



MEDIA KIT

Listening to the Spirit is a work of Christian social ethics in the tradition of the radical social gospel. The book addresses the political limits in community organizing by arguing that organizing networks can build deeper solidarity through sacred values, and provides Christians with political theological tools to understand the relational meeting and the listening campaign as religious practices.

Broad-based community organizing (BBCO) is perhaps the most widely used form of political participation supported by American religious institutions today. As organizing groups become more religiously diverse, however, so do the conceptions of sacred value that ground organizing in the first place. In today's political climate what we hold most dear, those sacred values such as human life, a land, or a natural resource may seem to only further entrench us in our enclaves and threaten the solidarity of any constituency. This book tells a different story.

Drawing on discussions of racial capitalism, radical democracy, feminist theory, and philosophical theology, *Listening to the Spirit* crafts a political theological framework to interpret these organizing practices in ways that Christians have traditionally understood through the Holy Spirit.



OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

PRAISE FOR STAUFFER

"Listening to the Spirit is state of the art and cutting edge, making a rich argument that interfaith community organizing works by evoking and creating sacred value, not by marginalizing faith. The pages of this luminous book radiate Aaron Stauffer's many years of justice organizing and his fusion of social ethics, social theory, political theology, and the burgeoning scholarship on organizing."

GARY DORRIEN

REINHOLD NIEBUHR PROFESSOR OF SOCIAL ETHICS AT UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

"Stauffer gives us not only a powerful and powerfully informed account of community organizing keeping pace with the Spirit, but also a way of thinking about such matters, "sacred value" as crucial instruction on what it means to speak of the Spirit, so that if we dare, we might search out the Spirit's direct action in the world of liberative politics, and throw in with democracy."

JONATHAN TRAN

ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR FACULTY AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY AT BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

"With intellectual agility and wisdom born of experience and faith, Stauffer develops a political ecclesiology of organizing based on God's call to cultivate relationships of liberation and love. He argues that community organizing, at its best, begins with listening for the Spirit's graceful movement in the world. Through organizing centered in sacred values, churches may build relational power for deepening democracy and countering racial capitalism. Organizers and faithful people seeking a more just world will relish Stauffer's vibrant continuation of the radical social gospel tradition."

CYNTHIA MOE-LOBEDA

PROFESSOR OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS, PACIFIC LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AND GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL UNION, DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE AND FAITH (PLTS)

STAUFFER'S WORK

THE WENDLAND-COOK PROGRAM IN RELIGION & JUSTICE

An interdisciplinary program located at Vanderbilt University Divinity School. We focus on issues of justice that arise at the intersection of religion, economics, and ecology.

Founded in 2019 by Dr. Joerg Rieger and supported by a generous gift from Barbara Wendland, the mission of the program is to develop resources and opportunities for students, scholars, clergy, and activists to envision and create a more just and sustainable world for all. Stauffer is the Associate Director.

More Info: www.religionandjustice.org

SOLIDARITY CIRCLES

A leadership training program for faith leaders, clergy, organizers, and community members who realize that the solidarity economy is essential for the flourishing of life and our faith communities. We believe that this work is deeply connected to the mission and vocation of Christian churches.

More Info: www.religionandjustice.org/solidarity-circles



ABOUT AARON



Aaron is the Associate Director of Online Learning and the Wendland-Cook Program in Religion and Justice at Vanderbilt University Divinity School.

Interdisciplinary in nature, his scholarship is in Christian social ethics, philosophical theology, and historical theology. His work lies at the intersection of the academy, the Christian church, and community organizing. His current book project with Oxford University Press, is titled: Listening to the Spirit: The Radical Social Gospel, Sacred Value, and Broad-based Community Organizing.

An ordained Teaching Elder in the PC(USA), Aaron most recently was the Executive Director and then Special Advisor of Religions for Peace USA, where he helped launch a national anti-Islamophobia program based in the southeast, along with organizing national senior religious leaders on issues of common concern such as mass incarceration, immigration and climate change. Before his doctoral work, Aaron was an organizer with the Industrial Areas Foundation in San Antonio, Tx. Aaron is active in his denomination, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and has been active participant in international ecumenical and interfaith organizations, such as the World Council of Reformed Churches and the World Council of Churches. Currently, Aaron lives and works in Nashville, Tennessee with his partner, Lauren and their sons, Julian and August.

FEATURE AARON

PODCAST INTERVIEWS

Host Aaron as a guest on your podcast to discuss his research, insights, and experiences. Dive deep into his expertise and explore topics of mutual interest with your audience. He's been featured on Religion and Justice, Homebrewed Christianity, and more!

JOURNALISTIC INTERVIEWS

Conduct interviews with Aaron for articles, blogs, or news pieces. Gain unique perspectives and insights that can enrich your content and provide valuable information to your readers about building the solidarity economy within their own religious traditions and practices. He's been featured in the Christian Century and Tikkun Magazine.

EVENT SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Invite Aaron to speak at conferences, seminars, workshops, or panel discussions. Benefit from his expertise and engage your audience in the work of theology, organizing, and building the collective for the better of our world.

SOLIDARITY CIRCLES

Join or form solidarity circles to become part of the solidarity economy movement. Engage in meaningful discussions, share resources, and collaborate on initiatives that align with Joerg Rieger's scholarship and experience.

Contact:

aaron.k.stauffer@vanderbilt.edu