
Pentecostals tend not to be ecumenical, and ecumenists tend not to be Pentecostal. One can hardly deny the truth of this generalizing statement. Yet both movements, started simultaneously in the early 20th century, are considered a great work of the Spirit for the edification of the Christian church at large. Wolfgang Vondey, associate professor of systematic theology at the School of Divinity of Regent University, provides arguments for the compatibility of these two “movements of the Spirit” in this volume. The book is a collection of documents on ecumenism and ecumenical documents, consisting of an introduction and three main parts. In his introduction, Vondey seems to have the aforementioned two groups in mind as readers for this collection. He affords his Pentecostal readers with a short history of the ecumenical movement and for those versed in ecumenism he lists five principles which need to be thought through when one seeks to dialogue with Pentecostals. After the introduction, different articles written by Pentecostal theologians on the relation between Pentecostalism and ecumenism are offered. Next, five Final Reports of ecumenical dialogues in which Pentecostals have been involved are republished. The third part consists of three reflective articles of Pentecostals on two recent major Faith and Order publications.

The first part of this volume consists of six articles which have all been read and/or published earlier, notably under the auspices of the Society for Pentecostal Studies. Douglas Jacobson gives us a fair overview of the diverse perspectives eight first-generation Pentecostal leaders had on ecumenism and Christian unity. His examples clarify that while some were ecumenically very open, others were more critical or even sharply judgmental. The same polarity can be found in Pentecostalism this very day. In the second article Harold Hunter acknowledges the difficulties of ecumenical engagement due to the fragmentation and diversity of Pentecostalism, but while questioning the exclusiveness of conciliar ecumenism he offers his readers an overview of diverse ways in which Pentecostals have already been involved in official ecumenical dialogues and less official ecumenical initiatives. Hunter discusses not only North-American developments but also provides examples from across the globe and accounts not only for the involvement of Classical Pentecostals but also of Charismatics. In the next two articles, two examples are offered on Pentecostal ecumenical involvement.
at the national level. Carmelo Álvarez relates the story of ecumenical Pentecostalism in Chile, where Pentecostals today are fully integrated in ecumenical platforms. Álvarez introduces us to the history and identity of South-American indigenous Pentecostalism, and explains how the involvement of Chilean Pentecostals in social networks and solidarity projects has contributed to their openness towards other churches. His story is offered as a positive example from which Pentecostals in other countries can learn. Paul van der Laan in his article zooms in on the situation in the Netherlands, where the largest Pentecostal denomination has had correspondences and dialogues with the larger Protestant churches and the Roman Catholic Church over the last five decades. In the lessons offered to his readers, he emphasizes an honest approach and clarity of purpose and method, leaving room for both spiritual and intellectual encounters. In the fifth article of this collection, Raymond Pfister attempts to provide a Pentecostal pedagogy of reconciliation by rethinking the Pentecostal identity in relation to Evangelicalism and the central task of ecumenism. Though providing some interesting thoughts, I found it difficult to understand what the article is really aiming at. Cecil Robeck’s article prepares us for the second part of the book. Personally embodying Pentecostal theological ecumenism for decades, he provides his Pentecostal readers with striking anecdotes of the fascinating world of ecumenism and offers useful lessons learnt the hard way to those who are prepared to follow his lead. He focuses on the difficulties one can expect from fellow-Pentecostals, but ends with the most important benefit he acquired from the Roman Catholic-Pentecostal dialogue: it helped him to understand who he is as a Pentecostal. In short, the collected articles show us that the programs of the ecumenical and the Pentecostal mindset are indeed compatible ‘software’, and that is good news. Yet one currently needs to be bilingual in order to understand both and quite persistent to truly connect them. What the examples demonstrate overall, however, is that the result is definitely worth the effort.

The second part provides five final reports of theological dialogues in which Pentecostals were involved. The first four reports come from the Roman Catholic-Classical Pentecostal dialogue, which has taken place regularly since 1972. Reading through the Final Reports, one clearly sees the path of development, both in themes and in theological quality. The first two reports are short, yet deal with a large variety of issues, focusing on subjects related to Pentecostal identity like the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and worship, and on Roman Catholic emphases like Mariology and ordained ministry. The third and fourth reports are significantly more theoretically