

Forum #2 – What does it mean to be a grounded Christian?

Note: To view the 50 minute video recording of Forum 2, please check separate STPC webpage.

PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES & PRESENTATION SUMMARIES

Reverend Jonathan Britt Biography:

Associate Pastor of [St. Thomas Presbyterian Church](#) (STPC)

Jonathan Britt grew up Greenville, SC, and is the child of teachers. Jonathan was raised in the Presbyterian Church, where he was ordained as a Ruling elder in 2005. He received his B.A. from Furman University (Greenville, SC) in Music and Religion. In 2013, he graduated Princeton Theological Seminary with his Master of Divinity (M. Div.), moved to Houston and completed a Chaplain Residency at Memorial Hermann SW Hospital. During his tenure at Princeton Theological Seminary, he interned at Northville United Presbyterian Church, located in the Adirondack National Forest of NY and he later became the Youth Director at First Presbyterian Church of Freehold, NJ. He is an avid outdoor photographer and loves to play the trombone. Jonathan lives in the Near Northside area of Houston with his wife, Allison, and their dogs, Wrigley & Chopper.



Reverend Jonathan Britt Presentation Summary:

For myself and for my church members:

Brian McClaren: [Brianmcclaren.net](#), Twitter: @brianmclaren, facebook.com/mclaren.brian

Rachel Held Evans: [Rachelheldevans.com](#), Twitter: @rachelheldevans,
facebook.com/rachelheldevans.page

Danielle Shroyer: [Danielleshroyer.com](#), Twitter: @DGShroyer, Facebook.com/DGShroyer

Bruce Reyes-Chow: [www.reyes-chow.com](#), twitter: @breyeschow, facebook.com/breyeschow

Doug Pagitt: [www.dougpagitt.com](#), twitter: @Pagitt, facebook.com/pagitt.doug

Nadia Bolz-Weber: [www.nadiabolzweber.com](#), twitter: @sarcasticluther,
facebook.com/sarcasticlutheran

Yolanda Pierce: [Yolandapierce.com](#), Twitter: @YNPierce, Facebook.com/ynpierce

Rob Bell: [Robbell.com](#), Twitter: @realrobbell, Facebook.com/realrobbell

John Pavlovitz: [Johnpavlovitz.com](#), Twitter: @johnpavlovitz,
Facebook.com/johnpavlovitzofficial

William J. Barber II: Facebook.com/RevDrBarber

Organizations/Groups:

- Center for Progressive Renewal
 - o [www.progressiverenewal.org/](#)
- Faith Leaders Coalition of Greater Houston
 - o [www.faithleaderscoalition.org/](#)
 - o Facebook.com/FaithLeadersHouston
- FaithandReason.org
 - o Facebook.com/faithandreasonorg
- Poor People's Campaign
 - o [www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/](#)
 - o twitter: @UniteThePoor
 - o facebook.com/anewppc

Podcasts:

- [Homebrewed Christianity](#)
- [The Liturgists](#)
- The Gathering: A Time for Reflection, Revival & Resistance

Devotional Apps:

- D365
- Our Bible
- UKirk Daily

Forum #2 – What does it mean to be a grounded Christian?

Reverend Eid Abdelmassih Biography:

Pastor, [Houston Hope of the Nations Presbyterian Church](#)

Eid Abdelmassih was born and raised in Egypt. He received his M. Div. from Cairo Theological Seminary and was ordained in the Egyptian Presbyterian Church on 1999. He pastored several Churches in Egypt before he immigrated to the USA in 2009. He came to Houston and is a member of Presbytery of New Covenant.



In 2009, Eid started Houston Hope of the Nations Presbyterian Church (on [Facebook](#)) in Houston which basically focuses on serving internationals and refugees. Eid is married to Neven and they have three children, Rose, Sam and Yousef.

Reverend Eid Abdelmassih Presentation Summary:

For myself:

1. Reading the Bible to understand who God is.
2. Imitating Christ in my life.
3. Spending time in prayer daily.
4. Learning from others on how they live a Christian life.
5. Not being judgmental when I deal with people.

Recommend for my church members:

I recommend that everyone to use his/her creativity to choose what works for him/her.

Forum #2 – What does it mean to be a grounded Christian?

Reverend Helen Bailey Biography:

Parish Associate to two churches

Helen Bailey was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, attended a Russian Orthodox Church through junior high school and became a Presbyterian in high school. She received her BA in History/Religion with minor in Psychology from Cleveland State University and then her M. Div. from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. She has a M.A. in Marriage and Family therapy from University of Houston/Clear Lake. She is a licensed [Professional Counselor/Supervisor](#) and a licensed [Marriage and Family Therapist/Supervisor](#).



Helen has three grown sons. Her many areas of service includes serving as co-pastor, a hospital chaplain, being part of a clergy couple serving in a 4 point field, part-time advocate for [That All May Freely Serve](#).

Reverend Helen Bailey Presentation Summary:

For myself and for my church members:

I will present an overview of past attitudes and actions in the history of the Church. I will consider how circumstances have changed due to the actions of believers. I will then present how we, as present day followers of Christ Jesus, can make an impact in our world by the ways we live our own lives so as not to get caught up in the tangle of today's times.

Forum #2 – What does it mean to be a grounded Christian?

Reverend Dr. Nora Fitch Biography:

Senior Pastor of St. Thomas Presbyterian Church

Nora Fitch served as Pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Odessa, Texas and at First Presbyterian Church in Angleton, Texas. She completed her Doctor of Ministry degree at Austin Seminary in May, 2011. Prior to going to seminary, Rev. Fitch was a Registered Nurse with a M.Ed. from U. of H. and BSN from UT Health Science Center. As a RN, she worked in critical care at Hermann Hospital, was a school nurse in Alief ISD and was assistant manager at the Institute for Preventive Medicine at The Methodist Hospital. Nora also worked for M&M Mars for 11 years in various areas including HR for Sales, Factory, Division and Internal Consulting & Training. Married to Jim Fitch, they have three grown children and four grandchildren.



Reverend Dr. Nora Fitch Presentation Summary:

For myself:

1. Worship each Sunday with the congregation.
2. Keep my eyes open & watch for God's work in the world.
3. Stay in conversation with God.
4. Immerse myself in scripture when writing sermons, Bible studies, and daily scripture/prayer.
5. Have participated in Presbyterian/Jewish Dialogue Group for almost 10 years, also went to Israel with this group.
6. Theology courses, seminars, books. Example devotionals includes [My Utmost for His Highest](#), Oswald Chambers and [Upper Room Devotional](#).

Recommend for my church members:

1. Worship each Sunday with the congregation.
2. Daily prayer and scripture readings.
3. Participate in Bible studies and/or small groups (like [ChristCare](#) or a Spiritual Formation Group).
4. Sing in the choir if musical – a wonderful way to be grounded.
5. Serve as a volunteer for church activities or outside organizations that help others.
6. Theology courses, seminars, books.