

A reader-supported journal

by [John Buchanan](#) in the [September 17, 2014](#) issue



Few magazines have the digital revolution figured out. That revolution is still very much under way. Like most journals, the *Christian Century* combines print technology that was developed a long time ago with digital technology that continues to evolve in the 21st century. Some of you wait for the *Century* to arrive in the mailbox. Others find it via our website, e-mail alerts, or social media.

The *Christian Century* has invested precious resources to remain a viable and indispensable journal for people of faith who strive to “think critically and live faithfully.” We are proud of our website which posts religion news as events happen and offers fresh commentary daily, as well as easy access to a complete online edition of the print magazine and to our robust archives.

We have thought a lot about a question that all journals, from the *New Yorker* to the *New York Times*, must ponder: How much of the magazine should appear online, without cost to the reader? Currently, readers can freely access any three articles per month from the print edition. Our hope, of course, is that this taste of the

magazine will be an inducement to read more and to subscribe, either in print or online.

The *Christian Century* is unusual among print publications in that subscriptions account for 60 percent of our revenue (with advertising bringing in 19 percent of the total). Other publications depend on a much higher percentage of ad revenues. Many publications also rely on institutional financial backing or wealthy benefactors. We rely on you, our readers, to keep this enterprise viable by your contributions over and above the cost of a subscription.

The digital revolution will surely continue. We know that there are many challenges and adjustments ahead.

But as long as Christian leaders seek to think critically and live faithfully, there will be an urgent need for a forum like the *Christian Century*. More than any other journal I know, the *Century* reflects a faith that is intellectually serious, spiritually alive, and socially engaged. It embodies the conviction that faith is a matter of head as well as heart and hands.

We are intentionally and proudly independent. We do not have institutional backing. We exist because there are Christians who care deeply about theology, ministry, and the life of congregations and who are willing to support this project with their charitable giving. That support enabled us to survive the Great Recession of a few years ago and is enabling us to adapt to a fast-moving, uncertain marketplace. That support will allow us to continue this mission in the future.

I know this cause matters to you. It matters to me. I urge you to [join us in sustaining the *Christian Century*](#) and its mission with your generous financial contributions.