

# Editorial

This issue of *Spes Christiana* offers a rich mix of articles with fresh assessments of areas in Seventh-day Adventist history, theology, and spirituality, as well as in-depth interpretations of biblical passages. Four of the nine articles were first presented as papers at the European Theology Teachers' Conference (ETTC) in Budapest, Hungary, 22–25 March 2023.

Reinder Bruinsma presented the keynote address at ETTC. He addressed the relationship between theologians and administrators in the church. As Bruinsma puts it, "Must the church look towards its professional theologians when it concerns theological developments and definitions of beliefs, or towards those who have been given the administrative task of 'running' the church and of keeping it together?" In asking this question he draws on his many years of experience in both education and administration.

Gilbert M. Valentine addresses a similar issue. In Adventist scholarship, few have equalled Siegfried Horn's reputation. He was widely respected as an archaeologist, author and Dean of the Theological Seminary. However, his church career coincided with a period of high theological tension. How did Horn deal with this? Valentine paints an intriguing portrait of Horn by analysing the personal diaries he kept for more than fifty years. How Horn, the progressive scholar, maintained his commitment to a church led by theologically traditional administrators provides a fascinating case study.

John Okpechi considers the pivotal Marburg Colloquy of 1529 and its significance for the history of Protestantism in general and its potential for informing contemporary Adventism in particular. Sixteenth century theological disagreements and responses to them prove to be instructive for twenty-first century disputes also.

The sanctuary doctrine has triggered more major theological controversies in Adventism than any other teaching. Yet, as Stefan Höschele notes, its moral implications have rarely been addressed. Höschele takes some major steps towards addressing this imbalance, making links with other theological areas that highlight its ethical potential.

As Adventist church membership increases so a greater awareness of its complexity and diversity arises. Filippo Alma investigates Romans 14:1–15:13, a biblical passage demonstrating diversity of opinion in the early

church, and Paul's pastoral advice on how to engage with that. Setting this study within the social and religious context of Rome in the mid-first century, and analysing Paul's detailed rhetorical strategy, Alma reflects on the contemporary relevance of Paul's advice.

Ellen White's voluminous writings influenced, and continue to influence, the Adventist church's priorities. Harri Kuhalampi invites us to consider a neglected area of her output – the basic Christianity outlined in *Steps to Christ*. Here, he finds profundity in her apparent simplicity. Thus, theological teachers, the core readers of this journal, who spend much time in the depths of scholarship will find much to ponder in Kuhalampi's analysis.

We also publish Kendra Haloviak Valentine's much appreciated sermon, delivered to the participants at the 2023 ETTC. Her sermon demonstrates the fruit of detailed reading, imaginative intertextual analysis, illumination of the gospel narratives, and thoughtful application to our contemporary scene.

Goran Zivkovic reads Haggai from an eco-theological perspective, emphasizing the contribution of ritual. This raises some profound questions concerning how ancient texts can impact on our contemporary ethical decisions.

Matthew Korpman explores rather different aspects of Ellen White's work in two articles. In one, "Fictitious Tales or Historical Treasures", the focus is the New Testament Apocrypha, in particular The Acts of Paul and Thecla. In "Satan's Captives are Burning the Bible", the focus is on early manuscript evidence for her general attitude to the Apocrypha. These two articles add fascinating details to this growing area of Ellen White studies.

Two book reviews assess recent significant publications on Ellen White and Adventist church history. Theodore Levterov considers Donald Edward Casebolt, *Father Miller's Daughter: Ellen Harmon White*, and Rory Mendez appraises Richard B. Ferret, *Seventh-day Adventist Health Reform – A Crucible of Identity Tensions: Ellen G. White and Dr. John H. Kellogg – The Battle for Seventh-day Adventist Identity*.

Finally, please note that from this issue of *Spes Christiana*, the journal will appear annually.

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