we do have the motivation to endure prolonged

medical training, and that we love science and do not hate the sight of blood, the hope of becoming a medical doctor is a real possibility for us. It is not a certainty, as there are many factors besides these that could affect the outcome, some of which are entirely outside of our control. (Keats discovered while in medical training that he was incurably ill; which is why he became a poet instead, and died in his early twenties.) But, with hope, the issue is not certainty but possibility, and genuine hope is based on what is possible *for us*. The point is not that we should be realistic about our chances for realizing this or that, but that we should make an effort to know ourselves and to entertain those hopes that are not contradicted by what we learn.

3. *Hopes Involve Risk*. Because they involve desires that may or may not be realized, hopes are inherently risky. It is all too easy to idealize hopes, to declare that they are inherently good as they manifest a positive attitude toward the future. Yet, because the future is open, there is always the risk that our hopes will *not* be realized. Disappointment, demoralization, even feelings of devastation may follow. Given the risks involved, we sometimes keep our hopes to ourselves, so that if they do not materialize, we will not have the added humiliation of public failure. However, concealing hopes from others does not work because our hopes are revealed more by the way we live our lives than by what we say. A couple who have been dating for several months do not have to tell us in words that certain hopes are associated with this relationship. If, in time, we no longer see them together, we know without being told that certain hopes have not been fulfilled.

To hope, then, is to place ourselves at risk. We risk the failure of our hopes and the shame and humiliation that often accompany the failure of hopes. When our hopes fail, we take it very personally because in hoping we invest ourselves, putting our very existence on the line.

If one risk of hopes is that they set us up for possible failure, another danger is that they may direct us to unworthy goals or cause us to overlook other objectives that are more desirable. We can become captive to certain hopes precisely because we judge them to be more realizable than others. Some hopes are realizable but the price is too high. One may become the top salesperson in the firm—a long desired goal—but find that

the price in terms of shattered personal relationships, weakened personal integrity and broken personal health was far too high. Or one finds that the achievement of professional success does not bring the anticipated personal satisfaction or financial security. There are also instances when the realization of some cherished hope leaves us confused or apathetic, as we no longer have the goal that previously energized us. Unfulfilled hopes cause despair, but fulfilled hopes often cause depression, apathy and boredom. People who discern that they are especially prone to such reactions in the wake of hope's fulfillment—people with self-knowledge—will often entertain more than one hope, or hopes that build on one another, so that when one hope is realized they have already oriented their lives toward another. As Erikson puts it, "It is in the nature of our maturation that concrete hopes will, at a time when a hoped-for event or state comes to pass, prove to have been quietly superseded by a more advanced set of hopes."<sup>4</sup>

Another risk that hopes present is that we become so oriented toward their attainment that we neglect the satisfactions our present situation already affords. This is often used as an argument for curbing our desires and for being content with what we have. But a more useful perspective is to realize that our current situation is, in part, the fruit of various past hopes that have been fulfilled, and we should not therefore neglect their continuing meaning for us. We may need a hope-beyond-hope to sustain us through the period of depression or apathy that follows the realization of a given desire, but there are also times when our envisioning of still another hope causes us to overlook the satisfactions that previously realized desires afford.

Hope has a restless quality to it. By definition, it is oriented to the future. It should not be curbed or stifled, but it is not everything, and sometimes it needs to be balanced by other perceptions and experiences. When we experience satisfaction in our present reality, we allow love an equally significant place in our lives. Where hope is always oriented to the realizable, love is appreciation for what we already have. So a discerning life—a life of wisdom—is based on our capacity to balance our hopes and our loves, and not to allow our lives to be dominated by one or the other.

Still another risk in hopes is their consequences for others. There are times when our hopes, if realized, will make life more

difficult for others, especially those who are dependent on us. Knowing that our hopes may carry risks for others, we may decide they are not worth the price that others may have to pay for them, and we resign ourselves to their unfulfillment. We may continue to harbor resentments against those who inhibited the realization of these hopes. Some people carry such resentments to their graves: "If only Jim had been more courageous and less practical." "If only I had trusted my own judgment instead of listening to Liz, with all her objections and 'what ifs'." In turn, children of parents who sacrificed their own hopes for "the sake of the children" may carry through life the sense that they were the unwitting cause of a parent's disappointment, or were made the scapegoat for a parent's inability to take the necessary personal risks involved.

Thus, as future projections that envision the realizable, hopes are risky, and are typically experienced as such. Hopes can be exciting, scary or unnerving. Unlike reveries, musings and day dreamings, hopes anticipate real changes, and because they do, we should not romanticize hope as though it were an utterly harmless activity. Hopes can have tremendously positive outcomes, but they are also responsible for harm. One test of our maturity as persons is our ability to hope in ways that do not put other individuals at unacceptable levels of risk. Other tests of our maturity are the willingness to accept higher levels of risk for ourselves than will be required of others, and our ability to make intentional, self-conscious efforts to minimize the costs of our hopes to others.

## Hope and the Reframing of Time

I want now to comment briefly on methods that are currently in use in psychotherapy that encourage hopefulness for the future. These methods fit within the category of reframing methods, which I discussed at some length in my book entitled *Reframing: A New Method in Pastoral Care*.<sup>4</sup> The two methods that have particular bearing on my discussion here are presented in a book by two Finnish psychotherapists, Ben Furman and Tapani Ahola, entitled *Solution Talk*.<sup>6</sup> The one method is called "future visioning", the other is called "revising the past".

## Future Visioning

In “future visioning” the counselees are asked to project themselves into the future (several weeks, six months, a year from now) and to describe their life now that their problem has been resolved, and to explain what they believe made the change possible. The method of “future visioning” is revealing for what it precludes. By focusing on a time in the future when the problem has been “overcome” rather than upon the past where the problem is assumed to have originated, the persons involved in the situation can be seen as mutual helpers rather than as obstacles. They are not the objects of blame, as usually occurs when the therapy focusses on underlying causes of the current problem. Also, the counselees’ own narrative of how the problem got resolved is potentially as worthy of a plan for its resolution as anything the therapist might have proposed. The therapist may simply give the plan his or her blessing. For example, one of the authors was a consultant to a mental health facility. The health team met with a teenage boy whose treatment wasn’t going well. When he was asked to envision himself six months from now—doing much better—and to explain how these positive results came about, he mentioned that a particular staff psychiatrist had befriended him and helped him get better. This was not, however, the psychiatrist who had been assigned to this boy; it was one he watched working with other patients. So on the basis of the boy’s future visioning this psychiatrist was assigned to him, and he began to show improvement immediately.

Theologically informed readers of Furman’s and Ahola’s book are often quick to note that what underlies their future visioning method is a kind of realized eschatology. The future is already here, in the present, so that what we have been hoping for—our heartfelt desires—are already being met. What their cases show is that clients are quite willing to engage in the imaginative act of future visioning, and that, when they do so, they have a lively perception of having made the future present.

## Revising the Past

The other method that involves a reframing of time for the sake of a more hopeful future is Furman’s and Ahola’s notion

of “revising the past”. They note that we tend to view our past as the source of our problems, and argue that as long as we view it this way we set up an adversarial relationship with ourselves because our history is an integral part of us. This adversarial relationship with ourselves can be reduced, if not overcome completely, by viewing our past as “a resource, a store of memories, good and bad, and a source of wisdom emanating from life experience”. The past is no longer viewed as “the source of our problems” but is seen instead as “resource for solutions”. The authors relate how they encourage their counselees to see past events that they have interpreted as liabilities as being, rather, sources of strength. They tell about a woman whose mother put her in a dark closet for hours when she was a child. This woman had gone on to become a gifted art teacher, helping children use their imaginations through drawing. When she related how her mother had confined her to a dark closet for hours, the counselor (one of the authors of the book) did not minimize the trauma she had suffered, namely, that she was the victim of child abuse. But he asked her the question: “What did you do in the closet to keep yourself from going crazy with fear?” She answered, “I used my imagination. I thought of myself being somewhere else, out in the fields, or in a park.” Then he said, “And isn’t this what you are now doing for the children you teach? Isn’t your experience of coping with being locked in a closet as a child a source of your gift as a teacher?” She had not made this connection in her mind before this.

This method of “revising the past” is designed to change a person’s perception of what is possible for him or her as far as the future is concerned, this change being made possible by changing the meaning of certain past events. This method is also based on the rather odd assumption that the past is as open and as possibility-filled as the future is. To say this is to seem to speak utter nonsense, for only a fool believes that the past can be other than what it was. Yet there is also wisdom—a kind of foolish wisdom—in this affirmation of the openness and revisability of the past, for it says that what is open about the past is the meaning or significance we assign to it in the present. In support of this view, we have the biblical Joseph’s contention that the turning of his brothers’ act of treachery into something providential was an act of God. This means

that “revising the past” may also be theologically understood as being grounded in the boundless mercy of God, who is able to take sinful actions that we or others committed in the past and make of them something better than we would ever have imagined.

Which is to say that God is the original and eternally Hopeful Self, who uses the agency that is God’s own to keep the future ever open for new possibilities. That the world and we ourselves exist at all is because it is God’s nature to be hopeful. We exist because God, in response to God’s own felt deprivation, was fueled by desire, and perceived that something new could come into being. As James Weldon Johnson, author of the poem “The Creation” puts it, “And God walked out on space and said, ‘I’m lonely, I’ll make me a world.’ ”<sup>7</sup> This world that God made is a *self*-projection, a world into which God, from the very beginning until now and forever after, has *projected* God’s very own self.

But this was a self-projection that carried great risk for God, as hopes, once realized, take on a life of their own, having effects that were not originally intended. Hopes are wonderful things, but they are also dangerous, a fact to which the world, and especially the history of humankind, is tragic testimony. This is why it is so essential for us to believe that God remains a Reliable Other who has not abandoned us, and why it is important that some of us be pastors, ones who assist others in their struggles to maintain hope—helping them keep their heads above water—and who testify to, and carry in their very being, the ambiguities that are inherent in hope itself.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Delivered as one of the annual Lutheran Life Lectures at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, 4 November 1993.
- <sup>2</sup> Erik H. Erikson, *Insight and Responsibility* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1964) 116.
- <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 117.
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* 117.
- <sup>5</sup> Donald Capps, *Reframing: A New Method in Pastoral Care* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990).
- <sup>6</sup> Ben Furman and Tapani Ahola, *Solution Talk: Hosting Therapeutic Conversations* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992).
- <sup>7</sup> James Weldon Johnson, *God’s Trombones: Seven Negro Sermons in Verse* (New York: Penguin Books, 1990) 17.