

Prophet, Poet, Pastor – New voices from the next generation help guide the Church in the face of the pandemic.

## Prophet

Political scientist Jonathan Cole gives us a title for what we are living through in *Living with pandemic uncertainty amid the 'Great Disruption.'* He writes, “We find ourselves living through the total disruption of the stability, regularity and predictability on which our psychological health depends.” The Great Disruption,” is “one of those truly seminal events in human history that will animate generations of historians in perpetuity.” He continues, “We are painfully aware that we are living through a moment of great political, social, and economic upheaval.” Cole describes four unprecedented uncertainties: (1) the scale and scope of this global health crisis is unknown; (2) the costly individual and collective sacrifices may or may not work to mitigate the pandemic; (3) the complete uncertainty of how long we will endure total disruption; (4) and the unknown changes that this catastrophic event will produce. Cole asks if the Great Disruption will prove to be a moment of creative destruction or a Hobbesian vision of mass death. “Our present lot, then, is to stoically endure the pandemic uncertainties of the Great Disruption in the hope that the new order that comes in its wake will be formed from the fruits of creative destruction, and simply destruction.” You can copy this link to read Cole’s article:

<https://www.abc.net.au/religion/pandemic-uncertainty-and-the-great-disruption/12124804>

## Poet

In *Rise of the Scops: Wonder After the Pandemic* <http://mereorthodoxy.com/scops> in *Mere Orthodoxy*, English professor Jeremiah Webster calls for prophets, priests, and poets, who will challenge the limits of human intelligence, commerce, government, and “smart” devices. Webster’s vision includes, “Priests and poets who are ambivalent to political tribalism, sober in the assessment of the excesses of late-empire, and immune to the huckster impulse of American religion.” He calls for “Millennial, Gen Z, and Alpha scops” to “shape and refine our aesthetic and theological commitments.” If we are to “inhabit wonder, that ardent quality that informs our desires, commitments, responsibilities, and loves” we will need to “abandon a legion of contemporary idols: Mammon being preeminent. . . and “re-evaluate the scienticism that at once solved all of our problems and got us into this mess.” We need “to discern how to love our neighbors as ourselves: to “read” our neighbors as clearly as the literary tradition reads us.”

Pastor

Pastor Jason Harris of Central Presbyterian Church in New York City preached on Palm Sunday a sermon entitled, *Making the Most of the Time: A Time for Clarity*. Preaching from Jesus's act of temple cleansing on Palm Sunday (Luke 19:28-48), Harris addresses the power of the pandemic to call in question our life's expectations. Our normal life has been disrupted and we're not so sure of how much more we can take. We want life to go back to what it was before the crisis. But Jesus challenges our expectations. He came to bring peace and salvation, but not on the world's terms, not on our terms. The crowds on Palm Sunday wanted Jesus to throw out the Romans and return Israel to self-rule. But Jesus was facing a far greater challenge than Roman rule. Harris explains how Jesus's cross and resurrection were essential for bringing about the salvation we need, rather than a return to our understanding of the good life. (<https://vimeo.com/403820689>)