

A Kind of Solitude

How Pacing the Cage with an Icon and The Book of Common Prayer Restored My Soul

JAMIE HOWISON

Six months into a deep personal crisis occasioned by the unexpected end of his marriage, Jamie Howison traveled halfway across the continent to Halifax, Nova Scotia, to engage in a unique and intense five-week contemplative retreat served in the context of the chapel community of the University of King's College. Immersed in the liturgies of the Canadian Book of Common Prayer, mentored in the writing of an Orthodox icon of Christ Pantocrator, challenged to confront the hard truths behind his brokenness, and laid bare by the hours of silence and solitude, Howison discovered something of the power of the ancient spiritual traditions in the restoration of a twenty-first-century soul. *A Kind of Solitude* tells that story.

"In *A Kind of Solitude*, Jamie Howison invites us onto an unfamiliar but beautiful healing path of his own agitated Way of the Cross. Are you as done as I am with the rah-rah 'gospel' of triumphalist platitudes and ready for some real and raw good news? Jamie is a man who's limped through the sorrow of Gethsemane, known the dying gasps of Golgotha, and beheld the Easter sunrise of resurrection life. Follow him on this tender retreat and I'm sure, like me, you'll breathe your own sighs of solace and hope."

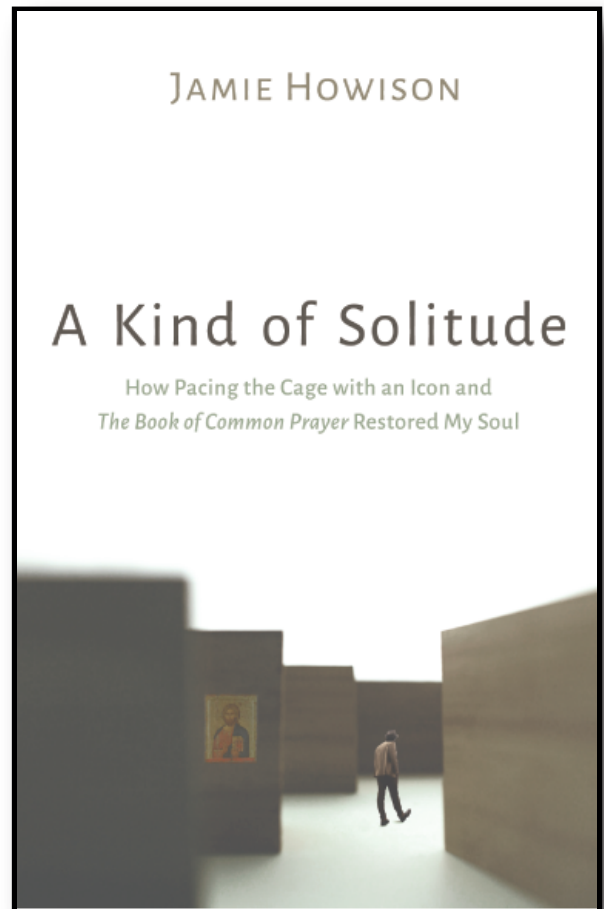
—BRADLEY JERSAK, Dean of Theology & Culture, St. Stephen's University, New Brunswick

"In this story of a man with a broken heart and the healing power of an icon, Jamie Howison recounts how, with the aid of ancient spiritual insights and practices, and the faithfulness of an undergraduate Christian community in Halifax, a remarkable transformation took place in his life. St. Augustine said that the soul is like a 'waterless land,' and in this journal we see the divine gardener at work, bringing about restoration and new life. This testimony will bring hope to others who long to see God while in a place of disillusionment and desperation."

—STEPHEN ANDREWS, Principal, Wycliffe College, Toronto

"*A Kind of Solitude* is a must read for pastors and anyone who is interested in the spiritual life. It is a story of death and resurrection, from darkness to light. There are very few brutally honest spiritual memoirs, and this is one of them. Life is difficult, and often, downright impossible, and Jamie's story shows us how we can transform our pain into something beautiful."

—WILLIAM C. MILLS, Eastern Orthodox priest and author of *Losing My Religion: A Memoir of Faith and Finding*



JAMIE HOWISON is a priest of the Anglican Church of Canada and the founding pastoral leader of Saint Benedict's Table in Winnipeg. He is the author of *God's Mind in That Music: Theological Explorations Through the Music of John Coltrane* (2012), and the co-author with Steve Bell of *I Will Not Be Shaken: A Songwriter's Journey through the Psalms* (2015).

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