

Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers

Volume 37 | Issue 4

Article 2

10-1-2020

In Memoriam: William J. Wainwright

Michael L. Peterson

Follow this and additional works at: <https://place.asburyseminary.edu/faithandphilosophy>

Recommended Citation

Peterson, Michael L. (2020) "In Memoriam: William J. Wainwright," *Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers*: Vol. 37 : Iss. 4 , Article 2.

DOI: [10.37977/faithphil.2020.37.4.2](https://doi.org/10.37977/faithphil.2020.37.4.2)

Available at: <https://place.asburyseminary.edu/faithandphilosophy/vol37/iss4/2>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers by an authorized editor of ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange.

In Memoriam: William J. Wainwright

Michael L. Peterson

The passing of William J. Wainwright on November 5, 2020, is a great loss to the Society of Christian Philosophers and the *Faith and Philosophy* family, and a profound sadness for me personally. Born in 1935, Bill spent the bulk of his career at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where he was named a distinguished professor and, after his retirement, awarded the university's most prestigious honor for faculty. From the beginning of the SCP, Bill was an active and contributing member—always insightful and always kind. A quick glance at his book publications provides a sense of his valuable output: *Reason and the Heart* (1995), *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Religion* (2009), and *Monotheism and Hope in God* (2020), to selectively name a few titles.

Of course, I personally most remember Bill as the third Editor of *Faith and Philosophy*, from 1995 to 2000, which was during my semi-eternal tenure as Managing Editor. Bill would almost always preface our interactions regarding the journal operation with questions about me, my family, my writing projects, and our common Hoosier origins. In those days, F&P carried special topical issues every October, and Bill conceived and put forth several excellent special issues: those on virtue theory and the mind-body problem readily come to mind. Following Bill Alston and Phil Quinn as editors, Bill Wainwright continued to strengthen F&P's solid reputation for publishing top-rate material in the philosophy of religion and related areas. Moreover, Bill later served faithfully as President of the SCP from 2007 to 2010.

While the above information is public and not my personal revelation, I want to reveal here a couple interesting little items about Bill that only I know, both regarding F&P's commitment to serious dialogue with those who do not share our Christian commitments. First, from day one, Bill had me add his lifelong friend Bill Rowe (Purdue) to our print mailing list for a complementary lifetime subscription. Obviously, Rowe was an important dialogue partner with the SCP to the end. Second, in the later 1990s, well-known atheist philosopher Antony Flew sent a check to the journal office for a two-year subscription, along with a friendly note to me saying that he wanted to follow what we were doing. I replied to Flew that we were pleased to give him a lifetime subscription, much deserved for his contributions to philosophy. I told Bill about this, and we both were proud of



the reach of the journal. Although nonbelieving critics panned Flew's 2007 book *There Is A God: How the World's Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind* as evidence of his declining mental powers, Bill and I were aware of at least one other relevant story line.

We will sorely miss our friend and brother Bill Wainwright but take comfort in the fact that the gracious life he lived and sterling qualities he exhibited, both personal and intellectual, have positively affected all who knew him.

Professor of Philosophy

Asbury Theological Seminary