

# Editorial foreword

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This festschrift is in honour of the work and skills of Professor George Lotter. It is no easy task to capture the extend of Lotter's vast contribution to the study of pastoral care. His contribution could be seen in the 91 students who obtain their masters and doctoral degrees under his mentorship. Sixteen of his masters students also achieved their doctoral degrees under his mentorship. His further investment in the students was also evident in the co-authoring of scientific articles. A large number of the 42 articles written by him is evident of this. We are grateful that he guided students this way and are looking forward to more contributions of this kind in future.

The theme of this *festschrift* 'Pastoral Theology in SA: *semper reformanda*', selected by Lotter himself, is indicative of his dedication to the reformed theology. His critical thoughts and research in the reformative field led to numerous papers – national and international. George Lotter could be seen as an outstanding scholar who lives his believes in his field of study. Lotter follows in the footsteps of our Lord with his dedication and compassion towards people. George was also my mentor when I entered the academic world after 30 years of service in the church. His valuable and unselfish acts are also echoed by many young researchers.

The articles, contributed to this *festschrift*, address a number of relevant subjects in the Practical Theology:

Magezi E. Baloyi's article investigates the challenges and problems affecting retired and elderly black South Africans with particular focus on the economic impact of aging and its influence on family relationships in the lives of elderly people. He investigates the specific challenges black elderly people faced and the task of the pastoral caregiver. Guidelines for the church in the improvement the elderly's lives form part of this work.

In Gert Breed's article the ministry in the presence of God (*coram Deo*), as revealed in the Book of Exodus, is described. The results of the investigation are continuously applied to the practical work of the congregation. The article concludes that the ministry can be largely enriched when the congregation are purposefully guided to come together, serve and live consciously in the presence of God.

Alfred Brunson explores the narrative approach and positive psychology and the effect of it on wisdom in his contribution to the *festschrift*. This article endeavours to contribute to the enrichment of pastoral practitioners' frame of reference by drawing on the insights of the narrative and positive psychology.

In his article, Ben de Klerk addresses the relationship between the pastoral ministry of confession or guilt and reconciliation, and the performing of liturgical acts. The article concludes with the fact that the communicative act of confession of guilt and reconciliation as an independent act in the liturgy of the congregation could be a powerful pastoral tool to the congregation as a whole and to members individually.

In his article, Wentzel C. Coetzer emphasises that children are full members of the community of faith (including their emotions). The importance of pastoral care to children is also emphasised, including the techniques and practical guidelines on religious issues for the guidance of the child who has experienced loss.

Rob Elkington, Darryl Meekins, Jennifer Breen en Suzanne Martin investigate the importance of effective leadership development of church leaders in their article. It introduces a new framework for leadership development in the 21st century church. It concludes with a list of theory-based activities that, if undertaken, will equip church leaders to utilise the proposed framework.

In their article, Dion Forster en Johann Oostenbrink argue for the importance of a rediscovery of a theology of work that can empower and equip the church and individual Christians for ministry

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in the marketplace. The article comes to the conclusion that the church will need to revisit its missional theology, refocuses its efforts on broader society, and empowers and equips its members for ministry in the marketplace in order to be faithful in partnering with God in the *missio Dei*.

Johan Janse van Rensburg's article focuses on the current situation of pastoral theology worldwide but mostly in South Africa. Since epistemological choices determine the method and content of research on pastoral theology as well as the practical implementation thereof, there is an urgent need to evaluate the influences on pastoral theology and the results of these influences. The article focuses on the epistemological dynamics that have changed pastoral theology from a scriptural approach to a discipline of communicative acts and a postmodern strategy of narrative pastoral counselling.

In her article, Philippa Strong focuses on the important question of Youth Ministry and the balance between theological ministry and ministry that also encapsulates the cultural situation of the youth. The article gives culture its rightful and relevant place in Youth Ministry, without it overshadowing the foundation of effective Youth Ministry, namely theology.

Petria Theron's article deals with the fact that both lecturers and students in Practical Theology should further develop their empirical research capacities. A more systematic approach during the coding and data analysis phase of qualitative research with a proposed model for coding and data analysis in practical theological studies are suggested.

The abundance of themes in this *festscrift* is an indication of the kindness George Lotter received and utilised during his long career.