preparing kids for a dangerous world
a dangerous world

Climate change, white nationalism, extreme income inequality, and religious hostility - if these are the dangerous realities that our kids will face, how will we prepare them?
White “Christian” nationalism
Climate denialism
Kleptocracy/Oligarchy
Christianity has been the chaplain/enabler of 5 centuries of colonization by white Christian nationalists … and environmental plunder by white Christian industrialists.

Can you see why the descendants of the colonizers/plunderers would emphasize sin & forgiveness
- God loves me, us, chosen (Christians)
- God is like a King or Father
- God will soon destroy the earth?

We wanted personal forgiveness without corporate repentance
- God love us - NOT THEM!
- God is like a dictatorial king and autocratic father
- a planetary going-out-of-business sale
Don't the hours grow shorter as the days go by
We never get to stop and open our eyes
One minute you're waiting for the sky to fall
The next you're dazzled by the beauty of it all
Lovers in a dangerous time

These fragile bodies of touch and taste
This fragrant skin, this hair like lace
Spirits open to the thrust of grace
Never a breath you can afford to waste
Lovers in a dangerous time
When you're lovers in a dangerous time
Sometimes you're made to feel as if your love's a crime
Nothing worth having comes without some kind of fight
Got to kick at the darkness 'til it bleeds daylight
Lovers in a dangerous time.
Unacceptable alternatives in a dangerous time:

Consumerist secularism vs. Fundamentalist religion

Consumerist religion vs. Fundamentalist secularism

Deadly religion vs. Dead religion

Strong/hostile vs. Weak/benign religion

Movement fundamentalism vs. Institutional lethargy
A Creative Alternative:

A new kind of Christianity, a generous orthodoxy, progressive Christianity, just and generous Christianity

moving with parallel movements from other faith traditions

in a multi-faith movement for justice, joy, and peace
An important scientific innovation rarely makes its way by gradually winning over and converting its opponents; it rarely happens that Saul becomes Paul. What does happen is that its opponents gradually die out, and that the growing generation is familiarized with the ideas from the beginning, another instance of the fact that the future lies with the youth.

- Max Planck
The reason an awakening takes a generation or more to work itself out is that it must grow with the young; it must escape the enculturation of old ways. It is not worthwhile to ask who the prophet of this awakening is or to search for new ideological blueprints in the works of the learned. Revitalization is growing up around us in our children, who are both more innocent and more knowing than their parents and grandparents. It is their world that has yet to be reborn.

- Wm. G. McLoughlin
how do we prepare children for life in a dangerous time?
1. Help them identify as participants in a never-ending spiritual revolution/evolution of love.
a curriculum of morality
lines of moral reasoning (Jonathan Haidt)

1. justice
2. compassion
3. loyalty
4. purity
5. tradition
lines of moral reasoning (Jonathan Haidt)

1. justice

2. compassion

3. loyalty - enlarging circle/ race, religion, etc.

4. purity - dirty = violent, wasteful, greedy

5. tradition - tradition of growth, evolution, maturity
a curriculum of wisdom
Wise goals/ends
Wise methods/means
Wise values
Wise decisions
a curriculum of love
neighbor
neighbor

family

friends

faith community

community

“public identities” - party, nation, race, religion

stranger, alien, outsider, outcast, other, enemy
self
Self

self-understanding
self-discipline
self-care
self-control
self-reporting
self-giving

... through life’s many stages.
earth/creation
God

(who is known through all other loves)
WARNING!

love of money

fear

bed-time stories
1. Help them identify as participants in a never-ending spiritual revolution/evolution of love.

2. Equip them as life-long Christian activists for this dangerous time.
this dangerous time
lifelong environmental activism
lifelong solidarity with poor/other/vulnerable
lifelong agents of peace
lifelong
lovers of people
(no exceptions)
equip

experiential learning, observation/imitation, role play, simulation, scenario planning, examples (+/-), action/reflection
Christian
way of Christ
way of saints*
way of heroes
1. Help them identify as participants in a never-ending spiritual revolution/evolution of love.

2. Equip them as life-long Christian activists for these dangerous times.

3. Assist their parents with tools for the most challenging work of life: good parenting.
a progressive focus on the family?
practical
age-specific
psychologically informed
interactive
integrative
1. Help them identify as participants in a never-ending spiritual revolution/evolution of love.

2. Equip them as life-long Christian activists for these dangerous times.

3. Assist their parents with tools for the most challenging work of life: good parenting.

4. Teach them the contemplative/spiritual practices that will sustain them through a lifetime.
Self-Examination: Inner work (alone, aided)

Prayer: Journaling, practicing God’s presence, group prayer, liturgical prayer

Solitude/Silence: sabbath, sabbatical, renewal

Soul Friendship: seeking counsel, queries, receiving giving rebuke/encouragement

Study: seeking good mentors, reading good books, living good questions

Church: joining or creating/convening/hosting
inner AND outer work
action AND contemplation
spiritual activism
a dangerous world

a great work

extraordinary people
you
preparing kids for a dangerous world