



ALLIANCE FOR VULNERABLE MISSION

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Alliance for Vulnerable Mission Bulletin

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Click here to register for the USA conference
to get early bird price

Volume 9, Number 10.

here



Editor:

Jim Harries,

PhD,Chairman of the AVM

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Jim Harries	Jonathan Winter	Chris Flanders
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		Stan Nussbaum

The Alliance for Vulnerable Mission encourages some missionaries from the West to engage in their ministries using local languages and resources.

Registration open for US conference, go ahead and register when you are ready! [Here](#).

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- **Gena Thomas** will be presenting at this year's Vulnerable Mission Conference in Pittsburgh (details: vulnerablemission.org). Gena was a missionary in northern Mexico for more than four years, where she taught English, served as a youth leader in her local church's church plant, and co-founded a coffee shop ministry, El Búho, with her husband, Andrew. The two consumed insane amounts of caffeine and struggled to redefine the word missionary all the while living between two cultures: the local

Mexican world and the traveling rock climber world. Their son was born not long after opening El Buho, which sought to bridge the gap between those two cultures.

Gena's book, *A Smoldering Wick: Igniting Missions Work with Sustainable Practices*, was published in June 2016. The book is set up in three categories: theology, theory, and practice, and seeks to offer a theological framework for missions based on biblical justice rather than Western charity. She will be discussing justice, charity, and participatory development in her seminar at the conference.

Gena is passionate about the local church being the catalyst for holistic, sustainable poverty alleviation. She holds a master's in International Development from Eastern University. Gena and Andrew live in North Carolina with their two children, Cademon and Juniper. They hope to open a coffee shop ministry there. She'd love to connect with you on social media @genalthomas or at her website at www.genathomas.com.



- **Words of Joy** Language is the way a nation, people or tribe expresses themselves., and although it would be extremely simplistic to think that a language relates to the socio-cultural aspects of a people, there is a certain pleasure in looking at which concepts are scarcely expressed in a particular language and which words are over-represented. See [here](#).

- Organisers of the **honor / shame conference** in Wheaton college, have posted videos of their various events. To see those videos, so as to be better informed on honor / shame concerns related to Christian mission, go [here](#).

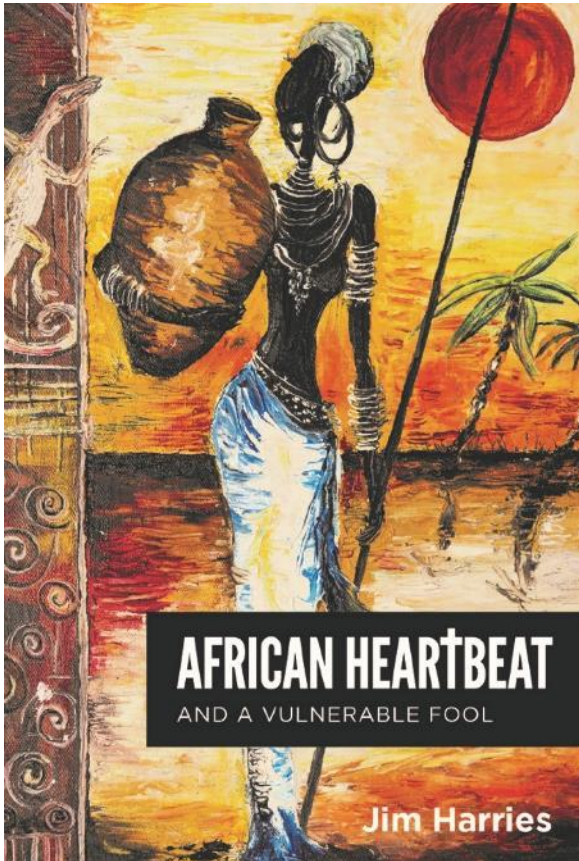


- **World Mission Associates changes its name**

The WMA (World Mission Associates) is a close sister-organisation to the AVM (Alliance for Vulnerable Mission). Their director, Jean Johnson, has attended many of our vulnerable mission events. She is to be a plenary speaker at our upcoming USA conference (vulnerablemission.org). The organisation that she directs, that seeks to help missionaries overcome problems of dependency, is now to be called *Five Stones Global*. I think we need to applaud them for acquiring an excellent name. Here is their new logo. The new website is fivestonesglobal.org and Jean's contact email is to be: Jean@fivestonesglobal.org.



- Jim's new novel:



African Heartbeat and a Vulnerable Fool A Novel by Jim Harries

Can a white man thrive living as an African in an African village? Philo's adventure takes him to the fictional African country of Holima, where he is adopted by an African tribe. Should Philo follow Western wisdom, and cause problems by generous giving? Or can he convince Western people that a vulnerable approach is the best way to reach Africa? Jim Harries' Christian novel draws on his true-life experiences.

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REVIEW: *"an eye-opener ... unlike anything I've read before ... an unusual story ... the social and cultural insights were full of interest and surprises."*

This flier can be downloaded [here](#).



- 'The response to Irma shows why we often get charity so wrong', says Craig Greenfield, guiding us on how to get away from 'disaster mentality.' See [here](#).

- The Alliance for Vulnerable Mission is **very appreciative** of people who take **vulnerability** seriously. Marcus Grohmann (from Germany) is one of the younger people who is now engaged in advanced level research that explores principles being put forward by the AVM. Read more about what he is doing here. Those who are able, please consider supporting him in his endeavours:

Funding opportunities for VM-related research in South Africa?

By Marcus Grohmann



In South Africa, society is still grappling with the painful past of colonisation and apartheid. In a time of political crisis and with the persistence of enormous inequalities, many question the chances for successfully building a 'rainbow nation'. It is in this context that some churches are trying to bring about 'racial transformation', work towards equality and

build multicultural communities.

Having been part of the AVM network for some years, I find two aspects of this development particularly striking: (1) The move towards becoming multicultural seems to be happening only on the side of (formerly) white churches; (2) if racial integration is happening, it almost exclusively takes place in English. Thus, instead of reaching cultural equality, what seems to be happening is an assimilation into Western culture.

In my PhD research in Cape Town I want to look at the implications of this Western- and English-dominated process for the goal of becoming multicultural. My hypothesis is that the sole use of English in a white-dominated environment fails to engage deeply with African worldview and culture. Instead of bringing about cultural diversity and equality, it maintains Western domination over African culture and theology.

My hope is that this research would inspire Christians in South Africa across racial boundaries to seek deeper relationships with each other based on African languages.

My wife Annethea and I, together with our 2-year-old daughter Ilse, are here with a German mission organisation. To date, our income stems from individual donations. Since these are insufficient, we are currently looking for additional funding through a scholarship or the like to complement our funds. If anyone could indicate where it might be worth looking, it would be much appreciated.

My contact details: marcus.grohmann@gmx.de , +27 81 586 14 84.

Moving beyond post-colonial dependency: developing sustainability through vulnerability

sponsored by the **Alliance for Vulnerable Mission** (vulnerablemission.org)

Trinity School for Ministry, Ambridge, Pennsylvania, www.tsm.edu

Wednesday 8th November 2017 registration at 5.00pm, finishing 12 noon on Saturday 11th November.

Cost: \$270.00 conference and meals. Bed and breakfast separate. Discounts available for those attending part-time and/or students.

Speakers to include: Jean Johnson, Director, Five Stones Global.
Dr. Stan Nussbaum, SYNC.
Rev. Canon Dr. John Macdonald, Trinity School for Ministry, PA.
Dr. Jim Harries, Chair, Alliance for Vulnerable Mission.
Fred and Carol Lewis, Worldview, Portland, OR.
Peter Sholl, Director, MOCLAM, Monterrey, México.



'Emphasising the use of indigenous languages and resources as the norm for some intercultural workers.'

We are looking for presenters of papers in other languages: Korean, Swahili, Spanish ...

Queries to: allyson@vulnerablemission.org or jmacdonald@tsm.edu [Click here](#) or go to: goo.gl/5SXC6t to register.



Conference outline; Moving beyond post-colonial dependency: developing sustainability through vulnerability

To be held at Trinity School for Ministry, Ambridge, Pittsburgh, 8th to 11th November 2017 (details: allyson@vulnerablemission.org) (Meals and breaks not included in this skeleton schedule).

Wednesday (8/11/2017)

17:00 Registration

19:00 Plenary paper 1. Dr. Stan Nussbaum "The past and future of vulnerable mission, built on attendees' p...

Thursday (9/11/2017)

9.30 Plenary 2. by Jean Johnson. "An Unhealthy Self-Image = An Unhealthy Community"

14.30 Panel of practitioners each commenting on their VM experience.

16.00 Seminars 2.

18.45 Plenary 3. by Dr. Jim Harries. "Please listen carefully to what you don't understand."

Friday (10/11/2017)

9.30 Plenary 4. Fred and Carol Lewis.

11.45 seminars 3

14.30 Outing to old economy village in Ambridge. / Meeting to plan future activities of AVM/USA.

18.45 plenary 5. Peter Sholl. "Sustainable mission in Cuba - lessons learnt (sometimes the hard way)"

20.15 Tea and discuss the conference so far in groups. Feedback.

Saturday (11/11/17)

9.30 Plenary. Summing up key points from the conference, by Dr. John Macdonald.

10.15 Working Groups.

11.00 Wrapping up, 11.40 worship.

Conference ends at 12 noon with lunch.

Provisional