

Don't be bored, read the *Century*

Our staff operates under the premise that life is never dull.

by [Peter W. Marty](#) in the [September 27, 2017](#) issue



For all of the missteps my wife and I made in the realm of parenting, I'm pretty sure that one of our more brilliant successes was the prohibition we placed on the word

bored. Every member of the household was banned from using that word or any of its correlatives when referring to one's immediate experience or outlook on life.

Our rule, which didn't require enforcement until the kids reached adolescence, helped stifle some of the contempt that accompanies most expressions of boredom. The "entertain me" attitude that springs from a lack of interest in what's happening in the world can make personal boredom appear to be someone else's fault. That wasn't a workable proposition in our house. Susan and I believe that one of the unheralded gifts of God's spirit is the reminder that life is intrinsically interesting and full of daily significance. Whatever our human capacity may be for losing resolve, feeling listless, and sensing an absence of meaning, there is always more to life than what is immediately observable to our eyes.

When our son and daughter were in middle school and high school, hinting through their inertia on a few days that there was nothing worth getting excited about in the world, I could have handed them the *Christian Century*. Why not? The magazine is a perfect antidote to boredom, as far as I'm concerned. But, in truth, they were too young for it at the time. The *Century* isn't for everybody.

For those of us who have come to enjoy the *Century* in our adult lives, the magazine is our reminder that interesting people are shaped by thoughtful and demanding conversations. At the *Century*, we operate under the premise that life is never dull. Our pages are devoted to the demanding questions, critical thinking, and faithful probing that make life interesting.

But here is where I need your help. Everyone loves good journalism, and good religious journalism is at a premium these days—yet not everyone is excited about paying for journalism. A magazine like ours can never fully meet production costs with subscriptions priced at a reasonable rate. Hiking the subscription rate to unreasonable levels sends subscribers fleeing, as we have discovered. And you may have noticed that the *Century* doesn't exactly have luxury car manufacturers and jewelers pressing to advertise on our pages, though that would certainly help pay the bills. No, this is a nonprofit journalistic ministry relying on the goodness and faithfulness of readers who are devoted to leading interesting (aka nonboring) lives.

[So make a contribution to the *Christian Century's* 2017 annual fund](#) that is worthy of your appreciation for the magazine. If you haven't already made a gift this year or set up an option for recurring giving, I hope you will make a gift now. Please take to

heart the *Century's* value in your life. You can make a difference in allowing this engaging magazine, into which we put great effort, to continue to bless your life and the lives of so many others.

A version of this article appears in the September 27 print edition under the title "Don't be bored."