

A Note from the Editors



It has truly been an honour to watch and be a part of VJTM coming into existence. This issue marks our second publication out of what will hopefully be many, as well as a time of transition for our journal team. Having now published both issues of our inaugural volume, the journal team finds itself on the cusp of a new stage in the journal's life. We have finished the work needed to establish the basics of a journal, including all the policies and practices that make a journal possible. Now we can begin to move into maintenance and improvement, and take VJTM to new places of journal publishing. May this next season be a time of growth guided by a new breath of the Holy Spirit.

As stated, the 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

In most developed fields, the “vanguard” of best practice on the subject is led by people engaging in scholarly dialogue on topics in the field. This “scholarly forum” is made up of avenues through which writers can publish their thinking and findings after being vetted and improved by a regulatory body associated with the publisher. In this way, the scholarly publisher acts as a check to make sure the information being published is high-quality. This is what differentiates the scholarly forum from the general public forum seen on social media and other avenues, which may include inaccurate information and thus cannot be considered a reliable source for guiding a field. Book publishing is one such scholarly avenue, and journal publishing, such as VJTM, is another.

Through this method of responsible publishing, the scholarly forum provides an avenue for those in the field to both participate in and stay abreast of new developments. When new practices and creative solutions are discovered, they can be shared in the scholarly forum so that other scholars, practitioners, and students can benefit. In this way the scholarly forum can simply be considered an institution for sharing knowledge.

It is the conviction of VJTM that the church can and should participate in the scholarly forum, and that it will be greatly aided in its mission by doing so. Generally speaking, the church does have a scholarly forum that academics participate in, including publications such as books and journal articles. However, these scholarly resources are mainly consumed by the community of scholars. While being excellent and complex sources of information, pastors and lay believers may regard such resources to be confusing at best, and at worst, simply unnecessary. As a result, after graduation, many pastors and church leaders never pick up an academic journal again. In the same way, pastors and Christian practitioners go about their everyday ministry, continually improving their practice, discovering new theological applications, and coming up with creative solutions to common problems, but never have the opportunity to share their valuable insights with the larger church. In this way, a gap exists between academic theology and applied ministry.

VJTM believes that both scholars and practitioners have valuable insights to share, and the church will be greatly improved if they can be convinced to share their thoughts with one another

through formal methods of dialogue, such as in the scholarly forum. To this end, we invite scholars, pastor/practitioners, and students to contribute their thoughts to our open-access journal, so that all have the opportunity to share, learn, and be improved in the process. We believe that God can and does move through this process, and that, in this way, academic publishing can function as an act of worship.

We recognize that there are barriers inherent in the publishing process for those who are not familiar with the world of scholarship. This unfamiliarity does not mean that they do not have valuable insights to share. VJTM is committed to reducing these barriers so that everyone has the opportunity to contribute. Our identity as an open-access journal is integral to our vision of allowing every writer the opportunity to contribute their insights to the scholarly forum, and for every reader to benefit from the thoughts of others.

VJTM remains 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.

In this issue, our authors explore the "momentum" of the church for both the past and the future, touching on topics such as revisioning Pentecostal eschatology, examining the church's stance on mental illness, and using insights of the early church as a model for modern missions. Such reflection allows us to use the past to inform the future, so that we may be continually improving from both the insights and mistakes of Christians in years gone by. Through such reflection within a forum of responsible, scholarly publishing that values both academic and practical insights, we can collectively form the "vanguard" of theology and ministry.

"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 have separated our inaugural volume into two issues this year in order to present the first issue at Vanguard College's 75th anniversary celebration while still releasing this regularly scheduled issue in September. This would not have been possible without the incredible contributions of the following individuals: Kaylee Craig, Joshua VanZandbeek, Daniel Zander, Joel Bornau, and Kayla Muth. 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.

Finally, 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.

Cayla Thorlakson, Interim Editor in Chief

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