

Provisional programme.

Conference – 31st May to 2nd June 2018, to be held at ANCC. (provisional, as per April. 20th 2018)

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

Conference programme

(in bold are the plenaries)

Day	Time	Event	Person
Thursday	17.00	Arrival	
	18.00	Supper	
	19.00	'Who R U?'	Andy and Jim
	20.00	What is Vulnerable Mission?	Participatory discussion led by Jim Harries
	21.00	Cup of tea.	
Friday	7.50	Bfast	
	8.30	Worship led by Mark Jaffrey	
	9.00	Keynote paper: mission in Chaco, Argentina. Title: Mission without Conquest – learning to be guest, companion and friend in the Argentinian Chaco - an alternative missionary practice. Abstract (impromptu): a way of doing mission which we as a peace church are especially interested in because it is an effort to recover the missional posture of the early church.	Frank Paul Chair: Peter Stagg.
	10.30	Break	
	11.00	Ignoring Advice: implementing Vulnerable Mission in Africa. Potential missionaries are often told that, in a foreign context, it is important to take advice before acting. How does that work, when one's people's reputation is for superiority, wealth and generosity, and one is in a poor community? If one takes advice from one's own Western people, will that not perpetuate such superiority? To avoid filling traditional paternalistic roles, to remain vulnerable, Western missionaries must filter what they hear from the West. If 'listening' to nationals requires first knowing their language, as I suggest is the case, it takes years to understand what they are saying. In the meantime, wisdom and discernment is needed to acquire understanding. Hence the importance of the two principles: learn to use their language, then use it, and, don't build on foreign money.	Jim Harries Chair: Deborah Bernhard

	13.00	Lunch	
	14.30	<p>Group discussions</p> <p>Discussion prompters.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is 'vulnerable mission'? 2. Why do we need vulnerable mission? 3. In what ways does vulnerable mission recover the posture of the early church? 4. Should a new missionary 'ignore advice'? Discuss. 	Chair: Jim Harries
	15.30	Report back	Andy Dipper
	16.00	Break tea coffee.	
	16.30	Mission today, and vulnerable mission	Richard and Louisa Evans Chair: Frank Paul
	18.00	Supper	
	19.30	Panel and questions	Frank, Jim, Deborah, Andy Dipper to chair.
	21 Tea / coffee.	Break	
Saturday	7.50	Bfast	
	8.30	Worship led by Mark Jaffrey	
	9.00	<p>How VM principles might contribute to reconciliation and transformation in South Africa</p> <p>Centuries of colonialism, culminating in apartheid, have left the South African society with deep emotional scars and massive structural inequalities. Many Christians and others seek to reconcile people, to build community, to 'heal' the nation and to improve the lives of the deprived. Doing this work rarely happens with the resources and the languages of the disadvantaged. This paper will suggest some reasons why using the principles of Vulnerable Mission (VM) could be beneficial for the project of reconciliation and transformation in South Africa. It will then consider some of the obstacles and resistances to VM principles before concluding with possible arguments for 'white' South African Christians to engage in Vulnerable Mission.</p> <p>30' presentation 20-30' discussion in small groups 20-40' questions to me/open discussion</p>	Marcus Grohmann Chair: Jim Harries
	10.30	Break tea	
	11.00	<p>Honoring local traditions as a principal of Vulnerable Mission in the Buddhist context.</p> <p>This paper outlines some of the actions and attitudes that encourage cultural dependency in mission in the Buddhist context, and suggests some changes missionaries can make to free local people to follow Jesus in their own traditions, without becoming dependent on ties to western structures or culture. It is assumed that Vulnerable Mission is already being</p>	Deborah Bernhard Chair: Tim Reeves

		<p>practiced. Points included come from my own experience in church planting among a minority Buddhist unreached people in Thailand, where I used only local language and resources. First, I define what is meant by cultural dependency in this paper, then outline some of the common practices that encourage cultural dependency. Then, I suggest practices that help prevent cultural dependency from developing in the work of the missionary. There is also a list discussing points "where missionaries commonly get stuck", or so-called blind spots or barriers to missionaries working through local traditions, instead of western ones. Sources are cited that illustrate and provide further context and reading.</p>	
	12.30	Broader discussion	Jim Harries
	13.00	Lunch	
	14.30	<p>Seminars</p> <p>1. Frank Paul <u>When helping hurts</u> and charity destroys dignity - reflecting on the ambiguity of money and outside resources. WHAT is the workshop all about: Not only the experience of Christian missionaries and development workers show that "our ideas" and "our good intentions" are not sufficient to support local churches and projects in a sustainable and self-empowering way. More often the long period effects seem even counterproductive. Because of outside funding and donations there obviously is a great reluctance to evaluate them frankly and make publicly accessible what was really worth doing - in short and long-term periods - or not. In the workshop we critically want to evaluate our own experiences, but most of all think about a holistic approach and how it can work to strengthen people, to build on their own abilities and resources, supporting their dignity and healthy interdependence and how to focus from the beginning of any "project" on mutual learning, mutual planning and genuine cooperation - without (financial) dependencies. POSSIBLE OUTCOME of the workshop: "It's all about people and processes not projects and products".</p> <p>2. Jim Harries <u>Racism and vulnerable mission.</u> Many in the West these days pre-suppose that to not be racist is a foundational norm for moral living. This seminar will look at insidious agendas being concealed by efforts at avoiding 'racism'? Could anti-racism be a strategy that aims to prevent other people from catching up with the West, maintains Western hegemony in education, and conceals the impact of the Gospel? In this seminar we will be told that anti-racism, a bastion of secularism, might be one of the great evils of our time. Vulnerable mission, the counterpoint to anti-racism, takes traits that are these days often rendered invisible by anti-racist agendas, seriously, so as to engage reality, and not propaganda, on the ground in Africa and elsewhere.</p> <p>3. Jens Bernhard <u>Mission Narrative and Oikos.</u> New missionaries and people interested in mission base most of their actions on a few common and subconscious underlying narratives. It is these narratives that determine their strategy, who they work together with, and through which filter they read missiological papers. Very often, the underlying power of those narratives does not get much attention while their correctness and usefulness is widely assumed and almost never questioned. The purpose of this workshop is to illuminate the counterproductive impact of some mission narratives among those with whom we share the good news. I want to address how they function, how they prevent the good news from being understood, and to make some suggestions about how they might be changed. We will spend some time examining our own narratives, and the results they lead to, and consider how they might be changed.</p>	Jim and Frank and Jens Bernhard to lead seminars.
	15.30	Break.	

	16.00	Drawing ends together Reporting back from seminars Prayer time.	Joint chair Jim Harries and Andy Dipper
	17.00	Depart	

