



ALLIANCE FOR VULNERABLE MISSION

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**Alliance for Vulnerable Mission Bulletin  
October 2020**

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**Volume 12, Number 10.**

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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**Advance Conference Notice: 2021.**

The next UK-AVM conference is to be held at All Nations Christian College, Hertfordshire, 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021. **Call for papers inside.**

Please suggest contributions to this Bulletin, to [jim@vulnerablemission.org](mailto:jim@vulnerablemission.org)

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**Call for Papers. Conference.** 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020

**You are invited to submit paper proposals to this event**

All Nations Christian College, UK, 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> 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?

Papers should be between 4000 and 8000 words. Abstract maximum 300 words. Anyone wanting to write and present a paper other than in English, please consult.

Presentation time will be maximum ½ hour (strictly), followed by 30 to 60 minutes of discussion with those in attendance.

Submit your abstract asap, latest May 1<sup>st</sup> 2021, to  
[jim@vulnerablemission.org](mailto:jim@vulnerablemission.org)

- Please give us some information on your background / experience.
- Please contact me and let me know of your interest in writing and presenting a paper.

### **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. (We will recompense speakers IF we get a sufficient attendance to be able to afford to do so.)



Conference sponsors:

<p><i>Alliance for Vulnerable Mission</i></p> <p>vulnerablemission.org</p>	 <p>ALLIANCE FOR VULNERABLE MISSION</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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- Apologies. The running header for earlier runs of the September *Bulletin* was erroneous.

- [This article, entitled: \*\*COVID-19 opportunities for internationalisation at home\*\*](#), by Phan Le Ha and Thanh Phung, in *University World News*, actually addresses the language question head on, right at the end of the account, suggesting that some Vietnamese students study in the Vietnamese language!

**University World News**   
THE GLOBAL WINDOW ON HIGHER EDUCATION



- [‘Suspension of a US professor sparks debate over a Chinese word’](#), reports the BBC. Professor Patton has been suspended from teaching at a university in California, as the result of teaching the use of a Chinese term that sounds a little like an offensive English

word used to refer to black people. (– strange that in this age when we are all scientific, that such a little word create so many stirs ... )



- Joseph William Black, residing in Kenya, recently had an article published on dependency, relating to orthodox churches:

Black, Joseph William, 2020, 'Effects of Dependency in Orthodox Missions: a Western Kenyan Perspective.' 179-201 in: *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 64:1-2.

The abstract reads as follows: Many churches and

denominations have struggled with dependency, but the Orthodox churches of western Kenya in particular provide a clear picture of how financial and material dependence on outside sources negatively affects the ministries of priests and the lives of ordinary Orthodox Christians, as well as the role of Orthodox churches in their local communities. This explores the nature of dependency in Christian ministry in general, and how dependency has been caused and experienced in the context of Orthodox churches in western Kenya in particular. Consequences of this dependency in the life of Kenyan Orthodox Churches will be highlighted. The article concludes with suggestions for international Orthodox mission agencies and missionaries, hierarchs, parishes, and local parish leaders to escape from the negative effects of dependency and lead Orthodox Christians and parishes into self-sustainability and financial responsibility and spiritual health.

**Bill provided me with this biography:**

Dr. Bill Black grew up in the US state of South Carolina. While attending Duke University, he lived in Kenya with a Kenyan pastor and his family for part of a year during a short-term mission trip in 1980. After university he directed the short-term missions program in Kenya for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship for four years. He completed his Masters of Divinity from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and was ordained a Presbyterian minister, serving churches in North Carolina and Pennsylvania. He went back to school to get his PhD from the University of Cambridge in the UK.

Bill moved to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 2000, teaching at the Ethiopian Graduate School of Theology and serving for 4 years as the senior pastor of the International Evangelical Church. In 2008 he moved to Nairobi, and taught at the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (now African International University). In 2011 after a long process, he converted to the Orthodox Church. Later that year he began teaching at St. Paul's University (Limuru, Nairobi, Machakos and Nakuru), where he continues to teach in the Faculty of Theology. He has also taught at the Makarios III Patriarchal Orthodox Ecclesiastical School in Nairobi, and has assisted the Archbishop of Nairobi and the Bishop of Kisumu and Western Kenya in various projects. He is a member and sometimes preacher at Sts. Anargyroi Orthodox Church on Valley Road in Nairobi.