

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2022

INTRODUCTION

When 2022 began, few of us expected that it would become a year of war in Europe. But on 24 February Russia invaded Ukraine and at the time of writing the end of this war is not in sight. Several articles in this issue of the Newsletter pay attention to this war. As FEET we are horrified by the news about the death of innocent theologians. The clear concern of our brothers and sisters in Ukraine is that the rest of the world will sooner or later forget this war and return to 'business as usual', as happened for example with the wars in Syria and Yemen. Let us make sure that this war is not forgotten and let us continue to pray for all involved.

In August this year we hope to meet many of you in Prague for our biennial conference; details below. It is poignant that we will have various speakers from Ukraine! Please book early via <https://feet-europe.org/conferences> to assist the organisation. More details below. As always, the conference is also open to non-members.

Pieter Lalleman, editor

In 2009 FEET had many sympathisers but only 25 actual members. At the moment we are up to some 75 members, not counting the members of the German AfeT and the Swiss AfbeT. This is a reason for thankfulness!

This newsletter is sent to 985 addresses of FEET members, friends and institutions.

Please notify the secretary (and the publisher of EJT, if applicable) of any changes to your address.

Please use the addresses secretary@feet-europe.org and subscriptions@aup.nl.

Members, please remember to pay your membership fees.



IN THIS ISSUE

Introduction	1
At the Sunset of the Russian Empire by Johannes Reimer	2
War in Ukraine by Roman Soloviy ...	5
Statement on the war in Ukraine. ...	6
Interview Gert Hain	7
Interview Hetty Lalleman	8
In memoriam Helmut Burkhardt ...	10
FEET Conference 2022	11
European Journal of Theology	12
Conference on Barth's Römerbrief .	12
The Executive Committee	13



At the Sunset of the Russian Empire. Putin's attempt to build a 'Russian World' and the Evangelical answer

Johannes Reimer¹

1. THE PROTECTOR OF RUSSIANS IN THE WORLD

Since Vladimir Putin became president of the Russian Federation, he has again and again stressed the importance for Russia to support Russians wherever they may live in the world. He often uses the term 'Russki Mir' (= 'Russian world') to describe Russians living in Russia and outside of Russia.² This is a term with deep historic roots, used today to describe Russians as an ethnic entity, a diaspora community outside of Russia proper, or even the canonical territory of the Russian Orthodox Church.³ Historically the term described 'the Russian state and empire as a distinctive civilizational space'.⁴ Used already in medieval sources, for example, to describe the civilisation of ancient Russia as a Russian world, 'Russki mir' was widely used by Pan-Slavic authors since the 1870s capturing a world inhabited by Slavic tribes which are united by the Orthodox faith, culture and mentality.⁵

The idea of Russianness defining identity was back on the table soon after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The end of the Soviet Union left all newly formed independent states with the search for a national identity. And, of course, the ethnic majority in every given country proposed a future national idea. Soon Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian became the official

languages in the Baltics, as well as Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Georgian and others in their respective countries. Ethnic Russians and Russian-speaking people beyond the borders of the Russian Federation found themselves in minorities and under cultural, linguistic and even economic pressure.⁶ And even in the Russian Federation a search for a new national idea started.⁷

The idea of 'the Russian World' was soon rediscovered. And Putin found the idea in any way attractive. It gave him a ground to re-imagine a Russian empire.

The first step towards this was the building of different institutions in Russia around the issue of Russian compatriots living outside of Russia.⁸ At the first congress of Russian compatriots in 2001 Putin underlined his will to support the Russian diaspora in any way possible against injustice done to them and he invited the compatriots to recover the power of Russia, calling such a recovery a 'question of self-determination' and even more a 'spiritual self-determination'.⁹ Putin defined Russians in 2014 by stating: 'When I speak of Russians and Russian-speaking citizens I am referring to those people who consider themselves part of the broad Russian community. They may not necessarily be ethnic Russians, but they consider themselves Russian people.'¹⁰ It is this Russian-speaking diaspora, the Russian world, which he has in mind. Putin states:

¹ Dr Johannes Reimer is professor emeritus of Mission Studies at the Ewersbach University of Applied Arts, Germany, and director of the Department of Public Engagement of the World Evangelical Alliance.

² J. O'Loughlin, G. Toal, V. Kolosov, 'Who identifies with the «Russian World»? Geopolitical attitudes in southeastern Ukraine, Crimea, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Transnistria', *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 57.6 (2016) 745-778 (745), online at <https://ibs.colorado.edu/johno/pub/RussianWorld.pdf> (accessed 23.03.2022).

³ S. M. Aleinikova, *Russkii mir: beloruski vzgliad* (Minsk: RIVS 2017) 5.

⁴ O'Loughlin a.o., 'Who identifies with the "Russian world"', 747.

⁵ See for instance David MacKenzie, 'Panslavism in Practice: Cherniaev in Serbia (1876)', *The Journal of Modern History* 36 (1964) 279-297.

⁶ See for instance Jeff Chinn and Robert Kaiser, *Russians as the New Minority: Ethnicity and Nationalism in the Soviet Successor States* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996); Valeri A. Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame* (London: Sage, 1997).

⁷ Wayne Allensworth, *The Russian Question: Nationalism, Modernization, and Post-communist Russia* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield 1998).

⁸ See an overview in O'Loughlin a.o., 'Who identifies with the "Russian World"', 750.

⁹ Vladimir V. Putin, 'Vystuplenie Prezidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii V. V. Putina na Kongresse sootchestvennikov' [Speech of the Russian President V. V. Putin at the Congress of Compatriots], October 11, 2001, at http://old.nasledie.ru/politvnt/19_44/article.php?art=24 (accessed 23.03.2022).

¹⁰ Vladimir V. Putin, 'Address to Conference of Russian Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives', July 1, 2014, at <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/46131> (accessed 23.03.2022).

‘What matters is not where you live geographically, what matters is your mentality, your aspirations and, as I said, the person’s self-identification.’¹¹ They are people who ‘share a common concern for Russia’s future and its people, a commitment to be useful to your historical homeland, to promote its socioeconomic development and strengthen its international authority and prestige’.¹² In 2007 Putin signed a decree establishing an organisation called the Russian World Foundation (RWF) with a clearly declared mission to promote the Russian language, culture and spirituality within Russia and abroad and to encourage interest in Russian history and culture. Today the RWF works in more than 80 countries. In the RWF the idea of *Russki Mir* became an institutional expression and at the same time an instrument of Putin’s foreign policy. Observers of Russian politics in Ukraine, for instance, directly relate the activities of RWF to the idea of *Russki Mir*. Michael Wawrzonek rightly stated: ‘The neo-imperialist goals of Russian policy toward Ukraine in recent years have received a doctrinal foundation – the concept of the Orthodox civilisational community – the *Russkiy mir*’.¹³ Further, he claimed that ‘*Russkiy mir* ... should be considered a pretext for Russian political, economic, or “security” policies toward Ukraine’.¹⁴ In Putin’s Russian world the war in Ukraine is a step towards the realisation of the much higher idea of a strong Orthodox reality. Answering the question what the Russian people are to him, Putin said:

As for our people, our country, like a magnet, has attracted representatives of different ethnic groups, nations and nationalities. Incidentally, this has become the backbone not only for our common cultural code but also a very powerful genetic code, because genes have been exchanged during all these centuries and even millennia as a result of mixed marriages. And this genetic code of ours is probably, and in fact almost certainly, one of our main competitive advantages in today’s world. This

code is very flexible and enduring. We don’t even feel it but it is certainly there. So what are our particular features? We do have them, of course, and I think they rely on values. It seems to me that the Russian person or, on a broader scale, a person of the Russian world, primarily thinks about his or her highest moral designation, some highest moral truths. Therefore, the Russian person, or a person of the Russian world, does not concentrate on his or her own precious personality ... Western values are different and are focused on one’s inner self. Personal success is the yardstick of success in life and this is acknowledged by society. The more successful a person is, the better. This is not enough for us in this country. ... Death is horrible, isn’t it? But no, it appears it may be beautiful if it serves the people: death for one’s friends, one’s people or for the homeland, to use a modern word. These are the deep roots of our patriotism. They explain mass heroism during armed conflicts and wars and even sacrifice in peacetime. Hence there is a feeling of fellowship and family values. Of course, we are less pragmatic, less calculating than representatives of other peoples, and we have bigger hearts. Maybe this is a reflection of the grandeur of our country and its boundless expanses. Our people have a more generous spirit.¹⁵

In Putin’s world Russians constitute a ‘super-ethnos’ with clear markers opposed to Western Individualism.¹⁶ This super-ethnos he attempts to re-establish, believing in a kind of spiritual destiny and divine calling.

2. THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE AND THE RUSSIANS

Russia has never been the country of ethnic Russians only. Citizens of Russia, *Rossiane* in Russian, are not automatically Russians, *Russkie*. In fact, almost 200 ethnic groups exist in the Russian Federation according to the 2010 census.¹⁷ The vast majority of the population

¹¹ Putin, ‘Vystuplenie’.

¹² Vladimir V. Putin, ‘Vladimir Putin’s Address to the Participants of the Fourth World Conference of Compatriots’, October 26, 2012, at <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/16719> (accessed 23.03.2022).

¹³ Michael Wawrzonek, ‘Ukraine in the “Grey Zone”: Between the “*Russkiy mir*” and Europe’, *East European Politics and Societies* 28 (2014) 760.

¹⁴ Wawrzonek, ‘Ukraine’, 776.

¹⁵ Vladimir V. Putin, ‘Direct Line with Vladimir Putin’, April 17, 2014, at <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20796> (accessed 23.03.2022).

¹⁶ O’Loughlin a.o., ‘Who identifies with the “Russian world”’, 753.

¹⁷ Yekaterina Sinelschikova, ‘How many ETHNIC groups live in Russia?’ in *Russia Beyond* 16 November 2021, at <https://www.rbth.com/lifestyle/334417-how-many-ethnic-groups> (accessed 24.03.2022).

claims to be ethnically Russian (80,9%),¹⁸ but a closer look often reveals mixed ethnic identities, which lead to a short cut of identifying oneself as Russian. Having the official Russian nationality has always been profitable in times of the empire as well as the Soviet Union. I vividly remember how often Soviet officials suggested to me, an ethnic German, to change my nationality to Russian. 'You are limiting your chances,' they argued, 'by not being Russian.'

The ethnically Russian population of the Russian Federation is obviously much less than the 2010 census suggested. And the massive immigration of Central Asians, Caucasians, Chinese and others is pushing the number down year after year.¹⁹ Russia is second after the USA in numbers of citizens not born in Russia and Moscow is the third largest city of Europe in terms of migrants.²⁰ Many ethnic Russians are concerned that the massive immigration will for ever change the identity of their country. It is obvious that the vast majority of ethnic migrants do not belong to Putin's 'super-ethnos', are seldom Orthodox in faith and rather belong to the Muslim majority of the South of Russia and Central Asia. The *Russki Mir* of Putin is daily questioned by them.

Not much different is the situation in the former Soviet republics. A survey taken in the countries neighbouring Russia, to check the general acceptance of the idea of *Russki Mir*, showed how limited the acceptance by the majority of the population in the former USSR is.²¹ *Russki Mir* as the basic philosophy of Putin's attempt to rebuild the Russian empire seems to be failing.

Putin's aggressive push of his *Russki Mir* idea, uniting people of different backgrounds into a 'super-ethnos', obviously finds little support among broad masses of the ethnically non-Russian population in and outside of the Russian Federation. In fact, exactly the opposite is happening. People with hybrid ethnicity leave their Russiness and return to their original ethnicity. Germans, Jews, Tatars, Ukrainians, not to mention

traditional Muslim populations, are searching for who they really are. This is a process which, in the judgement of some historians, may end in a dissolution of the rest of the once glorious Russian empire. Putin's push for an exclusive Russian ethnos may soon turn out to be the biggest political mistake of the Russian administration.

3. WHAT COMES AFTER PUTIN

Putin is in any case an old man. His time is running out. But what comes after him? Certainly, no person like him. Typical for a dictator, he was unable to determine a successor. There is no Putin after Putin. This will bring Russia in troublesome times. Will the people of Russia, the Rosiane, forget the Russiness of this president? Will they really submit to a super ethnos? Please allow me to express my personal doubts. No, they will not! And the result will be the breakdown of the Russian empire. What does this mean for Evangelical Christians in the country? Like many other societal institutions in Russia, they have bought into the idea of a Russian-language-driven spiritual life and worship. How can they be prepared for things to come after Putin?

The answer is: they must become multilingual by definition. An Evangelical church in Tatarstan, for instance, must reach out to the Tatars in their language. As well as a church in Jakutsk in Jakut. Russian as the predominant language of evangelism and worship has served its day. The things to come will massively question this monolingual approach. Thank God, by now Bible translations are available in most languages of Russia. Evangelicals are in no way relying only on Russian as the language of communication. And there are already various examples of churches which have chosen to reach out to the nations of Russia in their own language and culture. Following their example will create new chances for evangelism and church growth after Putin's empire closes its doors.

¹⁸ Sinelschikova, 'How many'.

¹⁹ Ben Judah, 'Immigrant Russia – A Crisis of demography or ethnicity?', *European Council of Foreign Relations* 26 October 2010, at https://ecfr.eu/article/commentary_immigrant_russia_-_a_crisis_of_demography_or_ethnicity/ (accessed 24.03.2022).

²⁰ Olga Vendina, 'Die Ethnisierung der Migrationsprozesse in Russland', *Russland Analysen* 236 (23.03.2012) 9, at <https://laender-analysen.de/russland-analysen/236/die-ethnisierung-der-migrationsprozesse-in-russland/> (accessed 24.03.2022).

²¹ O'Loughlin a.o, 'Who identifies with the "Russian world"', 776.

War in Ukraine

Roman Soloviy

The text below was published on Facebook on 2 April 2022 by Dr Roman Soloviy, a member of the Executive Committee of FEET who lives and works in Lviv. It is here reproduced with his permission. In the next issue we are hoping to publish an interview with Roman; as a result of the war he could not be interviewed at this time.

As predicted by some military experts, the war has gone into a slow phase. So far, there is no serious reason to expect the end of the war or at least a ceasefire. Even during negotiations, and especially after dozens and hundreds of Russian missiles and strategic bombers aimed their mortal charges on Ukrainian cities. More and more we in Ukraine feel that war is becoming a total phenomenon for us. This is the main difference between the experience of war by those in the country and those who watch it from outside its borders.

Fortunately for my friends abroad, war can't be of total importance as it is for us here. They have a life outside the war. War in Ukraine for them is just one aspect of daily life. For some it's a fragment of the news block of TV shows, for others it's volunteering activities, helping refugees or raising funds for the needs of Ukrainians. Many include the request for peace in Ukraine in their daily prayers. We are grateful to everyone who remembers Ukraine and finds a place for her in their heart!

For us in Ukraine, war is not a fragment of reality, it is the whole reality. Our agenda has been shaped by the frequency and duration of air alarms for over a month. The next communication is determined by the morning news about the nightly missiles - almost every morning

we write messages to friends and colleagues in different regions of the country to see if they are alive. More and more often come messages about dead or wounded acquaintances, friends, colleagues. War is penetrating everywhere - it defines the topics of our prayers, gives new angles to read Scripture, teaches a new way to treat believers' solidarity.

I think that after the end of the war this will be one of the hardest challenges for all of us – to switch to a peaceful life regime, to return war to its rightful place – a fragment in the integrity of our existence. For Christians, this liberation from totalitarian experience of war should begin now. In which way? We need to realize and experience again that any totality on this side of eternity is overcome by the invasion of the infinite reality of the Kingdom of God inaugurated on the cross. All earthly totality, even as terrible and deadly as war, will one day enter a place of endless glory, peace and love of the Kingdom of God. In prayer, in the Lord's Evening, in the Ecclesiastes community, we join the experience of the coming age in which there will be no death, no tears, no suffering. It gives us the strength to resist the totality of the claims of war on our lives. And that's why **#we_believe_we_remain_humans!**

FEET members, have you paid your membership fee?
Do we have your current address?

Statement against the Russian invasion of Ukraine

The Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians (FEET) wishes to express its utter abhorrence at the unprovoked war that the Russian Federation has instigated against its peaceful neighbour, the independent sovereign state of Ukraine.

We stand with all Ukrainian people, and especially our Christian sisters and brothers, in our opposition to the aggression, destruction and genocide wrought by the invading forces of the Russian Federation.

In the face of authoritarian tyranny, we pray for a just and lasting peace that respects both the international borders of the Ukraine and the will of its people to be free to determine their own future.



FEET Executive Committee, March 27, 2022

Interview with the FEET treasurer, Gert Hain

Gert, you are the only non-theologian in the Executive Committee of FEET; what did you do professionally?

Yes, I am the only non-theologian on the Committee of FEET. I studied economics and business administration at Frankfurt University. From 1972 I worked in a small company in Gießen which my father had taken over in 1938. Since 1974 I am the CEO of this company, the regional partner of Germany's leading rating agency. In 2013 my son Jan-Frieder Hain took over the main responsibility.

Have you always been a Christian? Can you tell us about your conversion?

I was born and grew up in a Christian family. My father as well as both of my grandfathers were elders in our local church, an evangelical free church. At the age of 13, during a youth camp, I made a conscious decision to accept Christ as my personal saviour.

Did you have any roles in the church?

After several years of leading a youth group in our local YMCA, I became a Sunday school teacher in our church and I did this for almost 18 years. About 1961 one of the boys I had in a really small youth group in Gießen was Thomas Schirmmacher, who back then lived with his parents near our church. He is now professor and a leader of the World Evangelical Alliance.

When Hans Bayer from the FTH Gießen went to the United States in 1994, he asked me to succeed him as one of the elders of our recently planted church in Wetzlar. As such I served for 17 years.

Do you have a favourite theologian? A favourite theological book?

I am so grateful to have met in my parents' and grandparents' families many leading pastors, not only of our free church but of various denominations of our German Evangelical Alliance. My uncle Wilhelm Gilbert was for 12 years president of the German Evangelical Allianz and one of the first members of the board of the German AfeT.

In my student time I was part of seminars given by the German scholars Adolf Köberle and Otto Michel; later I was part of lectures of Jürgen Moltmann and Klaus Berger (to see a kind of traditional theology) and of Herbert Braun (to hear the liberal opposite).

What are your hobbies?

One of my hobbies is to get to know foreign countries and cultures. I have been to New York and to Moscow, to Oslo and Helsinki as well as to Rome and Marrakech, Aleppo and Jerusalem. The city I love very much is London, where I learned much more than in my own capital city Berlin.

I also like a bit of sports, especially tennis and in the later years golf (surely more than Winston Churchill). One of the rooms in my home is occupied by my stamp collection and a modest library of mostly theological books.

When did you first join the Committee? Who else were there at the time? Who are the chairmen with whom you worked?

In 1983 Helmut Burkhardt asked me to join the board of the German AfeT, a sister organisation of FEET, and in 1991 there was an urgent need for a new treasurer for FEET. My first – and his last – meeting of our FEET Executive Committee was 1992 with Klaus Runia in Wölmersen. In the years that followed I worked with Howard Marshall, Pierre Berthoud and today with Gert Kwakkel as chair. The first secretary I worked with was the polyglot Gerald Bray, followed by Christoph Stenschke and Klaus Benschel.

What motivated you to do this work so long?

Because I had been aware of the theological situation in Germany for many years, I realised that there was also a need to promote 'a spirit of loyalty to the Bible' in Europe, as it is called in the constitution of FEET. Theologians should stick to the principles of their discipline and when a businessman is able to support them by his way of working, this should contribute to reaching a common goal.

Do you remember any funny or remarkable events?

Yes, there are remarkable events in my memory, too. The first to mention are of course our biennial conferences, whether they took place in Wölmersen, in Woltersdorf/Berlin, in Wittenberg or in Prague. And the meetings of our Executive Committee were not only times of stringent work but also times of community between sisters and brothers, some of whom became friends in the course of time. I will never forget that some twenty years ago in Wölmersen John Stott started a short conversation with me with 'My friend'.

Which conference do you remember best and why?

All our conferences had their highlights, in some cases depending on the speakers who came to FEET from different parts of Europe or the USA. In a special sense remarkable was our conference in Wittenberg in 2016: it was an extremely hot summer and I had to find accommodation in about 15 different places in the city

of Wittenberg. It was no easy task to reach financial agreements with all of them.

How is our financial situation?

When I started my work as treasurer for FEET, we had to settle a real financial problem. These problems could be solved after about two years, but in the subsequent years we never had much more money than we really needed. Over the years our heavenly Father has provided us with all. More recently we not only received a remarkable sum from the German AfeT but also more and more donations from our members. So, concerning our financial situation, we can be optimistic that we will be able to fulfil the ministry of FEET in the future.

Do you have any message for the readers?

Normally all theologians I came into contact with are very busy. My prayer is that we can find more younger scholars to continue the ministry of FEET in the years to come.

Interview with Hetty Lalleman

Hetty, where were you born, where have you lived and where do you live at the moment?

I was born in a town near Amsterdam and lived in the Netherlands till August 2000. Since then, my husband and I have lived in England, first in London and now in a village in Surrey. I taught the Old Testament at Spurgeon's College in London for many years, and before that at the Dutch Baptist Seminary.

Have you always been a Christian? Can you tell us about your conversion?

My parents were sincere Christians, and I made the decision to follow Jesus at the age of about 11.

What is your current position?

I am still linked to Spurgeon's College as a Senior Research Fellow and I am now the community pastor for Knaphill Baptist Church. As an Old Testament scholar, I did research on the Book of Jeremiah and much later wrote the Tyndale Commentary on that book. I have written at an academic level, but I am also passionate about 'translating' theological knowledge into the

language of everyday. This July an overview of the Old Testament for Christians will be published in Dutch; in fact, most of my books are in Dutch but some are also in English, like *Celebrating the Law?* and *Close to Us*.

Do you have a family?

My husband and I have a daughter, a son-in-law and three grandchildren. They live in the Netherlands, so I don't see them so often, especially not as a result of Covid.

Do you have a favourite theologian? A favourite theological book?

For my own personal faith, I like to read (apart from the Bible) Henri Nouwen. I also like reading biblical reflections written by the Dutch theologian A.A. van Ruler.

What are your hobbies?

I like walking the dog and exploring historical houses. I also make cards from photos I take and play the piano. I started a children's choir in the place where we now live.

How did you first find out about FEET?

My husband Pieter had already been at a FEET conference when we first met and started our relationship. We went to FEET together after we got married, which is 38 years ago! I have been to many FEET conferences during all these years! I very much appreciate the fellowship with theologians from all over Europe. It's so stimulating for one's own research, even when the subjects are in other areas than one's own. It just stretches one's brains! It's also very encouraging to find out that there are evangelical scholars everywhere, who want to serve their Lord by doing academic work!

I have been a member of the Executive Committee of FEET for many years, but will be stepping down at the

conference in August. With others from the committee, I am also responsible for this Newsletter.

What is your ideal for FEET for the next five years?

I pray that FEET will grow in numbers, so that we will be able to take up some more opportunities to connect evangelical scholars throughout Europe. It would be great if our finances would grow in order to realise more contacts between scholars.

I think it's very important to promote sound theology for the church and the world, when so many 'fake' ideas can be found online which are often confusing for Christians.

Please notify the FEET secretary (and the publisher of EJT, if applicable) of any changes to your address. Please use the addresses secretary@feet-europe.org and subscriptions@aup.nl

In memoriam Helmut Burkhardt

Henri Blocher

Dr Helmut Burkhardt passed away on January 25, 2022, two days after he had reached the age of 83. With his 'promotion to higher service' FEET has lost a faithful member, one of the founding members, and is grateful to God for his lasting contribution to Evangelical theology.

Dr Burkhardt testified that he had already heard John Stott sketching his vision for FEET in the autumn of 1974 (speaking to pastors in Switzerland), even before the European members of the Lausanne Committee decided in January 1975, in Mexico City, to convene the Heverlee Conference, from which FEET was born. Dr Burkhardt participated in most, if not all, FEET conferences – we shall miss him indeed. For many years he also chaired AfeT, the German association affiliated with FEET (1977–1993).

When Dr Klaus Bockmühl moved to Vancouver, his mantle fell upon the shoulders of Dr Burkhardt, who also taught almost all his life at the St. Chrischona Theologisches Seminar near Basel (1977–2008). Through the ministry of the latter, the legacy has borne beautiful fruit, and now he follows his predecessor in his fellow-Christians' blessed remembrance.

Dr Burkhardt's *magnum opus* is probably his four-volume *Ethik* (Brunnen Verlag, Gießen), a landmark which offers sure guidance in the moral confusion of our age. His doctoral dissertation on Philo represented another area of special competence, and the doctrine of regeneration was for him an early field of research and exposition. He was also editor or joint editor of several important dictionaries, useful tools for building up a strong sense of Evangelical identity and showing the fallacies of theories that undermine or 'de-construct' our confession. Among these are *Das Große Bibellexikon* and the *Evangelisches Lexikon für Theologie und Gemeinde*.

Dr Burkhardt spent much energy towards scholarly akribeia, but he did not do so for the sake of academic excellence only: he worked for the Church of Christ, and was concerned to maintain the Bible-believing, 'Pietist', witness in German-speaking countries.

I was not on very personal terms with Dr Burkhardt (he was not much of an extrovert, and neither am I). But I glimpsed in him, I think, the model of a well-balanced blend: that of typical *Gründlichkeit*, German thoroughness, and serious personal godliness – love for Truth, love for the Lord, loving service of God's people.

We give thanks to God for his faithful servant – who has now entered his beloved Master's joy.

NB: Rolf Hille and Herbert H. Klement edited a Festschrift for Dr Helmut Burkhardt's 65th anniversary in 2004: *Ein Mensch – was ist das? Zur theologischen Anthropologie*.

Next FEET Conference: August in Prague!

The next FEET conference is fast approaching and booking is open at <https://feetprague.b2bonline.estec.cz/>. We will be meeting from Friday, 26 August till Tuesday 30 August 2022 in Prague. Full details of the programme are at <https://feet-europe.org/conferences>. The theme of the conference is

Hope for the World: Eschatology as a Source of Life for the Mission of the Church

The format will be similar to previous conferences: main papers, workshops, Bible readings, discipline groups and ample breaks for coffee, tea, meals and fellowship.

The discipline groups will probably be Old Testament, New Testament, Systematic Theology with Church History, Practical Theology and Ethics/Apologetics; they will meet twice.

Doctoral students are warmly invited; there will be a special group in which they can share experiences. Workshops will enable the delegates to work on the conference topic in smaller groups.

On the Sunday we will worship in a local church, after which there are various opportunities to see the great city of Prague.

A new element this time is that most main papers will have respondents from another part of our continent. They are:

- Paper 1,** 'Biblical essentials: Hope for the people of God and for the world according to the Old and the New Testaments'
Speaker Dr Julius Steinberg (Germany); response Dr Viacheslav Gerasimciuk (Ukraine)
- Paper 2,** 'Apologetics and mission: Characteristics of the hope cherished by people in secular Europe and how to deal with them in evangelism and apologetics'
Speakers Dr Yannick Imbert (France) on the Western part of Europe, and Dr Fedir Stryzhachuk (Ukraine) focussing on the Eastern part of Europe
- Paper 3,** 'The hope of the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting and its meaning for Christian life and witness today'
Speaker Prof. Dr Christian Stettler (Switzerland); response Dr Oleksandr Geychenko (Ukraine)
- Paper 4,** 'The hope of Christ's coming to judge the world and its meaning for preaching the gospel'
Speaker Dr Jirí Bukovský (Czech Republic); response Dr Ronald Michener (Belgium)
- Paper 5,** 'The hope of the arrival of the Kingdom of God and its practical implications for politics and the pursuit of social justice'
Speaker Dr Oleksandr Geychenko (Ukraine); response Dr Myrto Theocharous (Greece)

European Journal of Theology Issue 31.1 (April 2022)

In the recent edition of the **European Journal of Theology** you will find materials as diverse as an article on a current issue in Norway by a Norwegian and an article on an Italian from the past by an Italian. Robert Lilleaasen provides the background to the recent Norwegian law on religious communities and introduces the public discourse about same-sex relationships which followed it. He shows how the law gave rise to different responses in local politics, and then reflects on issues of religious freedom and the tension between various conceptions of freedom. This article is highly relevant for many other European countries!

Leonardo De Chirico introduces Cardinal Bellarmine, the famous theologian of the Counter-Reformation, and argues that the differences between him and Reformed theology are about much more than the nature of the Church and in fact touch on all of theology.

David Firth shows how readers of Joshua are supposed to go back to Deuteronomy in order to properly understand Joshua. Jean-Georges Gantenbein proposes innovative models for the contextualisation of the gospel in secular Europe, models which meet people's aesthetic and ethical needs as well as their desire for truth.

Üllas Tankler argues that partnership in mission is not a matter of efficiency so much as a matter of theology. He shows how Christians from different contexts can use their gifts and insights to achieve true mutuality in mission.

The editorial is not to be overlooked: Christoph Stenschke reflects on the state of the Church in Europe and the urgent need for 'shepherds/pastors who regather the scattered flock, but also reach out to the strayed and the lost'.

As usual the issue concludes with the book reviews, prepared under the responsibility of review author Hans Burger. Now published by Amsterdam University Press (AUP), the European Journal of Theology still has a fresh look which has received many positive appraisals. AUP is offering the Journal at a reduced price to subscribers in many countries. Please note that the advertised rate applies to subscribers in Western and Northern Europe, Australia, New Zealand, the USA and Canada only; the reduced rate applies in the rest of Europe and the rest of the world!

Offers of book reviews and suggestions of books to be reviewed are welcome at jmburger@tukampen.nl.

Conference on Barth's Römerbrief

The year 2022 marks the centenary of the publication of a book which rocked the theological world in 1922: the second edition of Karl Barth's commentary on Paul's Letter to the Romans, generally known as the 'Römerbrief'.

Why was this book so important? Is it still important? What does it tell us about Barth, the most important theologian of the twentieth century? Did Barth do justice to Paul? Can the younger generation of theologians afford to ignore this book?

On 4 and 5 November 2022 FEET will be offering an online conference on this topic. Details to be announced – but do reserve the dates now! The main speakers can already be announced: the Barth experts professors Cornelis (Kees) van der Kooi (Amsterdam) and Andrew McGowan (University of the Highlands and Islands, Scotland) and the New Testament specialist Professor Roland Deines (Bad Liebenzell).

This conference follows on the successful afternoon in commemoration of the centenary of John Stott in April 2021.

Executive Committee

Until the members' meeting in Prague in August, the members of the Executive Committee of FEET are::

Gert Kwakkel, Netherlands / France, chair; email chairman@feet-europe.org

Klaus Bense, Germany, secretary; email secretary@feet-europe.org

Gert F. Hain, Germany, treasurer; email treasurer@feet-europe.org

Pavel Cerny, Czech Republic

Leonardo De Chirico, Italy

Stephen P. Dray, England

Knut K. Kirkholm, Norway

Tatiana Kopaleishvili, Georgia

Hetty Lalleman, England / Netherlands, editor of the newsletter

Pieter J. Lalleman, England / Netherlands, editor of EJT

Roman Soloviy, Ukraine

Our website is <https://feet-europe.org/>

Please notify the secretary (and the publisher of EJT, if applicable) of any changes to your address. Please use the addresses secretary@feet-europe.org and subscriptions@aup.nl.

