



ALLIANCE FOR VULNERABLE MISSION

[www.vulnerablemission.org](http://www.vulnerablemission.org)

**Alliance for Vulnerable Mission Bulletin**

**May 2018** (Archived back-copies [here](#) Subscribe for free [here](#))

**Volume 10, Number 5.**

Editor: Jim Harries, PhD, Chairman of the AVM



<b>Executive board</b>	<b>Advisory board</b>	
Jim Harries	Jonathan Winter	Chris Flanders
Timothy Reeves	Jay Gary	Stan Chu Ilo
Fred Lewis	Tomas Dozier	Frank Paul
John Macdonald	Jean Johnson	Gord Sawatzky
		Stan Nussbaum

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

.....

*Early Bird rate for UK conference expires  
April 30<sup>th</sup> 2018!*

Click here to register:



***Vulnerable Mission: what it is and why we need it.***

[For further details, go to vulnerablemission.org](http://www.vulnerablemission.org)

Theme: "Vulnerable Mission"

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### Review & Preview



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We are pleased to announce that

## **Global Missiology** **(globalmissiology.org)**

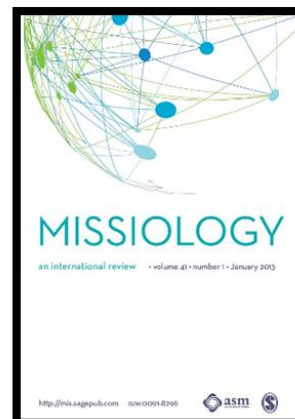
Has dedicated an entire edition of its missiology (English) journal to articles that have come out of the recent AVM consultation held in Pennsylvania, USA, in November 2017. The consultation was entitled:

### **Moving beyond post-colonial dependency: developing sustainability through vulnerability**

Click on any of the links to the left, to go to the live global missiology page.

We are especially grateful to the executive editor of global missiology, Nelson Jennings, and the editor-in-chief Enoch Wan, for their willingness to devote an entire edition of the journal to vulnerable mission.

“I am very encouraged to find that this article is going to press. It in very simple terms expresses some foundational pluses of vulnerable mission. It draws centrally on some of my actual field experience! I recommend it!” The article Jim is referring to above, is already published on [onlinefirst here](#).



**Five stones global** - a sister organisation to the AVM.

- The pieces below are by Jean Johnson, director of five-stones-global. (Jean is an advisory-board member of the AVM.)



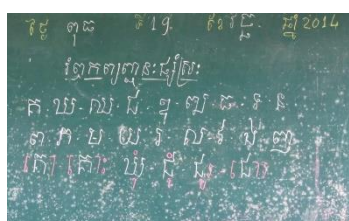
When in Cambodia, I (Jean Johnson) had the opportunity to meet and interact with Sairengpuia Sailo. He was a missionary sent out from Mizoram, Northeast India as a missionary to Cambodia. Mizoram is known for their locally sustainable and self-supporting churches. [So what would it be like to be sent out from Mizoram to Cambodia as a missionary?](#)

I sat around a table with those who were determining as a vocational missionary to Cambodia. They were interviewing me based on my application, Bible knowledge test, personal references, Myers and Briggs psychological test, and a language aptitude test. The language aptitude test revealed how I would fare in learning a foreign language. One of the persons who the power to accept or deny my appointment said, only scored 45 percent on your language aptitude test! That is a very low score! ”

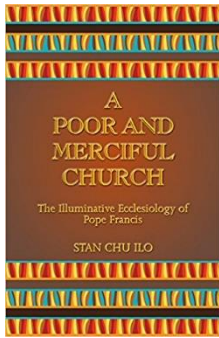


my fate  
general  
held  
“You

Of course this might be a valid reason to deny my appointment as a career missionary. However, I smiled and responded, “True, but I already speak Cambodian fairly well!” [Several months later, I was granted permission to serve in Cambodia and was able to secure a visa to reside in Cambodia based on my Cambodian language skills.](#)



“Learn the language people argue in!” This was my response to the question: [“If people speak two or three languages, which language would I recommend a missionary should learn and use?”](#)



### Poor and Merciful Church, Stan Chu Ilo:

“In this insightful text, Stan Chu Ilo addresses key questions that face modern Catholicism, particularly in Africa. He shows how two key themes of Pope Francis-- the church of the poor and the church of mercy have deep roots in biblical, patristic, and diverse ecclesial traditions. In Ilo's focus on Africa, he offers a "Triple A ecclesiology" of accountability, accompaniment, and action guided by some of the practices and theological aesthetics of Pope Francis. [The result is a road map and guide](#)

[for the mission of God in history beyond the papacy of Pope Francis.](#)” (Stan Chu Ilo is an advisory-board member of the AVM.)

- At least three of senior members of the AVM board, namely Dr. Stan Nussbaum, Dr. Chris Flanders, and myself (Jim Harries) have been invited to be part of a select group of 40 who will look at issues of patronage in Lebanon in early October this year, details: <http://honorshame.com/patronage/> Issues on the table closely resemble many of the concerns of the AVM. The terminology differs slightly, we have rarely used terms like patronage, gifts, or shame in vulnerable mission debates. But the issues run strongly in parallel: how to understand patronage biblically, and how to avoid doing damage in mission through misguided use of outside resources.



This piece, entitled International Students in China—an Opportunity? – Part 2, includes some vulnerable-mission-type advice! “My Pakistani friend asked, “May I visit your church?” I welcomed him along. He listened to a Bible talk in English, read the Urdu text on my iPhone, and asked me questions in Chinese,”

explains the author. Details [here](#).

- **Consultation:**
- 
- 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> June, Minneapolis. Please pray for a consultation being arranged to be held in Minneapolis, USA, 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> June 2018. It will be an exploratory / collaborative meeting of VM board members and others who are not explicitly committed to AVM, drawn from those who came to Trinity in November 2017. We'll be looking for ways to widen the awareness of VM principles in the U.S. setting.
- **A summary of the November 2017 consultation, *Moving Beyond Post-Colonial Dependency: Developing Sustainability through Vulnerability*, held at the Trinity School for Ministry in PA, can be found [here](#).**
- **Advance notice:** Please note that the April 2018 edition of *Global Missiology* ([globalmissiology.org](http://globalmissiology.org)) will be a special edition devoted to vulnerable mission, especially containing papers presented during the 2017 consultation in the USA.

# Vulnerable Mission: WHAT IT IS, AND WHY WE NEED IT



## *Mission Conference*

may 31 - June 2  
2018

allnations  
training for mission

hosted at  
All Nations Christian College  
Easneye, Ware, Herts  
SG12 8LX UK



Frank Paul  
Argentina/Germany



Deborah Bernhard  
Germany/Thailand



Dr. Jim Harries  
East Africa

Vulnerable Mission is a means of Christian outreach using the language and resources of the people being reached.

£ 179 early bird rate  
£ 199 after 30 April  
F/T students pay 80%  
conference@  
vulnerablemission.org

sponsored by:



[www.vulnerablemission.org](http://www.vulnerablemission.org)

[Register here.](#)

# Conference: Vulnerable Mission: what it is and why we need it.

All Nations Christian College, Ware, Hertfordshire,  
31st May to 2nd June 2018

## HIGHLIGHTS

Thursday 31st May.

17.00 hrs Arrival

18.00 Introductions

20.00 'What is vulnerable mission?'

Friday 1st June.

9.00 hrs Keynote paper, Mission in the Chaco, Argentina, **Frank Paul**.

11.00 Ignoring Advice: implementing Vulnerable Mission in Africa. **Jim Harries**.

14.30 Group discussions.

16.30 Mission Today, and Vulnerable Mission, Richard and Louisa Evans (provisional).

19.30 Panel and Questions. **Harries, Paul, Bernhard**.

Saturday 2nd June.

9.00 hrs A paper on South Africa, **Marcus Grohmann**.

11.00 Contextualization as vulnerable mission. **Deborah Bernhard**.

14.30 Seminars – various topics.

17.00 Departure.

VULNERABLEMISSION.ORG

Provisional

## Bios of our guest speakers, for the conference 'Vulnerable Mission: what it is, and why we need it.'

Conference to be held at All Nations Christian College, UK, May 31st to June 2nd 2018.

### Deborah Bernhard

Deborah has lived in cultures other than her own for over 20 years. Every place she's lived she has learned the local language. In her church planting work in Thailand among the Shan people, she used only local language and resources in her work. She found herself on a discovery of also using only local culture. Questions of "what does Jesus and his church look like in the skin of the local people and context?" led her to discovering barriers to the gospel and seeking to overcome them. Realizing that the answers require some paradigm shifts in the way we do mission among Buddhists, Deborah and her husband Jens have committed themselves to learning more about the local context, understanding barriers to the gospel, and sharing with others specific ways of overcoming them. Deborah is an Associate Certified Coach with the International Coach Federation, and coaches missionaries in SE Asia. She and her husband also lead groups of practitioners who are seeking to see Christ in the local culture, and are writing a book about following Christ in the context of Buddhist traditions.

### Frank Paul

Ute and Frank Paul have three children. They belong to OJC, an intentional interdenominational community in Germany - sharing life, daily work, resources (see: [www.ojc.de](http://www.ojc.de)). Their vision focuses on living and offering (mainly) to young people: friendship, a place of belonging, and a sense of direction in Jesus Christ. For 18 years Frank and Ute lived in Argentina - a few years in the slum areas of Buenos Aires ([www.kairos.org.ar](http://www.kairos.org.ar)). Afterwards they joined an international team of fraternal workers who were accompanying independent indigenous churches in the Chaco area in northern Argentina. Frank, fluent in Toba and Spanish as well as German, is a board member of the AVM-Alliance for Vulnerable Mission ([www.vulnerablemission.org](http://www.vulnerablemission.org)) that encourages others to lean on local strengths, resources and mother tongues.

### Jim Harries

Jim, is the chairman of the AVM (Alliance for Vulnerable Mission), that advocates for use of indigenous languages and resources in ministry overseas. Jim has a PhD from University of Birmingham, UK. He has lived and worked in East Africa since 1988, engaging indigenous and other churches with bible teaching using the Swahili and Luo languages. Jim, who is single, has been looking after orphan children in his African village home since 1997. He has published many missiologically related articles, and eight books, including *The Godless Delusion* (2017), and a novel, *African Heartbeat* (2018). Jim recently spent 10 weeks visiting 15 seminaries and Christian universities in the USA and Canada. Jim, who also speaks German, was born and raised in the UK. He attended All Nations in 1992/3.

## **“Why should a missionary be vulnerable?”**

(This is not about mission to vulnerable people, or vulnerable children, but it is about the need for a missionary to the majority world him/her-self to be vulnerable.)

Vulnerable to what? Vulnerable to failure. Vulnerable to getting ‘hurt’. Vulnerable, like, sensitive to what is going on. Vulnerable like - what you do won’t work at all unless local people invest their time, energy, and money into helping you ...

How do you become vulnerable?

1. Use their language. If you use their language, you will start to hear their criticism as they intend it. Then, in due course, you might learn how to function according to their social rules. Then God might be able to use you to reach them with the Gospel in a way that makes sense to them.

2. Don’t use outside money to subsidise what you are going to do. That is - even if the people you are going to work amongst are poor. That way you won’t buy your influence. You’ll have to sweat for it.

Who does vulnerable mission? Our focus is on helping Westerners to do vulnerable mission as a means to reaching people in the majority world.

Why do we need vulnerable mission? So as to be able to listen to the heart of people in the majority world. So as to share the Gospel of Jesus, meaningfully.

**[Download the provisional programme here.](#)**