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**Alliance for Vulnerable Mission Bulletin
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Volume 13, Number 6.

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

[Details here.](#)

[Registration here.](#)

General information at www.vulnerablemission.org

Please suggest contributions to this Bulletin to jim@vulnerablemission.org

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Idealistic conviction – elusive practice? The challenging quest for vulnerable mission in a middle-class suburb of Cape Town

(Marcus Grohmann, to be one of the speakers at the upcoming September 2021 conference, tells us the anticipated topic of his paper)

This paper will be a personal account of our time as a family in South Africa over the last five years and of our journey with God and with each other. It will explain how the principles of vulnerability became increasingly important to us as we started to

work with a multicultural university ministry and as I embarked on a PhD project studying reconciliation in multicultural



churches. We will be *Marcus (left), and family.* looking at our main

challenges to vulnerability – living in the English-dominated, middle-class university precincts – before considering steps we have gradually learned to take that help us let go of some of our dominance as White Westerners. This will be followed by a consideration of the benefits of vulnerability we have experienced with a focus on the learning and use of the Xhosa language. The paper will be concluded by looking ahead at what we see ourselves doing in the near future where we hope for vulnerable mission to take a more distinct shape in our lives.

Conference.

All Nations Christian College, UK, 12th to 15th September 2021
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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. (Can the **commercial** world engage in mission without promoting ‘ evils’ of capitalism?)
- 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. How can one then engage in theology interculturally?
- 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? What does this imply for cross cultural missionary engagement?
- Does the **introduction of outside technology** result in exploitation and enslavement? or liberation?
- **Globalisation** as a force that cripples the periphery. How can the voices of those at the periphery be heard, and their dignity guarded?
- When **short-term mission** has become **poverty-tourism** intended to adorn facebook pages with images of charity – what is the way forward?
- Can Westerners relate to **non-Western missionaries** without dominating them?
- The bible is God’s inspired book, but theological training is dominated by **Western curricula**. Are there alternative paradigms for local-context training of Christian workers?

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, near Ware in Hertfordshire. Full cost will be £300, or early bird £260.



Conference sponsors:

<p><i>Alliance for Vulnerable Mission</i> vulnerablemission.org</p>	
<p>All Nations Christian College, Easneye Ware Hertfordshire SG12 8LX Tel: +44 (0) 1920 443500 Email: info@allnations.ac.uk</p>	

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

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- **Vulnerable Mission in Action** Learning indigenous languages and prioritizing local funding, these missionaries follow a humble path of service, and help others do the same. [Continued ...](#)

Published in *The Plough*, produced by the *Bruderhof*.

(For more on *The Plough*, see plough.com)

- **Jim Harries itinerary – UK, USA, Canada and Korea, September to November 2021.**

Jim Harries, chair of the AVM (Alliance for Vulnerable Mission), is planning to visit the following places so as to promote vulnerable mission, primarily at conferences and through visiting seminars:



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September 12th to 15, UK – AVM conference.

21st September, Dallas Theological Seminary.

22nd to 24th September, Missio Nexus conference, Dallas.

24th Sep. to 2nd October, Fuller Seminary, William Carey International University, BIOLA University, in Los Angeles.

2nd to 6th October, Oklahoma Christian University.

7th to 11th October, Abilene Christian University, Texas.

11th to 15th October, Dallas International University.

15th to 19th October, Bible Translation Conference, Dallas.

19th to 20th October, Wheaton College, Chicago.

25th to 29th October Moody Bible Institute and Wartburg Seminary, Chicago.

2nd to 7th November, Seminaries in Vancouver, Canada.

8th to 12th November, Conference, South Korea.

It has been more difficult to plan than usual due to Corona. Your prayers valued, that all this can work out!



- Some short **papers recently put out for discussion** by Jim Harries (click for your copy of these short papers, that were originally launched as discussion-starters on academia.edu):

[*Why do People of African Origin Thrive when Guided by Foreigners, but often not when left to their own devices?*](#)

[*The Evil of Religion*](#)



- **Making Disciples or Marketing Jesus?** Those who are members of missionexus may find the following short article interesting. The author tells how he started his missionary career in Asia knowing how to communicate the Gospel in pat succinct ways. He gradually learned, that did not work, but that instead it was appropriate to wonder at the difference the Gospel was already making in people's lives. <https://missionexus.org/making-disciples-or-marketing-jesus/>