

Our 16 most-read magazine articles of 2016

Here are this year's *Century* articles that were most popular online. Thanks for reading.

December 29, 2016

(1) William H. Willimon: [Why leaders are a pain](#)

There's a subtext to lots of sermons I hear, and some I preach: *Discomfort is avoidable. Here's my formula.* It's the promise of all bogus religion.

(2) Reggie Williams: [Seeing whiteness](#)

I used to lead activities like the "Privilege Walk" and "Cross the Line." I couldn't shake the feeling that they were not taking us very far.

(3) Brian Doyle: [So much Twain](#)

Together, the three volumes are five inches tall and weigh more than my children did when they emerged from the sea of their mother.

(4) Mark Yaconelli: [Failure to launch](#)

I planned a service for students. None came.

(5) M. Craig Barnes: [The post-anxiety church](#)

The mainline Protestant church has to stop fretting about its future and sacrifice itself to mission.

(6) Samuel Wells: [When the church gets it wrong](#)

The woman looked at me with fear, pain, and trust—all things that the church has instilled in its faithful all these centuries.

(7) Melissa Florer-Bixler: [Children at the grave](#)

For career day at my daughter's school, I brought pictures of some of the things pastors do. The students were mostly interested in the funerals.

(8) Ross Kane: [Should Episcopalians repent?](#)

The Episcopal Church was and is right to affirm same-sex marriage. Now we should be willing to face the costs.

(9) Emily C. Heath: [Being they](#)

We call God "Father" and "Mother" because children don't say "Parent, Parent." But what will my children call me?

(10) Kyle Childress: [Guns in the pulpit](#)

In Texas, even pastors are carrying.

(11) Tony Jones: [The faith of the Dones](#)

The Dones aren't leaving church because they're burned out. They've just hit so much bureaucracy that they seek more efficient venues.

(12) Wesley Granberg-Michaelson: [Stealing Jesus](#)

My ecclesiastical criminality has been going on for 45 years. It all started at a Trappist abbey in Virginia.

(13) Peter Marty: [Christian conviction in the age of Trump](#)

Practice the beatitudes. Speak truth to power. Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God.

(14) Katherine Willis Pershey: [On knowing \(yes, in the biblical sense\)](#)

When I first had sex, it wasn't just teenage hormones. I wanted to know and be known.

(15) David Heim interviews Molly T. Marshall: [A seminary's calculated risk](#)

"We had to be willing to do a clear-eyed assessment of our financial situation—and to risk our old identity for the sake of a renewed mission."

(16) Sarah Morice Brubaker: [Why the world needs Sarah Coakley](#)

Coakley's kind of theology requires more than claims. It needs prayer.