

Editorial

From 21–25 October 2018 an international Barth conference was held in Stellenbosch with the theme “Embracing things past and things to come”. The conference was jointly hosted by Stellenbosch University, The School of Humanities at UNISA and the Centre for Barth Studies at Princeton Theological Seminary. The conference theme drew upon Karl Barth’s introduction to his *The Theology of John Calvin* (1922). Barth wrote, with reference to Calvin, that we should engage with history “on the simple grounds that we are humans and not oxen and asses that only know the present. We have a reason to embrace things past and things to come. We then, have a sense of time.” In the light of this remark the conference – 50 years after Barth’s death – focused on our complex and ambivalent pasts, as well as our current challenges and visions for the future. We are happy to include a selection in this edition of the *Stellenbosch Theological Journal* of the papers (by De Gruchy, Edwards, Field, Haddorff, Hartman, Nierop, Taljaard, and Wolff) presented at the conference

Apart from these eight articles, we include twelve further peer-reviewed articles. Many of these articles engage directly with ecclesial and societal challenges emanating from various South African contexts (see for instance the articles by Kgatla, Mashau, Pali, Resane, Vorster and Van Niekerk). In addition, a number of articles provide theological perspectives on global challenges related respectively to health (Rheeder) as well as to the so-called refugee crisis (Louw, Schinagl). Also included are articles that explore readings of biblical material (De Villiers, Rochester). The article by Francois Wessels on Martin Luther was presented in October 2017 as the annual Willie Jonker Memorial Lecture.

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