

**Words of Introduction from the Editor, Dawn Ottoni-Wilhelm
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Not having grown up in a religious home but in a loving, first-generation immigrant family committed to their children's education and fluency in English, I know something of the struggle of wrestling with questions of faith and the importance of doing so. During my college years, I was grateful for the sturdy roots I found among radical Anabaptist-Pietists who taught me the vital and necessary connection between spirituality and social justice, loving Jesus and being empowered by Spirit to participate in God's will on earth as in heaven.

But my grandmother Noni's voice still echoes in my heart and mind. With no more than a third-grade education and widowed with two young children at the age of twenty-seven in a country and culture not her own, she had the wisdom of Ruth and fortitude of Esther. "Keep-a you eyes wide open," she advised, and handed me her collection of Robert Frost's poems. One of only a handful of books on her shelf, it was a treasure beyond price as Noni explained that by memorizing Frost's verses she learned the language she taught her children to love.

Keep your eyes wide open. More often than not, Noni's words were meant as a warning to safeguard her beloved granddaughter from impending danger. But I took them as general advice: pay attention. Look and listen. It's something I came to recognize in Jesus's teaching as he called to those with eyes to see and ears to hear.

We who are called to preach, teach, and contribute to the study of preaching, who seek to question and understand God and the world we share, we know that the language of faith speaks many tongues and grows out of many cultures. Ours is a time of significant and rapid change in the practices of preaching and the educational institutions that support our teaching and research. Like the generations before us, we will also continue to discover gospel and its mysteries even as pandemics, wars, ongoing racial violence, injustices, natural and unnatural crises rage among us. And like others before us, if we are wise we know that we cannot proceed alone. We need one another. All of us. From our varied theological perspectives, religious commitments, regions of origin, age, ethnicity, gender identity, sexuality, we listen and look to one another with our eyes wide open, our ears attuned, minds alert, hearts softened, bodies and spirits ready.

With gratitude to my predecessors John McClure and Dale Andrews, to the members of the editorial board (including those who will soon retire, those who will soon join us, and others who continue their service), as well as the managing editor, Aimee Moiso, the section editors who ensure the ready flow of book reviews, and the many members of the Academy of Homiletics who carefully review the books and articles submitted for publication and read one another's publications, I am pleased to begin my service as editor of *Homiletic*. In my inaugural issue, I am privileged to welcome a range of scholarly voices who call us to listen, look, and engage in their questions and insights. I hope that you will consider this and subsequent issues as the academy's call to keep your eyes wide open.

Dawn Ottoni-Wilhelm