Contents

Introduction 1

1 Natural Theology: Questions of Definition and Scope 6
   The Aim of This Work 8
   A Brief Genealogy of Natural Theology 11
   Natural Theology: Six Approaches 18
   The Natural Theology Project: Thick and Thin Descriptions 22
   In Defense of a “Christian” Natural Theology Project 25
   The Christian Accommodation of Classic Natural Theology 35

2 Natural Theology and the Christian Imaginarium 41
   Sensorium and Imaginarium: Christianity and the Re-Imagination of Nature 42
   Modernity and the Suppression of the Imagination 47
   Metanoia: Seeing Things as They Really Are 50
   Imaginative Transformation: The Church as an Interpretive Community 55
   Theoria: Imaginative Beholding and Rational Dissection 57
   Nature as logikos: Reflections on the Doctrine of Creation 61
   Metaphors of Beauty and Order: Harmony and the Dance 66

3 Text, Image, and Sign: On Framing the Natural World 69
   Natural Theology as a Habitus 69
   The Intellectual Challenge of the Ambiguity of the World 73
   Nature as a Text: Natural Theology and the Book of Nature 78
   Nature as Image: Natural Theology and Landscapes 87
   Nature as a Sign: Natural Theology and Semiotics 93

4 Natural Theology: Contexts and Motivations 101
   The Importance of Cultural Location for Natural Theology 101
   A New Vocational Space: Natural Theology as a Religious Calling 105
   The Wasteland: Natural Theology and the Recovery of a Lost Nature 107
   Wonder and Mystery: Transcendent Experiences 110
   Re-Enchantment: Sustaining a Sense of Wonder 113
   The Rational Transparency of Nature and Faith 116
   Connectedness: The Human Longing for Coherence 120