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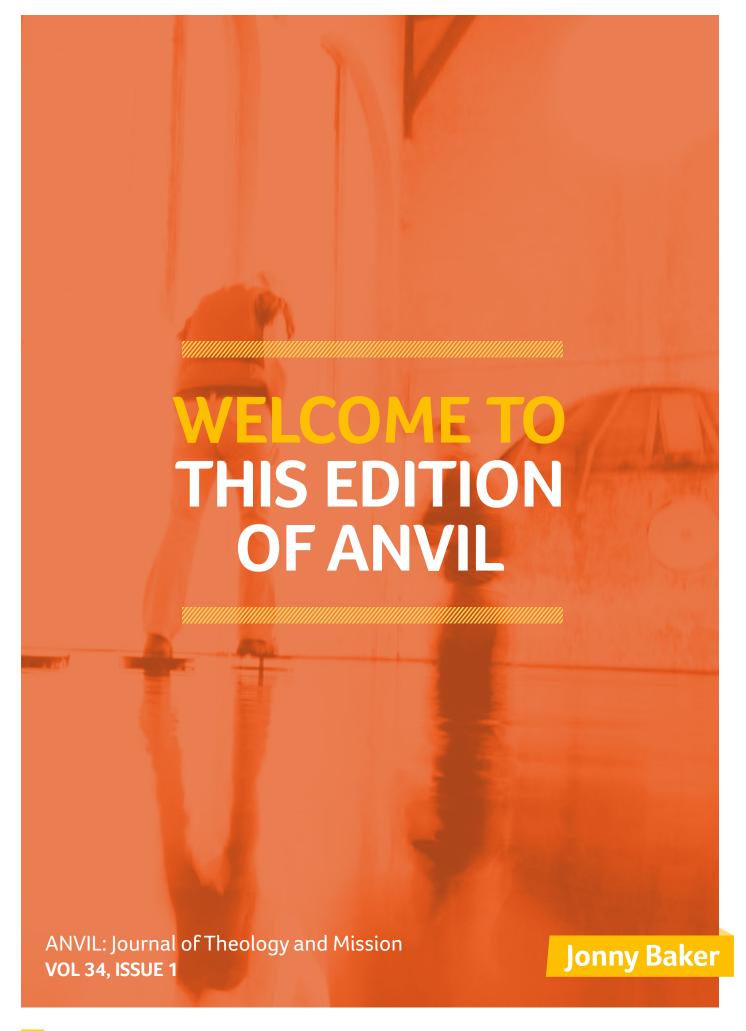
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Mission Is...

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THE EDITORIAL

Over the last six months Church Mission Society has been interviewing people to find out what they think mission is and mission is not. Debbie James and Thomas Fowler discuss some of the findings in their article. This campaign, called Mission Is, prompted us to dedicate an issue of Anvil to reflecting more on this question. We also made it the theme of the pioneer research conversations day in 2017, and two of the articles that follow (Mike Pears and Kyama Mugambi) are developed from presentations they made on that

I love how mission is a way of framing, a lens to think about and practise what it means to follow Jesus in today's world. Mission is what God is doing to reconcile all things and we are invited to participate with God in that healing and transformation as Christ's body. Mission resists being collapsed into solely evangelism or solely social transformation and it stops the church getting overly introverted or obsessed with itself because its focus is outward towards the whole world.

The energy of the church in mission in Africa is amazing and reading Kyama Mugambi's article, Mission is not Western, you'll get a feel for how mission is operating in a new paradigm that involves an explosion of church planting, social transformation and global gift exchange. Mike Pears brings the subject from the global to the local, thinking about the significance of place and geography in relation to

mission and Cathy Ross keeps it real with a moving article on mission and lament.

Unlike the church in Africa, the church in the UK faces the challenge of navigating a changing landscape where interest in Christianity has waned and only a small percentage of the population consider church a part of their life. It's in this environment that innovation and pioneering in mission have been seen as a muchneeded gift to reach beyond the edges of the church and to embrace the future. It often feels as though the church is in two minds about this. She knows she needs innovation, but she doesn't quite know what to make of new things that can be seen as threatening to the inherited ways of thinking and practising faith. Paul Bradbury and Tina Hodgett have designed an incredibly helpful map that offers a spectrum of pioneer ministry, which we are delighted to include in this issue and which adds some real insight to mission in the new environment.

Since CMS took on the hosting of Anvil, we have introduced articles that are reflections on practice, which we hope you have enjoyed. Mission is after all about practice and not just thinking or talking! Paul Ede's piece shows how a local community have been participating in transformation with God and with their locale in a really inspiring fashion. Their approach is very much mission 'with' rather than 'to' or 'for', and mission from the ground up. The CMS interviews and survey with people around the question of what mission

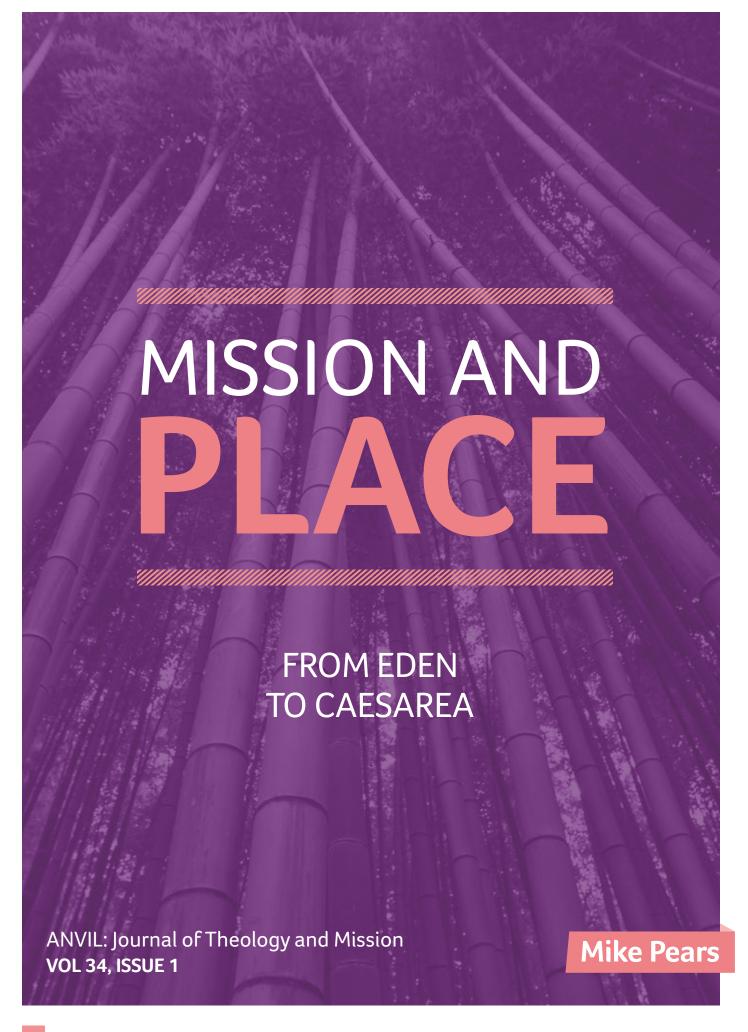
is showed that over 90 per cent of people we asked think mission is for everyone, but half the respondents also indicated that they aren't sure how to get involved in mission. Paul's article offers a really good example of how a local church community can get involved in ways that are renewing for them and for the community and fun to boot.

There are also three videos on the website edition, featuring Mike Pears, Ann Morrisy, and Kyama Mugambi who kindly agreed to be interviewed around the theme of 'mission is' at the pioneer conversations day, so do have a look at those too.

We welcome Isaac Frisby as the new book reviews editor. With the changeover of editor, there were no reviews in the last edition, but we are pleased to say they are back. A big thank you to Tom Wilson, who did a great job for several years as the previous book reviews editor.

We love to hear your feedback on Anvil so do email us at anvil@ churchmissionsociety.org to let us know your reactions and thoughts. CMS took on the hosting of Anvil in 2016 and have now produced five issues. The next three issues will be on the themes of youth ministry and mission, pioneering and missional ecclesiology. We welcome suggestions for articles. Before writing an article, do contact us first. Thanks for reading and we hope you enjoy this issue.

Jonny Baker is the CMS Director of Mission Education and Pioneer Mission Leadership Training Course Leader



'PLACE' IS UBIQUITOUS. IT SEEMS A TRUISM TO SAY THAT PLACE IS ALL AROUND US AND THAT INDEED ALL LIFE IS SOMEHOW AN EXPRESSION OF BEING PLACED.

Yet it is this very everydayness or taken-forgranted-ness of place that is one of its most potent characteristics. The familiar physicality of the natural and built environments present the world to us as 'normal', 'common sense' or even 'God given'. Yet the same familiarity that enables us to navigate through complex social and spatial landscapes without a second thought also functions to hide from us whole worlds of meaning and power.¹ These worlds – which are effectively hidden in plain sight – may be glimpsed when the taken-for-granted, or normative meanings of place are somehow transgressed. This may happen, for instance, in a moment of personal encounter which opens up a fissure or exposes a 'wound' in an otherwise normal everyday experience.²

Let me offer a few examples of how such a fissure might bring to light an otherwise hidden world of meaning. Consider the familiar phrase 'a woman's place is in the home'. You would I suspect react with indignation on hearing such a phrase. Yet this expression was until recently commonplace and moreover taken as a self-evident truth in relation to the design of government-provided housing of the 1930s to justify a small 'pantry' (kitchen) being placed at the rear of the house.³ The cultural norm was expressed in bricks and mortar and in turn the buildings portrayed the 'truth of the phrase' as normative or 'just the way things are'. Similarly, consider

a group of women wearing hijabs walking down a street in the London borough of Newham; they would no doubt go unnoticed. Yet the same group of women hiking in the hills of the Lake District may well attract some attention. The sense of indignation or discomfort in each case is not related to the subjects in view, but is rather to do with where they are placed and how they either conform to or transgress the accepted conventions of the place.

Transgressions of this sort can act as indicators of the many layered and complex sets of meaning and constructions of power which inhabit everyday places. They suggest to us that even the apparently safe and familiar places of home and high street are not as benign as we might suppose but are in fact sites where meaning and power are contested. Neither are the values or truths that seem inherent within a place as static and fixed as the solid features of the built and natural environments would have us believe. As in the example of the 1930s government housing, what appears to be a commonsense interpretation of the built environment to one generation can be an anathema to the next.

FROM EDEN TO CAESAREA

While these associations between place, meaning and power are clearly evidenced within biblical narrative, they remain largely unexplored in mainstream theology. In writing this article I hope to whet the appetite of at least a few readers with the thought that by pursuing a deeper and more thought-through theology of place we might gain significant, helpful insight in relation to the mission of the church in a world where many feel displaced, dislocated and precarious.

The particular theme I will focus on here is the apparent paradigm shift that takes place in the spatial imagination in moving from Old Testament to New Testament narrative, a shift which I am presenting here as a move from Eden to Caesarea. Such a shift should not be surprising to us, given the well-established understanding that the New Testament's interpretation of the Old involves a simultaneous pattern of both continuity and discontinuity.

I am however suggesting that, on balance, the spatial imaginations (and resultant practices) which currently dominate the church's mission tend strongly towards

¹ Tim Cresswell, *In Place / Out of Place: Geography, Ideology and Transgression* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), p.18.

² Mary McClintock Fulkerson, *Places of Redemption: Theology for a Worldly Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

³ Rosamond Jevons and John Madge, *Housing Estates: A Study of Bristol Corporation Policy and Practice Between the Wars*, ed. Prof. A.M. Tydnall (Bristol: Arrowsmith, 1946).

⁴ For examples of these discussions see Eric Stewart, Gathered Around Jesus: An Alternative Spatial Practice in the Gospel of Mark (Cambridge: Clark, 2009; Halvor Moxnes, Putting Jesus in His Place: A Radical Vision of Household and Kingdom (Louisville and London: Westminster John Knox, 2003); T.J. Gorringe, A theology of the built environment: justice, empowerment, redemption, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Philip Sheldrake, Spaces for the sacred: place, memory, and identity (Baltimore, MD. 2001).

⁵ Steven Bouma-Prediger and Brian J Walsh, Beyond Homelessness: *Christian Faith in a Culture of Discplacement* (Michigan U.S.A. and Cambridge U.K.: Eerdmans, 2008); Standing, Guy. *The Precariat* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2011).

the Eden end of the spectrum. My hope is that as we understand why the behaviour of Peter and Cornelius at their meeting in Caesarea was so utterly remarkable, we ourselves might also be awakened to a renewed spatial imagination. I will argue that it is this same spatial imagination, first embodied in the life of the church at Caesarea, which is central to the practical outworking of the Kingdom of God and new creation as envisioned within New Testament texts.

THE SPATIAL IMAGINATION OF EDEN

In Where Mortals Dwell, Craig Bartholomew not only takes Eden as a key starting point for his study of place, but argues that Genesis 1-3 is a foundational text for a biblical theology of place. Bartholomew presents a series of key proposals which form the basis of his biblical theology of place; among them are:

- God intends for humans to be at home in, to indwell, their places. Place and implacement[sic] is a gift and provides the possibility for imaging God in his creation. Place is thus a dynamic concept evoking the creative engagement of humans with their contexts.
- Place is never fully place without God as coinhabitant. Place is thus always, in one way or another, a theological concept.
- After Eden the challenge of implacement and the danger of displacement are a constant part of the human condition. Humans remain placed, but displacement is a constant threat.⁶

Bartholomew's reading of place as a space to be indwelled and co-inhabited with others and with God strikes a deeply evocative note, especially for those who suffer displacement or fear the loss of home. This theological reading of place finds resonance with the work of Walter Brueggemann in his theology of the Promised Land. In an oft quoted paragraph Brueggemman asserts:

Place is space in which important words have

been spoken that have established identity, define vocation, and envisioned destiny. Place is space in which vows have been exchanged, promises have been made, and demands have been issued. Place is indeed a protest against all the unpromising pursuit of space. It is a declaration that our humanness cannot be found in escape, detachment, absence of commitment, and undefined freedom.⁷

The theologising of place on the basis of Eden and Land lead to two central observations. The first is about the relational nature of place defined by the key relationship of 'God-people-place'.⁸ The second is the imperative of place-making:

The embodied nature of human beings means that our placedness [sic] is always local and particular; so too will be our primary responsibility for placemaking. Just as the first couple is called to tend to Eden, so we are called to tend to the respective places in which we have been put.⁹

These two key ideas find strong resonance in Christian tradition, especially with ideas of sacred places and more recently with practices of place-making and 'reneighbouring' within mission. They are well argued elsewhere and I will not rehearse the arguments again here. 10

However, serious criticism has been levelled at the spatial imaginations inherent within these Eden- and Land-based theologies. At the risk of oversimplifying the model (but wanting to aid the reader's own spatial imagination) the spatial constructions of Eden and Land could be represented as a bounded space set apart by walls or rivers which define an 'inside' (the territory of the people of God) and conversely an outside (the territory of those who are not the people of God). The identity of the people is based not only on their relationship to God and Land (Brueggemann) but also over-and-against those who are outside. The spatial imagination of Eden and the Land are thus sustained by religious practices of boundary enforcement which both include and exclude. 11

These ideas were persuasively presented by Mary Douglas in her ground-breaking book Purity and Danger.¹²

⁶ Craig G. Bartholomew, Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place for Today (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011) p.31.

⁷ Walter Brueggemann, *The Land* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2002, 2nd) p.4.

⁸ Bartholomew, Mortals, pp.2-3, 14-16, 29-31; John Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), pp.46-47; Brueggemann, Land, pp.1-14.

⁹ Bartholomew, Mortals, p.245.

¹⁰ John Inge for example expresses the conviction that Christians should be at the forefront of the recovery of place, and that the focus of such recovery is to rediscover the "dormant virtue of neighbourliness." Inge, Place, p.135. See also Sparks, Paul, Tim Soerens, and Dwight J Friesen. *The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches Are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2014); Philip Sheldrake, *The Spiritual City: Theology, Spirituality, and the Urban* (Chichester: Wiley, 2014); Bartholomew, Mortals, pp. 234–318.

¹¹ Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), pp.181-184.

¹² Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger.* London and New York: Routledge Classics, 2002.

Douglas, who worked as an anthropologist in the field of comparative religion and religious beliefs within primitive cultures (including those of ancient Israel), observed that in tribal cultures dirt was not a matter of hygiene or aesthetics but that pollution and taboo are cultural constructs that relate to the imposition of order on society through categorisation and differentiation. Douglas coined the basic definition of 'dirt as matter out of place' ¹³ and argued that the definition of dirt implies two conditions:

(A) set of ordered relations and a contravention of that order. Dirt then, is never a unique, isolated event. Where there is dirt there is a system. Dirt is the byproduct of a systematic ordering and classification of matter, in so far as ordering involves rejecting inappropriate elements.¹⁴

In a tribal context peoples were categorised and differentiated as pure or impure: those who were impure or polluted were tabooed; they were socially, spatially and representatively expelled from the life of the tribe.

In the 1990s a group of biblical scholars called the 'Context Group' drew on the work of Douglas and other social scientists as a frame for reading scripture. 15 They argued that the purity laws, as held in the Second Temple period, dominated the spatial imagination in Israel and that for Israel spatial representation was organised around degrees of purity according to proximity to the Temple, which itself stood at the centre of all creation. One of the members of the Context Group, Bruce Malina, argues that "the orientational map of Israel consists of two major category sets: the sacred and profane (exclusive and nonexclusive) and the pure/clean and impure/unclean (in proper place/out of place)."16 Purity laws for Israel prescribed the way of being 'set apart' for a God who himself was known as holy, or separate; they defined the ways of moral behaviour required to belong to an exclusive people whose identity was rooted in covenant relationship to an exclusive God. As such, morality in Israel is defined by conformity to purity law – to be moral is to belong.

On this reading, the spatial imagination of Eden and Land are very far from the seemingly benign home-space portrayed by Bartholomew; they are potent geographies of exclusion where those who lack the privilege of birth and commensurate purity are expelled to the outer fringes of the world. Indeed, exclusion is a dominant theme of Eden and Land narratives – Genesis 3 presents us not with a populated garden but with one which is uninhabited by human presence.

At this point I should make a brief qualification. The spatial imagination of Israel was of course much more complex and less 'fixed' than has been suggested thus far.¹⁷ Other cultural-religious mappings which are evident within biblical texts suggest that the spatial mapping varied within a community and changed through time. Examples of the ways in which meaning imbibed place in this way are in terms of whether a place was 'civilised' or not, ¹⁸ as hierarchical male spaces, ¹⁹ or as carrying a range of ideological²⁰ and cosmological ²¹ readings.

Despite this complexity however, the key point to notice is that each of these mappings serves to establish identities: they make claims about who 'we' are in relation to gods/ God and territory (and in this sense they are ideological) over and against who 'they' are. They not only include but they also exclude. Thus when Jesus declared that all foods were clean, he was not simply making an argument about religious practice. He was deconstructing and undoing the spatial imagination of Israel; he was in effect claiming that the world was being changed and that the whole social-spatial infrastructure upon which all power was predicated was being displaced to make room for a new arrangement. More of this later. First, to be properly prepared for a discussion about the shift of spatial imagination from Eden to Caesarea we should be aware of some of the significant work that has been carried out within the social sciences. While we can touch only briefly on the subject here, I hope that it is apparent that this is one of the instances where cross-disciplinary conversation is much needed.

A BRIEF EXCURSION INTO SOCIAL SCIENTIFIC THEORIES OF PLACE

It is sobering to see how far theological studies of place have fallen behind the social sciences and it is essential that theology is conversant with the social sciences in this respect.²² I will reference the work of just two social scientists here which will I hope communicate the sense

¹³ Douglas, *Purity*, p.44.

¹⁴ Douglas, Purity, p.44.

¹⁵ Jerome H. Neyrey and Eric C. Stewart, The Social World of the New Testament: Insights and Models (Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2008) p.xxi.

¹⁶ Bruce J.Malina, The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology (Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001) p.171.

¹⁷ For a fuller discussion see published PhD dissertation M. Pears, 'Towards a Theological Engagement with an Area of Multiple Deprivation' (Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit, 2015).

¹⁸ Stewart, Gathered.

¹⁹ Moxnes, Putting.

²⁰ Norman Habel, The Land is Mine: Six Biblical Land Ideologies (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995).

²¹ John K. Riches, Conflicting Mythologies: Identity Formation in the Gospels of Mark and Matthew. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000).

²² A helpful introduction to the study of place is: Tim Cresswell, Place: A Short Introduction (Malden, MA and Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 2004).

of the correlation that exists between some aspects of theology and social sciences.

The first is David Sibley who, in his book Geographies of Exclusion, argues that the primary social arrangements of place are based on exclusion such that 'others' (such as women, blacks, children, the old, those with alternative lifestyles, gays, the disabled) are placed as outsiders.²³ Thus, in speaking of the home, he sees it not as a place of secure 'dwelling' but rather as an embodiment of inequitable power:

Inside the home and the immediate locality, social and spatial order may be obvious and enduring characteristics of the environment. For those who do not fit, either children whose conceptions of space and time are at variance with those of controlling adults or the homeless, nomadic, or black in a homogeneously white, middle class space, such environments may be inherently exclusionary.²⁴

A key point we need to notice from Sibley's argument is that there is no hard and fast separation between the traditional religious ideas of sacred space and modern secular spaces; exclusion is the dominant formative power in all places. So the perception of the "sanctity of space" and the "continuing need for ritual practices" to maintain that sanctity applies not only to religious spaces but to all other places whether they be trendy cafes, shopping malls or railway stations. He asserts:

[These] rituals, as in ancient Israel ... are an expression of power relations: they are concerned with domination. Today, however, the guardians of sacred spaces are more likely to be security guards, parents or judges than priests. They are policing the spaces of commerce, public institutions and the home rather than the temple.²⁵

For Sibley therefore, place is symbolically important in the construction of 'deviancy' where defining what is deviant depends on the process of stereotyping 'others' ('othering') in terms of dirt. Sibley argues that the broad categorisation of individuals or groups in terms of dirt can be presented in a number of key sub-categories, namely disease ('we might catch something from them'), nature ('a swarm'), foreigners ('go back to where they came from'). You only need to read a copy of any tabloid paper to see a generous scattering of such references applied to the unemployed, those who are homeless or people who have to depend on state benefits.

A second social scientist whose work has bearing on the themes we are exploring here is Tim Cresswell. The first point of Cresswell's that I want to highlight is that he develops the thesis that 'place' combines the social with the spatial and that people act 'in place' according to their social standing. As an example of this he cites the case of an ordinary office where cleaners, secretaries and executives all act according to their relation to that particular place.²⁶ A key part of Cresswell's thinking is that social space is organised to serve the interests of those at the top of hierarchies (it is thus ideological). Actions or activities that do not conform to the accepted meaning of the place are now seen as deviant or 'out of place' judgements are not made about actions per se, but about the action's relation to its location or place (secretaries would not sit in the executive's chair).

The second point, which follows closely on the heels of the first, is to recognise that there is a two-way flow of constructive influence between the physical/material and the social aspects of place. This is to criticise the imagined binary that says that society shapes space (or place) but the converse – that space shapes society – is not the case. Cresswell vigorously rejects this position and drawing on other social sciences (including Robert Sack, David Harvey and Edward Soja) argues that space and society are co-constructing:

[T]hey wish to show that space is not simply formed and moulded but plays an active role in the formation of society. Society produces space and space produces society.²⁷

These arguments make some important points about the spatial imagination of Eden and present significant challenges to any form of mission that is predicated on that set of ideas. Unfortunately there is not room here to expand on these and other key insights from the social sciences in the way that they really deserve.²⁸ But even

²³ The term 'outsiders' is not intended to evoke a simple insider/outsider paradigm. Sibley argues for much more complex and nuanced social arrangement of place and, indeed, the ethnographic research in Chapter 5 of this thesis show that marginalised 'estate dwellers' who exclude 'outsiders' are also people of power.

²⁴ David Sibley, *Geographies of Exclusion* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995) p.99.

²⁵ Sibley, *Geographies*, p 72. Interestingly Miroslav Volf expresses a not dissimilar view: "As a power of normalization, exclusion reigns through all those institutions that we may associate with inclusionary civilization—through the state apparatus, educational institutions, media, sciences. They all shape 'normal' citizens with 'normal' knowledge, values, and practices, and thereby either assimilate or eject the 'abnormal' other. The modern self … is indirectly constituted through the exclusion of the other" (Volf, *Exclusion*, p.62).

²⁶ Cresswell, *In-Place*, p.3.

²⁷ Cresswell, *In-Place*, p.12. For a discussion on binaries see Paul Cloke and Ron Johnston, *Spaces of Geographical Thought: Deconstructing Human Geography's Binaries* (London: SAGE, 2005) pp.1-20.

²⁸ See Paul Cloke and Mike Pears (eds.), Mission in Marginal Places: The Theory (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2016) and ---, Mission in Marginal

this very brief snapshot should helpfully prepare the ground for seeing why a shift to the spatial imagination of Caesarea might be so profound. It might help our discussion about Caesarea if, before moving on, I summarise what some of the points are:

- That all geographies, including those of Eden and Land, are exclusionary: power is expressed in the monopolisation of space and the relegation of weaker groups in society to less desirable environments.
- That places are invested with meaning and those who do not conform to the dominant meanings of the place are seen as deviant or 'out of place'.
- That the nature of place causes these meanings to go generally unnoticed; they are regarded as 'just the way things are', 'taken for granted', or 'God-given'.
- That social-space is organised to serve the interest of those at the top of hierarchies (it is ideological).
- That place is not fixed, bounded or static.
 Rather it is dynamic and open. Indeed the material and social are co-constituting, each acting on the other in the production of place.

THE NEW SPATIAL IMAGINATION OF CAESAREA

This brief discussion of place suggests some interesting interpretive approaches to familiar NT texts and consequent practices for mission. In this instance I will focus on Acts 10 and the events at Caesarea which culminate in the face-to-face meeting of Cornelius and Peter.

This is no ordinary meeting. The boundaries (cultural-religious-spatial) which separate these two men and their entourages are formidable. Indeed, for them, the very idea of meeting is inconceivable, taboo. Yet Luke's narrative has been inexorably moving his readers to this point. That the gospel would be a light to the Gentiles has been a major theme from the very beginning of the

text (Luke 2:32, Isaiah 42:6)²⁹ and Acts 13 could be seen as the much anticipated moment of fulfilment as for the first time Gentiles are actually being included in the early church (coinciding as it does with the completion of Peter's ministry and the beginning of Paul's).

Furthermore Luke has already presented Jesus himself as provocatively disregarding the normal Jewish and Roman social-spatial arrangements. He has with impunity transgressed the norms of religious purity, 30 the hierarchical settlement of 'male-space'31 and the Roman hegemonic space of empire. 32 These dramatic cultural-spatial performances suggest that to see Jesus simply as one who radically crosses boundaries falls far short of Luke's intent. Jesus acts as if the boundaries did not exist and his declaration of the Kingdom seems to be no less than an inauguration of an entirely new spatial imagination accompanied with a host of social-spatial performances that witness to and embody an as-yet-unseen and unknown kind of place – indeed, nothing less than the new creation.

Given all that has been spelled out in Luke's narrative, the surprise of Acts 10 is that Peter is presented as being so disorientated or unseeing in the face of the momentous meeting that is about to take place.³³ Perhaps this is itself a testimony to the sheer strength of the cultural-religious hegemony of the day that placed such a meeting so far beyond the realms of possibility. As Luke records, Peter "was greatly perplexed" (v.17) and it was only through his eventual encounter with Cornelius that he could say "God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean" (v.28). Peter was not the only one among the Jews who was amazed (v.45) and he certainly had his work cut out convincing the wider church about what had taken place.

The first movement of the story therefore relates to Peter's own spatial imagination – his own inner sense of how the world worked. This is a fundamental point of departure for those disciples who wish to follow Jesus into the spatial practices of the new creation; the movement away from the exclusionary spatiality of Eden and Land and towards the inclusive spatiality of the new creation start within the self. There should be no surprise in this focus on self as, with the other Gospel writers, Luke presents Jesus as naming these exclusionary practices – and indeed all exclusion of others – as 'sin' (note for

Places: The Praxis (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2016).

²⁹ For the complimentary phrases "a light to the Gentiles" and "the ends of the earth" see Isa 42:6, 49:6; Lk 2:32; Acts 13:46-47, 26:23; for "when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" see Is 32:15; Lk 24:49; and for "you will be my witnesses" see Is 43:10, 12; Lk 24:49. David W. Pao, Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus, p.91.

³⁰ For discussion see: Bruce J Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001); Jerome H. Neyrey, 'The Idea of Purity in Mark's Gospel'. Semeia 35 (1986) pp. 91-128.

³¹ Moxnes, Putting.

³² Stewart, Gathered.

³³ Wright, Victory, 308-310.

example the speck and the log of Matthew 7:1-5). He was, according to Miroslav Volf's profound exposition of the practices of exclusion and embrace, "no prophet of 'inclusion' for whom the chief virtue was acceptance and the cardinal vice intolerance" (Volf, 72-73). Rather he challenged the belief that the source of evil lies outside of a person, in impure things, and identified it as being "in the impure heart" (Mark 7:15). Thus:

The pursuit of false purity emerges as a central aspect of sin – the enforced purity of a person or a community that sets itself apart from the defiled world in a hypocritical sinlessness and excludes the boundary breaking other from its heart and its world. Sin is here the kind of purity that wants the world cleansed of the other rather than the heart cleansed of the evil that drives people out by calling those who are clean 'unclean' and refusing to help make clean those who are unclean. Put more formally, sin is 'the will to purify' turned away from the 'spiritual' life of the self to the cultural world of the other, transmuted from spirituality into 'politics' broadly conceived ...³⁴

This seems a final indictment against the social-spatial practices of the purity codes associated with Eden and the Land. No wonder much of the narrative is caught up with Peter's dramatic inner experience – surely nothing less than a personal conversion. First through his dream (vv.9-16) and then by coming into the 'Gentile space' of Cornelius's house (vv.22-35) Peter turns away from centuries of Jewish tradition as he says "God has shown me that I should not call any person unholy or unclean" (Acts 10:28) and that "God is not one to show partiality" (Acts 10:28, 34).

We should not overlook the significance of who is doing the moving in this story, or of who is the guest and who is the host. It is notable that Peter is the one doing the travelling, it is he who moves out of his own world, beyond the social and geographic boundaries which previously fenced him in, and into the unfamiliar world of the Gentile community. Perhaps reflecting in his own physical journey the movement prophesied by Isaiah that the gospel would be a light to the ends of the earth (Isaiah 42:6, 49:6; Luke 2:32; Acts 13:46-47, 26:23). This Spirit-initiated movement was not for him a calling of Gentiles into his space, his 'pure' God space, so that they could come to know his God as he knew him and participate in his faith traditions. Rather, by moving into the cultural and faith space of the stranger the story focuses on a graphic exposure of the limitations of Peter's own faith space and how his construction of his religious space made him blind to the humanity of others ('I too am a man (human)'

and 'I should not call any person holy or unclean' (v.26)).

Perhaps one of the most sinister aspects of Peter's blindness to the humanity of the Gentile-other is the inability to conceive that God is in any way with them (as for example in the judgement of Matthew 25:38-40: 'When did we see you a stranger ... naked ... sick ... in prison?). It is the prejudicial conviction that 'God is with me, but not with you' that is both a cause and consequence of hard cultural, religious and spatial boundaries such as those around Peter - boundaries which fuel the stereotyping of people such as Cornelius as 'godless pagan' (exemplified in the 'amazement' of 'all the circumcised believers who had come with Peter' 10:45). In moving out of the security of his own cultural space with all its preconceived certainties and into the vulnerability of Cornelius's home it seems that for the first time Peter's eyes were being opened to the truth that the God he worshipped might also be found outside of the confines of his own religious tribe (10:34-35).

In his beautiful and persuasive book The Go-Between God, John Taylor describes "the current of communication" between the self and the other as an essential work of the Holy Spirit.³⁵ He insists that a necessary part of Christian mission is:

[T]he opening of our eyes towards other people. And this also is the gift of the Spirit. A Christian can never be the means of communicating Christ to another until what we might call the current of communication has been switched on. The scales fell from the eyes of the convert in the city of Damascus precisely when he heard one of these whose very lives he had been threatening say: 'Saul, my brother, the lord Jesus has sent me to you'.

Taylor's words are as applicable to Peter as they are to Paul. Peter's journey and the hospitality of Cornelius have dramatically changed the tone of the story. The current of communication has been established. What began as a cultural and geographical distance between the two (a distance which was initially and tentatively bridged by messengers (10:8-9, 17-20)) has moved to an intimate place of face-to-face dialogue where for the first time strangers share personal experiences and stories. As they recognise shared humanity and faith in God each of their lives are changed in ways which just days before had been inconceivable. As Taylor puts it:

This is the gift of the Go-Between God, the Spirit. Just as he opens my eyes in recognition of some other being and generates a current of communication between us, in the same way he can open my

³⁴ Volf, Exclusion, p.74.

³⁵ John V. Taylor, *The Go-Between God* (London: SCM, 1972) p.21.

MISSION AND THE SPATIAL IMAGINATION

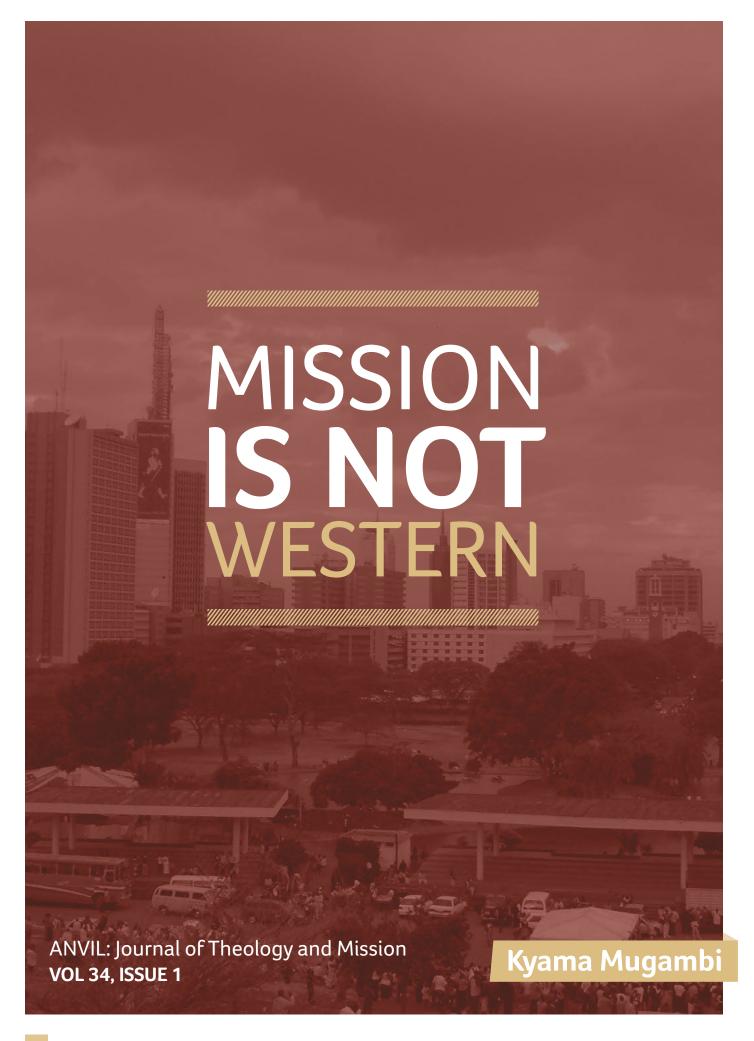
In one sense the actual embodiment of the spatial imagination of Caesarea is so limited to seem at first sight as of little consequence. It is after all only witnessed as a momentary relational space which exists between two men – it is limited in its timeframe as well as in geography. Yet, like the empty tomb on the day of resurrection, once the event has taken place (once the Kingdom has come on earth as in heaven) there is no going back. This is the power of the 'prophetic imagination'. ³⁶ It is to bring into view that which is not yet seen for in so doing the machinations of the powers are exposed and Lordship of Christ is made known (Colossians 1:13-23).

What then, might we ask, are the practical implications for mission? There is certainly a need for more 'reflexive space' within the practices of mission (as with Peter's experience) and a confession that mission must involve the ongoing conversion of the self as well as the other. There is, I suggest, the need to focus on creative and innovative social, spiritual and spatial practices whose intent is to participate with 'the Spirit of the Go-Between God' in opening up 'new-creational spaces' in our own mundane, every-day worlds. And finally there is a risky invitation to have the courage to leave behind our safe, self-constructed, Eden-like places and, like Peter, respond to the knock at the door and journey out as a stranger into the social and cultural spaces of others.

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³⁶ Walter Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001).



KENYAN PERSPECTIVES ON IDENTITY, CHURCH PLANTING, SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION, AND BOLD MISSION INITIATIVES

The nature of the gospel is to permeate every culture. In the words of Andrew Walls this gospel is "infinitely translatable". 1 As it enters different cultures it "creates a place to feel at home".2 This infinite translatability challenges the notion that mission, which is essential to the gospel, could be defined by any one culture. The growth of the gospel around the world in the last hundred years invites us to consider this. In 1968 Kwesi Dickson and Paul Ellingworth insightfully observed that Africa could only gain selfhood in terms of its expression of Christianity, and be adequate for her mission if she had first, internalized her knowledge of the Lord of the church, and secondly she could express that knowledge of the Lord in clear accents through her own reflection and thinking.3 Such expression and reflection can be seen in some of the new ways mission is characterized in Africa, as a microcosm of the nonwestern world. Taking examples from Kenya, I argue that the church worldwide benefits from this broader expression of mission that encompasses non-western elements.

Mission as a concept is difficult to define given the wide variety of perspectives on it throughout history and the large number of unique contexts in which it has been carried out and studied. But it is helpful to map some contours and salient points in the context of this discussion. For this, I find David J. Bosch's reflections particularly useful. Mission, he said, refers "to Missio

Dei, God's mission," and missions are "the particular forms, related to specific times, places, or needs of participation in the Missio Dei."4 To this end mission is about the dynamic relationship between God, his people and his world. With reference to the Great Commission in Matthew ²⁸:18-20, mission is a response to a "sending" by the "sent ones." Mission is sanctioned by, and missions are carried out in obedient response to biblical witness. To be Christian is to be a "sent one," a missionary, in an enterprise that progresses outwards from one context, moving beyond it into all the world. Mission is in this way an enactment of the command in Acts 1:8: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." All Christian witness is therefore missionary, in so far as it relates to the human condition. Bosch articulated this well, saying that missionary activity is as "coherent, broad and deep as the need and exigencies of human life."5

Mission sees continuity between belief and action, orthodoxy and orthopraxis. As such, mission integrates worship and evangelism with social action that transforms individuals and communities. Vinav Samuel expounds on this transformative nature of mission. When mission is carried out in context, it needs to permeate the very fabric of the community demonstrating the translatability of Christian faith.6 It does not stop there but continues by engaging the world through its commitment to praxis. This praxis manifests, for example, through commitment to provide freedom and power to those who need it most – the poor. It will also become evident through providing reconciliation and solidarity.7 Mission builds transformative communities of change.8 Taken together these highlight the contours we will use in this discussion when we refer to mission, missions and missionaries.

IDENTITY AND COMMUNITY IN MISSION

We begin by reflecting on two Kenyan voices from different eras who spoke on mission with authority from their pastoral convictions and who remained

¹ Andrew F. Walls, The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith, 1st edition (Maryknoll, NY; Edinburgh: Orbis Bks; T & T Clark, 1996), 25.

² Ibid.

³ Kwesi A Dickson and Paul Ellingworth, eds., Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs. (London: Lutterworth Press, 1968), 9.

⁴ For a more in depth discussion see David Jacobus Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1991), 9–10.

⁵ Ibid., 10.

⁶ Vinay Samuel, "Mission as Transformation," in *Mission as Transformation: A Theology of the Whole Gospel*, ed. Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden, Reprint edition (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Pub, 2009), 229.

⁷ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 229.

⁸ Samuel, "Mission as Transformation."

committed to engaging these perspectives and their implications for the church. John Gatu, a Presbyterian minister in 1971, famously proposed the voluntary suspension of missionary activity in Africa for five years. His argument was that such a moratorium would enable Africans to learn to rely on themselves and to develop authentic self expression. Gatu made this call at a missionary conference in Wisconsin and repeated it three years later before the third assembly of the All Africa Conference of Churches in Lusaka in May 1974.10 Gatu challenged the very notion that mission, in perception and practice, was Western. In his view, space should have been availed to allow a redefinition of this concept.

A clean break was necessary in Gatu's mind, to provide for a rethink about the relationship between the West and the Global South. He said, "The answer to our present problems can only be solved if all missionaries can be withdrawn in order to allow a period of not less than five years for each side to rethink and formulate what is going to be the future relationship." Thus, the continued presence of foreign missionaries hindered reflection on the issue of missionaries, prevented a reformulation of missions practice and obstructed the development of a new paradigm for missions. In practical terms, for example, Africans could not grow in their leadership and ability to handle ministry with an ongoing presence of foreign missionaries.

Missions activities, as formulated then, were dependent on foreign funds, preventing local missions from developing unique solutions for African problems. In this way, the presence of foreign missionaries was a hindrance to the sustainability of local African missions. ¹⁴ On the question of selfhood, Gatu was concerned that the strings attached to foreign resources had implications on the local missions. These strings inadvertently hindered the development of the African church in becoming all God meant it to be. Gatu proposed a hiatus in missionary activity to

reflect on responses to these issues which he felt were a threat to the African church. If there is anything Gatu accomplished in his call, it was to highlight the close relationship between selfhood and mission. As the gospel entered the life of the African, the conviction developed to be an active participant in mission from within the context.¹⁵ To give some historical and political context here, Gatu's call resonated with the continent at the conclusion of the decade of independence. It also came at a time when Christianity grew exponentially on the continent. By the 1980s, the debate had largely subsided, though the pertinent issues that the moratorium proposal raised had not resolved.¹⁶

The secretary general of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) in the 1970s predicted that when the church in Africa was able to discover itself, then we would see renewed expressions that would relate better with the church global. While making a case for the moratorium, The Reverend Canon Burgess Carr said,

"Leave us alone for a while, so that we may be able to discover ourselves, and you, in Jesus Christ. When this has happened you will be able to come to Africa and see churches renewed and empowered by the Holy Spirit to a new consciousness of what Christ means to them and their mission to others; Genuinely self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating churches making their full contribution to the whole church in the world; Churches that have found a new freedom to see unity among themselves, and; Churches whose relationships with other churches are based upon equality under the Lordship of Jesus Christ."

The moratorium did not happen as envisioned by Gatu, but Carr's thoughts were nevertheless realised. African churches were renewed, empowered and grew tremendously. In the intervening period between 1970 and 2000 the number of Christians in Africa tripled from 115

⁹ John Gatu considered himself a Revivalist, a member of the revitalization movement that began among Anglicans, sweeping through the Presbyterians, Methodists among others in the East African region from the 1930's into the 1970's. Rev. Dr Gatu would later on become the moderator of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA). John G. Gatũ, *Joyfully Christian. Truly African.* (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2006), 163–68; John G. Gatũ, "Jesus Christ the 'Truthful Mirror': My Finding Jesus Christ in the Ministry of the East African Revival Movement," in *The East African Revival: History and Legacies*, ed. Kevin Ward and Emma Wild-Wood (Kampala, Uganda: Fountain Publishers, 2010), 47–59.

¹⁰ Gatũ, Joyfully Christian. Truly African, 169–76.

¹¹ Gatũ, Joyfully Christian. Truly African., 167.

¹² Ibid., 166–68.

¹³ Gatu cites examples in administration, theological education and medical missions. See Ibid., 172–73.

¹⁴ Ibid., 166-68.

¹⁵ Gatu, points out that unbeknown to him at the time, there were others making the call around the world. On such example was the outspoken Catholic priest Daniel Barrigan, speaking out of Latin America. See John G. Gatũ, *Fan into Flame* (Moran Publishers and Worldreader, 2017), 130–31.

¹⁶ Mugambi, Christian Theology and Social Reconstruction, 207–8, 213.

¹⁷ Carr, "The Mission of the Moratorium." Published as an occasional bulletin of the Missionary Research Library NY - http://www.internationalbulletin.org/issues/1975-00/1975-02-001-carr.pdf

million to 361 million.18 Champions of this renewed African church began to emerge.

One of these champions is Oscar Muriu, a Kenyan pastor of the Nairobi Chapel, an evangelical independent church. Speaking to 20,000 young people at a missions conference in Urbana, Muriu raised concerns that resonated with what Gatu raised 30 years before. Muriu, however, proposed a different approach. He argued that Christianity in the non-Western world is fundamentally different and that new paradigms for missionaries must be developed because of this. He suggested that this paradigm for missionary engagement endorsed interdependence, created a new paradigm missionary, and was marked by reciprocity along with respect and humility for other cultures. 20

In his passionate speech, Muriu drew a model of the relationship between the different parts of the global church. Using the passage from ¹ Corinthians ¹² about the body of Christ, Muriu crafted a powerful picture of what he saw as the future of global missions. He paraphrased this message thus: "If the American church should say because I'm not an African I do not belong to the body, it would not for that reason cease to be a part of the body..." Using the passage he proposed that partnerships modelled after the body of Christ as presented in Corinthians would the a new paradigm for global missions. ²²

Muriu further pointed out that the ultimate display of maturity in the body of Christ is interdependence. As such, global missions should be marked by this type of maturity which presupposes the inadequacy of each component part to fulfil its own needs.²³ Each church from each region of the world needs input from the church in other parts of the world. He went on to make a case for reciprocity as an essential component of global missions. He suggested that the old model of missions "from the west to the rest" was outdated and inconsistent with a scriptural understanding of the body of Christ. Missions of the future should be

reciprocal. Such missions will facilitate missions from the West into the two-thirds world and facilitate reverse missions back into the West. In this way global missions will not be one-sided but reciprocal. Such reciprocity, he suggested, is the antidote to unhealthy dependence. ²⁴ Muriu was agreeing with Gatu that missions, especially cross-cultural ones are not the preserve of the West.

Muriu also appealed for respect and humility among the different regions of the world. He pointed out that the weaknesses and the failings of the churches from the different parts of the world are not an affront to their dignity. Instead he argued that the parts that were unimpressive could well be the most important. Those parts of the body that are unrefined and are perceived to be undignified should be approached with respect and humility. It is through respect and humility that all parts can then contribute to the well-being of the entire body of Christ. Such respect and humility for all cultures does away with patronisation which is inconsistent with what is required from the body of Christ. Here Muriu was offering an inclusive, ecumenical, proposal of how the mission conversation could be carried out.

Looking into the future, Muriu suggested that Christians from the two-thirds world would have much to offer Christianity globally. This Christianity, for example, provides a new starting point for the development of a theology which gives insight into such issues as liberation from oppression, health, and healing, powerlessness, survival, suffering, and hope. This theology has in the past been dismissed by some Western theologians as shallow.²⁷ If Gatu's contribution connected mission with identity, Muriu highlighted the interface between mission and the global Christian community.

Both of these perspectives are essential in framing the conversation on mission in a global context where Christianity is more demographically dominant in the Global South. In many ways, Christianity in Africa is representative of Christianity in the world today.²⁸ Allan Effa states it in stark terms saying "it is fair to

¹⁸ Todd Johnson and Peter F. Crossing, "Christianity 2013: Renewalists and Faith and Migration," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 37, no. 1 (2013): 32–33.

¹⁹ Oscar Muriu was raised an Anglican in Nairobi in the 1970s. He became the pastor of Nairobi Chapel, a non-denominational church in 1989. In the course of his leadership, the church grew tremendously from 6 members to several thousand in a decade. During that time the church shifted from the Plymouth Brethren inspired worship expression of its original British founders, to a Charismatic African expression. Oscar Muriu, *Urbana Missions Conference 2006: Interdependence Model of Missions*, 2006, https://vimeo.com/69504380.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., 17:17-18:31.

²³ Ibid., 18:30-20:30.

²⁴Ibid., 24:13.

²⁵ Ibid., 26:11-32.

²⁶ Muriu, Urbana Missions Conference 2006: Interdependence Model of Missions.

²⁷ Ibid., 5:30-9:09.

²⁸ Andrew F. Walls, The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002), 116–19.

say that the very heart of the Anglican community has been transplanted to Africa."²⁹ Taking the example of the Anglican church he says, "the Church of Nigeria's average church attendance is greater than that of the combined Church of England, Episcopal Church of the USA (ECUSA), and Anglican Church of Canada."³⁰ It therefore follows that going forward, the mission will likely be expressed through the identity of the dominant Christian expressions across the globe. Mission is no longer just Western. We now consider some ways in which mission is not Western, citing some examples from Kenya.

CHURCH PLANTING AND MISSIONS

Church planting is one important trend that shapes missions today going into the future. In the 1800s, the number of congregations worldwide were estimated to have been 150,000. That number increased to 400,000 at the turn of the century in 1900, eventually growing to 3.4 million congregations by mid-2000.³¹ That represents a staggering growth average of over 80 congregations per day over 100 years. It is expected that the number of congregations in the world will rise to the region of 7.5 million in 2025.32 This would represent a growth rate over the course of 25 years of over 300 congregations a day. Most of this growth is in the non-Western World: in Africa and Latin America. In Kenya for example there were over 6,000 churches awaiting registration in 2007. 33 Comparatively, between 2000 and 2025 it is expected the number of sending mission agencies will grow but at the rate of about one mission agency every five days.34

These numbers, while estimates, paint a picture of what missions may look like in the future. We cannot expect that every church planted in Africa over the next ¹⁰ years will be a bona fide missionary sending church. Many churches planted will be small and will not be able to marshal the resources necessary to send individuals or teams to other countries. We also cannot peg our evaluation of the effectiveness of missions by

the number of foreign mission sending agencies formed each day or year for that matter. In truth, the presence of a missionary agency does not necessarily mean that they are active or effective in any given area of missions. The quality of the personnel and the efficacy of the service a missionary agency provides may not meet the needs of the target communities.³⁵

What we can see however, from the exponential growth of church congregation numbers and the slower growth of mission agencies, is that the local church will increasingly become a crucial actor in missions, in a local-church driven missionary era. This echoes much of what we see in the New Testament, and the Book of Acts in particular. If we take seriously what we see in such movements as the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Winners Chapel and other African movements, we conclude that the church in Africa includes many church planting movements. The "church-planting church" will replace the foreign mission sending agency as the primary agent of growth for Christianity, at least in Africa.

In Newer Pentecostal Charismatic Churches (NPCCs) the pneuma-centric commitment to spiritual gifting presupposes that every believer plays an active part in worship, evangelism and discipleship within the community.36 Bosch outlines this as one of the emerging mission paradigms where mission is "ministry by the whole people of God." 37 We should expect to see a shift away from mission in Africa as carried out by foreign missionaries a century ago, exemplified by David Livingstone and others, to the current churchoriented approach of mission by such communities as the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) from Nigeria. 38 Take, for instance, Prince and Esther Obasi-Ike, Nigerians who moved into Kenya in 1995. All they had was their sense of call to mission, confirmed by their general overseer, and the contact of a Kenyan who they met at their church in Nigeria. They moved their family into Nairobi, without much by way of resources, and presented themselves to the relatives

²⁹ Allan L. Effa, "Releasing the Trigger: The Nigerian Factor in Global Christianity," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 37, no. 4 (2013): 214–18.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Johnson and Crossing, "Christianity 2013: Renewalists and Faith and Migration."

³² Todd Johnson, "The Global Demographics of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal," *Symposium: Global Perspectives on Pentecostalism* 46, no. 6 (November 2009): 479–83, doi:10.1007/s12115-009-9255-0.

³³ Stephen Makabilia, "NCCK Asks for Vetting of Churches," *The Standard*, September 7, 2007.

³⁴ Johnson and Crossing, "Christianity 2013: Renewalists and Faith and Migration."

³⁵ Gatũ, Joyfully Christian. Truly African., 170–73. These were pertinent issues even at the time of Gatu's moratorium proposal.

³⁶ NPCCs are a category of the fastest growing church movements in Africa. They are evangelical churches for whom the power and work of the Holy Spirit remains central to their expression. See Allan H. Anderson, *African Reformation: African Initiated Christianity in the 21st Century* (Trenton, N.J.; London: Africa World; Turnaround, 2001), 167; Johnson, "The Global Demographics of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal."

³⁷ Bosch, Transforming Mission, 368–510.

³⁸ Prince Obasi-Ike and Esther Obasi-Ike, Purpose and Promise-Driven Life (Nairobi: Mustard Seed Publications, 2012).

of their Kenyan contact. They were accommodated on the strength of their contact's recommendation. Their church plant went on to plant dozens of other churches locally and internationally, often using the same model of relationships and connections from the congregation. The local church became both a missionary sending agency and a church planting hub. The Obasi-Ikes refer to themselves as "pioneer missionaries" sent by the movement's "visionaries." The "visionaries" are RCCG's general overseer and his wife. "Pioneer missionaries" is a term that was once the preserve of missionaries of Western extraction.³⁹

Christianity has slowly been gaining recognition as an integral part of African cultural consciousness. Indeed the study of Christianity in Africa is now also the study of an African religion. 40 The PEW forum report on the global size and distribution of Christianity shows that the 10 countries with the highest population of Christians in tropical Africa account for 17 per cent of the Christians in the world. 41 Seven of these countries are at least three-quarters Christian. From an ontological perspective, missions, and in this case church planting, is already becoming an expression of African identity. One part of being African could well be, being a Christian! The world view from which future mission initiatives will take place is inherently African and Christian at the same time. 42 Increasingly, we will find that African churches are asserting their identity through mission where church planting therefore becomes a way to engage in mission while expressing at least one or more aspects of African-ness.

One church in Berlin is known by a Kenyan name. Mavuno Church Berlin was launched in 2011 as a German-led, German-speaking church for Germans.⁴³ A German couple, Daniel and Nancy Flechsig, were commissioned to go back to Germany to plant a church under Mavuno Church from Nairobi where they trained and caught the vision. This couple had attended a three-year cross-cultural training exchange programme with an African church. The elder board of the declining 100-year old EFG Lichterfelde church approached the Flechsigs to lead it. The EFG Lichterfelde submitted itself to Mavuno church's leadership and vision and was re-launched as Mavuno Berlin under the leadership of the Flechsigs. 44 Its mother-church, Mayuno Church in Nairobi, has launched congregations in five countries in Africa.45 The church has also sent teams to start church planting work in an additional five countries. 46 Mayuno Church Berlin went on to engage in their social context, specifically among refugees during the German refugee crisis of 2015-2016.47 Non-western mission in Africa grows through planting new churches. In this process, it also becomes an avenue for the expression of an African identity.

SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT AS MISSION

African theologians like JNK Mugambi in the early 1990s and more recently, Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, pointed to an emerging African Christianity that moves beyond passive piety to social reconstruction. Many emerging churches strive for health and wholeness in society. 48 The pulpit remains their primary communication avenue for these ideals. The theology forged in the mind of the preacher, and informed by their context, is prophetically proclaimed to provoke, stir up and otherwise challenge the status quo. Several large and influential NPCCs have chosen to use their sermons to articulate a cogent theology of personal responsibility for the listener to institute change in their political and social context. 49 In the past, some leaders of mainline denominations in Kenya engaged in provocative and adversarial exchanges

³⁹ "RCCG Pioneer Missionaries - Solution Centre," accessed August 17, 2017, http://www.rccgsolutioncentre.org/index.php/about-us/ pioneer-misionaries.

⁴⁰ Andrew Walls makes this case forcefully in his writing. See Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History,* 117–19.

⁴¹ Pew Research Center, "Global Christianity – A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Christian Population," *Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project*, December 2011, 54, http://www.pewforum.org/2011/12/19/global-christianity-exec/.

⁴² Walls, The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History, 116–35.

⁴³ Mavuno is Swahili for "Harvest." The church opted to use the Swahili word instead of the German equivalent, as a way to maintain ties and link its identity to the African church whose vision and mission it subscribes to.

⁴⁴ "Mavuno Berlin Launch," *Mavuno Berlin Launch: Facebook Post*, accessed January 1, 2016, https://web.facebook.com/217099715011720/ photos/a.217121368342888.64636.217099715011720/217121371676221/?type=3.

⁴⁵These are Nairobi in Kenya, Kampala in Uganda, Lusaka in Zambia, Blantyre in Malawi, and Kigali in Rwanda. See "Mavuno Church Website," n.d., http://www.mavunochurch.org/new/.

⁴⁶These are Addis Ababa in Ethiopia, Johannesburg in South Africa, Gaberone in Botswana, Bujumbura in Burundi and Dar es Salaam in Tanzania

⁴⁷ Kyama Mugambi, "The Refugee Crisis in Europe: The Role of the African Church in a Global Conversation," in ASET 2016 (ASET 2016, Nairobi, Kenya: Africa Society for Evangelical Theology, 2016).

⁴⁸J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "We Are Here to Heal: Revitalisation Movements as Charismatic Communities in Africa," in *Interpretive Trends in Christian Revitalization for the Early Twenty First Century*, ed. J. Steven O'Malley (Lexington, KY: Emeth Press, 2011), 272.

⁴⁹I discuss some of these approaches in more detail in my article. Kyama Mugambi, "Elements of Political Engagement in Emerging Urban Pentecostal Movements in Kenya," 2017.

with the national leadership in the push for democratic change. 50 Sermons in many African NPCCs are more focussed on urging the individual to act to bring about social transformation. The sermons will hold national authorities accountable; the underlying assumption is the congregation's greater ability to influence change. Going back to Mavuno church as an example, one of the themes emerging in the sermons is the notion that justice is instituted by individuals within a social system. In his sermon "Restore Justice," Muriithi Wanjau urged his congregation to, "move away from seeing justice as the government's or civil society's responsibility." He told them to understand that God holds his people accountable for the practice of justice in our nation, and in God's eyes, justice in day-to-day dealings is even more important than worship and prayers on Sunday.⁵¹ He taught his congregation that one way to effect this justice is to eradicate poverty, not through handouts but by a commitment to economic empowerment. The answer to eradicating poverty in the Kenyan society, said Muriithi, was "to break people out of poverty into a place where they own their means of production which is what we call the 'middle-class.'"52

These churches also promote social transformation through an economically and intellectually empowered laity who gather in Christian professional forums. Christians for a Just Society (CFJS), was founded in 1998 by a group of Christians who "believed that there was a role for Christians to play in the political, economic, and social affairs of our country and aimed at sensitising and mobilising Christians to get involved." Their mission is to "mobilize and equip Christians for political engagement." Their church leaders programme provides information and resources for leaders in churches to use when vetting and engaging with political leaders. They also run training programmes for practicing Christians for women who are aspiring to political office. 54 CFJS hosts town hall meetings for the

middle class to interrogate the visions and objectives of political aspirants. These consultative forums encourage and affirm a consensus approach to political issues.

SOCIAL MEDIA, ELECTRONIC MEDIA AND THE INTERNET – THE NEW "ROMAN ROADS" OF MISSION

The growth of social media, blogging and other internet-based platforms through ICT development in Africa provides unique new opportunities for churches to carry out mission. The internet for example has been used to broadcast the gospel directly to an audience that would not otherwise attend the church. NPCCs maintain websites where they advertise their churches, often presenting profiles of their leaders. ⁵⁵ Many of these churches also stream their sermons online as part of their evangelistic efforts. Their pastors have large followings in social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook. Muriithi Wanjau, the senior pastor of the Mavuno family of churches, has over 10,000 Facebook followers, and over 16,000 Twitter followers. ⁵⁶

Some churches have launched TV and radio stations to reach beyond their Sunday congregations. Christ is the Answer Ministries for example runs Hope FM, which carries music programming, talk shows and sermons from within the church and outside. To ther separate entities have launched Christian radio stations to advance an evangelistic agenda through media and the arts. Kubamba Radio is one such entity. Kubamba Radio was started by young leaders such as Moses Kimathi, with a passion for missions in high schools. After over a dozen years of engaging in high school ministry, and leading Bible studies for gospel music artists, they began presenting large concerts to bring together young people for end of year vigils. The group then launched a radio station focussing on music and

⁵⁰ John Karanja, Paul Gifford and others discuss the role of such clergy-activists as David Gitari, the outspoken Anglican Archbishop, Anglican Bishop Alexander Muge, and the Presbyterian priest, Timothy Njoya. See Stephen Muoki Joshua and Stephen Asol Kapinde, "'Pulpit Power' and the Unrelenting Voice of Archbishop David Gitari in the Democratisation of Kenya, 1986 to 1991," *Historia* 61, no. 2 (2016): 79–100, doi:10.17159/2309-8392/2016/v61n2a4; Paul Gifford, *Christianity, Politics and Public Life in Kenya* (London: C Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd, 2009); John Karanja, "Evangelical Attitudes toward Democracy in Kenya," in *Evangelical Christianity and Democracy in Africa*, ed. Terence O. Ranger (Oxford University Press, USA, 2008), 67–94.

⁵¹ Muriithi Wanjau, "Restore Justice," *Blog.Mavuno*, February 17, 2013, https://mavuno.wordpress.com/2013/02/17/restore-justice/. https://mavuno.wordpress.com/. https://mavuno.wordpress.com/. https://mavuno.wordpress.com/. https://mavuno.wordpress.com/. https://mavuno.wordpress.com/. https://mavuno.wordpress.com/. https://wordpress.com/. https://wordpress.com/. https://wordpress.com/. https://wordpre

^{53 &}quot;Welcome to Christians For a Just Society (CFJS)," accessed February 21, 2017, http://cfjsafrica.org/welcome-to-christians-for-a-just-society-cfjs.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ "Allan Kiuna The House of Restoration," accessed November 18, 2016, http://www.jcckenya.net/rev%20allan.htm; "RCCG Pioneer Missionaries - Solution Centre"; "Bishop J.B Masinde," Deliverance Church Umoja, accessed January 6, 2016, http://www.dcumoja.org/bishop-jb/.

⁵⁶ Pastor M, "Muriithi Wanjau: While Calling for Justice & Official Response, Let's Also Verify and Avoid Spreading Fake News.," Tweet, @ muriithiw, (August 9, 2017), https://twitter.com/muriithiw/status/896264498276859904; "Muriithi Wanjau Facebook," accessed August 19, 2017, https://www.facebook.com/PastorMavuno/?pnref=story.

⁵⁷ "Hope FM | Listen and Live," accessed September 1, 2015, http://www.hopefm.org/.

^{58 &}quot;Kubamba Krew (K-Krew)," Kubamba Krew (K-Krew), n.d., http://www.kubamba.com/.

topical discussions aimed at teenagers and young adults. The radio station is based in Nairobi. Radio hosts come from several NPCCs in the city.

NPCCs also use other means to present their message as they engage with society. David Oginde, the CITAM bishop, maintains a blog known as the Bishop's Blog. On the blog he offers a commentary on current affairs giving his considered position on key issues. Oginde's articles offer a sober critique with none of the provocation and adversarial language common in activist blogs. The arguments are articulate and forceful and he boldly addresses some of the political issues touching on national scandals⁵⁹. Some laity also use the social media platform for activism. Some of them see it as their Christian calling to engage the powers that be. Njonjo Mue for example is a human rights lawyer with graduate theological training. Mue often uses Facebook as his preferred blogging medium, though his articles can be found on other blogging sites. 60 Mue represents a group of laity that has taken activism to the internet, reaching large audiences on a platform that also allows feedback.

BOLD MISSION INITIATIVES

Mission in non-Western contexts has seen the emergence of bold evangelism initiatives meant to take the gospel beyond what was initially done before. One such initiative is a nonpartisan and interdenominational missionary organisation, Sheepfold, founded and run by an Anglican clergyman, Canon Francis Omondi, in 1988. It sent out its first missionaries in 1989. The ministry works in Eastern Africa, the Horn of Africa and the Sahel among the unreached tribes and people groups where there has been little or no impact by the churches. Aside from evangelism the agency mobilises churches, trains missionaries and develops partnerships and networks for mission. Sheepfold combines evangelism and social work. In their own words, their approach to ministry "is with both hands extended - one hand invites individuals to repentance, faith, and eternal reconciliation with God through Christ Jesus. The other embraces the lost's physical and emotional well-being. This is the hand of social justice, mercy, and compassion which embody the goodness of God's Kingdom on earth. One is not a means to the other but both are equally significant to life in the eternal Kingdom."61

Their initiatives include missionary training, education, medical services, agricultural model farming and entrepreneurship.

Much of their work is in the arid areas, among people who have had very little or no contact with Christians and Christian missionary work. Their centre is in an area with a Muslim majority, facing frequent attacks from Al Shabaab, an extremist Islamic group based in neighbouring Somalia. Sheepfold aims to be relevant in a geographical region that faces frequent, highly unpredictable attacks on Christians. Omondi publishes his reflections on a blog about what it means to be a Christian in his particular context, and in Kenya at large. One of the most tragic challenges to their witness was on Maundy Thursday in 2015 when 147, mostly Christian, students were killed in an Al Shabaab attack on Garissa University. A week after this incident Omondi wrote,

Will the pressure of persecution on Christians curtail their witness? It is the will of God that all the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the water cover the sea. In his prayers, Jesus says, 'Yet not as I will, but as you will.'(Matthew 26:39, 42) He completely trusted God's plan, and He knew God's will would be done. Trusting God doesn't mean that I will always understand suffering or the reason behind it. But I've learned that because Jesus trusted God, my life is forever changed.⁶³

Omondi writes with authenticity and authority on these matters while living with constant threats on his life and the lives of those he works with. Sheepfold retains its ministry in a hostile context, where its effective witness is acknowledged by Christians and non-Christians alike.

There are other unique missionary initiatives of different kinds. Some of these initiatives involve reverse mission where Africans move into the West, either for work, or as Christian workers. Cyprian Yobera for example is ordained in the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK). Before traveling with his family to be a missionary in the UK in 2002, Yobera was a minister in a large church. He had led an effective ministry among the youth in Kenya for years as the director of Youth for Christ. After moving to the UK as a missionary, Yobera began work with the Eden project in inner city Manchester as a full-time CMS mission partner in this

⁵⁹ David A. Oginde, "Bishop's Blog – CITAMBlog," accessed March 18, 2016, https://citamblog.wordpress.com/category/bishops-blog/. ⁶⁰ "Njonjo Mue," accessed February 22, 2017, https://www.facebook.com/njonjomue.

^{61 &}quot;The Sheepfold Ministries," Faith2Share, n.d., http://www.faith2share.net/network/network-members/the-sheepfold-ministries.

⁶² His blog is called "Waanglicana" Swahili for "the Anglicans" Francis Omondi, "Waanglicana," *Waanglicana*, n.d., https://waanglicana. wordpress.com/.

⁶³ Francis Omondi, "Let This Cup Pass....," Waanglicana, April 6, 2015, https://waanglicana.wordpress.com/2015/04/06/let-this-cup-pass/.

area of need.⁶⁴ Steve Maina is another Anglican minister who left Kenya in 2009 as a missionary to New Zealand, where he coordinates missions activities with CMS. These bold initiatives in mission by African missionaries challenge past models and stereotypes of missions, while affirming the catholicity of the global church as a mission-oriented community.

commitment to missions. In these ways then, in responding to the Great Commission, the African church is demonstrating that mission is no longer just western, it is in fact, not western – it is global.

CONCLUSION

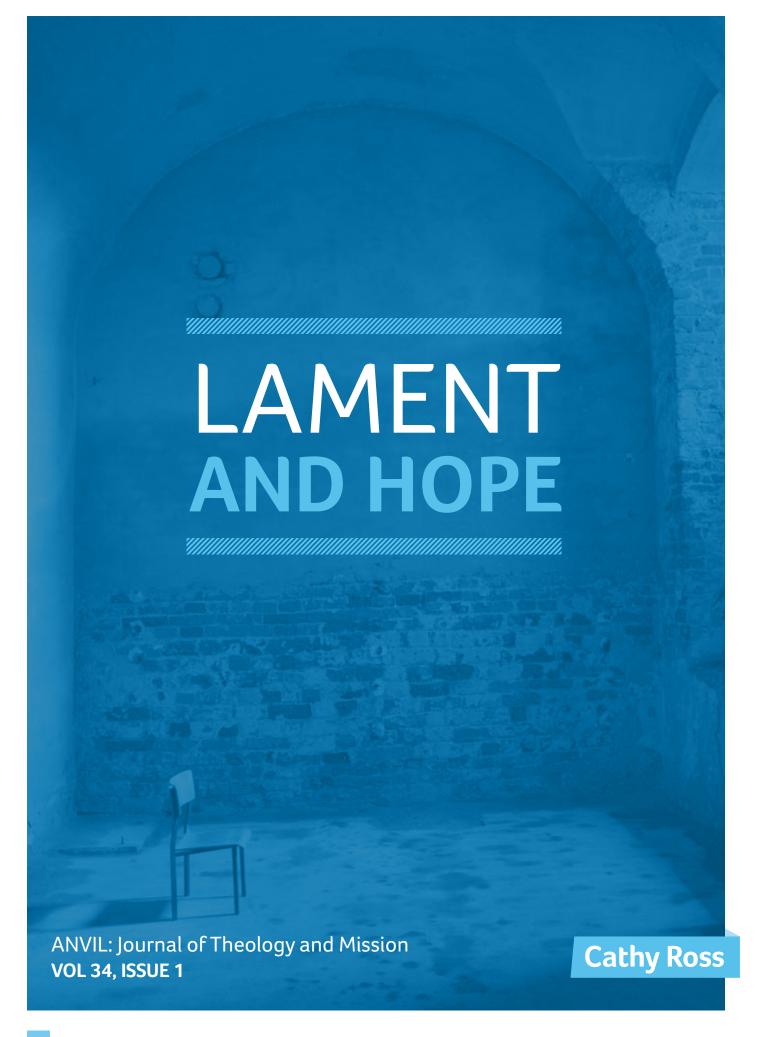
The continued growth of the church in Africa challenges the past notions of mission whose reference point has been the West. The prominence of the church in places outside the West is a boon for global Christianity, as the expression of mission encompasses non-Western elements. As we considered Christianity in Kenya, we saw how Gatu's moratorium proposal highlighted the relationship between selfhood and mission. The establishment of the gospel in the African Christian developed a conviction that they too could be active participants in mission. Muriu's perspective of a mature Christianity that features interdependence and reciprocity highlighted the role of mission in promoting the interconnectedness of the church globally.

In Africa, the church has emerged as the primary agent of growth for Christianity as well as the primary sending agency for missionaries. The missionary activity of the church has also become an avenue through which an African Christian identity is expressed both locally and internationally. This Christianity is concerned about praxis as much as it is concerned about orthodoxy. It strives for mission into its society by pushing beyond passive piety into social transformation that aims for health and wholeness for all. The church is also actively seeking new ways to engage in mission. Technological advances such as social media, electronic media and the internet have become opportunities for mission to society. Through different kinds of bold initiatives both locally and internationally African missionaries affirm the catholicity of the church and its historical

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⁶⁴ "Veritas :: Rev. Cyprian Yobera," accessed August 7, 2017, http://uk.veritas.org/speakers/rev-cyprian-yobera/; "Out of Africa: A Kenyan Missionary Sets His Sights on Manchester: Cyprian Yobera," *The Independent*, August 10, 2008, http://uk.veritas.org/speakers/rev-cyprian-yobera/; "Out of Africa: A Kenyan Missionary Sets His Sights on Manchester: Cyprian Yobera," *The Independent*, August 10, 2008, http://www.independent.co.uk/extras/sunday-review/features/out-of-africa-a-kenyan-missionary-sets-his-sights-on-manchester-5343048.html.



"THERE ARE THINGS THAT CAN BE SEEN ONLY WITH EYES THAT HAVE CRIED."

++ Christopher Munzihirwa, Archbishop of Bukavu, 1994-1996.

INTRODUCTION

Recently, I have been thinking about lament and how this seems to be such a common theme - both in world events as well as in our own lives. 1 Some reading that has begun to open this up for me has been the work of a Roman Catholic Ugandan theologian, Emmanuel Katongole. His latest book is entitled Born from Lament, The Theology and Politics of Hope in Africa.² This is a book that looks squarely at the truly terrible, evil, cruel violence and tragic suffering in Congo recently and reflects on how and why this has happened. He details the trauma and the depth of loss experienced – the loss of community, the loss of humanity and more tragically, the loss of future. I am sure you know some of the horror and suffering children taken from their villages and told to kill their relatives. A 2011 study indicated that 1,152 women were raped every day during the recent conflict – a rate of 48 per hour. An American study shows that 12 per cent of all Congolese women have been raped at least once.3 I won't elaborate further – the stories are truly chilling. So Katongole asks, how does one live with this? Can there be a future and if so, what kind? And, where is God? He finds the clue to the future in the power and hope of lament.

Katongole believes that in the face of such pain and trauma, the church in Africa (and everywhere!) needs to learn how to lament. He suggests that the African church tends to focus on a powerful God, a God who performs miracles, who is mighty to save and who reigns supreme – all of which is true of course, but that we also need to know how to lament in the face of suffering, trauma and pain. And that the counterpoint to our almighty God is the crucified God, seen in Jesus Christ on the cross, who continues to suffer with and among us – as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 1:23 "a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles".

So with his insights and an example from Burundi, I would like us to consider lament in three ways: lament as complaint, lament as resistance, justice and innovation and lament as newness and hope.

LAMENT

Katongole reminds us that for Israel, their safety and security are not found in military might and strength, nor in wealth or cyber-security that we might want today, but in their covenant relationship with Yahweh. Yes, the Israelites praised God but they also protested at God, railed against injustice and pressed God for deliverance. We see this especially in the psalms. Of the 150 psalms, 60 of them, or 40 per cent, are known as psalms of lament. There are psalms of praise, psalms of thanksgiving and royal psalms but the largest category is lament. This meant that the core of Israel's life – social, religious and community was framed by lament.

There is a generally recognised structure to these psalms of lament with five elements. Let us take Palms 13 as an example:

Psalm 13

¹ How long, O Lord? **ADDRESS** – prayer directed to God Will you forget me forever?

COMPLAINT – description of the problem

How long will you hide your face from me?

² How long must I bear pain in my soul,
and have sorrow in my heart all day long?
How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

³ Consider and answer me, O Lord my God! **REQUEST** – they ask for a specific response from God

Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death, **MOTIVATION** – articulates the reason God should help

- ⁴ and my enemy will say, "I have prevailed"; my foes will rejoice because I am shaken.
- ⁵ But I trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.
- ⁶ I will sing to the Lord, **CONFIDENCE** confession of trust in God's help because he has dealt bountifully with me.

These elements of address, complaint, request, motivation and confidence do vary, as they are not all found in all psalms of lament, but they do signify a kind of turning to God which reflects a deep intimacy

¹ A version of this was first presented as a keynote address at the Leicester Diocesan Conference, Wed 20 Sep 2017.

² Emmanuel Katongole, Born from Lament, The Theology and Politics of Hope in Africa, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017)

³ Ibid., 14.

with God. A relationship of trust, intimacy and love is a necessary precondition for genuine lament. When the biblical writers lament, they do so from within the context of a foundational relationship that binds together the individual with members of the community of faith and that community with their God.⁴

Katongole states that biblical lament is not a kind of unrestrained whining at God, nor a kind of angry venting, but rather it is a structured and complex language of complaint, protest and appeal directed to God.⁵ So this makes it a distinct faith language with its own vocabulary and grammar for those intimate and difficult conversations with God when we are hurting.

Another important facet we notice is that lament often moves into praise – the laments and songs of thanksgiving belong together in Israel's worship. They have the confidence to express the entire range of human emotions before God – doubt/faith, sorrow/joy, fear/trust, life/death – such is the confidence born out of the covenant relationship and a sign of the depth of this relationship with their loving God. What kind of relationship is it if we can only express our joy and faith but not our need, our sorrow, our pain, our trauma, our complaints even?

LAMENT AS COMPLAINT

When Father Gerry Arbuckle spoke at Church Mission Society in 2014, he had some pertinent things to say about lament, mourning and grief. You can hear them here https://vimeo.com/103220993

Complaint is also a key component of lament. Expressions of complaint in the psalms range from concern, to utter desperation in the face of illness or before one's enemies, to protestations of innocence.

To complain seems risky and almost improper. However, I think it shows that the relationship with God is alive, dynamic and open. To complain is to refuse to accept things the way they are; it protests God's silence and presses God for deliverance. One requires courage to protest in this way against God – but we see it again and again in the psalms and in the prophets such as Jeremiah. It may also be a way forward into newness. In the psalms of lament, while the writers draw on memories of God's saving actions in the past, there are always the risk and possibility that God will act in totally new ways as a result of this present suffering, so we may see and learn something totally new and unexpected about God. This suggests that Israel understood complaint as an essential part of their covenant

relationship with God. "It is not those who lack faith who complain, but those recognised for strong faith who bring their most honest and passionate feelings to God." It ensures that the relationship is alive, dynamic, negotiated, contested.

It is risky - because complaint is a form of protest. It challenges God – "How long, O God?", "Why do you hide your face?" It puts God on the spot. The psalmists say some outrageous things such as "you are the one who has done this, Remove your scourge from me; I am overcome by the blow of your hand." (Psalm 39:10) And what kind of God remains silent to his people's pleas? Perhaps God is silent not because God is unmoved – but because God himself laments and suffers with us. Jesus' incarnation and his cry of dereliction on the cross – based on Psalm 22:1, "My God, my God why have you forsaken me?" - testify to this.

African-American gospel songs, the slave spirituals, are a powerful expression of their belief that God was with them in their suffering, even while they were living in their whirling vortex of God-forsakenness. The slave songs are drenched in pain and sadness but they also express a spirit of resistance, confidence and hope. What gave them this confidence was the Exodus story – that ultimately God would save or rescue them, and also their identification of their own suffering with that of Christ's forsakenness on the cross. I am told that during the apartheid years in South Africa, the most popular services were Good Friday services because they could identify with Jesus in his pain, suffering and desolation.

Jesus understood the slaves, the oppressed, the anguish of apartheid, because he too knew misery, anguish and forsakenness – this resonance gave them the ability to endure and to hope. And ultimately it was these spirituals that gave birth to the freedom songs of the American civil rights movement. Martin Luther King Jr commented: "The freedom songs are playing a strong and vital role in our struggle. They give the people new courage and a sense of unity. I think they keep alive a faith, a radiant hope, in the future, particularly in our most trying hours."

What about us? How do we engage with lament? Walter Brueggemann and others have highlighted the absence of lament in our churches. Brueggemann connects it with the inability to face suffering or to embrace negativity in our Western world. Glenn Pemberton suggests that the church, as a middle-class institution, has become increasingly embarrassed by

⁴ Ibid. 107.

⁵ Ibid., 107.

⁶ Ibid., 110.

⁷ Ibid., 115.

the earthy and gritty language of lament. He writes,

... we have chosen to live protected lives in insulated communities, whether our community is a middle-to-upper class neighbourhood or a church with a fortress mentality. Our lack of solidarity with those in need is what causes us to wonder why these prayers are in the Bible and question who would ever need them."

Another writer comments that it is because of our increased prosperity and identification with the mainstream. Lament sounds dreary and negative to those who do not wish to be reminded either of their own vulnerability and suffering or that of those around them.

Ellen Davis offers some hard-hitting and challenging insights. She suggests that when we read Psalm 109 we need to turn it 180 degrees so that it is directed towards us and ask ourselves: "Is there anyone in the community of God's people who might want to say this to God about me/us?" We are active participants in a rapacious industrial economy, regularly consuming far more than we need of the world's goods. She then projects this idea onto our great grandchildren's generation – to say nothing of the present majority world – who might cry out and lament to God:

Let their memory be cut off from the earth because they did not remember to act in covenant faith but hounded a person poor and needy, crushed in heart, even to death. (Psalm 109:14-16)9

Brueggemann concludes:

A community of faith which negates lament soon concludes that the hard issues of justice are improper questions to pose at the throne, because the throne seems only to be a place of praise. I believe it thus follows that if justice questions are improper questions at the throne... they soon appear to be improper questions in public places, in schools, in hospitals, with the government, and eventually even in the courts. Justice questions disappear into civility and docility.¹⁰

A loss of lament signifies a loss of passion for social justice.

LAMENT AS RESISTANCE, JUSTICE AND INNOVATION

So we forget that lament can be a form of resistance and can ultimately bring about newness and hope. We have already noted the African-American slave spirituals are a form of resistance. Lament is also a form of agency. A cry of anguish is not only a way of naming and mourning what is lost but is also a way of standing in the midst of the suffering. And so lament deepens our engagement with the world of suffering and invites us into more active social and political engagement.

Let me offer you a dramatic example of this now by telling you Maggy Barankitse's story. Maggy is a Tutsi and was caught up in the ethnic massacres in Burundi in 1993. In October, 1993, she hid in the local bishop's residence as soldiers attacked, stripped Maggy, tied her to a chair and then massacred 72 people, including one of her best friends. Amazingly, her seven children all survived the massacre by hiding in the sacristy. Katongole narrates her story:

After the massacre, Maggy crawled into the chapel. She prayed as she cried, "My mother taught me you are a God of love. She lied to me. You are not love... God, why was I not killed? Why am I here? Why O God? As she prayed and cried, she heard Chloe... The children had escaped by hiding. Bribing the militia with money, she managed to save another twenty-five children from the burning and building ...and as night fell she sought refuge at the home of a German development worker.¹¹

Maggy set up Maison Shalom – houses for children, farms, businesses, a swimming pool, a cinema, a hospital, a nursing school, a micro-credit finance union and even a university. You can see a short clip of Maggy's story here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dxz9yE0O-Sk

In 2016 Maggy won the Aurora Prize. The Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity is a new global award that is given annually to individuals who put themselves at risk to enable others to survive. It is a pioneering global initiative seeking to express gratitude to those who put themselves at risk to save Armenians from the genocide one hundred years ago.¹²

There are some important things to note about Maggy in the context of lament. After the massacre she experienced an incredible energy, determination and anger – all of which she turned into setting up Maison Shalom. But the key driver for her was love –

⁸ Glenn Pemberton in Katongole, Born from Lament, 180.

⁹ Ellen F Davis, in Getting Involved with God: Rediscovering the Old Testament, (Boston:Cowley,2001), 28-29.

¹⁰ W Brueggemann, "The Costly Loss of Lament" Journal for the Study of the Old Testament 11, no 36 (1986), 64.

¹¹ Katongole, Born from Lament, 229.

¹² https://auroraprize.com/en/aurora/detail/9296/the-aurora-prize-finalists, accessed 10 August, 2017.

she operates out of an excess of love which is a basic theological principle for her. It was love that made her an innovator. In her words, "Love made me an inventor". In the face of all this trauma she improvised and innovated so the children could survive, and not only survive but flourish. She invented a new community – not solely Tutsi or Hutu, but a community beyond tribalism. She came up with very practical ideas for the children. Her love was deepened through her grief and lament.

There is something about pain and suffering that are at the heart of love. "There are things that can be seen only with eyes that have cried," said Archbishop Christopher Muzihirwa, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Bukavu from 1994-1996. In the midst of civil war in Eastern Congo he worked for peace and to build structures of justice, forgiveness and love. He experienced the war, the ethnic violence, the refugee crisis and the destruction of Bukavu. He was a prophet for a new vision of society but after two years as archbishop, he was assassinated – shot dead at a checkpoint.

"There are things that can be seen only with eyes that have cried." Out of pain, intense suffering and anger, Maggy found the courage to take risks and to innovate. She was determined that death and evil would never have the last word because she innovated something which offered newness and hope. Because love wins.

It is vital to remember this; that love wins because I need to offer a sad postscript. In 2015 President Pierre Nkurunziza decided to run for a third term. This plunged the country into crisis; thousands fled, hundreds were arrested and many were killed. Maggy had spoken out strongly against the third term, was targeted and she fled into exile where she still is, living and working in Rwanda. The government has shut down all the Maison Shalom programmes, including the schools and hospital in Ruyigi, closed their bank accounts and confiscated all their assets. They have also killed some of the children. These events have obviously deepened Maggy's lament.

This is not a "they lived happily-ever-after" story yet somehow, this makes Maggy's story more poignant for me. We do what we can with the resources we have, the knowledge and energy we have and we act according to what we know.

Katongole states that these events call for "a closer exploration of the interconnection between lament and martyrdom in order to highlight the (strange) hope that

the death of the innocent ... offers to Christians in their struggle for peace in Africa."13

Maggy's story is also an example of someone who resists the scarcity narrative. We need to resist this culture of fatalism. We need to reignite creativity and innovation, have honest conversations about vulnerability and fear of failure, be attentive to the resources we do have and draw on those. Perhaps we just need to look again, or look in new places for the resources that are already available in our communities and passionately resist the myth that we don't have enough, aren't good enough, don't know enough.

One way to resist this culture of scarcity is to practise gratitude and generosity. In her research on shame and vulnerability, Professor Brene Brown discovered that her participants consistently described both joy and gratitude "as spiritual practices that were bound to a belief in human connectedness and a power greater than us." This should not surprise us. Practising gratitude is how we tangibly acknowledge that there is enough, that we are enough. This is a deeply Christian insight but also profoundly counter-cultural in our society that preys on our desires to want more, to consume more and therefore to waste more. Gratitude restores our perspective, enables us to be content with what we have and ensures that we remember our generous Creator God.

In the West, we have grown up in a transactional culture which encourages constant accumulation of goods or, when applied to leadership, encourages managerial, command and control-type approaches. What if we lived with more of a gift-culture mentality where we gifted our time, talents, services for the delight of doing so and for the good of the wider community? Surely this is what Sabbath and the Old Testament Jubilee were all about - ensuring that rest, sustainability and 'enough' were key values in society. We, however, experience growth as one of our culture's highest values: greater production, greater consumption, greater commodification and a trust in progress and technology that things will always get bigger and better. What if we thought in terms of stewardship, trusteeship, sustainability, sufficiency and volunteering? We know that volunteering has as many benefits for the person volunteering as for the project. In a 2012 report. commissioned to review the benefits for volunteers, researcher Dr Rachel Casiday said, "Volunteering can yield as many benefits, if not more, for the volunteers themselves."15

¹³ Katongole, Born from Lament, 242.

¹⁴ Brene Brown, Daring Greatly, How the Courage to be Vulnerable Transforms the Way we Live, Love, Parent and Lead, (Penguin: USA, 2012), 123.

¹⁵ http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/volunteering/Pages/Whyvolunteer.aspx, accessed 18.08.2017.

Gift culture fosters generosity and ensures that everyone has enough. Gifting and generous communities support one another, share with one another, want to know "how can I serve?" Just as Jesus claimed that he did not come to be served but to serve (Mark 10:45), so a gift culture delights in service. Gifting sets in motion a cycle of generosity where one gift prompts another and so it becomes a kind of virtuous circle: wanting to serve, wanting to give and desiring to bring out the best in one another.

LAMENT AS NEWNESS AND HOPE

We have already noted that lament can have a surprising turn to praise. However, lament and praise are not simply juxtaposed. Rather there can be an unexpected movement which brings about a fresh perspective and new language. So this possibility of lament turning into praise "reflects a transformation and innovation, a novelty that is only possible with the articulation of both pain and belief."16 Biblical lament has the potential to bring us to a new place, to a new depth, to a new song of praise which is qualitatively different from the praise that has gone before. It is a new kind of depth of knowledge and experience, only made possible by the experience of suffering and pain. It is a new kind of seeing: "There are things that can be seen only with eyes that have cried." This is an important insight for pastoral ministry – that there is newness and hope after pain – but it will be different and we will only arrive there because of the pain.

Perhaps Pope Francis's metaphor of the church as "field hospital" is appropriate here – repairing the brokenness and healing the wounds - not that we are the sole actors in this regard. But we do offer a theological grammar of hope. By standing alongside those who are suffering, by being with (not doing for or to) we participate in the mystery of God's own suffering, death and resurrection. It is this participation that mysteriously releases hope. Katongole claims that the African church is a unique gift to world Christianity as a laboratory of hope which "provides a living witness of what hope looks like in the context of violence and war."17

Are we able, in our own contexts, to be a field hospital that heals and binds the wounds, stands in solidarity with the afflicted and traumatised, challenges injustice and innovates to offer hope and bring about newness?

Let me conclude with some words from a poem by Denise Levertov:

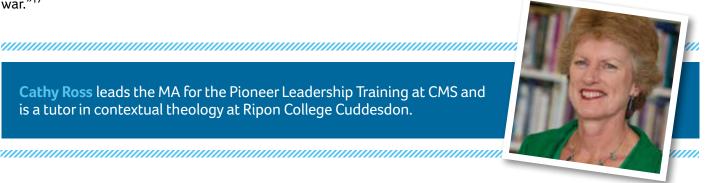
Beginners

How could we tire of hope? —so much is in bud.

there is too much broken that must be mended. too much hurt we have done to each other that cannot yet be forgiven.

So much is unfolding that must complete its gesture, so much is in bud.18

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¹⁶ Ellington in Katongole, Born from Lament, 109.

¹⁷ Ibid., 264-5.

¹⁸ Denise Levertov, Beginners" in New Selected Poems, (Northumberland: Bloodaxe, 2003), 137-8.



WE BOTH LIKE ASKING QUESTIONS.

In a world (and a church culture) that is often seeking to present the answers, we think there is room for asking questions that catalyse personal journeys of discovery. That is why at New Wine, Big Church Day Out, Greenbelt and other Christian festivals during summer 2017, Church Mission Society designed an exhibition stand, not to talk overtly about what CMS does, but rather, to ask a big question.

The people working at the stand asked as many people as possible what 'mission is' through a six-question survey. 'Mission' has become one of those words that is often bandied about, but really, what is it? We ended up asking over 2,000 people at festivals, events and online. The survey results and some candid video responses can be found on the CMS website.

What you won't necessarily see there however is the impact of asking the question. Nervous laughter, stunned silences, tears and stories of hurt, loss and failed dreams as well as tales of amazing encounters, wonderful leaders and beautiful human connections all surfaced at our stand. We were taken aback by people's frequent acknowledgement of being called to God's mission, but the dissatisfaction at being unable to put that call into action. Indeed, the results showed very positively that 91 per cent of the people surveyed believe everyone should be involved in mission, yet 45 per cent struggle to identify their call or to put it into action.

Reasons why many people aren't living lives of mission are varied. Some don't know what their specific call is; for others lives are so stuffed with work, family and church that there's scarce time and resource to think about anything else. For some, stepping out and sharing their faith fills them with fear. Others are confused by what mission means for them in their community and the wider world – where does it fit with their church activity and what has been modelled to them? So many people had never been asked or asked themselves what mission is or considered the implications for their lives. All these things highlight to us that there is work to be done in helping people discover the breadth and depth of God's mission call.

BUSTING MYTHS ABOUT MISSION

As a result of people's responses and as the Mission Is campaign continues, we have produced some online free resources to help people do just that and to bust some myths about mission. These include some videos

where a range of people reflect on mission. CMS pioneer student Kerry McLeish reflects on how she has changed from seeing mission as going to Africa, running an Alpha course, putting on a church event or talking to a friend about her faith, to now understanding mission as being what God is doing in the world. She says: "He is at work in the world all the time throughout creation and in every aspect of life and it's about us joining in with what he's is already doing, not us going and doing something or organising to do something and praying that he'll come along with us and bless it." Luke Larner, self-described ragamuffin chaplain in Luton, similarly reflects that mission is "not so much about strategising, our clever ideas, our agendas; it's really discovering what God is doing, finding the glimpses of glory, finding the places where God's kingdom is out-breaking" and he offers practical tips - essentially focussing on the importance of listening, looking and waiting. It's so helpful to see that mission doesn't belong to us, or even the church. Rather, God is already on a mission in every community and is simply asking us to join him in it. Perhaps taking time to notice God's activity around us is the biggest step we can take towards living out a life of mission. In so doing, we are released from any mission myths or baggage that might suggest mission is about us - about us saving the world or fixing things.

Both Luke and Kerry reflect on how they've been surprised by God's activity outside of the church. Luke describes how he found people on the Alcoholics Anonyous 12-step programme were discovering Jesus through their recovery journey. In handing their life over to God they were encountering Jesus and having powerful encounters with the Holy Spirit, yet no paid missionary or minister had been sent to them. Says Luke: "It was just happening". Tanas Al Qassis, CMS regional manager for Europe, Middle East and North Africa shares how many Muslim-background believers experienced Jesus appearing in a dream, without anyone first preaching to them. He comments that God is not "taken" to other places, but is in fact "already at work" in those places, if only we will notice. In order to live a life of mission, we don't have to carve out a specific hero-type call or develop a strategy or fit 'another thing' into our already busy lives - these are myths we can dispense with. Our challenge is to discover where God is working and how we can be part of it. We hope that this perspective of mission releases people to discover the breadth and depth of God's call.

Also in the videos, Levi Santana, CMS mission partner in Brazil, challenges any idea that mission might primarily be a Western thing – a myth that the rapid growth of Christianity in the global South has exposed. He says: "If we are partakers in [God's] mission then we all share a part in that mission, so then it has to be something

that belongs to everyone. So it's western, it's Asian, it's African, it's Latin American." Levi and his family are an example of multi-directional mission; sent by their church in Brazil to engage in mission in the UK, they have recently been sent back to Brazil by the UK church to continue in mission there. Harvey Kwiyani, lecturer in African Christianity and theology and director of Missio Africanus, is also featured in the resource and speaks of the importance of migration for mission. There is a big reversal of mission now happening as many Christians from other parts of the world that were once evangelised by Europeans are now migrating to Europe. He issues the challenge that "the West really has an opportunity to engage non-Western Christians living among them" which raises more questions about mission. What is God doing through the gift of the global church in Britain and how are we joining in?

Another question arises in the wake of economic austerity and increasing privatisation. How do churches engage in mission in local communities that feel increasingly marginalised? Is mission, in this instance, about doing stuff "for" people in need? Or is that also a myth that needs busting? Johnny Sertin, CMS pioneering mission adviser, presents an alternative view that shifts the emphasis from us doing things "to" and "for" others to being and doing things "with" them. He says: "It's really important to work alongside people... it recognises that everybody in a very inclusive way has stuff to offer, share and give." Johnny noticed the significance of this when he went to help at the "Jungle" refugee and migrant camp in Calais before it was shut down, where he met a group of Sudanese men. He had taken a number of items to distribute and was struck by the exchange of gifts that took place. Having received the gifts from him, the men invited Johnny and those he was with to sit down and share coffee with them, "treasure" that they had carried on their arduous journey from Sudan and which they prepared over a small fire in the squalor of the camp. What does mission look like if it is "being with" people? What does mission look like if we are the guest and not always the host?

MISSION IS ... MORE QUESTIONS

As the Mission Is campaign continues, we still have plenty to do to liberate ourselves, our mission community and the church we are called to serve, to put our call in action: to join with God to see a world transformed by Christ. That's why, whatever mission is, we're not ready to stop asking the question.

Thomas Fowler project managed the first stage of the Mission Is campaign. **Debbie James** is director of church and community mission at Church Mission Society



Some content originally published in The Call, Issue 7, p22, used with permission.

PIONEERING MISSION IS... A SPECTRUM **Tina Hodgett and** ANVIL: Journal of Theology and Mission **Paul Bradbury** VOL 34, ISSUE 1

This article has grown out of recent conversations surrounding the use of the term of 'Pioneer Minister'. Initially an overview of the terminology is given before the 'pioneer spectrum' is offered. The pioneer spectrum invites a broader means of understanding pioneer ministry and in particular encourages a deeper appreciation for those pioneer ministers working in innovative ways to see 'the future emerging in the present'.

PIONEER DEFINITIONS

The search for a definition of the word 'pioneer' in a Church of England vocational context began over ten years ago. I (Tina) remember a debate at theological college over a draft proposal made by Dave Male, now National Adviser for Pioneer Development. It has taken much of the intervening period to arrive at the current definition, approved by the Ministry Council:

Pioneers are people called by God who are the first to see and creatively respond to the Holy Spirit's initiatives with those outside the church; gathering others around them as they seek to establish new contextual Christian community.¹

Meanwhile other definitions have gained currency in other contexts. Jonny Baker's succinct description of pioneers as people with 'the gift of not fitting in'² grew out of his contact with pioneers on the CMS Pioneer Mission Leadership Training course. The apparently paradoxical term 'loyal radicals'³ used to describe those who were totally committed both to the inherited church and to missional change, was welcomed as a defence against the accusation that pioneer work was superficial and uninformed by theology and tradition. George Lings develops a typology of pioneer ministers that identifies the differences in individual charism and character

which lead some to be serial initiators and others to sustain what has already been started, and helpfully addresses the frequently-posed question, 'Isn't everyone a pioneer?' Most recently Dave Male has made the distinction between parish-based pioneers and fresh start pioneers.⁵

It seemed presumptuous to begin work on an additional typology for defining the pioneer vocation, but fresh in post in a diocese which had put pioneer work at the centre of its new diocesan strategy, I was regularly involved in conversations where participants were working with their own personal interpretation of the word 'pioneer' with all the risk of miscommunication that entailed. In a situation where policy depended on engaging everyone to move together towards a shared destination, it seemed vital that all participants were sharing the same interpretative framework when they spoke of pioneers. I began to sketch out a diagram I could use with colleagues to give context to our discussions, developing it in dialogue with representatives of different constituencies.

TOWARD A SPECTRUM OF PIONEER VOCATIONS

The roots of the Pioneer Spectrum (see Figure ¹) lie in a conversation I (Tina) had with a member of a diocesan committee. A fellow pioneer minister who specialised in a form of church planting he endearingly called 'bishbash-bosh-bouncy-castle' asked me and a colleague (also pioneer ministers, engaged in what I would call 'exploring spirituality on the edge') how we saw our call and ministry. It was clear he didn't fully understand what we were about, and was, I suspect, concerned about our orthodoxy.

The generosity of his question allowed us to explain, and he was reassured and subsequently encouraging of our work. However, the conversation made me realise that even within the ranks of people who self-identify as pioneers there is potential for significant misunderstanding, and for insecurity and suspicion to creep in and undermine what God is doing.

Sometime later through contact with the CMS pioneer community I was given a document entitled Best Guess Typology of Current Approaches to Church by Richard Passmore.⁷ This typology spanned a range of

¹ https://www.cofepioneer.org/pioneermeaning

² Baker, J. and Ross, C. (eds) The Pioneer Gift: Explorations in mission (Canterbury Press Norwich, 2014)

³ http://acpi.org.uk/2017/09/13/loyal-radicals/

Lings G, Looking in the Mirror; what makes a pioneer? in Male, D. 'Pioneers 4 Life' (BRF, Abingdon, 2011) p30-47.

⁵ https://www.cofepioneer.org/types/

⁶ This refers to the process of gathering people through community events with the aim of building bridges with unchurched people and having opportunities to share the gospel

⁷ Richard Passmore's typology is adapted from Gerald Arbuckle, *Refounding the Church*, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1993)

ecclesiologies from traditional through modal/sodal⁸ to what Passmore terms 'missional sodal', or 'sobornostic' (from the Orthodox Russian concept of sobornost). This latter category describes an approach to church which foresees the possibility of venturing off the edges of the existing ecclesial map into unchartered territory. This may appear threatening to the more orthodox mind, but it may also represent the route the church has to take into the future in order to be the most contextually appropriate means of gospel transmission for subsequent generations, and to be the deeply enculturated expression of church needed in the coming world.

INNOVATORS, ADAPTORS AND OTHER PIONEERS

Independently I (Paul) was reading Gerald Arbuckle's Refounding the Church and finding it a rich resource to help clarify the particular vocations of pioneers. Arbuckle makes the distinction between innovators and adaptors:

Both are creative persons and needed, especially the innovative and refounding type; both threaten the group because they dissent from the acceptable ways of doing things, but it is the innovator that particularly endangers the group's security... ⁹

What we term 'pioneer innovators' are therefore these deeply committed sodal or 'sobornistic' pioneer leaders who with their teams venture out beyond the edges of the church's structures to explore the creation of faithful expressions of Christian life among people of a new context. Their innovations, which provide an initially disturbing influence on the inherited church, in some cases become welcomed by the broader church in time. It is important to affirm, however, that the length of 'time' may well be unknown, certainly significant, a time in which the church needs to protect the vocation of these pioneers, trusting that the fruit of their ministry may be a generation or more in the making.

It is 'pioneer adaptors' who have the creative gift to adapt these innovations to their own contexts. In addition, 'pioneer adaptors' are also skilled in adapting in the other direction, as it were, taking tropes of the established church's ritual and rhythm and adapting them into new environments.

These distinctions map closely onto a growing experience in the pioneer ministry community: that a number of innovative pioneer projects have now been adopted, "Pioneers are people called by God who are the first to see and creatively respond to the Holy Spirit's initiatives with those outside the church; gathering others around them as they seek to establish new contextual Christian community."

adapted and applied by others. Messy Church, as one example, was an innovative piece of pioneer ministry when it was first created by Lucy Moore in Portsmouth, and continues to innovate in new areas such as among the elderly and armed forces. Those who have applied the model may be 'pioneer adaptors', faithfully listening to context and shaping the model to fit their own context. Meanwhile the many iterations of cafe church are a good example of 'adaptors' working in the other direction.

There are also contexts in which replication is applicable, where a context is seen to be sufficiently comparable so that a successful model of church can simply be repeated. There is a risk in replication without sufficient reflection on context, or openness to the innovative influence of local culture. Some models by their very nature leave little room for adaptation. They are freighted heavily with the culture of those leading it and may struggle to engage deeply in cultures disconnected from inherited forms of church. We term the leaders of such initiatives 'church replicators'.

There are also those we call 'pioneer activists', whose gift and vocation is to shape place in ways that seek to align a community, network or industry with the values of the Kingdom. Seeing themselves as missionaries, but without the express intention of planting a church, these pioneers are nevertheless creating highly innovative Kingdom

⁸ Winter, R.D. *The Two Structures of Redemptive Mission*, based on a paper given at the All-Asia Mission Consultation in Seoul, Korea, in August 1973

⁹ Arbuckle G, Refounding the Church, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1993),109

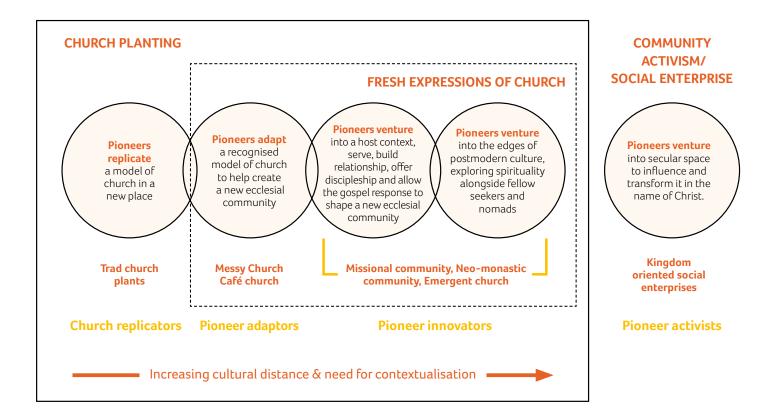


Fig ¹ Pioneer Spectrum – shows the range of pioneer ministry vocations on an axis of increasing 'cultural distance' from the missioner or missional team. Also shows how these vocations relate to the intention of planting churches and to the concept of fresh expressions of church.

responses to the pressing issues of our communities. Theirs is an important vocation which deserves recognition and support.

CULTURAL DISTANCE

The spectrum has helped positively identify the particular charism of a variety of pioneers and church planters. Furthermore, we began to realise that it did so in ways that mapped onto a spectrum of 'cultural distance'. Cultural distance is a concept that tries to assess how far from any meaningful engagement with the gospel a subculture or people group is.¹⁰ It visualises the reality of our post-Christendom context where issues of race, language, history, religion/worldview create a complex and diverse cultural landscape in which mission takes place. The cultural distance from, for example, a rural village in Wiltshire to an urban housing estate in London is immense. Culture is also no longer purely about place, as neighbourhoods become increasingly diverse and people identify with networks more than neighbourhoods, as well as form significant strands

of identity on the internet. Hence at one end of the spectrum is a culture similar in character to that of the missional team; at the other end is a culture with significant barriers of language, worldview and attitude to those engaging with it.

CONCLUSIONS

In the confusion around our use of language for pioneers and with the competition for resources that is the reality in many denominations (and certainly in our own Anglican structures) we believe the pioneer spectrum is helpful. It says to the pioneer innovator who is working slowly in an incarnational mode among, say, poor urban young adults, that their vocation and ministry is very different and yet equally as valid as the resource church¹¹ leader up the road. These two pioneer leaders may be only a mile apart, but they are ministering in very different worlds, something this spectrum makes visible. Mapping these vocations onto an axis of cultural distance also lends weight to the argument that the particularly precious vocation of many pioneer innovators must be

¹⁰ For an explanation and exploration of cultural distance see Hirsch A, *The Forgotten Ways*, (Baker, Grand Rapids, 2006), 56 -63

¹¹ 'Resource church' is an increasingly common term in the Church of England for church plants that tend to replicate a Sunday service and program-based congregational model of church. They have emerged as a concept from the Holy Trinity Brompton network of churches and

given space and time. Our cultural context has not settled into some kind of post-Christendom consensus. The only given is that of continuous change. The experience and learnings of our innovators, in failure as well as success, are the seeds of a significant element of the future of the church.

As well as ensuring an understanding of the range of pioneer vocations that the Holy Spirit has conceived, the pioneer spectrum protects the possibility of a broader range of ways of being church than those we have already imagined and begun to see emerging. In particular it is vital to draw the attention of all those concerned with the future of the church to the concept that there may be more radical, exploratory, imaginative ecclesial communities than we have yet seen, and to give space within our structures and systems for these embryonic churches to be implanted and take shape.

The pioneers who carry the responsibility of bringing these God-ideas into the world will need understanding, encouragement and support as they work in a prophetic way to make them visible, a sign of the future emerging in the present.

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are rapidly becoming a significant element of the church planting and mission strategy of many Dioceses.



Reprinted and expanded from the White Canvas Collective blog

WHAT CREATIVE WAYS CAN A CHURCH EXPRESS ITS MISSION AT THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY, FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE COMMUNITY?

How can the church engage in the 'new commons' in such a way as to fulfil the promise of Jeremiah 29:7, that we will prosper if we seek the prosperity of the city to which we have been called?

CHURCHES AS MIDWIVES AS A COMMUNITY BIRTHS ITS OWN VISION

Our Hammyhill was a weekend event in April 2017, designed and delivered by a group of local residents from Hamiltonhill, a neighbourhood of Possilpark in north Glasgow. It is an area very near the bottom of the multiple-deprivation indices, but blessed with a few remaining residual assets – a common story in post-industrial Britain. Our goal was to develop a community-led vision for Hamiltonhill from the ground-up. It resulted in a full-colour brochure with a community and spatial vision for our area that has now been delivered to all 1,500 homes in the neighbourhood²

Supporting and helping catalyse Our Hammyhill was instinctive and natural. We had become deeply entwined in community life and had deliberately cultivated this connectivity to our place over the previous 10 years, having built up rich reciprocal gift-giving connections with our neighbours. The local residents were seasoned like salt by members of

Clay Church (Clay)³ – salt in the sense of fertiliser, not preservative!⁴ Ourselves, local residents and members of Clay got involved in different ways, acting simply as citizens and agents for the common welfare of our whole community, a counter-culture in service to the common good.

As a whole group, we were on a budget: just £4,000 from our local area budget. We've always been good at being creative on a tight budget in Hamiltonhill. Church members (as citizens and among fellow citizens) can engage with local institutional structures and help secure these types of funds. Those who endeavour to turn up to community (or neighbourhood) planning meetings and community (parish) councils are the ones who can influence how that money is spent.

IT TAKES A COMMUNITY TO REACH A COMMUNITY: THE THINKING BEHIND IT ALL

As citizens and neighbours, we wanted to take ownership of our role in the process of establishing a major development of 600 homes on our doorstep. After more than two decades of feeling like the land and built environment had been razed in front of our eyes, and poor community engagement from our social landlord, we wanted to explore what a community and spatial plan for our place might look like.

In collaboration with other local residents and our local community connector, we decided to apply the best principles from both an asset-based community development (ABCD) approach, 5 and that of the Project for Public Spaces, ⁶ by combining them at a grassroots level. ABCD is a superb framework for any church to embrace that wants to work alongside its community for the betterment of all. It focusses on discovering the gifts and resources of the people and local area, connecting them to one another in associational life for particular, tangibly realised actions, and creating spaces of hospitality where people can meet and share their aspirations and do something about them. It focusses especially on involving the gifts of people at the margins and welcoming the stranger. It asks three basic questions: 'what can we do for ourselves?', 'what can we do with help from outside the community?' and 'what do we need to ask others to do for us that we cannot do for ourselves?' The order

¹ Sparks, P. et al., The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches Are Transforming Mission, Discipleship, And Community, Downers (Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2014)

² "Our Hammyhill" (2017), https://www.dropbox.com/s/fgidle5c96vnrpl/Our%20Hammyhill_September%202017.pdf

³ www.claychurch.org.uk

⁴ Kreider, A. Salty Discipleship: Bringing New Worlds to Life (online 2008) available at: http://www.anabaptistnetwork.com/node/291

⁵ McKnight, J., Block, P., The abundant community: awakening the power of families and neighborhoods (Chicago, Ill: American Planning Association, 2010)

⁶ https://www.pps.org

is important – empowerment starts by creating space for the community to tackle its own issues first, even if appropriate and timely outside help is subsequently sought.

ABCD was theorised by a Christian called John McKnight. He has managed to encode within it some powerful theological ideas, without using jargon.⁷ McKnight himself was influenced in his thinking by a Catholic priest and philosopher called Ivan Illich. It is a theory readily used by the CCDA (Christian Community Development Association) in America and is applicable to all communities, not just those at the margins. Through ABCD approaches, churches can become abundant communities that can foster and be fostered by abundance in the wider locality. But it starts with churches who become relational before becoming 'solutional'. To put it another way, it's about "discoverables not deliverables,"8 working with the Spirit to discover gifts latent in the community and seeking first its prosperity and wellbeing. The point about ABCD is that citizens and church members can implement it without paid community development or church leaders needing to be involved. Anyone can kick-start the process of building abundant community in their place.9

SOME CONTEXT

Over 25 years, disinvestment and planning choices have removed from Hamiltonhill its community centre, three primary schools, a secondary school, two swimming pools, office space for community groups and a community gym. Even our allotments were shut for several years because of soil toxicity (just as plans for houses to be built there were revealed, but never came to fruition because of the 2008 economic crash). Not to mention leaving two huge areas of residential land (now vacant brownfield). Since 2001, Hamiltonhill and its surrounding area has lost over 20 per cent of its housing stock to demolition. A triple whammy of the 2008 crash undermining development, austerity, and 'residualisation' has taken its toll. Residualisation is the phenomenon of social polarisation in urban areas which creates "a pattern of movement of people excluded from society from place to place as social

problems become sequentially concentrated and then displaced without dealing with the underlying causes of worklessness, poverty or poor housing." Poverty is often concealed and shifted, but won't budge until the structural questions are properly addressed.

Karl Polanyi once suggested that contrary to popular portrayal, laissez-faire [and ipso facto neoliberal] capitalism was and is planned. It is in fact social resistance that is the spontaneous humanising response to damaging market forces, not the other way around. These forces dislocate us in our relationship to others and the land, for example, by monetising previous reciprocal and gracious exchanges between neighbours, or privatising common good land. Drawing on Polanyi, Bruce Alexander suggests that dislocation is the inevitable consequence of a lack of psycho-social (and I posit psycho-spatial) integration. Dislocated communities are rendered more vulnerable to the effects of addictive processes such as alcohol and drugs or online gaming.

Recently local people living around Hamiltonhill have shown that we really love our community and care about its space. We are determined to resist being dislocated from our own context and community by the power of market forces. We don't claim to be the first to stage this resistance. We do sense that this is a new wave of the old impulse to re-integrate our neighbourhood. From painting rusty lamp-posts, to a mini-winter festival with a marquee and games; from a DIY football pitch in a wasteland, to a community barbeque; from securing planters to brighten up the area, to the story of the Bench – a place for folks to stop on rest on the way back to the shops, local people have begun to organise resistance. That's a lot of love considering how battered and neglected the community had been. Clay sensed that this is where the church should get stuck in.

To be clear, the story is not solely one of neglect. There have been two new school sites launched, though now they are outside our area. There is one remaining covered meeting place – Clay Church's Bardowie Hall. The 'Back Garden' community garden behind the new health centre is important to us. And we worked hard to secure Local Nature Reserve status for the

⁷ For a theological exposition of the principles of abundance that McKnight draws on, see Sam Well's lecture to the Church of Scotland GA in 2017 entitled *Catalysing Kingdom Communities*: http://stream1.churchofscotland.org.uk/about_us/general_assembly/archive/catalysing_kingdom communities. It builds a missiology out of the framework of John 10:10

⁸ http://whatworksscotland.blogspot.co.uk/2017/04/asset-based-community-development-collective-efficacy.html

⁹ For a further article co-written by the author arguing that churches can develop abundant community in their places through environmental mission, together with practical examples and theological reflection, see 'Understanding the Environmental Realm' in *Mission in Marginal Places* (Vol.2) ed. Pears M. and Cloke P, (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2016)

¹⁰ McCartney, G., Hearty, W., Taulbut M., Mitchell R., Dryden R., Collins, C., "Regeneration and health: a structured, rapid literature review", *Public Health* 148 (2017): 69-87

¹¹ Polanyi, K., The great transformation (Boston Mass.: Beacon Press, 1957)

¹² Alexander, B.K. The Globalisation of Addiction: a Study in Poverty of the Spirit, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008)

Clay Pit between us and the canal, with Glasgow City Council and Scottish Canals support. In 2015 a vision to create a new inner-city eco-village emerged and pre-crash visions of development were dusted off. A new development framework finally came forward from Queens Cross Housing Association and Glasgow City Council's Development and Regeneration Services which seemed to give the possibility of taking it to the next level, re-stitching our community back together spatially as well as socially. But for the two years leading up to Our Hammyhill, the only meaningful follow-up community engagement about the masterplan for our area had been led by the community (in May 2016). A co-production approach could have further empowered and restored dignity to our battered community using a proper engagement process. But that option was not pursued amidst lack of vision and tax cuts.

Since we've always been told that "the plans aren't set in stone", one resident suggested we should come up with our own plan. So a small group including local kids put the weekend together. This meant educating ourselves about the planning process from scratch. We received some help in this from the council, but there has been more support from our local community worker Ali Mitchell, as well as retired planning professionals.

NO EATING, NO MEETING

We wove many elements into our programme, from community celebrations including a ceilidh and a barbeque to some self-education with a high-profile visiting speaker (we secured Cliff Hague, president of Edinburgh's Cockburn Association, ¹³ a charity dedicated to conserving the built heritage of the city, pro bono). We wove food into every element we could. Indeed, Clay Church's informal motto has long been "no eating, no meeting", and that held true for Our Hammyhill.

We started by enabling our kids' vision to emerge and be at the heart of the process. Then we thought about what we could do for ourselves on Friday night, taught ourselves what might be possible with some outside help on Saturday afternoon and then began to think about what we needed other people to do for us only at the end. On the Sunday evening we delivered a 'guerrilla playground' on some abandoned land and had a big community barbeque surrounded by our friends and neighbours, which was shalom in action, delivery of immediate change by locals for locals.

In the run-up to the event, we distributed leaflets

(hand-delivered by locals) with multi-coloured ribbons that could be tied around people's favourite places in the area. Not only did this help to publicise the event, but it also helped us to see what the favourite spots already are, and why. We used Clay Church's Bardowie Hall and open-air sites all over our area. We had an exhibition constructed from insights of local teenagers through the Planning Aid Scotland¹⁴ "In the Footsteps of Geddes" project, using Google Cardboard Virtual Reality technology for panoramic photos and ³D selfie imaging. We held a community-build with the architects Baxendale out on the street, where local folks could stop, build and chat in a colourful timberframed moveable viewing platform for community conversations called the Hammyhut. And a play engagement from PEEK where local kids were engaged in play spaces all over the area, and asked for their thoughts on community and space while they played.

We used the Place Standard tool for more structured resident-with-resident interviews. The Place Standard tool provides a simple framework to structure conversations about place. It allows you to think about the physical elements of a place (for example its buildings, spaces and transport links) as well as the social aspects (for example whether people feel they have a say in decision making). ¹⁵

We operated a mini-design studio for a central public space after being inspired by Cliff's Ingredients for Great Public Spaces talk (an Urban Design 101-type class). And we imagined, designed and implemented a community-built play-space intervention in one weekend, creating a tree swing, hopscotch and Twister play-space in 'Hamiltonhill Park', as our kids are now calling one of our local brownfield sites.

THE END GOAL

The brochure was produced in time for the development's pre-application consultation (PAC) with our social landlord, so that our community could enter that consultation empowered, confident and convinced as to some of the key community goals that we have for our neighbourhood, brochure in hand. Otherwise the PAC will be done 'to us' rather than 'with us'. This forms the small-p political dimension of this collective act of resistance to neglectful powers.

Probably my most precious moment was finding a photo of a local lady we know well (and who has had a tough time and often finds herself at the edge) with big smile on her face, having climbed a local tree and tied a rope swing around it for the kids. This was a local idea,

¹³ http://www.cockburnassociation.org.uk

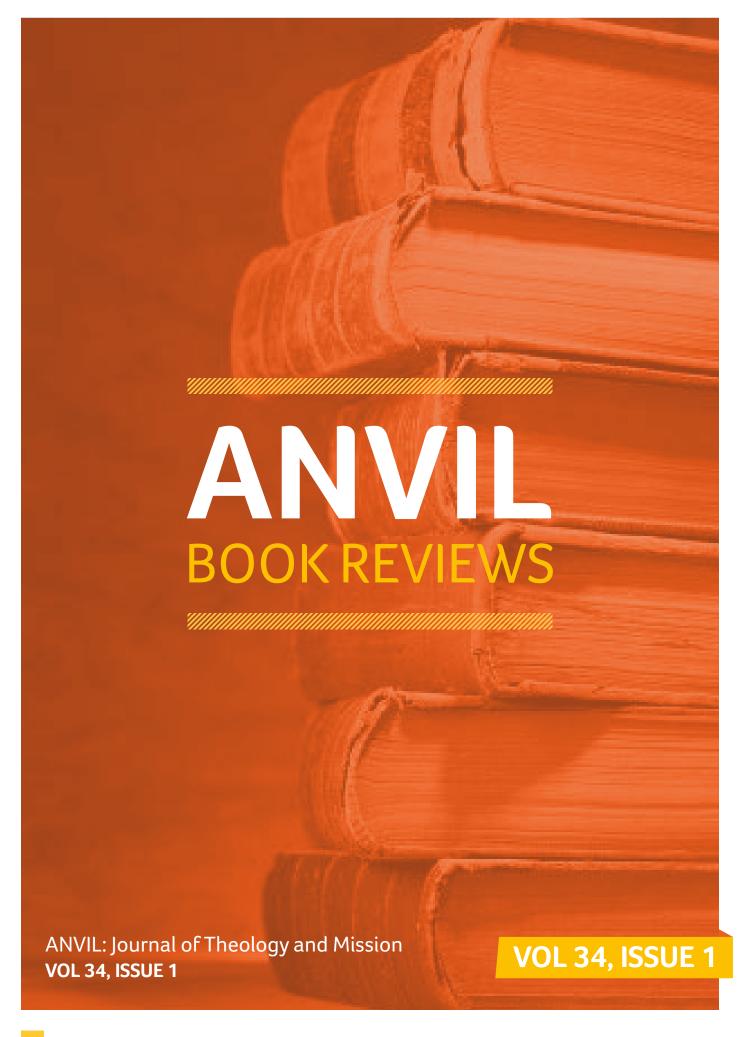
¹⁴ https://www.pas.org.uk

¹⁵ https://placestandard.scot

which was made to happen with local resources by local people for local kids, and put in place by our neighbour with real joy! This is ABCD in action...with church in the mix. It is seeking the prosperity of our place in a tangible and simple way, as an end in itself. And yet it also paid off for us as a church. Even more than before, we have discovered our calling at the heart of our community and now have the brochure to turn to as we go on to discern how we should apply ourselves to mission in our community over the next season. Our peace and prosperity is discovered by first seeking it for others: seek first the Kingdom and the rest will be added unto you. Mission is from the ground up. We start with the gifts the community has and the relationships we have built, assuming that what is best for our community's wellbeing is what is best for our wellbeing. In this way, Clay offered its own gifts into the mix and helped generate a rich experience of reciprocal gift-giving and community envisioning for the whole of Hamiltonhill and we all had a lot of fun doing it.

Paul Ede. After 15 years living and working in marginalised communities in Scotland as a non-stipendiary incarnational pioneer and community development worker, including 10 years as a founding church planter, Paul and his wife Esther have moved to Fife where he is retraining as a town planner. He holds an MTh in theology and urbanism and has taught Christian Mission at the Scottish Baptist College. He also curates White Canvas Collective, a collaborative blog giving voice to pioneers in Scotland (www.whitecanvas.org).





1. BIBLICAL STUDIES

Douglas A Campbell, Framing Paul: An Epistolary Biography (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014)

Framing Paul follows on in Doug Campbell's seminal catalogue of work re-imagining our understanding and theological interpretation of the Apostle Paul and his writing. Having read The Deliverance of God and been impacted not only by Campbell's commitment to theological traditions, but also his willingness to adapt and be creative with his thinking, I was very expectant in reading Framing Paul. I was not disappointed.

Framing Paul seeks to fill in a simple but profound blank in the way we understand Paul's letters. While we often take our view of Paul and his theological frame from the content of his writing, what would happen if we first established a frame of understanding from his life, background and tradition, and then founded on our understanding on what Campbell refers to as his "epistolary backbone" – Romans and 1 & 2 Corinthians?

Campbell takes us on a journey which gently subverts our view of the terrain around Paul and his writing. How do we view the Acts timeline? What importance does biographical detail have on our understanding of Paul? His work on Romans and 1 & 2 Corinthians as a backbone for our understanding of Paul's theology then makes perfect sense – but is not the less imaginative in the lessons Campbell draws from it. Expect a focus on detail, a theological integrity in coming to conclusions and more of Campbell's imaginative ideas on justification which made The Deliverance of God so compelling.

One particular delight in reading this book though was Campbell's willingness to engage not just with the context of the time but also the context within which Paul's letters are being read and the impact that has on understanding. In the excellent extended preface, Campbell notes "where we read Paul – whether in a study, at a café, on a bus – directly affects what we see" (p. xxi.) He then begins to explore how reading "Paul in Prison" affects the eyes we have on the texts and of course he's right. So many of Paul's texts were prison letters yet we spend so little time imagining the impact of this. As in so many things context is key and Campbell embraces this fully.

Having established a core foundation for our view of Paul, Campbell then places all of Paul's other letters around this theological frame. He takes his time, first with the Thessalonian letters then with the smaller epistles and concluding with a great chapter on his letters to Titus and Timothy.

This last chapter tackles some thorny issues, not least whether we should even group these so-called Pastoral

Letters together. While at times I felt Campbell got bogged down in that particular question (as he admits he does with other technical points, p.404), I also felt these three letters highlighted how valuable Campbell's frame was. So many questions exist around authencity, meaning and relationship in these letters, and Campbell concludes we need to keep holding these questions in the forefront of our stories. However, I left with a much clearer understanding of Paul's theological stance and crucially on how Paul was viewed by early readers. These are letters, and as such, how they were received is so crucial to our understanding.

Framing Paul presents a detailed, methodological and at times complex foundation to our reading of Paul. However, its work is so important in allowing us to speak with confidence about this man who wrote so much of the New Testament. In Campbell's words it gives us the basis to "pose further exciting questions to the apostle – and perhaps with more hope that we will hear his answers" (p. 411).

Andy Freeman, Fresh Expressions

James D G Dunn, Christianity in the Making Volume 3 – Neither Jew nor Greek: A Contested Identity (Grand Rapids:

Eerdmans, 2015)

This is the third and final volume in which James D G Dunn comes to the end of his attempt to sketch the first generations of Christianity. He takes us from the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, then through the second century when the second, third and fourth generations of believers firmed up the distinctive identity of the still new Jesus-movement. This identity, says Dunn, is shaped with Jesus as the "defining centre". The movement developed from an initial emphasis on the cross to a holistic view of incarnation and mission, with death, resurrection and ascension as the climax. Dunn describes it as a move from gospel to Gospel.

Dunn charts for us the development of Christian identity by taking us through the main characters and the impact of their writings, some of which eventually formed the New Testament canon. He checks out for us the sources and then explains how the Jesus story is retold by Mark, Matthew and Luke and re-shaped by John and Thomas. He emphasizes the importance of James (the brother of Jesus and leader of the Jerusalem church), Peter, Paul and John.

Dunn ends with the familiar theme of unity and diversity, identifying key determinants: a (Jewish) model for living, table-fellowship and the rite of initiation, and how faith/trust in Christ crucified alone is fundamental. Paul ensured that the gospel of Jesus was for all who respond in faith.

Dunn's third volume is titled A Contested Identity, explaining the struggle between orthodoxy and heresy as the years ticked by. I found his examination of the characters and their writings particularly helpful. He highlights the contributions of each character and how the "great Church" began to settle on both the canon and the authority of eyewitness accounts, particularly the role of Peter as a bridge-builder. John and his writings paved the way for a new Christological depth and Paul explained both the Jewishness of Christ and the significance of "neither Jew nor Greek" – the gospel for all.

This third volume sits alongside the first two volumes and provides a rigorous and extensive resource for all levels of study: the student; the interested theologian and church historian; the preacher; and the teacher. I already use volumes one and two and heartily recommend volume three to complete the "trinity". They draw me back to Jesus as the "defining centre".

John Day, Adviser to the Archbishop of York and priest-incharge of St Chad's, York

Michael J Gorman, Apostle of the Crucified Lord: A Theological Introduction to Paul & his Letters, 2nd edition (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017)

My first thought on reading Gorman's sizeable (just over 700 pages) but very readable introduction to Paul's letters is that I wish that I had had this book thirty years ago when I did my undergraduate degree in Biblical Studies!

In six chapters, and just under 200 pages, Gorman provides an introduction to Paul's context, mission, theology and spirituality. Here we see the influence of writers such as Richard Hays, N T Wright, Richard Horsley and Morna Hooker on his interpretation of Paul's letters and theology. At the end of this section Gorman attempts to summarise Paul's theology in one sentence; surprisingly he succeeds, although the sentence is half a page long!

Gorman is particularly helpful in outlining the religiopolitical context in which the churches that Paul founded and wrote his letters to had to survive. In particular, he helps the reader to understand the implications of the active promotion of the imperial cult in the cities of the empire on the life and witness of the early church.

One of the key themes of Gorman's other writings, cruciformity (the idea that the cross of Jesus is not just the source of salvation but is also the shape of Christian life), is central to his discussion of Paul's thought and spirituality.

Some evangelical readers will take issue with Gorman's argument that theosis, a term more usually associated with Orthodoxy, is important in Paul's work; many more

will dispute his understanding of justification.

After the first six chapters come 13 chapters on the Pauline letters. He includes a discussion of the authorship of the disputed letters. In the earlier chapters there is a helpful section on exactly what we might mean when we judge that a letter was written by Paul, given his use of an amanuensis, and that most of the letters claim more than one author.

Gorman's 13 chapters on the Pauline letters discuss the authorship (if contested), occasion, and content of each of the letters and he goes on to provide a concise commentary for each of them.

The final chapter, "Paul our contemporary", is an all too brief attempt to help the reader to place Paul's thought in the ongoing mission of the church. Gorman challenges the church today to allow the cross of Jesus to shape our life and witness.

Apostle of the Crucified Lord is written from a position of deep and thoughtful faith in Christ. The more conservative reader will take issue with his stance on the authorship of some of the letters, and his interpretation of Paul on justification will be controversial in some quarters too.

All in all this is a valuable addition to my New Testament library, and one that I will return to. I enjoyed reading the book, at times being challenged by Gorman and at others disagreeing with him. The real gold in the text is the commentary that he provides on each of Paul's letters.

I would recommend it to anyone who is studying Paul's letters, either as an undergraduate or for their own profit and pleasure. It is particularly useful volume for anyone who regularly preaches on Paul to have close at hand.

Tim Gill

2. THEOLOGY

Kate Bruce, Jamie Harrison, Eds.,

Wrestling with the Word: Preaching tricky texts (London: SPCK, 2016)

Do we really need another book on preaching and another collection of succinct sermons by people very competent at their craft? Yes – is my simple answer to this compilation. This book of 159 pages offers advice on shape and structure, and assistance in preaching a wide collection of tricky texts, including those that deal with transcendence (beyond human experience), violence, terror, strangeness and abrasion. Each group of sermons on a particular theme has a helpful section on homiletic strategies that may be adopted and aspects for the preacher to pay attention to. The book is divided into three main sections: part one, "Theological Foundations",

pages 3–22; part two, "Sermons on Tricky Texts", pages 25–124, with 15 contributors; and part three, "Wrestling with the Word", with three main contributors, including a stimulating article by David Day on the need for an "application emphasis".

Most of the contributors work in the north east of England or Edinburgh and include Kate Bruce, James Dunn, Magdalen Smith, Justin Welby, Walter Moberley, John Bell and Roy Searle. I was going to read this book as my daily meditation each morning, but found myself drawn to it several times a day so I finished it quite quickly. Bruce's chapters in section one "The call to preach" and "Wrestling with the theology of preaching" provide an appetising starter with some useful quotes to affirm both the act of preaching and the need for it to contain biblical substance that connects with culture. I loved the biblical insights, personal wisdom and the communication aspects that were shared on these texts. For example, Walter Moberley's sermon on Mark 6:14-29: "the birthday party from hell." Wrestling is for those who love reading the Bible, including its quirkier passages. There is much to ponder here and also how to relate the tricky texts to everyday life.

For preachers and Bible readers this is a practical, interesting book that encourages us to embrace tricky texts rather than ignore them and deal with them in a mature corporate manner.

Paul Thaxter, CMS

Fleming Rutledge, The Crucifixion: Understanding the Death of Jesus Christ (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017)

Fleming Rutledge seems little known in Britain. She is an American Episcopalian who has published several volumes of highly regarded sermons. This magisterial book is the fruit of a lifetime's experience as a preacher and teacher. Although not a professional scholar, Rutledge has read astonishingly widely and the result is a book broad in scope, wise in its judgments and, while conservative in tone, not afraid to criticize some of the more popular misconceptions in atonement theory.

The book is divided into two main parts. The shorter first part explores some broader issues surrounding the crucifixion of Jesus preceded by a lengthy introduction (37 pp.) dealing, among other things, with the necessity of interpretation: "The cross of Christ does not interpret itself by itself."

Chapter one examines the primacy of the cross, insisting that in it the nature of God is revealed. She does not hesitate in saying that the crucifixion is the most important event that has ever happened. Chapter two

looks at the godlessness of the cross. The question is not "Why did Jesus have to die?", but "Why was Jesus crucified?". The manner of Jesus' death is as important as the death itself. This is not a topic often studied and Rutledge has performed a valuable service in giving it close attention. Chapter three discusses the "Question of Justice" and looks in a preliminary way at righteousness language, pointing out that the "dikaios" word group covers both "righteousness" and "justice" in English. Unsurprisingly, Rutledge agrees with Käsemann in seeing righteousness as a power word "because it refers to the power of God to make right what has been wrong" (italics hers). Her important contribution is thus to suggest that the usual English translation "justification" should be replaced by "rectification". In what she calls a "bridge chapter", Rutledge seeks to rehabilitate Anselm for our time. His book Cur Deus Homo? (Why the God-man?) has often been heavily criticised as propounding penal suffering and Rutledge is right to suggest that Anselm's term "satisfaction" can easily be translated "rectification". Finally, in this part, Rutledge examines the "gravity of sin". Here her guiding principle is that "we cannot rejoice to think of ourselves as sinful... unless we are already claimed by the divine light of the gospel" (p. 169). In the economy of God, grace precedes guilt.

Part two explores in detail the biblical motifs. Rutledge's overriding concern here is to show how the motifs and images often overlap and interpret one another. She settles for a two-part approach: atonement and deliverance. She elaborates the first as God's definitive action in making vicarious atonement for sin. Within this category the cross is understood as sacrifice, sin offering, guilt offering, expiation and substitution. Related motifs are the scapegoat, the "lamb of God" and the "suffering servant" of Isaiah 53. The second is elaborated as God's decisive victory over the alien powers of sin and death. The cross is understood here as victory over the powers and deliverance from bondage, slavery and oppression. Related themes are the new exodus, the harrowing of hell and Christus Victor. This category is particularly linked to the kingdom of God and as such is strongly futureoriented.

It is impossible to comment in detail on the sheer range of material covered in this part of the book. It will, however, be helpful to focus on particular aspects of her treatment which will be of interest to conservative readers. First, she argues that justification/rectification is a larger category that includes reconciliation. Reconciliation is the result of God's justifying/rectifying activity. This is a commonly accepted view, but Rutledge goes on to insist that whilst reconciliation is God's completed work (2 Corinthians 5:19), it is also the result of struggle as 2 Corinthians makes abundantly clear. She makes the further point that the forensic imagery of the law court is subordinate in the NT to the theme of the apocalyptic victory in the cross and resurrection of Christ. Indeed, Rutledge devotes an

entire chapter to the theme of the "apocalyptic war" as originally expounded in Gustav Aulen's epoch-making book Christus Victor. She cites the evangelical author Lesslie Newbigin as one who takes the Pauline imagery that is often called into the service of a forensic view of the atonement ("the wages of sin is death") and lifts it into the cosmic realm of apocalyptic. The isolation of the forensic view of the atonement is rightly taken apart by Rutledge in a thrillingly convincing manner. When she does eventually come to examine the theme of substitution, it is no surprise that she rightly criticises the tendency in certain evangelical authors (e.g. J I Packer) to give precedence to forensic imagery over other imagery. "When this happens, the single individual with his solitary guilt looms over the conceptual landscape, leaving no space for the drama of the cosmic struggle" (p. 506). This chapter alone with its nuanced treatment of the substitutionary theme would make the book worth buying.

I hope that enough has been said to give the flavour of this remarkable book. It is sufficiently accessible for those with only minimal knowledge of the topic and it will also provide strong meat for those already familiar with atonement theology. I heartily commend it.

Howard C Bigg, Cambridge

Anna-Claar Thomasson-Rosingh, Sigrid Coenradie and Bert Dicou, Re-Imagining the Bible for Today, (London: SCM, 2017)

This book is written by a tutor at Sarum College and two ministers in the Netherlands. They all share a background with a Dutch denomination, the Remonstrants, which, according to their own words, "is really more philosophical and socio-culturally oriented than purely biblical-theological" (p 1). However, they all believe that it is important to read the Bible and to keep on reading it. They offer this book as a tool to offer various ways of reading the Bible and to bring the Bible to life for those who wish to engage critically. They claim that the two ways they use most are: imagination and conversation. I was hooked. I believe that we need more imagination in our lives and faith and that conversation is a great way to learn. The book does try to model this but sadly – for me anyway – it does not quite work. I will try to explain why.

The first chapter is the strongest chapter, in my opinion. It opens with an interview with each of the authors so immediately we get to know them a little and their views on the Bible. This is interesting and engaging. We are then introduced to six ways of reading the Bible: contextual Bible study from Brazil, feminist readings of the Bible, queer readings of the Bible, ecotheology, the Earth Bible Project (fascinating) and godly play. Each of these approaches could have been expanded on much more

fully. We are introduced to them so briefly that it was tantalising. I would love to have read more on each and to learn how I could apply these approaches to Bible reading – both individually and corporately.

The next four chapters address a range of important and current topics: sacrifice, vulnerability, the planet and economy. While I applaud the attempt to address these topics I do not think that the authors really followed their stated methodology of imagination and conversation. There was a short interview with a physicist on his views on creation but most of these chapters consisted of finding these themes in current novels and films. I love films and am a voracious reader of novels. I just did not resonate with the approach of fairly lengthy summaries of the novels and movies placed alongside biblical passages and themes. I have been trying to work out why. Let me give one example. Silence by Shusaku Endo is summarised and used as an example to reflect on a vulnerable God, as was another novel and two films. Wit and Arrival, I wonder if the comparisons are just too obvious? Or perhaps there was too much material - we are introduced to many novels, films, and some art also. All the literature cited (apart from Silence) was Western; it might have been challenging and informative to have some novels and movies from the majority world reflected upon.

I think the key issue is – who is this book for? The back cover states that it is for those "who aren't too sure what to believe and how to exercise faith" – so perhaps I am not the right person to be reviewing this book.

I loved the first chapter and would have appreciated more on how these six different approaches can help us to read the Bible. The penultimate chapter is a play on the book of Ruth, which you could try in a small group context. There are a large number of sources in this book, a full bibliography and some interesting ideas but I am not convinced that the promised conversation really took place.

Dr Cathy Ross, CMS

3. MISSION

Michael Moynagh, Church In Life: Innovation, Mission and Ecclesiology (London: SCM Press, 2017)

Mike Moynagh takes a framework of innovation to explore the emergence of new ecclesial communities in mission. He draws on emergence and complexity theory to show how newness emerges and in doing so has come up with a very dynamic way of approaching contextual mission, which is able to be responsive, flexible and creative; to learn from what's happening and adapt accordingly. The book is packed with examples and stories, theology,

missiology, ecclesiology and social theory. He describes six processes of innovation which overlap and feed into each other: dissatisfaction, exploration, sense making, amplification, edge of chaos and transformation. Transformation is the result of the other five processes working together in overlapping and interpenetrating ways.

I particularly like the way he names restlessness and dissatisfaction as a positive starting point. Lots of organisational cultures prefer to hide dissatisfaction. Dissatisfaction starts you on the journey. You explore through trial and error alongside prayerful attention. Sense making turns your exploration into a story as you are reflecting on what's happening, piecing it together and making sense of it. Crucially this involves plenty of conversation and feedback – so rather than having a solution you land and develop, the important thing becomes listening and learning and adapting in the light of feedback. Mike suggests it's a move to "act and reflect" rather than "predict and plan". I have come to think of this as "feeling your way", which is common in pioneering in mission where there is always uncertainty.

A lot of formation and training for ministry assumes a fixed body of knowledge and practices that leaders will go and lead as they have been trained. By way of contrast (and perhaps more realistically), Mike imagines an environment where things are unpredictable, and unknown. The edge of chaos is a fascinating insight. Systems and organisations that are very fixed and stable don't tend to cultivate creativity and innovation – they dampen it or squash it. Newness is seen as a threat to order. Systems that are open to change and newness are nearly always less stable – inside the edge of chaos. Feeling uncertain, knowing things are unpredictable and not being sure what the future might look like whilst knowing the present can't continue as it is turns out to be a good place to be, perhaps ideal even.

There are some particularly creative sections. For example, in one chapter Mike looks at recontextualising, drawing on insider movements and Steve Bevans's models for contextual theology. He has an inspired overlay of those models with Jesus' ministry in the gospels. There has become something of a divide between those participating in mission through a "church planting" lens and a "contextual mission" lens in the UK. This books offers a framing that makes sense of both in integrating around innovation and speaks well to those approaching mission with either lens.

My one small gripe with the book is that innovation in mission has been limited to new ecclesial communities. If mission is joining in with the healing of all things then the framework for innovation that Mike introduces can be applied much more broadly. And I think the book is relevant to anyone training for leadership in today's church and world.

Mike has been a great reflector for the church in the UK on cultural change and mission and fresh expressions of church. In his previous book Church for Every Context he looked at the development of contextual churches in the early church and in the wave of fresh expressions in the last 30 years, laying out a theological rationale and the practice of developing and maturing such churches. This new work stands alone but also builds on the previous work. The book is over 400 pages long and offers a wealth of wisdom for those innovating in mission in the new landscape we find ourselves in. I wholeheartedly recommend it – Mike's thinking and writing gets better and better.

Jonny Baker, CMS

Todd Wilson, Gerald Hiestand Eds.,

Becoming a Pastor Theologian: New Possibilities for Church Leadership

(Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2016)

Karl Barth once quipped that "in the church of Jesus Christ there should be no non-theologians". He'd be pleased with the book at hand. Wilson and Hiestand are concerned about the state of the pastoral vocation. Pastors, they say, increasingly "don't know who they are or what they're supposed to be doing" (p. 1). While a tad hyperbolic, this claim does bear some truth as pertains to the work of theology in everyday ecclesial settings. For centuries, the church had a "clear and compelling vision" of what a pastor is meant to do (p. 2). At the heart of this vision was the task of theology. Alas, in modernity, this vision has been fading. But the future need not be like the recent past: Becoming a Pastor Theologian intends to re-situate the "calling of the theologian back into the identity of the pastor" (p. 2). This is all part of the Centre for Pastoral Theology, which Wilson and Hiestand direct.

The volume is comprised of 15 contributions which probe and ponder what it means for pastors to be theologians. Three sections group the essays: one on identity, one on historical perspective and one on the Bible. The target audience is those who are either in or moving into regular church ministry. Theological educators would likewise benefit.

In reading these essays, certain irritants arose. Chapter seven, for instance, contains a snide and unnecessary dismissal of forms of preaching that are overly concerned with "meeting felt needs", attunement to "popular culture", and even laughter. As I see it, this list of so-called offences could, from another vantage, be judged a list of virtues for effective preaching in a postmodern context. The chapter by Vanhoozer – who I otherwise greatly admire – felt a bit packaged and stale at moments. And then there was Chapter 11, reflecting pastorate-theology

in conversation with the Pastoral Epistles. While not without profitable insights, it did have a moralistic tone at moments.

Notwithstanding the forgoing irritants – and a few others – Becoming a Pastor Theologian is a laudable project. Its purpose is important: issuing a clarion summons to quit conceiving of "theology" as an obscure academic discipline that often (and perplexingly!) hails from nonconfessional contexts (chapter one, by Peter Leithart, chronicles the emergence of this baffling state of affairs). It is also worth noting that this project (see especially chapter 4) is careful to differentiate between the scholar-pastor and the pastor-theologian. The latter ethos should find space in every pastoral vocation. In contrast, only a few ministers will also be bone fide scholars, owing chiefly to the "demanding nature" of such work (p. 53).

Nearly every essay in this book offered something on which to chew. Several were written by high profile Christian thinkers (named on the cover). Even so, the pieces I found most stimulating came from the hands of several more modest contributors. I wish to briefly cite three

Chapter six, by Scott Manetsch, profiled the nature and work of theology in Calvin's Geneva. Aside from dispelling certain inaccurate stereotypes (Calvin was not a theological dictator but rather operated in a decidedly conciliar manner), Manetsch unearths certain "past practices" that hold promise for our own moment. Consider the "Company of Pastors", a group of all pastors and theological educators in Geneva who met each Friday morning to study Scripture and theologically address social concerns. This fellowship was premised on the conviction "all ministers possess equal authority by virtue of their common vocation to proclaim God's work and administer sacraments" (p. 83). Would not such associations - at the local, diocesan, or regional level be of benefit to today's pastors and churches? Should thoughtful engagement on tricky and sensitive spiritual, moral, and missional issues simply be outsourced to those in academic posts? Manetsch thinks not. I agree.

Chapter ten, written by Ed Klink, was an inspiring breath of fresh air. Klink's discussion centres on the pastor's handling of Scripture. What he spells out violates many of the carefully curated interpretive conventions of late modern, western theological colleges. Of course, Klink stresses the value of the historical-critical toolbox. He exhorts the conscientious use of commentaries. Yet there's more, for the text carries "its own interpretive commands innate to its origin and nature" (p. 138). The pastor theologian is nowhere more true to her vocation than when she allows the words of the Bible to remain "subservient to the Word" (p. 139). Klink rightly stresses the significance of canon for truthful biblical interpretation. Along these lines, pastors are all called to be canons, namely women and men who ensure that

all exposition is framed "by the Alpha and the Omega" (p. 141). As Klink sums up, this posture ensures that the doctrines of the church do not get separated from the text of Scripture. In a reductionist era, where pastors are often malformed to provide biblical preaching which is sterile, 2D and vapid, Klink's point is timely. It cuts right to the heart of what it means for pastors to be theologians – people who appreciate that exeges is must be governed by what the Bible is.

I would also be remiss to not mention Laurie Norris's chapter. Norris is the only female contributor to this collection. She grapples with the overarching purpose of the book with attention to how "women fit within this model" (p. 163). Her prose exhorts heightened participation by women in the work of theology, appealing to NT precedent, as well as the legacies of Perpetua, Thecla, Macrina and others. At a practical level, Norris longs for more women to undertake formal theological training. She urges men to be more inviting of women, ensuring their place at forums, discussions, synods, etc., where contemporary theological reflection is undertaken. Of note, Norris's suggestions do not stem from a feministic principle; instead, her motive is faithful stewardship (1 Corinthians 12). Why would the wider church wish to disregard or undervalue any member or the body that God has grafted in for the purpose of theologising?

Becoming a Pastor Theologian gave me space to reflect on issues directly connected to my own vocation as a priest. For this I am grateful. More consequently, I am also hopeful – in a moment where theology is given short shrift, deemed irrelevant or both, this volume is a catalyst for turning such tides. May those in the pastorate take up this mantle!

Rev Roger L Revell, Vancouver

Laura Sumner Truaux, Amalya Campbell,

Love Let Go: Radical Generosity for the Real World (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017)

This is a gem of a book. It is a quick, easy and accessible read about what it says on the cover – love and generosity. It tells the story of LaSalle Street Church in Chicago, who received an unexpected windfall of \$1,600,000, and how they dealt with this gift. The story is told by the Senior Pastor, Laura Truaux, and a colleague, Amalya Campbell, a marketing consultant and church member.

As you can imagine, deciding what to do with such a large amount of money was not easy! The first thing they decide to do is to tithe the money to each church member so each person receives a cheque for \$500. Much of the book narrates how various church members used their \$500 and there are some very moving stories of how this money helped people at just the right time. More interestingly

there are accounts of how many members gave away even more than the initial \$500 because this initial act of generosity unlocks more generosity. This is the underlying theme of the entire book – that generosity and a generous mindset resists scarcity and opens us up to further generosity.

Woven throughout the book are gentle meditations on various biblical characters and how they modelled or learned these principles of generosity and gratitude. Abraham, David, Miriam, Mary and Martha all feature. I particularly liked their framing of and lessons learned from Miriam being struck with leprosy and Mary and Martha serving Jesus. They surmise that Miriam's leprosy was a gift of grace – not a punishment – to remind her of her true identity. She was cast out so that she could be reminded of her true identity and to remember God's generosity to her. The Mary and Martha story is placed within the frame of mindfulness.

They also refer to various social science experiments (all American) to justify their claims that generosity and gratitude contribute to greater mental and emotional wellbeing. These are interesting, challenging and thought provoking. I particularly liked the experiment about money and fish! Participants sat in front of computers to complete their questionnaires. After six minutes a screensaver appeared on some of the computers. Some saw money floating underwater, some saw fish and some saw no screensaver at all. After they completed their questionnaires, the participants then were asked to set up two chairs for a conversation. Those who had seen the image of money placed their chairs further apart (by a foot!) than those who had not. Hmmm... - just one experiment, I thought; but all nine experiments conducted proved that the money-primed participants acted more independently and distantly than the others. There is real food for thought here.

This is a book about money, generosity, gratitude and attentiveness. There are some drawbacks for a wider audience – it is entirely American in its focus and the emphasis is almost entirely on money with respect to generosity. However, there is acknowledgement of how we could be more generous with our time, talents, creativity and a challenge to reassess the resources we do already have. There is also an awareness of reciprocity – it is not just about North American do-goodism. I think this is a book for those who have enough money (which is probably most of us reading this review) but again, not entirely. There are a couple of moving stories (one from Tanzania) of the power of community to help sustain a family in crisis.

I highly recommend this book – its simple narrative and many stories will keep me pondering for a while. And you will need to read it to discover what the church did with the \$1,600,000!

Dr Cathy Ross, CMS

Stephen Platten, Ed., **Oneness: The Dynamics of Monasticism** (London: SCM, 2017)

Monasticism, whatever its form, has always enjoyed a position of intrigue within the church. While not always appreciated in every age (the dissolution of the monasteries being an infamous example), the rich insights of communities devoted to prayer, work, and obedience still have a draw on the imagination of contemporary Christianity, mostly notably evidenced in the rise of the "new" monasticism and authors such as Shane Claiborne.

Oneness is a collection of essays dedicated to Brother Harold, the larger than life character who founded the hermitage of St Mary and St Cuthbert on a beautiful hillside in Northumbria, known as Shepherds Law. While celebrating what has been achieved at Shepherds Law, from its inspiration to its present form, the book also uses the hermitage as a case study to discuss and unpack various aspects of religious communities, such as music, architecture, and the life of discipleship lived out in prayer and obedience.

The collection boasts some excellent contributors, such as Andrew Louth, Emeritus Professor of Patristic and Byzantine Studies at Durham University, Sarah Foot, Regius Chair of Ecclesiastical History at the University of Oxford, George Guiver CR, Superior of the Community of the Resurrection, and the editor Stephen Platten, former Bishop of Wakefield.

It is divided into two parts, the first titled "Setting the Scene", which contains chapters one through four, including an introduction by Platten. The second, "Unfolding the Mystery", comprises chapters five through ten. The sections do precisely what the titles suggest: chapter one locates religious communities in the wider church and world; two sets out the history of monasticism and religious communities in Northumbria; three examines the 19th and 20th century legacy that has led up to Brother Harold's endeavour; and finally four looks at his story itself.

In section two: chapter five traces the history of the skete, the form of religious life that Brother Harold is attempting to cultivate, back to its origins in the Egyptian desert and through the (largely) Orthodox tradition; six addresses the particular Franciscan flavour which has fertilised Shepherds Law, looking at the Franciscan ideal of the hermitage; seven sketches out the shape of a monastic life, from meals to hospitality, worship to buildings, and unpacks the particular "sacrament" peculiar to religious communities; eight looks at the place of chant in the history of religious communities; nine assesses the form and functionality of monastic architecture and gives a description of the history, inspiration, and consideration

that went into the construction of the Shepherds Law site; and ten, the crown of the collection, sets out the gifts that monasticism has to give to Christian discipleship in the contemporary church, as they have down through the ages before.

Oneness also boasts the contribution of two archbishops for the foreword and afterword. Justin Welby's interest in the rich potential of religious communities is well known, having himself established the Community of St Anselm at Lambeth Palace in 2015, with the specific aim to encourage those between the ages of 18 and 30 to experience a monastic setting for a year, dedicated to prayer, study, and service to the poor. Rowan Williams's monastic credentials are already well known, having taught at the College of the Resurrection, and having previously written on the Desert Fathers and Mothers.

This accessible collection will be of benefit to numerous audiences. To the educated layman it gives an insight to the sometimes mysterious world of monastic life. To the ordinand and minister it offers rich fare for engaging with discipleship and the vocational shape this can take, particularly chapter ten. To the student it gives a useful overview of the monastic way through the lens of Shepherds Law and history of religious communities in Northumbria. I thoroughly appreciated this book and highly recommend it.

Isaac Frisby, CMS

4. OTHER

Timothy Dudley-Smith, A Functional Art: *reflections of a hymn writer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017)

Thomas Dekker and Robert Hudson (Ed.),

Four Birds of Noah's Ark: a prayer book from the time of Shakespeare, (Grand

Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017)

"The lunatic, the lover and the poet Are of imagination all compact."

So says Duke Theseus in A Midsummer Night's Dream (Act V, Scene I). And having established that madness, love and poetry occupy similar territory he goes on to describe the poet's art:

"The poet's eye, in fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name."

The art of poetry (and who but Shakespeare knew this better?) is indeed a matter of giving "a local habitation and a name" to "airy nothing". It's the business of making the conceptual concrete, and while that may perhaps at times have something in common with madness it is undoubtedly an act of love.

Both these two works, though written centuries apart, certainly have that in common. Both are acts of love, concerned with making the conceptual concrete. Timothy Dudley-Smith's new book is a sustained and consistently engaging reflection on the hymn-writer's "functional art": "functional" in that its fruit is designed above all to be used. He reflects on this art through the examination of a number of "marriages", such as "content and form", "meaning and language" and "rhyme and metre". The book is peppered through with anecdotes and the most apposite of quotes – as well, of course, as being full of quotations from the great English hymn tradition.

Dekker's book, with its engaging title, written in 1608 and newly edited by Robert Hudson, gathers together prayers under four headings: the Dove, the Eagle, the Pelican and the Phoenix. In the first he writes prayers for "all those who labour in the cities and the fields" such as a midwife, a miner and a serving-man. "The Eagle" includes prayers for those entrusted with authority, while the last two sections are focused on Christ. "The Pelican" reflects on the seven deadly sins, and on Christ as their conqueror. (The pelican was a traditional image of Jesus as the bird was believed to feed its young with its own blood.) Lastly "The Phoenix" reflects on the significance for the reader of the death, burial, resurrection, ascension and return of Christ – the phoenix image obviously lending itself to that purpose.

As we commemorate 500 years since the launch of the Reformation it's worth reflecting how very Protestant these works are – in the very best sense of the word. Both are deeply imbued with Scripture. Timothy Dudley-Smith's first (and perhaps best known) hymn "Tell out my soul" was inspired by the then recently published New English Bible. He points out how much of Charles Wesley's work is drawn straight from the Bible, and yet with such skill that the words become wholly his own. Dekker's work oozes a knowledge of the Bible even though it was written three years before the publication of the Authorised Version, demonstrating clearly the influence of Coverdale's Great Bible and the Geneva Bible.

Both works are also "Protestant" in the sense of rejoicing in the everyday. Dekker's most impressive prayers are those he puts in the mouths of ordinary people, expressed simply and directly with limited rhetorical flourish, powerful imagery and with a great deal of feeling ("prayer shall forever be the sails that shall carry up my heart"). We should note too his "democratic" conviction that to be noble was not necessarily to be good, and vice versa.

Dudley-Smith makes the point that hymn-singing was a very tangible expression of the Reformation conviction

about the priesthood of all believers, which explains in part why the Protestant hymn tradition is so rich. He quotes some moving words of John Jewel, written in 1560, describing how as the Reformation took hold people began simply to sing, more and more: "You may now sometimes see at Paul's Cross, after the service, six thousand persons, young and old, all singing together and praising God". Dudley-Smith also displays a refreshing breadth of influence: perhaps as a celebration of "common grace", another concept dear to the Reformers. So Philip Larkin earns many more entries in the index that Graham Kendrick.

Both works are demonstrations of popular piety; the common tongue of prayer and praise: "functional arts" indeed.

Both too are works of their time. There is pathos and irony in some of Dekker's prayers for the protection of those in authority and of the "commonwealth". That such prayers should be made only three years after Gunpowder Plot is entirely understandable. But we pray for the Prince of Wales who was to die just three years after publication. And we pray against Civil War which of course did indeed break out with tragic consequences some 34 years later.

Moving to the present day Dudley-Smith is contentious is his appraisal of the contemporary worship song. He probably over-emphasises how bad (some) are, but under-estimates the extent to which in very many churches they have driven out the more traditional hymn. Were he to be aware of the extent to which that is true I'm sure he'd bewail it: and rightly so, for today's Christians are surely being deprived of access to a rich, ancient and (still) living tradition which has given rise so some of the most beautiful and moving expressions of Christian faith in English or in any other language.

Both the hymns which Dudley-Smith cites and the prayers Dekker writes will do much to deepen and develop faith in the hearts and minds of those who use them, sing them and pray them.

Philip Mounstephen, CMS executive leader

Emmanuel Katongole, Born from Lament: The Theology and Politics of Hope in Africa (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017)

When I came across this book over the summer, I was very excited as I have found Katongole's writings enormously helpful. He seems to struggle and wrestle with the same complex questions about Africa that I have. An earlier work, The Sacrifice of Africa: A Political Theology for Africa (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), helped me begin to make sense of Congo's violent history and indeed how much of what happened in Congo is a kind of cipher for the rest of Africa. Katongole is Ugandan and a Roman Catholic priest, and is currently Associate Professor of Theology and Peace Studies at Notre Dame University in the USA. In The Sacrifice of

Africa, he tells some of his own personal story. Through ill health, he was not recruited to the Ugandan Army to fight against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) as his brother was. Instead he was sent to a Roman Catholic boarding school and eventually ended up in a seminary in Belgium when the Rwandan genocide happened. He later read Adam Hochschild's book on Congo, King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror and Heroism in Colonial Africa (Houghton Mifflin, 1998), which helped him to make sense of violent colonialism in Congo and all over in Africa.

I see this latest book on lament as a kind of seguel. He opens with the story of Angelina, whose daughter had been abducted by the LRA. Angelina became an advocate for the abducted girls and she came to live out a politics of forgiveness that represented an alternative form of politics. In Born from Lament, Katongole narrates her (and other) stories as a way of creating a "theopolitical imagination committed to the invention of a new future in Africa" (xii). In telling her and others' stories, he noticed particularly their ability to embrace and transform their personal experience of tragedy and suffering into energy and advocacy for nonviolent alternatives. Through his research and meeting with people in Congo, he began to see that the key is lament. He concluded that "at the heart of their innovative and nonviolent civic engagement, and also somehow the reason for it, was a deep sense of grief, anguish and suffering" (xv). This book tells the stories of some of these activists (see Maggy Barankitse's story in my article on lament in this issue of ANVIL) and explores lament not as an articulation of despair but rather as a multi-layered and complex performance through which suffering, mourning and hope are expressed.

The book is divided into five parts. The first part serves as an extended introduction to the theme and explains some of the background. The second and third parts explore the biblical material on lament and Katangole also interacts with theologians such as Moltmann and Gutierrez. The fourth part explores the prophetic laments of Jesus and Jeremiah and also offers a contemporary example from Congo with the story of Archbishop Christopher Muzihirwa of Bukavu, who was martyred two years into his ministry. Archbishop Christopher said, "There are things that can be seen only with eyes that have cried." This is one of the most profound insights in the whole book, in my opinion. The fifth part is shaped around Rachel's weeping at the slaughter of the innocents but with the hope that the Lord has created a new thing on earth. This is illustrated with contemporary examples from Congo.

This is an informative and significant book – one I wish to reread. Essentially the book is about hope and his concluding chapter presents a powerful apologia for the unlikely juxtaposition of lament and hope. In discussing and sharing insights from this book with students, I have found that it has much wider resonances than just for Africa.

Dr Cathy Ross, CMS

Christine Mangla Frost, The Human Icon: A Comparative Study of Hindu and Orthodox Christian Beliefs (Cambridge: James Clarke and Co, 2017)

Anyone who wants to reflect on the connections and differences between Hinduism and Christianity would do well to read this book. Scholarly but accessible, it is written by a knowledgeable and experienced author, and deserves wide attention. Christine Mangla Frost grew up as a Hindu, in a high caste Brahmin family, and became interested in Christianity as an adult, first joining the Anglican Church and then moving to become an Orthodox Christian. Although this is not an autobiography, it is full of her personal experience and knowledge of the two faiths she brings into dialogue with each other.

Chapter one is an excellent introduction to what it means to inhabit a Hindu world. Here we do not just learn of the author's own perspective, but are introduced to the range of perspectives that Hindus hold. The book is worth buying for this chapter alone, especially for use to introduce students with no previous experience of Hinduism to the fundamental categories of thought. Chapter two outlines the place of Orthodox Christianity in India, explaining the historical plausibility of links with the Apostle Thomas and how Christianity has become contextualized in India, part of the normal fabric of life.

The meat of the discussion comes in the next five chapters. Chapter three focuses on the "quest for the divine," comparing at tvam asi ("that you are") within Vedanta and theosis (deification) in Orthodox Christianity. The Hindu saying and the Orthodox concept are both critical, Frost argues, for believers to calibrate their spiritual sights in daily life. She examines how both aspire to the divine, and how those visions differ. Chapter four builds on this, through an examination of the bhakti (worship) tradition, examining Christian and Hindu conceptions of God as "the lover of mankind". Frost argues that the bhakti tradition of Hinduism is monotheistic, and evokes the passionate longing of the human heart for union with the divine, a longing echoed especially in the Song of Songs within Christian scripture, but also found elsewhere.

Chapter five examines a clear difference between Christianity and Hinduism by comparing how the two faiths tackle the issue of suffering and evil. The discussion centers on karma and the cross, noting that the Christian concept of a God who suffers and dies on a cross has no parallel within Hinduism. While some strands of Hinduism do have a concept of grace, especially linked to bhakti devotion, there is no understanding of expiation or propitiation or of a final judgement where believers are justified by faith in the death of the Son of God. This

distinction helps Frost explain how the Hindu concept of avatar, the descent of the divine, while superficially similar to the Christian notion of incarnation, is in fact a completely different conception.

Chapter six discusses yoga, a topic that is perhaps the most common Christian connection with Hinduism. Frost takes a nuanced position, noting the spiritual roots of the practice, and that it means far more than a keep-fit routine of light physical exercise. But at the same time, she recognises that it is possible to engage in some of the physical exercises devoid of spiritual content. She also discusses her own attempts at Christian yoga, explaining her decision to keep her prayers and her exercise routine separate.

Chapter seven tackles "signs and wonder," contrasting Orthodox spiritual elders with Hindu holy men. This chapter is particularly useful for those who engage regularly with Hindus and are looking for criteria to use in evaluating the many Hindu sages. Frost is critical without being cynical, robust without being extreme, noting the crucial difference of the humility of Orthodox elders compared to the Hindu holy man. Thus she states that the "self-deprecatory humour [of Orthodox spiritual elders] comes from humility. A parallel self-mocking is rare among Hindu sages: cultic gurus may be amusing, even witty, but very few would have much hesitation about presenting themselves as of superior spiritual status to lesser mortals" (p. 310). A further challenging comment in this chapter relates to the different conceptions of love within Hinduism and Christianity, an important reminder for interfaith dialogue. Just because we use the same word, does not mean we have the same understanding of it.

In summary, this book is an excellent resource for anyone engaged in Hindu Christian dialogue. What is particularly helpful is the author's positioning of herself within Christianity. A development might be for her to engage more clearly with particular strands of Hinduism. This does happen in different places within the book, but further projects could focus more clearly on, for example, just the Vaishnav school of thought, to deepen and strengthen the engagement. The Human Icon deserves to become a key text for any Christian engaged in conversation with their Hindu friends and neighbours.

Tom Wilson, Leicester

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