

Editorial

The Christian movement is often forced to give account for themselves. Also, we in Africa in particular, must do so under the piercing eyes of a hostile, public media. Let us first concede: often we ourselves are the cause of this hostility - through our own doing. In this case then, we have to be willing to hear the critical voices from friends and enemies. As a missiological journal, we would also want to provide space for all these voices. At other times however, this experience is an inherent part of being a foreigner in this world and a discomforting presence, a sign of God's odd kindom. We will also express this oddness, in our journal.

However, to give account of ourselves should not only happen in times of crisis. As we discern and explore where God is continuing to breathe new life amongst all nations and cultures, self-reflection and articulating this presence, out in the open, must be part of our life as a community. It is an inherent part of a scholarly community, but specifically of a missional spirituality to continue to ask questions and search beyond the secure and safe expressions of our life together and our scholarly engagement.

It is in the light of this understanding that we present to you a selection of articles, which breathe this kind of spirituality and ethos. In this edition, various colleagues, again from different disciplines, contexts and missiological paradigms, ask important questions. They explore key biblical perspectives and insights, engage and question the (often) forced movements of God's people, but also creatively explore new missionary impulses from these different contexts. All these authors do this not simply for the sake of being critical; they do this from their own involvement, with a view of serving concrete expressions of God's mission. These expressions are varied - it manifests in local congregations, in social justice movements, in the sphere of development planning and the struggles for food security; it emerges in urban settings, as well as in rural villages.

Daniel O'Kennedy's article opens up new insights from an Old Testament perspective. As O'Kennedy concedes, this is not the only perspective possible on the prophetic book of Zechariah, however it does affirm our commitment to the biblical discourse, as central to our engagement. The article of Olehile Buffel comes from the research project on the relationship between migration or the movements of people and mission. Buffel provides a sharp analysis from a Black South African perspective, as well as creative impulses for further reflection. Rose Mboya, comes from a different perspective altogether. Mboya's article is based on research in Tanzania, and focuses on the danger of toxigenic fungi and mycotoxins in food. What are to be the role of faith communities in this context? For us, at Missionalia, it is important to stimulate dialogue across disciplines and this article is an example of that. Frans Hanke and Pieter

Verster's article continues their emphasis on the dynamics within local missional congregations and how Missiology can serve the vocations of these congregations. They propose a model to serve and support local churches which, they argue, would increase the individual and corporate missional involvement of believers. The article by Christopher Munikwa and Jurgens Hendriks, comes from a specific Zambian and Zimbabwean context. For these countries the challenge of the existing missionary methods remains. Munikwa and Hendriks however, creatively explore an innovative communal and contextual framework, which might be relevant, not only for the specific church denomination, but also for other similar contexts. The agency of students from the University of Zimbabwe is also affirmed as important dialogue partners in this research. The article from Stuart Bate brings us "back to reality" in situating the missiological discourse, historically and also theologically.

It is evident from the above that the Christian movement should and indeed can give a proper account within a public sphere. This space, is however not simplistically a burden or worse, to be forced out – more importantly it is an opportunity for innovation and a fresh impetus to transforming mission and Missiology; an expression of a particular missional spirituality.

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