



## Evidence of church unity for global health

This issue completes eight years of publishing the *Christian Journal for Global Health*. At the beginning hardly anyone would have predicted that global health would become first in the minds of the majority of the earth's population or that an infectious calamity would become the focus of global attention. In fact, health in a global sense is testimony to the unity of the human race at a time when fractionation is a strategy for political hegemony. The Christian understanding of humans, made in the image of God and called to steward the creation, is a fundamental basis for this unity. The editors see the journal as a way to join this understanding with a vision of health for all nations.

The journal editors have issued a call for papers on [Vaccinations and Christian Social Responsibility](#) which we anticipate publishing early in 2022. As a foretaste of that, this end-of-year issue has a commentary by Professor Steffen Flessa on [Vaccination Against COVID-19 as a Christian Duty? A Risk-Analytic Approach](#). He analyzes the decision-making process for getting vaccinated, a process that involves probabilities and risk-analysis, as well as consideration of the greater good.

Two original research articles are included in this issue. [Jorge de Andres-Sanchez](#) with his colleagues from Universitat Rovira i Virgili in Catalonia, Spain, find that belonging to a religious community together with an intact family structure afford protection against unhealthy tobacco and cannabis use. [Syeda Saniya Zehra and Elizabeth Schwaiger](#) from Forman Christian College in Lahore, Pakistan, provide evidence of a unique advantages of attachment to God and a collectivist family culture on reducing perceived stress, among Christians who are a minority of the country's population.

Personal travel gives me opportunity for access to Wi-Fi networks in homes of family and friends and thus acquaintance with creative SSID labels. One of the more meaningful ones was "readmorebooks". In pursuance of

that advice, this issue has two book reviews that we think deserve the attention of readers. The first is a review by Arnold Gorske of a two-volume handbook entitled [Health Promoting Churches](#), published by the World Council of Churches and authored and edited by Dr. Mwai Makoka. As Dr. Gorske comments, these books, "have more lifesaving, health and healing potential than anything else I have read," except the Bible. The second is Dr. William Newbrander's review of [All Creation Groans: Toward a Theology of Disease and Global Health](#), edited by Daniel O'Neill and Beth Snodderly. The essays included in this book create a comprehensive multidisciplinary survey of the theological grounds for church involvement in global health and the spiritual and behavioral aspects of disease origins. Dr. Newbrander's review provides a helpful introduction to these important and often unexplored issues.

The editors are pleased to receive poetry submissions from time to time and we are grateful for our poetry reviewer to help us evaluate them. [I Will Never See a Full Moon the Same](#) is a moving reflection on the death of a young patient, but death with a perspective of hope.

As of the middle of this December, the coronavirus pandemic is still very much with us with surges in case numbers in a variety of countries, and with several variant strains. The deployment of vaccines, their future development and the means to expedite their uptake around the world continue to be fertile subjects for research, policy, ethics and theology. We urge and look forward to publishing other submissions in response to this call for papers and other subject early in the new year.

The glory the angels revealed to the shepherds at the birth of Christ, He has given to His people, whom He desires to be unified to reflect that glory (John 17:22). For those strengthened by beholding each other's work and faith, may your communities experience a very merry Christmas and peaceful new year.

