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Alliance for Vulnerable Mission Bulletin
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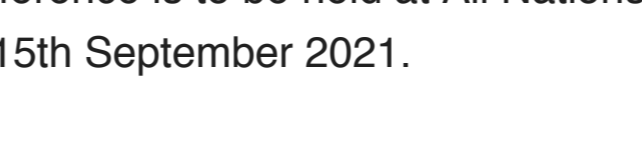
(Archived back-copies here Subscribe for free here)

Editor: Jim Harries, PhD, Chairman of the AVM



Table with 3 columns: Exec board, UK / Europe board, Advisory Board. Lists names like Jim Harries, Andy Dipper, Chris Flanders, etc.

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



The next UK-AVM conference is to be held at All Nations Christian College, Hertfordshire, 12th to 15th September 2021. Details here.

Registration here. Provisional programme here. General information at www.vulnerablemission.org

Dark box containing text: Please suggest contributions to this Bulletin to... This month's contents: Conference details: Vulnerable Mission and Anti-Racism, Christianity, Corruption, Mortality, and Closing of Churches due to Covid-19, etc.

AVM Conference: All Nations Christian College, UK, 12th to 15th September 2021

Vulnerable Mission: English and Dollars Powering Ministry, Good Idea?

We urge some missionaries to practice their ministry using the languages and resources of the people they are reaching. This will honour the indigenous. It is a Christ-like starting point for sharing the Gospel in contextualized ways.

We will be discussing issues such as:

- Practicalities and ramifications of use of indigenous languages by Western missionaries.
How does translation to and from an indigenous language affect missionary work?
While finances are needed for mission work, how can one ensure that finances do not dominate?
What good practices are there to ensure a missionary remains vulnerable in their local context?
How to engage in mission without exuding (excessive) power.
What organisational structures enable vulnerability on the side of Western missionaries on the ground.
What help can we offer churches who want to engage directly in cross cultural mission to avoid pitfalls of power.
Tentmaking and business as mission models that leave the Westerner vulnerable.
When the uneven spread of wealth is itself an injustice, how can one use one's surplus to enact global justice.
How can mission agencies promote vulnerability, when dominant models of understanding presented by a vast global media are rooted in positivism and liberalism?
Is vulnerability the key to contextualisation?
Theology traditionally draws strongly on metaphor. However local metaphors from the majority world are unfamiliar to the Westerner, and vice versa.
Where politics and religion are not separate categories, missionaries need to be careful not to get bogged down in unanticipated conflicts.
Is miracle a post-enlightenment category? Is magic a normal aspect of life?
Does the introduction of outside technology result in exploitation and enslavement? or liberation?
Globalisation as a force that cripples the periphery.
When short-term mission has become poverty-tourism intended to adorn facebook pages with images of charity.
The bible is God's inspired book, but theological training is dominated by Western curricula.

Conference Details:

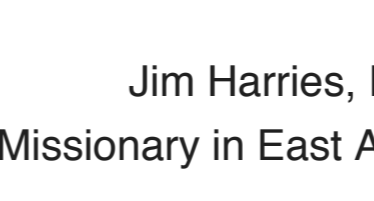
This will be a three-day residential conference. It will be held in the English country house at the attractive rural location of the UK's premier missionary training college, All Nations, near Ware in Hertfordshire. Full cost will be £300, or early bird £260.



Conference sponsors: Alliance for Vulnerable Mission (vulnerablemission.org)



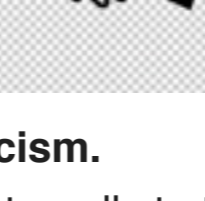
All Nations Christian College, Easneye, Ware, Hertfordshire, SG12 8LX
Tel: +44 (0) 1920 443500, Email: info@allnations.ac.uk



Jim Harries, PhD. Board chair, Missionary in East Africa

Organising Board table with names and roles: Jim Harries (East Africa, Chair), Andy Dipper (UK, Host), John Macdonald (USA), Nick Henwood (UK), Frank Paul (Germany), Peter Stagg (UK, Finance), Daniel Albert (USA), Deborah Bernhard (Germany)

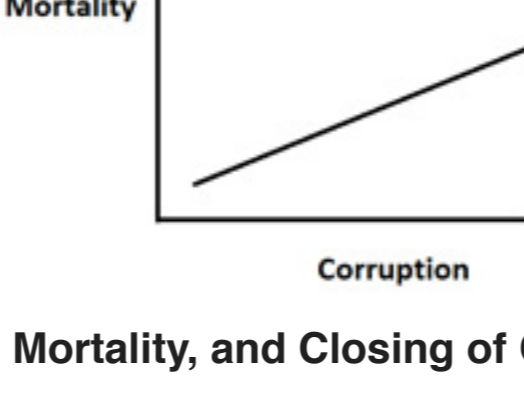
September 2021 conference on Vulnerable Mission - Provisional programme here.



Vulnerable Mission and Anti-Racism.

Vulnerable Mission hits the road internally to the West, by providing a critique of contemporary means of countering racism. Here is an article by Jim Harries that does that, entitled: Why Social Science Fails Blacks, and how to be truly-antiracist. The article is published in Currents in Theology and Mission.

https://www.academia.edu/49346584/Why_Social_Science_Fails_Blacks_and_How_to_be_Truly_Anti_racist



Christianity, Corruption, Mortality, and Closing of Churches due to Covid-19.

Recent blog by Jim Harries. https://www.academia.edu/attachments/67904357/download_file?s=portfolio

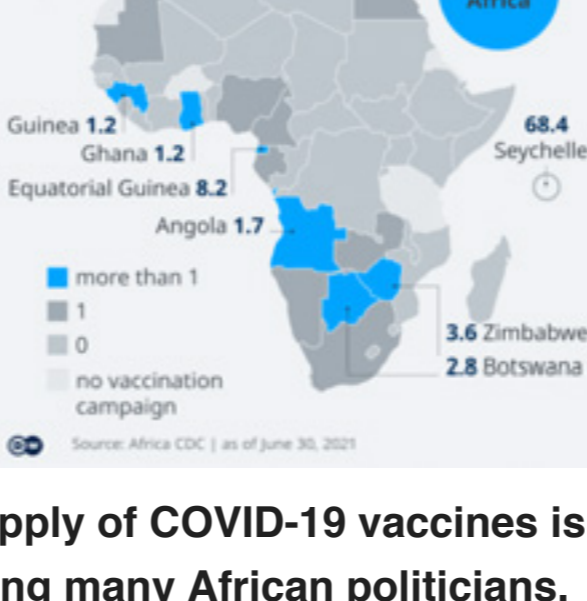


'Jesus of the Gospel or the Witch of Tradition: Cause for Vulnerable Mission.'

is the title of this article recently published in the EMQ (Evangelical Missions' Quarterly). Scroll to p.28.

Abstract: "Drawing on René Girard, (1923-2015), a French scholar who spent most of his life at Stanford University in the USA, this essay shifts from anthropology to the Gospel. It reveals the central role of desire in human living. Thus, removing the focus from the need for capital to achieve majority world development, it demonstrates the necessary centrality of the Gospel, as unique means of countering the rivalry and resultant killing of victims known as witches that otherwise occur. The Gospel offers a level of 'peace' previously unknown to human communities. Having been the foundation for its own development, to be responsible the West needs to keep the Gospel of Jesus as flagship to its involvement for the majority world. Girard's thinking explains how the foundation for sustainable development is not foreign capital, but demystification that arises from the Resurrection. Western missionaries promoting this message need, in order to connect with indigenous people's ways, to use African and not European languages."

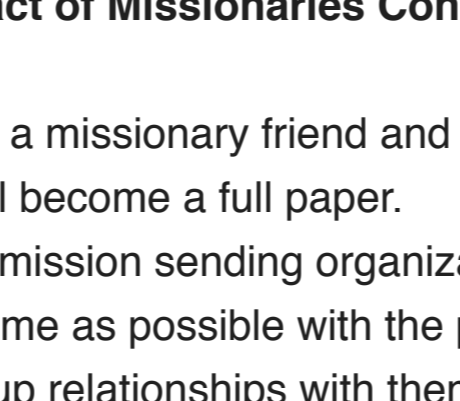
https://www.academia.edu/attachments/67843782/download_file?s=portfolio



The disparity in the supply of COVID-19 vaccines is causing anger and incomprehension among many African politicians.

"The selfishness in this world is bad," Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni said last week at the World Health Summit in Kampala. But he also used his opening speech to warn his African counterparts: The current situation is a wake-up call, Museveni said. "It is a shame that the African continent is sleeping and waiting to be saved by others."

https://www.dw.com/en/africa-covid-vaccine-revolution/a-58136447/



Reducing the Power-impact of Missionaries Connected to Powerful Mission Sending Bodies.

Draft-thoughts produced by a missionary friend and Jim Harries, 3rd July 2021. It is hoped that this draft will become a full paper. When new members join a mission sending organization, it is common for them to want to spend as much time as possible with the people they feel called to, and by this means to build up relationships with them. However, mission work has become increasingly administrative. A mission presence is frequently reflected in a multiplicity of running projects. These need attention, monitoring, and assessment. The need for funding means that grant requests and reports have to be written. People lower in the hierarchy are required to produce reports that keep their superiors informed.

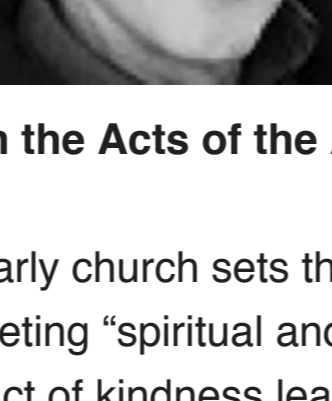
The presence of pre-existing projects pulls mission structures into directions in which power becomes a key issue. New recruits are typically ill-prepared for that. Even if these recruits do not want to become part of the power-play, they are forced to satisfy their supervisors, who in turn are obliged to meet administrative demands from further up the hierarchy. With each level, the interpretation of ministry as an expression of power increases. Higher levels employ power to make the lower hierarchical levels achieve organizational goals. Because higher-level supervisors generally have less contact with the local people the mission intends to serve, the lower members in the hierarchy can be obliged to put administrative matters before relationships. Mission bosses use the power they have to keep that emphasis (mainly for what appear to be good and plausible reasons). I want to ask, how can superiors stay vulnerable towards their new recruits, so as to render new recruits less prone to involving power when dealing with the local people the organisation is serving? How can training of mission leaders include a component of vulnerability, so that the new leaders (usually on a lower hierarchical level than the person who decides about attendance at leadership training) keep their enthusiasm for relationships and working face to face with local people? How can we include checks and balances so that power structures in the higher echelons are kept to a minimum? There should be vulnerability not only when working with local people, but also by supervisors dealing with new recruits to the mission.

Are Foreigners Still Needed in the Age of Indigenous Mission?

Have a look at this intriguing article from Lausanne Global Analysis. (Unfortunately the Vulnerable Mission option is not considered here.) https://lausanne.org/content/lga/2021-07/are-foreigners-still-needed-in-the-age-of-indigenous-mission/post-199715-footnote-12

Religion in the University by Nihcolas Wolterstorff.

(Book review by Jim Harries, published in the Evangelical Review of Theology). This book challenges readers to look more profoundly at the role of religion in academic thinking. It would provide an excellent basis for a graduate-level course examining the reasons why, philosophically speaking, religion should be allowed to penetrate every corner of university life. It could prove a valuable catalyst stimulating thoughtful discussion across disciplines. https://www.academia.edu/50067857/Review_of_Religion_in_the_University_by_Nicholas_Wolterstorff



The Trouble with Kindness in the Acts of the Apostles (published in Global Missiology)

Paul Hertig realises that "the early church sets the tone for kindness in an unkind world" especially by meeting "spiritual and physical needs." Following Pentecost, however, "the first act of kindness leads to the first act of persecution [of Christians]" because it was "critiquing the religious and political establishment." Even today, 'kindness' easily, I suggest, upsets influential people. 'Being kind' is not only a nice and 'neutral' activity - it can evoke major opposition. Missions' thinkers need to consider how to understand and respond to, or to avoid, that kind of opposition. http://ojs.globalmissiology.org/index.php/english/article/view/2507/5942