

Editorial

Welcome to the July 2017 edition of the *Stellenbosch Theological Journal* (STJ) in which we present 24 peer-reviewed academic articles and 3 book reviews.

We are especially pleased to include a book review by Dirkie Smit of Klaus Nürnberger's two-volume systematic theology, published as *Faith in Christ Today: Invitation to Systematic Theology, Volume 1: Life in the presence of God* and *Faith in Christ Today: Invitation to Systematic Theology, Volume 2: Involved in God's project*. In many ways this book project is indeed, as John de Gruchy writes on the back cover, 'not only the summation of all Nürnberger's work over many years, but a lively, contemporary presentation of what it means to live in the world in the presence of a redemptive God who offers us life and hope.' Dirkie Smit, who retired from Stellenbosch University at the end of 2016, is now the Rimmer and Ruth de Vries Professor of Reformed Theologies of Mission and Public Theologies at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Included in this edition is a review article by Khegan Delpont of the Oxford theologian Graham Ward's book: *Unbelievable: Why we believe and why we don't*. Ward, a regular visitor to South Africa, recently published the first volume of his systematic account of the Christian faith, entitled *How the light gets in: Ethical Life 1* (Oxford University Press, 2016).

The other 23 peer-reviewed articles cover a wide variety of topics from various positions and disciplines. Several articles in the last few editions of STJ focused on migration and the plight of refugees. In this edition Vhumani Magezi's article addresses this topic from a practical theological perspective.

Readers with an interest in the history of intellectual life at Stellenbosch University will find much to reflect on in Anton van Niekerk's article 'A department under siege: How Philosophy at Stellenbosch split in order to survive'. A prominent figure in this narrative is Johan Degenaar. Aspects of his work is presented in the article by the Dutch political philosopher Theo de Wit – specifically on the boundaries of transitional justice, with special reference to the views of Jean Améry and Degenaar concerning the tension between justice and survival.

We are glad to include other articles by international authors, such as the article by Jean Zumstein, an eminent New Testament scholar from the University of Zurich, published here in an Afrikaans translation as “Die boodskap van die kruis as middelpunt van Pauliniese teologie” (“The Message of the cross as centre of Pauline theology”). In addition, we present an article by Bruce Pass from the University of Edinburgh on religious journalism in Australia which includes reference to points of contact with Abraham Kuyper.

Julius Gathogo’s article in turn draws on experiences from the Kenyan context in the discussion of indigenous rituals in African ecclesiology.

In the light of the 500th anniversary of the 16th century Protestant Reformation(s) an article, co-authored by Felipe Buttelli and Clint le Bruyns, focuses on the political responsibility of the Protestant churches in Brazil.

Here in South Africa several academic conferences will commemorate the Reformation, including conferences in October 2017 at the faculties of theology in Pretoria and Stellenbosch respectively. The meeting of the Theological Society of South Africa (TSSA) – held in June in Stellenbosch – also had as theme ‘Between conflict and communion: the reception of 16th century reformations in South Africa.’ We hope to publish papers from these conferences in upcoming editions of the *STJ*.

Robert Vosloo

(Editor: *STJ*)