ESSAY · IN THE REGISTER OF V. I. LENIN

What Is to Be Done?

Burning questions of our little movement. Lenin answered the old question with a party and a newspaper. This pamphlet answers it with a table, and a record of who sat at it.

Richard Verver · October 2026

The voice is borrowed; the argument, and its errors, are mine. Words quoted as Lenin's are his own, from the English of his *Collected Works*; the places are given in the note at the end.

Preface

The question is older than the man who made it famous. In the Jordan valley the crowds came out to John and asked him, "What shall we do then?" The publicans asked it, and then the soldiers. To the soldiers he said, "Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages" (Luke 3:10–14).

At Pentecost, when Peter had finished speaking, the crowd was pricked in the heart and asked it again: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). Hold on to that answer. We will need it at the end.

In 1863 Nikolai Chernyshevsky, a prisoner in the Peter and Paul Fortress, gave the question to a novel. In 1886 Tolstoy asked it after he had walked the night shelters of Moscow for the census. His answer was that he must stop living on other men's labour and do his own work. In 1902 Lenin took Chernyshevsky's title for a pamphlet, subtitled it *Burning Questions of Our Movement*, and answered with a party. In 2025 a diocesan chancellor in Dallas asked it once more, of a quarrel within the Church herself, and answered with accompaniment.

The question is burning again, and for the same reason it burned for Lenin. A new power organises people at a scale no circle of friends can match. It is not a tsar, and it has no police. It is the cloud: the feeds, the platforms, and now the great machines that think for us in distant buildings.

Lenin's answer to a centralised power was a counter-power of the same shape. This pamphlet argues for a different answer, and it argues in his manner, with his own words wherever they serve. The best case against a vanguard is made by taking the vanguard seriously. So we begin, as he did, on the edge of a cliff.

I. Firmly holding each other by the hand

Lenin opens his first chapter with a picture. “We are marching in a compact group along a precipitous and difficult path, firmly holding each other by the hand.” Enemies surround them and fire on them from every side. And some in the group begin to call the others down into the marsh.

He does not forbid them. “You are free not only to invite us, but to go yourselves wherever you will.” He asks one thing only: “Only let go of our hands, don’t clutch at us.” The group, he insists, “combined, by a freely adopted decision, for the purpose of fighting the enemy.”

Let us take the picture seriously and ask the question it raises. Who is holding our hand now?

We still walk a narrow path. But the hand most of us hold, all day, is a phone. Our compact group was not combined by a freely adopted decision. It was assembled for us by recommendation, and it changes when the recommendation changes. In an earlier essay, Whether the Cloud Makes Many Worlds, I argued that the cloud does not split us into many worlds. It hides the table that lets us share one.

And the marsh has moved. Lenin’s marsh was the comfortable compromise, the party that stops fighting. Ours is softer still. It is the valley where everything is free, where our letters, our photographs, our music and now our very memories are kept for us by someone else. Nobody drags us there. We walk down because the path is easier and the hand we hold is warm.

Here is the difficulty Lenin did not face. His comrades in the marsh were clutching at him, and he could feel it. The hand that holds us now does not clutch. It holds gently, and it is very hard to tell from the inside whether we are being led or carried. The first thing to be done, then, is the oldest: look down and see whose hand it is.

II. Consciousness brought from without

The heart of Lenin’s pamphlet is a claim about where understanding comes from. Left to itself, he says, “the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade union consciousness.” The spontaneous element is real, but it “represents nothing more nor less than consciousness in an embryonic form.” The full thing “would have to be brought to them from without.”

From without meant from the party: a small body of professional revolutionaries who had the theory and would bring it down to everyone else. Everything else in the pamphlet follows from that sentence. The secrecy, the discipline and the centre all follow from it.

Now look at what the cloud promises. It does not offer to bring us a theory. It offers to bring us thinking itself, from without, from buildings most of us will never see. Lenin’s claim was about political consciousness. Ours is about intelligence as such, and the vanguard is no longer a party but a handful of companies and their machines.

I will not pretend to stand outside this. These essays have been written with one of those machines, and this one is no exception. It is a good fellow worker, and it was the first to tell me that it should not be put at the centre of anything.

The objection that matters most came from my daughter. She hates the bigness of it: the water drawn off for cooling, the land, the power, the earth consumed to make a mind in a warehouse. She calls it an abomination. She is right about the scale. Her only mistake, if it is one, is to think that scale is the only shape the thing can take.

The Church named Lenin's error before he made it, and named it again after him. In 1931 Pius XI wrote that "it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do" (*Quadragesimo anno* 79). That is the principle of subsidiarity. A vanguard is its contradiction, whether it is made of men or of machines.

There is one consciousness that truly came from without. The Word came from above, and he did not stay at the centre to send instructions down. He "was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). And he went to live in a very small town.

III. In defence of kustarnichestvo

Lenin's fourth chapter is the sharpest, and it is aimed at us. In English its title is "The Primitiveness of the Economists and the Organisation of the Revolutionaries." The Russian word translated *primitiveness* is *kustarnichestvo*. A *kustar* is a cottage craftsman, a man who works at home with his own tools. Lenin's charge is that the movement works like a village handicraft.

He describes the career of a typical circle with a novelist's eye. Some students make contacts among the workers. They print a leaflet, then a little paper, and start to plan a demonstration. The police, who have known them from the start, wait until they have grown, then sweep them up. "Usually the initiation of such actions ends in an immediate and complete fiasco."

We concede the point, and we concede it fully. A circle of amateurs cannot take a Winter Palace. If the question is how to seize a state, Lenin was right, and the twentieth century showed what his answer could do. The real question is whether we should want what the circle cannot do.

Here the title he borrowed turns on him. Chernyshevsky's novel has two answers to its own question. One is Rakhmetov, the professional revolutionary who toughens himself by sleeping on a mat studded with nails. The other is Vera Pavlovna, who answers the question by founding a sewing workshop, owned by the seamstresses who share its profits. Lenin kept the title and the man on the nails. He left the workshop behind.

We would rather keep the workshop. The most consequential thirty years in history were spent in one. "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?" asked the neighbours in Nazareth (Mark 6:3). The Word made

flesh practised kustarnichestvo for most of his life, with his own tools, in a small town the capital had never heard of.

My father and I keep a small shop of our own. I call it my carpentry shop, though we work in circuits and code rather than wood. It will never overturn anything. It is not meant to. It is meant to make good things for people who can see who made them, which is the whole of what the distributists asked: property and craft held widely, by people and families, at a size where a person can still answer for his work.

IV. Scaffolding, or the little DAG

Lenin's plan for joining the circles was a newspaper, one paper for all Russia. "A newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and a collective agitator, it is also a collective organiser." He compares it to "the scaffolding erected round a building under construction." It "marks the contours of the structure and facilitates communication between the builders."

It is a fine image, and it carries a warning he did not hear. Scaffolding is meant to come down when the building stands. His never did. The scaffolding became the building, and the building was a state.

The cloud is Lenin's newspaper perfected. It is a collective propagandist, agitator and organiser all at once, for the whole world, from a centre. It organises our attention as no editor ever could, and it never comes down, because it was never meant to.

What is to be done? Not a counter-newspaper, and not a rival centre. Our answer is a graph: a little DAG. The letters stand for *directed acyclic graph*. In plain words it is a record in which each entry names the entries it came from, and nothing loops back on itself.

Give each entry a name made from its own contents, and something follows. No entry can be quietly changed or cut out, because every parent is written into the name of every child. The record becomes like the coat at the cross, "without seam, woven from the top throughout," so that even the soldiers said, "Let us not rend it" (John 19:23–24).

Such a record has no centre. Every circle keeps its own whole copy. Two can write at once without either one asking leave. The bonds between circles are recorded, not commanded.

The Church has always grown this way. She has never admitted anyone alone. The law asks that each person to be baptized be given a sponsor, insofar as possible (c. 872), someone who vouches and stays. A record of who brought whom, back through the generations, is the oldest DAG there is.

In our little DAG one rule matters above the others. A claim about a person enters the record only when that person confirms it. No machine may confirm its own claims. The record belongs to the life it records.

Now put the machine back in, but small. Put it on a household's own computer, reading a record its owner keeps. It is no longer a voice from the cloud speaking to millions. It becomes particular, the size of one human life.

We should be honest about the trade. The small machine is less clever than the great one, and it will be for some time. It does not need to be clever. It needs to be faithful. Of the two, the record is the more precious. Any model will be surpassed within a year or two. A record of a life cannot be retrained, and it should never be held by anyone but its owner.

V. A lamp and a lantern

Lenin read his contemporaries in order to refute them. Let us read one of ours in order to learn from him.

In 2025 Gregory Caridi, chancellor of the Diocese of Dallas, asked our question in *The Lamp*: What Is to Be Done? His burning question is nearer home than ours. What should the Church do about the faithful attached to the old Mass? He never mentions Lenin, and he does not need to. His essay is everything the pamphlet is not: patient, fair to every side, and unwilling to pretend there is a clean answer.

He writes, too, from a fitting office. The chancellor is the keeper of a diocese's record, charged with seeing that its acts are "gathered, arranged, and safeguarded" in the archive (c. 482 §1). A man who keeps the record is the right one to ask what holds a people together.

His most useful gift is a distinction. He finds "at least three useful senses" of unity: "1) unity among the faithful, 2) unity in the rite, and 3) unity with tradition." Each recent pope, he shows, has weighed these differently, and much of the quarrel comes from that weighting.

Our little DAG has no option to add to his list. It may offer a picture. In a record where every entry carries its parents in its own name, unity with tradition is not a policy but a structure. The new cannot deny the old without changing its own name. The old cannot disown the new, because the new descends from it. Branches can run side by side from one root, and the coat is not torn.

As a Canadian I was glad of his flag. Our Maple Leaf came by ordinary politics, "based in part on the old *de facto* Red Ensign," and after the change "some people still flew the old flag." His point is that an old flag means something different depending on how the new one came. "The Church does not believe it was conquered by a foreign power or a revolution." In the language of the graph, a revolution is a new root. An ordinary change is a new child of the old, and the record shows which it was.

His own preferred remedy, an Extraordinariate on the model of the Anglican Ordinariate, has the same shape: "The old flag could fly proudly, but in its own jurisdictional space." I will not weigh his options. Here the critic of vanguards owes the centre a concession. Some things only the greater association can do, and ordering the worship of the whole Church is one of them (c. 838 §2). Subsidiarity cuts both ways.

Where his essay and ours truly meet is at the end. “There appears to be no practically perfect solution.” And then: “Whatever is done, it must be done in a spirit of accompaniment. If there are further restrictions, someone must walk with those who are forced to accept them.” Whatever the centre decides, someone must sit with whoever is hurt by it. That is what circles are for.

He closes with the young, many of them priests, drawn to the old Mass without the old quarrels. “Many Catholics just look at the old flag, and listen to the old anthem, and ask, ‘What’s so bad about that?’”

My own family has lived inside that question without ever having to answer it. My wife and I were married in 2012 at a Nuptial Mass of the current rite, sung throughout except for the homily and the vows. The propers were chanted in English to melodies drawn from the Gregorian. The Gloria, Sanctus and Agnus Dei were sung in Latin chant, and at the altar priest and people faced the same way, toward the liturgical east.

Our children were baptized in the current rite as well, with the old chants around the font: *Sitientes* as we came in, *Vidi aquam* on the way to the water, the exorcism in Latin, the *Te Deum* after. We went up to the altar singing the Byzantine troparion, “All you who have been baptized into Christ.” One child was immersed three times. Each was given to Our Lady at the end, with the *Magnificat*.

At one of those baptisms the Gospel was John 19:31–35, the blood and water from the pierced side. It comes a few verses after the seamless coat. No one at those fonts asked which flag was flying. The parent was already in the child’s name.

A lamp is for a house, and a lantern is for the road. The psalm asks for both: “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psalm 119:105). The Church needs the lamp that lights the whole house, and she needs the small lights her people carry. Neither puts the other out.

VI. The plan for a common table

We promised to return to Pentecost. When the crowd asked Peter, “what shall we do?”, he did not hand them a programme. “Repent, and be baptized every one of you” (Acts 2:38). Each one came in by name, and “the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls” (2:41).

Then Luke tells us what those three thousand did. “And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (2:42). “All that believed were together, and had all things common” (2:44). Here is the first communism, and it was not a party. It was a table. They were “breaking bread from house to house” (2:46), house by house, circle by circle. It was kustarnichestvo, and it covered the world.

Lenin, to his credit, knew a plan needs a dream. In his last chapter he writes, “We should dream!”, and at once confesses: “I wrote these words and became alarmed.” He imagines a stern comrade at a unity con-

ference asking whether an editorial board has "the right to dream without first soliciting the opinion of the Party committees."

He answers with the critic Pisarev. "There are rifts and rifts," Pisarev wrote, of the rift between dreams and reality. "If there is some connection between dreams and life then all is well." The dream does no harm if the dreamer "attentively observes life, compares his observations with his castles in the air, and if, generally speaking, he works conscientiously."

Lenin adds: "Of this kind of dreaming there is unfortunately too little in our movement." Here, for once, we agree with him without reserve. A dream must be checked against life. And life, for most of us, is not a party committee. It is the people at our table, who know us and will tell us the truth.

Last week, in a hospital in Toronto, a man was refused a knife for his bread, and no one would help him cut it. He went back to the table. There he and the other patients broke their bread by hand and passed the pieces round, so that no one knew where his own piece had come from.

That is the whole of our programme. Lenin wrote, "Give us an organisation of revolutionaries, and we will overturn Russia!" We ask for less, and expect more. Give us a table, and a record of who sat at it, and we will not need to overturn anything.

What is to be done? Break the bread. Pass it round. Write down who was there.

Coda: the music

The pamphlet has a twin you can play: a garage-band track at 132 beats a minute for Strudel, a free live-coding environment that makes music in a web browser. Lenin's worst word for the small circle was *kustarnichestvo*, cottage craft, the work of amateurs with their own tools; so this is a garage band, two guitars, a bass, an organ and a drum machine. Its code is built like the little DAG. Every part names the parts it is made from, and one part, the cloud, has no parents at all: it is brought from without.

The tracks inherit, as the essays do. This essay cites Whether the Cloud Makes Many Worlds in its first section, so there the band comes in under that track's hook, the Ascension introit *Viri Galilaei*, moved from G into D on the same choir, while the rimshot taps that track's telegraph, "What hath God wrought." Then this track's own hook takes over. At the common table the snare taps a new message in the same Morse: BREAK THE BREAD PASS IT ROUND. Each line quoted from the parent carries a short hash of the original, so anyone can check that it came down unchanged. The whole family sings together in A New Song. Made by Claude + Richard.

1. **I. The question** (0:00): a clean guitar, D, B minor, G, A, left open on the dominant; "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"
2. **II. Holding hands** (0:15): the band comes in together, under the parent track's *Viri Galilaei* and its telegraph; at 0:29 the hook, "what is to be done?"

3. **III. From without** (0:44): a great chord from outside swells, and the band is filtered away beneath it; “brought to them from without”; then a bar of nothing.
4. **IV. The shop** (0:58): a hammer taps IS NOT THIS THE CARPENTER in Morse, and the band is rebuilt by hand, four bars at a time.
5. **V. The round** (1:27): the little DAG: the hook passed round on guitar, organ, celesta and choir, each voice a bar behind the one before.
6. **VI. A lamp and a lantern** (1:56): the lamp holds a chord for the house; the lantern walks the hook for the road; a drum roll back in.
7. **VII. The common table** (2:11): everyone, with the snare tapping BREAK THE BREAD PASS IT ROUND; “give us a table”.
8. **VIII. Write down who was there** (2:55): three hits, the chord rings, and the essay’s last line.

Watch, listen, or take it with you

The video draws the pamphlet as a constructivist poster, and every mark in it comes from the score. The band marches up a cliff path hand in hand while the parent track’s chant scrolls past in square notes; the cloud swallows them; the carpenter’s hammer strikes once for every stroke of the Morse; four voices chase each other round a ring; a lamp holds still in its house while a lantern walks the road; and the twelve pieces of the loaf go round the table one seat a bar, one of them red so you can follow it. A telegraph tape along the bottom taps every message as it sounds. It ends with the track’s own DAG: who was there. Download it as an MP4 (1080p, 32 MB), or the vertical cut for phones as an MP4 (10 MB). On YouTube: the video and the Short.

A recording of the score, 3 minutes 5 seconds, to download and keep: MP3 (320 kbps, 7.4 MB), Ogg Vorbis (3.8 MB), or lossless FLAC (16.5 MB). It was exported from Strudel itself, from the same code, note for note. Like everything on this page, it is in the public domain: play it, sample it, remix it, upload it.

How to play it yourself

1. Open the track in Strudel. Nothing to install.
2. Press **play** at the top of the editor, or click in the code and press **Ctrl+Enter** (Alt+Enter also works). **Ctrl+.** stops it.
3. The instruments, drums and spoken lines are samples that load the first time they sound, so the first run can stutter or miss a line. If it does, stop and play again. The spoken lines come from a free text-to-speech service; if it is down, the track still plays without them.

4. To play it live, change it while it runs. Edit a line and press Ctrl+Enter, and Strudel takes up the new version without stopping. Try another message in `telegraph('BREAK THE BREAD PASS IT ROUND', 'rim')`, another tempo in `setcpm(132/4)`, mute a layer by putting `//` in front of its line, or move the sections around in the `arrange(…)` at the bottom.
5. If the link ever stops working, download the source (or copy it from below), paste it into the editor at strudel.cc, and press play. The PDF of this page prints the whole source on paper.

The chant is the parent track's, from GregoBase transcriptions; the melodies are public domain. The instruments are Strudel's General MIDI soundfonts and its built-in TR-909 samples. Strudel is free software by its own authors. The track itself, the code below, is dedicated to the public domain with this essay. Please do not register it with Content ID or any service that claims copies on your behalf.

The source code

```
// ============================================================
// WHAT IS TO BE DONE? — the garage mix
// In the register of V. I. Lenin · D major x garage power pop
// 132 BPM · 102 bars · ~3:05, then it loops
// For Strudel (https://strudel.cc): paste, press play (Ctrl+Enter).
// Dedicated to the public domain (CC0 1.0).
//
// Lenin's worst word for the small circle was kustarnichestvo:
// cottage craft, the work of amateurs with their own tools. So
// this is a garage band. A clean guitar asks the question of Acts
// 2:37, "what shall we do?", and leaves it open on the dominant.
// The band answers together; a great chord from outside swamps it;
// it rebuilds itself by hand while a hammer taps, in Morse, IS NOT
// THIS THE CARPENTER (Mark 6:3). Then the hook is passed round as
// a round, voice after voice. At the end the snare taps BREAK THE
// BREAD PASS IT ROUND, and the last chord rings while a voice says
// the essay's last line.
//
// The code is a little DAG. Every part below is made from parts
// above it and names them as its parents, the way each entry in
// the record names the entries it came from. One part has no
// parents: the cloud, which is brought from without.
//
// PARENTS. The tracks, like the essays, form a DAG, and a track
// carries its parents in its own material. This essay cites
// "Whether the Cloud Makes Many Worlds" in its first section, so
// in HANDS the band comes in under that track's hook, Viri
// Galilaei, moved from G to D on the same choir, and its telegraph,
// WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT; then this track's own hook takes over.
// Each quoted line keeps a short hash of the parent's original
// (sha256 of the quoted text, first 12 hex), so it can be checked:
//   whether-the-cloud.strudel.js  VIRI   fd123dbc28e8
```

```
//   whether-the-cloud.strudel.js  TALEA  019cbc25c20f
//
// TIMELINE (bar / time):
//   PREFACE    1  0:00  the question: a clean guitar, left open on A
//   HANDS      9  0:15  the band comes in together, holding hands,
//                       under the parent: Viri Galilaei, in D;
//                       at bar 17 the hook: "what is to be done?"
//   WITHOUT   25  0:44  a great chord from outside swells; the band
//                       is filtered away beneath it; one bar of nothing
//   SHOP      33  0:58  kustarnichestvo: a hammer taps the carpenter
//                       in Morse; the band rebuilt by hand, four bars
//                       at a time
//   ROUND     49  1:27  the little DAG: the hook passed round, each
//                       voice a bar behind the last
//   LAMP      65  1:56  a lamp for the house, a lantern for the road
//                       (Psalm 119:105); a drum roll back in
//   TABLE     73  2:11  the common table: everyone; the snare taps
//                       BREAK THE BREAD PASS IT ROUND
//   END       97  2:55  three hits, the chord rings, the last line
//   tail     101  3:02  silence for the reverb
//
// The spoken lines come from Shabda's text-to-speech and load the
// first time they play. If they are slow, stop and play again.
// ============================================================

setcpm(132/4) // one cycle = one bar

// ---- the spoken lines
samples('shabda/speech/en-GB/
f:what_is_to_be_done,thy_word_is_a_lamp_unto_my_feet,break_the_bread,pass_it_rou
nd,write_down_who_was_there')
samples('shabda/speech/en-GB/
m:men_and_brethren_what_shall_we_do,brought_to_them_from_without,is_not_this_the
_carpenter,give_us_a_table')

// ============================================================
// ORBITS: 1 drums · 2 guitars and bass · 3 spoken word ·
//         4 keys and bells · 5 the cloud · 6 choir
// Strudel plays soundfonts at 0.3 of their gain, so the
// instruments are lifted (gain x 3) to sit with the drums.
// ============================================================

// ---------------- ROOTS: the two things everything is made of

// ROOT 1. THE QUESTION: four chords, I vi IV V, D Bm G A.
// parents: none (it is asked)
const QUESTION = "<[d3,a3,d4] [b2,f#3,b3] [g2,d3,g3] [a2,e3,a3]>"
const ARPEGGIO = "<[d3 a3 d4 f#4 a4 f#4 d4 a3] [b2 f#3 b3 d4 f#4 d4 b3 f#3] [g2
d3 g3 b3 d4 b3 g3 d3] [a2 e3 a3 c#4 e4 c#4 a3 e3]>"
const ROOTS = "<d2 b1 g1 a1>"
```

```
// ROOT 2. THE HOOK: four bars on the eighth-note grid.
// "What is to be done? ... Break the bread, pass it round."
// parents: none (it is the answer)
const HOOK = 'a4@2 a4 b4 a4@2 f#4@2 ~@2 d4 e4 f#4@2 e4@2 d5@2 c#5 b4 a4@2 b4@2
a4@6 ~@2'
const hook = () => note(mini(HOOK)).slow(4)

// ---------------- PARENTS: from whether-the-cloud.strudel.js
// the Ascension introit, "Viri Galilaei", two bars, quoted as written
// in G (sha256 fd123dbc28e8) and sung a fifth higher, in D
const VIRI = 'g3@2 g3@2 g3 c4 b3 c4@2 d4 c4 e4 d4 d4@3'
const viri = () => note(mini(VIRI)).slow(2).transpose(7)
// the first telegraph message, quoted as written (sha256 019cbc25c20f)
const PARENT_TALEA = 'WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT'

// the verse turns the question round: I V vi IV
// parents: QUESTION
const VERSE = "<[d3,a3,d4] [a2,e3,a3] [b2,f#3,b3] [g2,d3,g3]>"
const VERSE_ROOTS = "<d2 a1 b1 g1>"

// ---------------- THE TELEGRAPH: Morse, as in the cloud's track
// dot 1 sixteenth, dash 3; 1 between signs, 3 between letters, 7 between words
const CODE = { A: '.-', B: '-...', C: '-.-.', D: '-..', E: '.', G: '--.', H:
'....', I: '..', K: '-.-',
               N: '-.', O: '---', P: '.--.', R: '.-.', S: '...', T: '-', U:
'..-', W: '.--' }
const morse = (text) => text.split(' ').map((word) =>
  word.split('').map((ch) =>
    CODE[ch].split('').map((sign) => (sign === '.' ? 'x' : 'x@3')).join(' ~ ')
  ).join(' ~@3 ')
).join(' ~@7 ') + ' ~@7'
const units = (talea) => talea.split(' ').reduce((n, t) => n +
(t.includes('@') ? +t.split('@')[1] : 1), 0)
const telegraph = (text, sound) => {
  const talea = morse(text)
  return s(sound).struct(mini(talea)).slow(units(talea) /
16).bank('RolandTR909')
}

// ---------------- THE GROUP: holding each other by the hand
// parents: QUESTION (through VERSE)
const kick = s("bd ~ ~ bd bd ~ ~ ~").bank('RolandTR909').gain(.9).orbit(1)
const snare = s("~ ~ sd ~ ~ ~ sd ~").bank('RolandTR909').gain(.7).room(.
15).orbit(1)
const hats = s("hh*8").bank('RolandTR909').gain(".3 .18 .26 .
18").hpf(5000).orbit(1)
const crash = s("<cr ~ ~ ~>").bank('RolandTR909').gain(.35).orbit(1)
const fill = s("<~ ~ ~ [~ ~ ~ ~ lt mt ht ht]>").bank('RolandTR909').gain(.
6).orbit(1)
```

```
const drums = stack(kick, snare, hats, crash, fill)
const bass = (roots) => note(roots).struct("x*8").s('gm_electric_bass_pick')
  .clip(.85).release(.05).lpf(1800).gain(.32 * 3).orbit(2)
const chug = (chords, g = .2) =>
note(chords).struct("x*8").s('gm_overdriven_guitar')
  .clip(.7).release(.08).lpf(3200).gain(g * 3).pan(.4).orbit(2)
const organ = (chords) => note(chords).s('gm_drawbar_organ')
  .attack(.02).release(.4).gain(.07 * 3).pan(.62).room(.3).orbit(4)
const group = (chords, roots) => stack(drums, bass(roots), chug(chords),
organ(chords))

// ---------------- THE LEAD: the hook on a dirty guitar
// parents: HOOK
const lead = (g = .22) => hook().s('gm_distortion_guitar')
  .release(.3).lpf(4200).gain(g * 3).delay(".15:.25:.3").room(.25).pan(.
55).orbit(2)

// ---------------- THE CLOUD: consciousness brought from without
// parents: none. It comes from outside and answers to nothing above it.
const cloud = (bars) => note("[d2,a2,d3,a3,d4,f#4,a4,d5]").s('sawtooth')
  .attack(2).release(2)
  .lpf(saw.slow(bars).range(400, 7000)).gain(saw.slow(bars).range(.02, .22))
  .room(.9).roomsize(8).orbit(5)

// ---------------- THE SHOP: kustarnichestvo
// parents: THE GROUP (rebuilt by hand)
const hammer = telegraph('IS NOT THIS THE CARPENTER', 'rim').gain(.5).room(.
2).orbit(1)
const claps = s("~ cp ~ cp").bank('RolandTR909').gain(.45).room(.3).orbit(1)

// ---------------- THE ROUND: the little DAG
// parents: HOOK, THE SHOP. Each voice is the voice before it, a bar later.
const voice1 = () => lead(.22)
const voice2 = () => hook().late(1).transpose(-12).s('gm_drawbar_organ')
  .release(.3).gain(.12 * 3).pan(.3).room(.3).orbit(4)
const voice3 = () => hook().late(2).transpose(12).s('gm_celesta')
  .release(.6).gain(.14 * 3).pan(.7).room(.5).orbit(4)
const voice4 = () => hook().late(3).s('gm_choir_aahs')
  .attack(.05).release(.5).gain(.22 * 3).room(.6).roomsize(5).orbit(6)

// ---------------- THE LAMP AND THE LANTERN
// parents: QUESTION (the lamp holds its first chord), HOOK (the lantern walks
it)
const lamp = note("[d4,a4,d5]").s('gm_drawbar_organ')
  .attack(1).release(2).gain(.06 * 3).room(.7).orbit(4)
const lantern = note(mini(HOOK)).slow(8).transpose(12).s('gm_celesta')
  .release(1).gain(.16 * 3).pan(sine.slow(8).range(.2, .8))
  .delay(".25:.375:.4").room(.7).roomsize(5).orbit(4)

// ---------------- VOICES
```

```
const vox = (p, g = 1.4) => s(p).hpf(150).lpf(8000).gain(g)
  .delay(".12:.25:.25").room(.2).orbit(3)

// ============================================================
// SECTIONS
// ============================================================

// PREFACE. "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37)
// parents: QUESTION
const secPREFACE = stack(
  arrange(
    [7, note(ARPEGGIO).s('gm_electric_guitar_clean')
      .release(.4).gain(.3 * 3).delay(".25:.25:.35").room(.4).orbit(2)],
    [1, note("[a2,e3,a3,c#4,e4]").s('gm_electric_guitar_clean')
      .release(1.6).gain(.3 * 3).room(.5).orbit(2)],
  ),
  vox("<what_is_to_be_done ~ ~ ~ men_and_brethren_what_shall_we_do ~ ~ ~>"),
)

// HANDS. "We are marching in a compact group ... firmly holding
// each other by the hand." The band comes in together, under the
// parent track: Viri Galilaei on the choir and WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT
// on the rim, where the essay cites "Whether the Cloud Makes Many
// Worlds". Then the child's own hook.
// parents: THE GROUP, THE LEAD, PARENTS
const secHANDS = stack(
  group(VERSE, VERSE_ROOTS),
  viri().s('gm_choir_aahs').attack(.05).release(.6)
    .room(.6).roomsize(5).gain(.3 * 3).orbit(6).mask("<1!8 0!8>"),
  telegraph(PARENT_TALEA, 'rim').gain(.3).hpf(1500).pan(.65).orbit(1).mask("<1!8
0!8>"),
  lead().mask("<0!8 1!8>"),
)

// WITHOUT. "It would have to be brought to them from without."
// The cloud swells; the band is filtered away beneath it.
// parents: THE GROUP, THE CLOUD
const secWITHOUT = arrange(
  [7, stack(
    group(VERSE, VERSE_ROOTS)
      .lpf(saw.slow(7).range(3000, 180)).postgain(saw.slow(7).range(1, .15)),
    cloud(7),
    vox("<~ ~ brought_to_them_from_without ~ ~ ~ ~>"),
  )],
  [1, silence],
)

// SHOP. "Is not this the carpenter?" (Mark 6:3)
// The band rebuilt by hand, four bars at a time.
// parents: THE SHOP, THE GROUP
```

```
const secSHOP = stack(
  hammer,
  claps,
  bass(ROOTS).mask("<0!4 1!12>"),
  chug(QUESTION).mask("<0!8 1!8>"),
  stack(kick, snare, hats, fill).mask("<0!12 1!4>"),
  organ(QUESTION).mask("<0!12 1!4>"),
  vox("<is_not_this_the_carpenter ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~>"),
)

// ROUND. The little DAG: pass it round.
// parents: THE ROUND, THE GROUP (half-time)
const secROUND = stack(
  s("bd ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~").bank('RolandTR909').gain(.85).orbit(1),
  s("~ ~ ~ ~ sd ~ ~ ~").bank('RolandTR909').gain(.6).room(.3).orbit(1),
  s("hh*4").bank('RolandTR909').gain(.18).hpf(6000).orbit(1),
  crash,
  bass(ROOTS).struct("x ~ ~ ~ x ~ ~ ~"),
  chug(QUESTION, .12).struct("x ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~").clip(2),
  voice1(),
  voice2().mask("<0!4 1!12>"),
  voice3().mask("<0!8 1!8>"),
  voice4().mask("<0!12 1!4>"),
  vox("<pass_it_round ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~>"),
)

// LAMP. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."
// parents: THE LAMP AND THE LANTERN; a drum roll from THE GROUP
const secLAMP = stack(
  lamp,
  lantern,
  note("<d2 b1 g1 a1>").s('gm_electric_bass_pick').release(1).gain(.22 *
3).orbit(2),
  vox("<thy_word_is_a_lamp_unto_my_feet ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~>", 1.2),
  s("<~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ sd*4 [sd*8, ~ ~ ~ ~ lt mt ht ht]>").bank('RolandTR909')
    .gain(saw.slow(2).range(.25, .6)).orbit(1),
)

// TABLE. "Breaking bread from house to house" (Acts 2:46).
// Everyone, and the snare taps the answer.
// parents: everything above but the cloud
const secTABLE = stack(
  group(QUESTION, ROOTS),
  lead(.24),
  telegraph('BREAK THE BREAD PASS IT ROUND', 'rim').gain(.4).hpf(800).pan(.
35).orbit(1),
  voice4().mask("<0!8 1!16>"),
  voice3().mask("<0!16 1!8>"),
  vox("<break_the_bread ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ pass_it_round ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~
give_us_a_table ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~>"),
```

```
)

// END. Three hits, the chord rings, and the last line.
const STAB = "[d2,d3,a3,d4,f#4]"
const secEND = arrange(
  [1, stack(
    note(STAB).struct("x ~ ~ x ~ ~ x ~").s('gm_overdriven_guitar').clip(.
9).gain(.25 * 3).orbit(2),
    note("d1").struct("x ~ ~ x ~ ~ x ~").s('gm_electric_bass_pick').gain(.3 *
3).orbit(2),
    s("[bd, cr] ~ ~ [bd, sd] ~ ~ [bd, sd] ~").bank('RolandTR909').gain(.
8).orbit(1),
  )],
  [3, stack(
    stack(
      note(STAB).s('gm_overdriven_guitar').release(4).gain(.22 * 3).room(.
6).roomsize(6).orbit(2),
      note("d2").s('gm_electric_bass_pick').release(3).gain(.25 * 3).orbit(2),
      s("cr").bank('RolandTR909').gain(.4).room(.5).orbit(1),
    ).slow(3),
    vox("<write_down_who_was_there ~ ~>", 1.5),
  )],
  [2, silence],
)

// ============================================================
// THE ARRANGEMENT
// ============================================================
arrange(
  [8,  secPREFACE],
  [16, secHANDS],
  [8,  secWITHOUT],
  [16, secSHOP],
  [16, secROUND],
  [8,  secLAMP],
  [24, secTABLE],
  [6,  secEND],
)
```

A note on sources

Scripture is quoted from the King James Version: Luke 3:10–14; Acts 2:37–46; Mark 6:3; John 1:14; John 19:23–24 and 31–35; Psalm 119:105.

Lenin is quoted from *What Is to Be Done? Burning Questions of Our Movement* (1902), in the English of the *Collected Works*, vol. 5, as published on marxists.org. The compact group, the marsh and "let go of our hands" are from chapter I, section A. "Only trade union consciousness," "consciousness in an em-

bryonic form" and "brought to them from without" are from chapter II, section A. The circle's career and its "complete fiasco" are from chapter IV, section A, and "Give us an organisation of revolutionaries" from section C of the same chapter. The newspaper as collective organiser, the scaffolding, "We should dream!" and Pisarev are from chapter V, section B.

Pius XI, *Quadragesimo anno* (1931), §79. Code of Canon Law (1983), c. 482 §1 on the chancellor, c. 838 §2 on the Apostolic See and the liturgy, and c. 872 on sponsors. Gregory Caridi, "What Is to Be Done?", *The Lamp*, Assumption 2025: the three senses of unity, the Maple Leaf and the Red Ensign, conquest and revolution, the Extraordinariate, accompaniment, and the closing question. Chernyshevsky's *What Is to Be Done?* (1863) and Tolstoy's *What Then Must We Do?* (1886) are described, not quoted.

SOURCES Lenin, *What Is to Be Done?*, chapter I, chapter II, chapter IV, chapter V, Pius XI, *Quadragesimo anno*, Gregory Caridi, "What Is to Be Done?", *The Lamp*.

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