

# In this number

KATI NIEMELÄ

## Conservative and Liberal Clergy and Daily Church Work

Polarisation between liberals and conservatives seems to have characterised the discussion related to the church in the second decade of the 21st century. In this article, the practical consequences of this polarisation among the clergy and their work are analysed based on survey data. The findings of the study show that theological orientation is clearly linked to work orientation and that this linkage follows the traditional understanding of the terms 'liberal' and 'conservative'. The study further shows that using these terms seems still valid, contrary to the expectations of many. Conservative theological orientation is particularly linked to seeing clergy work as a mission from God. The following areas of work are of special interest: mission work, evangelisation, reading and teaching the Bible. On the other hand, liberal theological orientation is particularly characterised by an interest in speaking and acting in favour of minorities and for justice. Notwithstanding the above, conservatives and liberals share views in many areas that are at the very core of church work.

HEIDI ZITTING

## The Understanding of the Episcopal Office According to Finnish Bishops in 1945–1965

After the Reformation, the historical episcopate and the title 'bishop' were retained, and the duties of a bishop remained broadly the same in the Finnish Evangelical-Lutheran Church. Certain other Lutheran churches undertook much greater changes in the practice of the episcopacy. In this article, I analyse how the Episcopal office is understood in literature written by the bishops of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church during the period 1945–1965. The writings reveal that even within this one small Lutheran church and in a comparatively short period of time there was no one unified understanding of what the episcopal office is; several approaches to the episcopacy may be found. The questions concerning episcopacy became especially acute in ecumenical situations.

JOONA SALMINEN

### **Early Christian Asceticism and Its Social Function**

The article discusses early Christian city life with respect to the later ascetic tradition. Comparison of two works, *Paedagogus* by Clement of Alexandria and *Vita Antonii* by Athanasius the Great, illustrates that early Christian asceticism before the desert movement had its root in the ordinary city life of the elite. The article also discusses the history of ascetic practices and their place in ancient philosophy, especially in Platonism and Stoic thought. The major contribution of the article is to point to demons and demonology as the link between city and desert. Temptations that the ascetics faced in the desert closely resemble those that were central in the city life more than a century before the desert movement and the rise of monasticism. Our current understanding of ancient emotion theories provides modern scholarship with valuable tools when it comes to discovering the philosophical roots of early Christian asceticism.

BISHOP ARSENI

### **The Icon of the Mother of God of Valaam – Token of Miracles or Token of Power?**

The article describes the life of Alexei Konstantinov, later Hieromonk Alipi, the painter of the Icon of the Mother of God of Valaam. It also explores the history of the icon itself and of Valaam Monastery. The long-lost miracle-working icon of the Mother of God was restored to Valaam Monastery in 1898. What happened was that Natalia Andreyeva, a widow living in St Petersburg, had a vision in a dream concerning the forgotten location of the icon, painted by Alexei Konstantinov in 1878, and when she prayed in front of the rediscovered icon, her severe rheumatism was cured. The article discusses possible models for the icon, the development of its spiritual status at the monastery, later variations on the image and the links to both ecclesiastical and secular power of the venerated miracle-working icon.

PERTTU OLLILA

### **The Yosemite Temple: John Muir's Theology of Rock and Ice as the Builder of a National Park**

John Muir (1838–1914) was a writer, mountaineer, conservationist, amateur naturalist and theologian – and the founder of Yosemite National Park in the USA. This study, a text and discourse analysis, relates Muir's theology to modes of thought current in the late 19th century. The article shows how Muir's disparate religious and Earth-science writings, exceeding his transcendental legacy, constitute an early form of ecology saturated with process philosophy. A rational and historical reconstruction leads to an aesthetic cosmology of God's terrestrial presence and voluptuous experiencing. Special attention is given to Muir's textual strategy, which succeeded in capturing the awe of Nature and God, and eventually in creating environmental politics.

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