

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the maiden edition of the Pentecost Journal of Theology and Mission (PJTM). PJTM seeks to provide a space for critical reflection on contemporary issues of theology and mission through a Pentecostal lens. It is a place for both seasoned and emerging scholars, and mission practitioners from Africa and elsewhere to share their experiences, research and reflections making a contribution to Theological Education in Africa and beyond. Theology arises in local contexts as Christians engage in addressing local concerns and challenges, but the insights of contextual theology have something important to say to the world church. By creating a space for the voices of African theologians, pastors and teachers to be heard, the global church will be blessed by glimpses of God's wisdom and glory. As God's revelation shines upon and reflects from many contexts, the world "will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the seas" (Hab.2:14) just as a diamond glints ever brighter as light is reflected from its multiple sides.

In this first issue that addresses 'Pentecostalism, Migration and World Christianity', we are honoured and delighted that the Chairman of the Church of Pentecost (CoP), Apostle Dr Opoku Onyinah has contributed our Feature Article. Dr Onyinah helpfully sets out the history and character of the Church of Pentecost. His article brings out one aspect of the uniqueness of the CoP as -

a financially self-supporting church right from its beginning to date. On finance, it is the policy of The Church of Pentecost not to ask for any outside support. The main sources of supports are tithes and offerings contributed by the members. The Church believes that God will meet the Church's financial needs in season and out of season.

The Church of Pentecost has become not only a World Church having established sustainable churches in 90 countries but also, by God's grace, a church that is able to offer reflection to the Body of Christ in Africa and beyond. Why?, because the CoP has the kind of spirituality that recognises, celebrates and expresses faith through indigenous cultures. This strong sense of identity is not without its challenges, especially as the church expands to other cultures and nations.

In this issue two scholars of the Church of Pentecost, Dr Emmanuel Anim and Apostle Dr Dela Quampah reflect on the CoP in the diaspora, exploring the models of mission that exist and reflecting on how the CoP can be effective communicators of the gospel across the world.

Dr Emmanuel Anim is Principal of the Pentecost Theological Seminary (PTS), Ghana and a regular teacher in Theological and Mission Institutions in Ghana, UK, USA and other parts of the world. In his article, "Mission, Migration and World Christianity", Anim notes that,

migration and Christian mission have often gone together with church planting, and sometimes the latter becoming the unintended consequences of the former. This was very much the case in early Christian history as persecuted Jewish Christians in Jerusalem fled to neighbouring communities of Samaria and later to Asia Minor outside Palestine ...
... the spread of Christianity across the world owes as much to migration, either voluntarily or by persecution, as it does to direct missionary efforts.

It is in light of these historic experiences that we may better understand African Christian mission in the diaspora. Dr Anim looks at the ability of the CoP to incorporate into its worship and liturgy the use of Ghanaian musical instruments, singing, clapping and dancing to local choruses making it attractive to Ghanaians in the diaspora and a place to feel at home. Anim suggests that many CoP churches in the diaspora have adopted a "chaplaincy mission model" and notes the values of this approach. However, Dr Anim highlights the crucial need for adequate training in cross cultural mission for pastors in the CoP so that they are equipped to "embrace a vision that encompasses the indigenous communities as well."

Dr Dela Quampah, former Dean of Studies at PTS is now leading the CoP in South Africa. His article provides a case study and example of praxis as he reflects on action, and acts on reflections, within the context of South Africa. He concludes with an insightful observation that,

globalization has resulted in the emergence of diaspora churches, which is a significant feature of the shift in contemporary Christian mission paradigm. And we need to celebrate the approach of some Pentecostal churches, who build capacity by empowering their laity to take the bold initiative and plant their home churches in diaspora communities.

The fourth article by Prof. Asamoah-Gyadu, a lecturer at Trinity Theological Seminary, Ghana, is titled "Migration and Diaspora Mission: Africa and the Changing Christian Landscape of the West". Prof. Asamoah-Gyadu observes that,

African migrants always carry their faith with them to the Diasporas thus contributing significantly to the revival of Christianity in the West... Unlike the cries of Diaspora Jews who out of exilic despair could not fathom singing the Lord's song in a foreign land, modern migrants are doing just that with the formation of churches with many hoping that their efforts may help to deal with the declining presence of Christianity in the modern West.

The fifth article, "Nigerian Immigrant: Pentecostal Churches and their impact on Global Christianity", is jointly written by Samuel Fabunmi and Professor Deji Ahebfoyin. Fabunmi is an upcoming scholar in Church History focusing on the development of African Christianity. Ahebfoyin is currently Head of Department, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. They help us to see the huge contribution that Nigerian Christians have made on the spread of Christianity in the world today, particularly in Europe and America, noting that,

Apart from the home front, Nigerian Pentecostal denominations are now proliferating internationally. Today, many of the Nigerian Pentecostal churches are firmly planted in western countries, such as France, Britain, Germany, Russia and the United States of America.

Migration may be a defining issue of the 21st Century. However uncomfortable the issues, Christians cannot avoid engaging with what is happening in every continent of our world. Irregular migration and how immigrants might regularize their status is one uncomfortable yet unavoidable question for Christians, for the Church and for the nations. This is picked up in our sixth article by Rev. Frederick Gyamfi-Mensah who researched the topic of irregular migration in Germany when he was there as a regular migrant pastor and student. Gyamfi-Mensah, an emerging scholar, invites us to reflect on the story of Abraham's migration to Egypt which raises some important theological questions for sober reflection.

This is particularly thorny when we consider the long term consequences of Abraham's sojourn to Egypt. Gyamfi-Mensah notes that,

In Genesis chapter sixteen, Abraham and Sarah had taken Hagar as maidservant from Egypt. Unable to bear children at this time, Sarah suggested that Abraham took Hagar as mistress and build a family through her, which was culturally acceptable. Perhaps, she had thought God's promise would come true this way (Gen. 15:4). It is particularly insightful when one considers the message of the angel of God to Hagar, part of which reads: "I will so increase your descendants that they will be too numerous to count" (Gen 16:10) ... What are some of the relevant contemporary challenges that the birth of Ishmael and his ancestry have brought to the whole issue of global migration today?

How the church responds to the challenges and implications of migration is the focus of Patrick Johnstone's article. For 40 years Johnstone wrote the internationally acclaimed prayer/information manual *Operation World*. In his article, through his personal and missiological reflections, he calls the global church to action in a world on the move. He sees –

the migrant crisis as a great opportunity to start multi-cultural teams planting multi-cultural churches that are relevant and spiritually effective in the demanding environment of today's globalized world.

Johnstone challenges the church to find ways and means of using their rich and varied gifts to build an integrated Christian community. We are grateful to all the contributors for this first edition – all are busy people who made time to share with us. We acknowledge the Editorial Board whose role in reviewing articles helps to ensure that the Pentecost Journal of Theology and Mission will stay robust, practical and scholarly. And we welcome you our readers, whether you are scholars, mission practitioners, pastors, students or church members we hope you will enjoy this first edition, and subsequent ones.

Since the gospel of Jesus Christ came to us through migration, how do we respond with the gospel in our world on the move? Indeed one of the greatest challenges facing the church today is how it would be able to see migration as an opportunity of bringing together Christians from all nations to all nations to live out the truth of the gospel in all the nations as spelt out in Ephesians 2:11-21. Through the cross Christ Jesus has destroyed the barrier, hostility and the dividing wall of ethnocentrism and denominationalism. He has indeed created in Himself one new humanity, where we are no longer foreigners and aliens to each other, but fellow-citizens with God's people and members of God's household. For through Christ Jesus we all have access to the Father by one Spirit.

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Chief Editor