guided by the unusual pairing of Aquinas and James Dunn. This section makes a useful contribution to this growing body of Christology starting with the Spirit—the only frustration being that it apparently fails to translate to his doctrine of God proper. It does, however, translate to his subsequent chapter on "The Holy Spirit and the Church," where the Spirit continues his work of inaugurating the kingdom of God in the world. He opens the chapter with the apparent dilemma of Jesus's eschatological predictions, which have led Dale Allison to conclude that "Jesus promoted an apocalyptic eschatology that did not, in fact, come to pass" (p. 220) and was therefore a "false eschatological prophet" (p. 226). In response to Allison, Levering submits that the proof of Jesus' eschatological expectation is the anointed church: "Appreciating Jesus's eschatological words and deeds should lead us to attend ever more fully to the Spirit's work in the church" (p. 232). This discussion is a highlight of the book and serves to unite his Christology and ecclesiology through the lens of Spirit-enabled eschatological fulfilment, resulting in a soaring vision of the church.

He subsequently asks, "In what ways should the church's life, and the life of the members of the church, be expected to display the work of Christ's Spirit?" (p. 233). His response is a thoroughly Catholic theology of the church visible, beginning in the latter half of chapter five (where he discusses "infused virtues" (p. 246), the gifts of the Spirit, and the sacraments), and continuing into chapters six ("The Holy Spirit and the Unity of the Church") and seven ("The Holy Spirit and the Holiness of the Church"). To this Protestant reader, it is worthwhile to hear an authoritatively traditional perspective of these features of church life, though admittedly some of the concepts are so steeped in Catholicism as to feel abstracted from (my experience of) the Scriptures. For example, he refers to "the theological tradition" of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit enumerated in Isaiah 11:2-3, but fails to reference those named in 1 Corinthians 12-14 or elsewhere in the New Testament familiar to those of us touched by the charismatic renewal. As such, there is scope for other denominational responses to Levering's question about displaying the work of the Spirit in the life of the church, building upon the ecumenically satisfying eschatological vision of the church he developed in chapter five. Here, then, is an engaging study on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, alive to the trends of contemporary pneumatology and faithful in its exposition of the Thomistic tradition.

Paul S. Fiddes, *Charles Williams and C.S. Lewis: Friends in Co-Inherence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021. (393 pp.) [ISBN 9780192845467]

Alistair J. Cuthbert

Charles Williams and C.S. Lewis: Friends in Co-Inherence is the first of three monographs by baptist theologian Paul S. Fiddes, all due to be published in the academic year 2021-2022. Now well into his fifth decade as a theologian, and holding the Title of Distinction of Professor of Systematic Theology at the University of

Oxford, Fiddes continues his prodigious academic output with more edited books, chapters and articles in the literary pipeline.

This substantial text is a very good example of a juxtaposition of two areas of Fiddes scholarship —the doctrine of God and theology & literature—into a synergistic piece of research that intertwines historical, biographical, and theological data, and results in a work of constructive theology elicited from the lives and writings of Charles Williams and C.S. Lewis. Any reader familiar with Fiddes' theological *oeuvre* will know that over the last 30 years he has written a number of published articles on both Lewis and Williams, strongly suggesting that this book is the culmination of decades of theological rumination regarding the friendship and theological beliefs of these two Oxford-based friends who were part of the famous informal literary discussion group, *The Inklings*.

As a proponent of what has been labelled the 'radical' perspective of the relational model of the Trinity, Fiddes is no less bold in this heuristic text. He presents the nascent thesis that the friendship between Lewis and Williams goes beyond an analogy of the social, communal relationships of the triune God, and rather is an example of human persons *actually* indwelling each other as an event of coinherence, the ground of which is the co-inherent, perichoretic relations of the trinitarian God. As Fiddes explains, "human persons *inhere or dwell in each other* so that they exist in mutual interdependence and that at the foundation of this relational reality the 'Persons' of the triune God permeate one another in love" (p.3). The thesis of the book is very much a defense and delineation of the previously made claim by Fiddes that perichoresis is a theological conviction he sourced not from Moltmann (as is often assumed) but from Lewis. Moreover, as well as theological homogeneity with both Lewis and Williams, Fiddes also has a once-removed personal link with Lewis in that he sat under the scholarly tutelage of Lewis' final research student, the late Francis Warner, a scholar to whom, together with his wife Penelope, Fiddes dedicates the book and calls 'friends in the Co-inherence.'

This monograph is divided into five parts. Part one is an historical-theological account of the developing friendship of Lewis and Williams which describes the chronological convergence of these two men's lives, and the ever-increasing intertwining of their thinking, culminating with much overlap in Williams' *All Hallows Eve* and Lewis' *The Great Divorce*. He also addresses the continuous differences in their thoughts especially concerning romantic theology, a subject that Fiddes deals with, in this age of the me-too movement, deftly and sensitively with regard to Williams' relational attempts to combine sexual desire with chastity around some female students.

In part two Fiddes insightfully traces the development of thought concerning 'co-inherence' and related ideas in the works of both Williams and Lewis. He notes the ever-increasing use of the word in Williams' work after discovering it in his reading of G. L. Prestige. The analogy of co-inherence is situated by Williams into his theology of romantic love but never, Fiddes concludes, into the actual relations of the Trinity. Conversely, Fiddes claims that Lewis uses the metaphor of 'co-inherence' as an analogy between human passion and divine love and also anticipates the making of persons through participation in the

triune God, as later proffered by Pannenberg and von Balthasar. Overall, however, according to Fiddes, Lewis does not move far enough away from his Christian Platonist position and abandon his dualistic metaphysic of the natural and supernatural.

Part three, the first of two one-chapter parts with a specific focus and narrow remit, analyses the unfinished work by Williams on King Arthur, a text that Lewis complemented and finished after Williams' unexpected and early death. From this collaboration between Williams and Lewis on the Arthurian theme emerge co-inherent ideas such as exchange and substitution associated with love. Yet, there still remains divergence between the friends with Williams envisaging participation and inter-penetration of the divine with creation whereas Lewis' Platonism precludes any such idea of participation.

Further, Fiddes demonstrates his consummate copious and inter-textual knowledge of theology and literature in part four with a wide-ranging study of the idea of co-inherence, both within Williams' and Lewis' corpuses of work and comparatively between both authors and other literary and theological figures. To begin, Fiddes observes and analyses the seeds of co-inherence that Williams discovered in the writings of William Blake, and the influence of Kierkegaard and Barth on his development of the co-inherent concept of the 'impossible possibility' despite Williams' apparent dislike of Barthian theology. Then follows a co-inherence study through seven of Williams' novels which delineates the movement from equilibrium through co-inherence and concludes with an educated guesstimate by Fiddes that if Williams had lived longer, a fully-orbed concept of co-inherence would have become more central to all his stories. Then in the latter section of part four, Fiddes traces Lewis' co-inherence ideas within a trinitarian dimension especially the interpenetrative dance in the Trinity, an idea that Fiddes claims cannot be found before Lewis. Central to this dance is the vision of desire and future glory, which is a vision, so Fiddes asserts, that Lewis procured from his reading of Thomas Traherne and became a prevalent theme in many of Lewis' texts, especially the world of Narnia.

Finally, in part five—the second of the parts consisting of one chapter—Fiddes concludes this work by taking all the content of co-inherence discussed thus far and articulating the position of this concept within the relations of the triune God. Drawing on decades of his writings in which Fiddes debated and sought to advance his unique 'persons as relations' idea in the Trinity, he discusses proposals of co-inherence in recent English-speaking theology located within social constructs of the Trinity but not in a 'persons as relations' understanding of the Godhead. The Trinity is a perichoretic dance but it is the relations, not persons, that generate the dance. This, so claims Fiddes, makes co-inherence and interpenetration easier to articulate and also helps bridge the gap caused by the differences between Williams and Lewis.

Charles Williams and C.S. Lewis: Friends in Co-Inherence is an excellent addition to the ever-increasing library of work by Fiddes on the relationship between theology and literature. A particular strength of this monograph is the in-depth delineation of a very familiar Fiddesian theme: that of perichoresis and interpenetration in the Trinity, and the subsuming of this theme in the concept of co-inherence. As is well

known, in *Mere Christianity* Lewis tentatively posits the proposition that God is neither static nor a person but "a dynamic, pulsating activity, a life, almost a kind of drama. . . a kind of dance" which Fiddes has taken and inculcated into his theology over the years. What he often mentions in passing, the link with Lewis, here he explicates in great detail in terms of the chronological, biographical, and thematic development of the perichoretic co-inherence theme found in Lewis, which both mirrored and differed from Williams' preoccupation with the same idea.

Regarding any weaknesses, the text perpetuates a perennial problem in Fiddes' theology that his interlocutors have pointed out. A number of times Fiddes solicits the speculative suggestion that if both Williams and Lewis had lived longer they would have probably developed their own ideas of perichoresis into "persons as relations" participation in the triune God, the kernel concept at the heart of Fiddes' doctrine of God. The problem with this assertion is that, as critiqued elsewhere, Fiddes assumes reliance on his "persons as relations" definition of a panentheistic doctrine of the triune God without any justifying engagement with the polemical comments of some of his critics. These comments fall into three intertwining objections: what is the meaning of this definition of *mere relations*, a notion of relationality that involves no persons at all; what advantage does this definition of panentheism have over other models of panentheism, not to mention other models of God such as classical theism, neoclassical theism, open theism and pantheism; and if framed in relational and experiential terms, how do humans locate their relationships and connections within the relations of the Trinity in the way Fiddes describes Williams' and Lewis' friendship, which also happens to include every person who reads their works, as participating in a reality of co-inherence?

For those interested in the ways that literature not only illustrates theology but actually *creates* theology, this monograph is well worth reading and studying. This especially applies to readers familiar with the work of Williams and Lewis, who know of their working friendship in *The Inklings*, and yet want to discover more points of connection and influence between the two men in both their lives and thinking. Fiddes has done an exemplary job in taking some of his past subject matter, unearthing new data about both writers, and constructing a forceful thesis that captures one of the main theses of his writings overall; like literature, Christian doctrine is capacious and open enough to constantly adapt in order to be communicated effectively to an ever-changing cultural and literary zeitgeist.