



ALLIANCE FOR VULNERABLE MISSION

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Alliance for Vulnerable Mission Bulletin

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Editor: Jim Harries, PhD, Chairman of the AVM



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

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- **Missionaries abroad ‘should be vulnerable’**



*Hattie Williams
(journalist)*

Article by journalist Hattie Williams in the *Church Times*: [“SHOULD the majority world be the target of patronage from rich missionaries?”](#)



This question will be asked at the next Alliance for Vulnerable Mission ([AVM](#)) conference, which is to be held in at All Nations Christian College, Hertfordshire, in December.” 8th to 11th. [More information here.](#)

Missionaries: aliens, providers, or fellow travellers?

International Conference

Sunday 8th December for a 6pm start to Wednesday 11th December 2019 finishing at midday. **All Nations Christian College, Easneye, Herts, UK.**

Details and registration here: <https://www.allnations.ac.uk/events/missionaries-aliens-providers-or-fellow-travellers>

Could the majority world be suffering from patronage by 'rich' missionaries – and if so, what could be done about that?

Outside Christian workers who build on foreign presuppositions in work amongst indigenous communities can, especially when foreign funded and using outside languages, unwittingly be damaging to indigenous sensibilities. This conference seeks to promote the idea that true empowerment requires getting alongside them. This necessitates vulnerability to their position and context. Such vulnerability can best be achieved if one shares the Gospel using indigenous languages utilising local resources.

Paper 1. *Introducing Vulnerable Mission, and paper: Mission Vulnerability essential to avoid conventional-mission pitfalls.* Jim Harries

Paper 2 *Mission without Conquest – learning to be guest, companion and friend in the Argentinian Chaco: an alternative missionary practice* Frank Paul

Paper 3 *How to establish yourself as a fellow traveler - with many positive examples of learning language/culture and using the local resources.* Hans Baer

Paper 4 *How can Western Missionaries best support a viable Mexican church planting network without dominating it.* Peter Sholl

Paper 5 *Undress, Be Enslaved, Wash: Three Movements in Cross-Cultural Mission from John 13.* Andy McCullough,

Paper 6 *Putting Reconciliation at risk? Engaging in vulnerable mission as a multiracial church in South Africa.* Marcus Grohmann

Paper 7 *Going alongside unreached people groups.* Mark Smith

Paper 8 *Understanding, embracing, enacting ministry from a position of weakness.* Chris Sadowitz

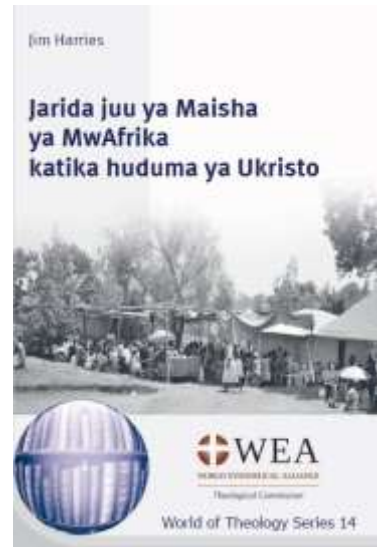
Paper 9 *Money, Vulnerability and Mission: The Example of Paul and the "Collection" For the Poor.* David Smith

Speaker Biographies

- Frank Paul (58), member of an intentional community of families in Germany (www.ojc.de), 18 years of family & missionary collaboration in a slum in BsAs and with indigenous churches in northern Argentina.
- David Smith was a pastor in Cambridge before moving to serve in Nigeria for five years and on many subsequent visits. He has taught in many institutions and has published work on various aspects of mission, including *Mission After Christendom* (2003), *Liberating the Gospel* (2013) and *Seeking A City With Foundations: Theology for an Urban World* (2nd.ed. 2019).
- Marcus Grohmann, Cape Town/South Africa, PhD student from Germany in the field of reconciliation studies, studying how white Christians in multiracial churches try to work for reconciliation in contexts they are usually dominating. Living and working on his research project involves learning the Xhosa language. With his wife, Marcus is serving part-time with the Student YMCA at the University of Cape Town. Together they have two daughters, 4 and 1 years old.
- Nick Henwood lives in multicultural Leicester. He works almost full time as a GP, is a member of a local New Frontiers church, and has an allotment for growing vegetables. He and his wife seek to be good news for the neighbours on their street. They are associates of Interserve - that ministers to people from an Asian and Middle Eastern background. Previously Nick and Ros spent 9 years in medical / community / church work in Nepal. He teaches about community health for Christian Medical Fellowship. He's a board member of Arukah Network - a global community health NGO. (Nick Henwood is to lead a workshop.)
- Jim Harries, PhD (theology, Uni. Of Bham, UK). Missionary in East Africa from 1988 to date. Main ministries include: bible teaching to indigenous churches using East African languages, looking after orphan children who stay in his home, reading, writing and research related to mission, development, linguistics, and anthropology. Chair of the AVM (Alliance for Vulnerable Mission.)
- Mark Smith, one-time missionary in Africa, first heard about the AVM (Alliance for Vulnerable Mission) in 2012. He is very concerned to encourage missionaries to work in such a way as to be vulnerable to the people being reached. Mark's dedication is demonstrated by his and his family's having spent over two decades in Africa.
- Hans Christoph Bär (DMin), from Switzerland, married to Beatrice, four children, four grandchildren. Working with OMF among the Karen people in North Thailand 1982-1998 and 2006-present as fellow traveler, church planter and Bible teacher. 1998-2006 pastoring the evangelical free church, Chrischona Stammheim (CH).
- Peter Sholl has lived in Monterrey, Mexico for the last 11 years. He serves as the director of MOCLAM, an organisation that offers theological education by distance in Spanish to students all over the Spanish speaking world. Pastors, campus workers, youth leaders and more study using locally produced core materials and study aids. Peter is Australian, and is a graduate of Moore Theological College, Sydney, Australia.
- Andy McCullough was born and grew up in Cyprus, has been involved in cross cultural church planting in Turkey, and is the author of *Global Humility: Attitudes for Mission*.
- Chris Sadowitz has served as a missionary to Japan since 1993. His educational background includes a BRE from Baptist Bible College In Clark's Summit Pa. and a M-Div from Grand Rapids Baptist Seminary in Michigan. Chris writes: "Most recently we are coming to realize that there is more truth and praxis to be mined from ways of weakness than our present practice and cultures admit."

- **Jim Harries' first book to be published in Swahili** is entitled: *Jarida juu ya Maisha ya MwAfrika katika huduma ya Ukristo* For your free download-copy click (*ili upokee nakala yako bure, finya [hapa](#): [here](#)*). To see other books in the same series, click [here](#).

Any Swahili speakers reading this, we are looking for people to contribute articles to a further edition of this book. Although not to be formally a journal, this can be like a journal in that we could produce more volumes as quality contributions become available. Anyone wanting to contribute an article in the Swahili language write to me at jim@vulnerablemission.org (Wanaofahamu Kiswahili wakitaka kuchangia kuandika kitabu kingine kama hicho, waniandikie.)



(A confession – I concede that my taking advantage of my contact with a German publisher in this way strictly is contrary to vulnerable mission practice.)

- Rachel Kleppen shares her thoughts on ways in which the globalised internet can make it more difficult to adjust to and thrive on the mission field: [Netflix Is Making It Harder to Be a Missionary](#) “No matter if it’s streaming sports, TV shows, or family updates—it’s hard to do ministry if you’re still tied to your old life,” suggests Kleppen.



- “The Best Way to Plant Indigenous Churches Is to Begin that Way,” *Mission Frontiers*, September-October 2016

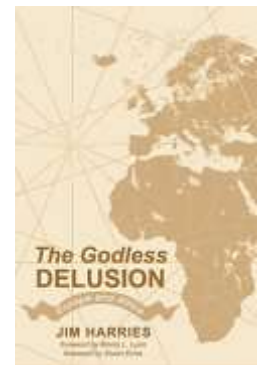
Read this article by Jean Johnson, director of Five Stones Global, [here](#).

- **Vulnerable Mission**, article.



How can modern Western sending organizations move away from the legacy of colonialism and avoid creating unhealthy dependencies? To start with, carry out ministry in non-Western contexts using the languages and resources of the host culture. This article from missionary-scholar Jim Harries introduces the radical idea of vulnerable mission. Click [here for the facebook link](#), and click [here for the article itself on pneuma review](#).

- See [here](#) for a review of *The Godless Delusion* by Jim Harries. As well as countering 'atheism', Jim makes the point in this book, that the West must not be satisfied just by hearing what African people say to direct their mission to Africa. We do not reach people because they agree to be reached, in the way 'they' say ... suggests Jim. It is just so difficult to communicate clearly across cultural divides ... this reviewer may not agree ...



- **"They Did Business With You Because of Your Great Wealth of Goods: The Tragic Repercussions of Materialism and Consumerism in Missions,"** *Mission Frontiers*, July-August 2016. This article by Jean Johnson, is found [here](#).



- **Anti-Racism is the Opposite to Vulnerable Mission**

See [here](#) for reflections on the conference held at Fuller Theological Seminary in 2017, entitled: 'Can "White" people be saved? Triangularity, Race, Theology and Mission,' by Jim Harries. (This is also the title to the book brought out after the conference. Follow [this link](#) to participate in discussion about it.) For other related, live discussions, go [here](#), or [here](#), or [here](#).

- Harries, Jim, 2019, 'Materiality and "Spirits": Explaining Exorcism in Africa,' *WCIU Journal: Cross-Cultural Communications* Topic, <https://wciujournal.wciu.edu/crosscultural-communication/2019/10/10/materiality-and-spirits-explaining-exorcism-in-africa> Part of the abstract: "Exorcism, a much valued, rational and sensible ministry as far as many African Christians are concerned, is frequently not appreciated in the West. This results from linguistic naivety, and the West's concealment of their own religious history to undergird secular ideologies. Both African faith in God, and indigenous languages, must be taken seriously in Western scholarship."

