

## *A Note from the Editors*



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Truly there is nothing more exciting than watching something that you barely allowed yourself to dream about years before finally coming to life before your eyes. Looking back at this story I see the theme of our current issue so vividly - using the past to inform the future.

As a Master of Library Studies student at the University of Alberta, I (Karina) attended a peer review workshop in the fall of 2018 and was part of starting a journal with other likeminded library students. While participating in peer review, I was hit with the realization that Vanguard College students might also like the opportunity to publish their work. Who wants to pour hours of time, energy, and effort into a research paper that you simply throw away after it is graded? I used my past experiences as an editorial board member and peer reviewer on this library journal to inform the future of a journal at Vanguard College.

A year or so after this first venture into academic publishing as a peer reviewer and editorial board participant, I started approaching faculty about the idea of incorporating journal publishing into their course work here at Vanguard. The complexity of setting up a system to handle this kind of publishing was a bit daunting. However, the University of Alberta has an open access publishing platform that they are not only willing to share with other institutions, but they also provide the support and training editorial boards need to get a journal started. After some discussion with digital initiative librarians in publishing at the University of Alberta, I concluded that one publication for the whole school would be the wisest course of action. In this way, we are using those librarians' past experiences to inform our future.

After mentioning the idea to a handful of students and alumni, enough excitement was generated to have our inaugural meeting in the spring of 2021. I would like to thank each person in attendance at that meeting for their contributions to what would become the scope and vision of this journal. We knew we wanted a mix of readers and authors at a variety of scholarly levels. Highlighting the intersection of theology and applied ministry, we dreamed of an open-access journal dedicated to publishing the scholarly works of students, scholars, and practitioners. This journal would allow current students to publish their hard work on assignments while also encouraging pastors/practitioners to continue thinking about, discussing, and publishing theology. Reciprocally, scholars also get to interact with perspectives from the trenches of ministry, and both pastors and scholars get to benefit from the fresh perspectives of students. Essentially, all three groups interact with the scholarly conversation together and use their collective past to inform each other's futures.

We remain rooted in our affiliation with Vanguard College and the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, participating in the College's mission to "develop and mobilize Spirit empowered leaders to be fruitful in God's mission." We also welcome participants to the academic conversation that are not affiliated with Vanguard College or the PAOC, but still desire to engage with the intersection of theology and applied ministry within their field or denomination.

Therefore, the stated goals of the Vanguard Journal of Theology and Ministry (VJTM) are to:

- ∞ provide students the opportunity to contribute their perspective to academic discussion
- ∞ encourage pastors and practitioners to engage in theological and scholarly discussion
- ∞ promote the integration of theological study with applied ministry experience

From here, our vision grew to encompass a broad array of submission types to appeal to all three categories of authors and readers that we wanted to serve. Each issue engages an annual theme from a variety of perspectives. What you now hold in your hand is a reflection of this variety. You have peer-reviewed articles from alumni practitioners alongside creative nonfiction, poetry, and art. All of these publications should cause your heart to pause and consider, how will you use the past to inform the future? Can you feel the momentum building?

You may notice that not all the books in our book review section are directly related to the topic of studying history. We included them because all books written and published contribute to the scholarly conversation on their chosen topic, essentially becoming part of the past that informs our future as soon as we read them.

In many ways, this year's theme arose naturally from Vanguard College's 75th anniversary celebrations. It is an honour to publish our first issue alongside this momentous occasion. Using the past to inform the future is a powerful way to reflect on the faithfulness of God while looking forward to what He has in store for us next. This is how we build momentum.

*“Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will show you, your elders, and they will tell you” Deuteronomy 32:7, NIV*

*“For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that ... we might have hope” Romans 15:4, NIV*

We press on towards the future with hope, knowing that we face many of the same challenges we have overcome before. We will continue recruiting volunteer authors to submit their work, peer reviewers to review it, editorial board members to publish it, and readers to read it. In all of this we remain confident that God's faithfulness to see this dream started will also see it through.

We have separated our inaugural volume into two issues this year in order to present this first issue at the open house event on graduation weekend in April while still planning for the regularly scheduled issue to release in September.

This would not have been possible without the incredible contributions of the following individuals: Bradley Baker, Kaylee Craig, Jillian Fast, James MacKnight, Tiffany-Marie McPhate (nee Sloboda), Joshua Richardson, Cayla Thorlakson, Joshua VanZandbeek, Hilary Warnock, and Daniel Zander. Thank you for the time and energy you contributed to the development of this journal in a variety of ways over the last year, and especially over the last few weeks.

We would also like to thank all our peer reviewers, without whom we would not have succeeded in including pastor/practitioner articles in this issue. You know who you are! Scholarship cannot thrive without the invaluable feedback you provide to one another. We are especially grateful for your assistance with the tight turn arounds to get this first issue ready.

And thank you, readers! We hope that you find inspiration and motivation in these pages. As this publication becomes part of the past, use it to inform your future.

Karina Dunn, Library Director

Cayla Thorlakson, Interim Editor in Chief, Secretary

James MacKnight, Editor

Hilary Warnock, Editor