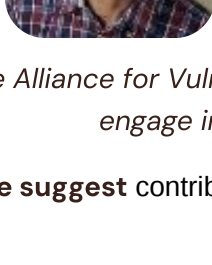




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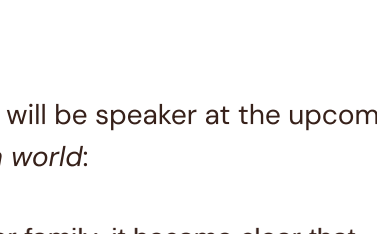
Editor: Jim Harries, PhD

The Alliance for Vulnerable Mission encourages some missionaries from the West to engage in their ministries using local languages and resources.

Please suggest contributions to this Bulletin to bulletin@vulnerablemission.org

15th October 2026: Anna T.

Serving as alongsiders in the Muslim world

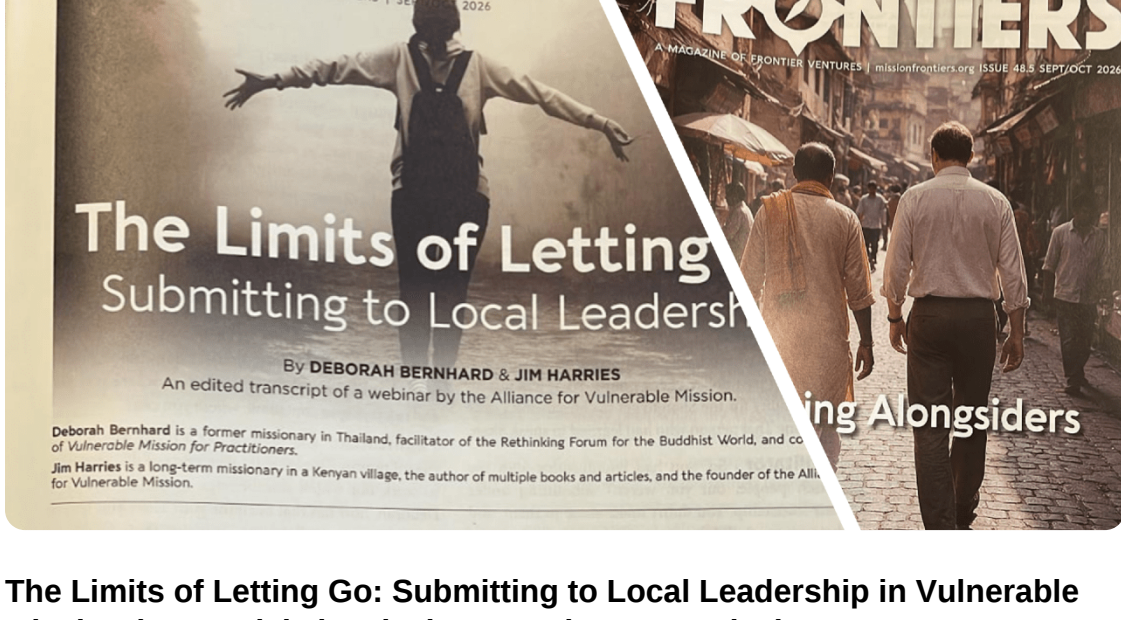


Webinar registration open

On 15th October 2026 at 14:00 Berlin time, Anna T. will be speaker at the upcoming AVM Webinar *Serving as Alongsiders in the Muslim world*:

As Anna lived and served in the Muslim world with her family, it became clear that requiring a change of ‘religion’, or ‘conversion to Christianity’, was getting in the way of the good news. She will share her journey of how she and her husband developed the concept of alongsidering, as they explored different appropriate roles for those like themselves who came from outside to share the good news. They also developed the C-scale, which is a descriptive framework for understanding Christ-centered communities of faith and how they relate to the Muslim faith.

Register [here](#) for free.



The Limits of Letting Go: Submitting to Local Leadership in Vulnerable Mission (new article in Mission Frontiers magazine)

How far should Western missionaries and practitioners go in relinquishing control and submitting to local leadership? What are the risks, tensions, and transformative possibilities when ministry is carried out in indigenous languages and with local resources alone, as advocated by the Alliance for Vulnerable Mission (AVM)? Through this edited transcript of the AVM Webinar in April 2026, Deborah Bernhard and Jim Harries explore the paradoxes of “letting go” in cross-cultural ministry. Their candid dialogue challenges conventional mission strategies and wrestles with what “weakness” and “submission” may mean in practice.

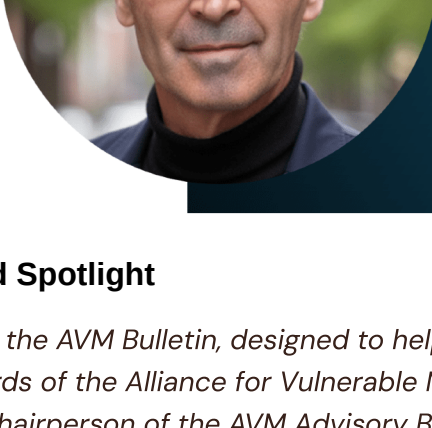
Please find the digital version [here](#).

IN THEIR WORDS

A Board Spotlight

Jay Gary

Chair of the AVM Advisory Board



New series: In Their Words – A Board Spotlight

This marks the beginning of a new series in the AVM Bulletin, designed to help readers get to know the people serving on the boards of the Alliance for Vulnerable Mission.

*We open this month with **Jay Gary, PhD**, Chairperson of the AVM Advisory Board, who introduces himself in his own words:*

“Dr. Jay” is a professor at Oral Roberts University in the Doctor of Strategic Leadership program. He is recognized as America’s “Dean of Foresight” among educators, entrepreneurs, and futurists worldwide. Mission leaders know him as the lead developer of the Perspectives Study Program, and he directed the Younger Leaders Generation program for U.S. Lausanne for three years.

His work spans non-profits, higher education, professional associations, and regional communities, helping stakeholders focus on the future through entrepreneurship, leadership development, networking, and social transformation.

Jay has long been a champion of Vulnerable Mission. When asked why, he says, “Vulnerable Mission strips away Western privilege and power, letting the gospel take root in a people’s own context — allowing a church to emerge from their own language and culture.

Jay’s current work includes launching graduate degree programs and teaching professionals the best practices of strategic foresight that position enterprises for disruptive innovation. He serves as a commissioner for accreditation with the World Futures Studies Federation, formerly chaired the Association of Professional Futurists, and serves on the ILA’s “Advancing Leadership Programs” task force. His CliftonStrengths—Strategic, Maximizer, Achiever, Learner, Ideation—reveal a Powerhouse profile. His superpower: helping organizations anticipate and create the future.



Digitaler Donnerstag im November 2026

Mutig, verletzlich, neugierig

Mission neu lernen

November Webinar series (in German) in partnership with the German Mennonite Mission Committee

Die einzelnen Themen:

- 5.11.: Begleiten statt erobern: Missionare als Gäste und Begleiter von indigenen Gemeinden im argentinischen Chaco - mit Ute und Frank Paul
- 12.11.: Leben teilen im Stadtviertel: Als Christen unterwegs mit Menschen in kirchfernen Gemeinschaften in Deutschland - mit Ute und Frank Paul
- 19.11.: Mission neu denken: Jesus-Nachfolge im buddhistischen Thailand - mit Deborah Bernhard
- 26.11.: Versöhnung durch Mission? Herausforderungen und Chancen von gewählter Verletzlichkeit in Südafrika - mit Dr. Marcus Grohmann

Beginn jeweils am Donnerstag um 19.30 Uhr.

Zugangslink über:

www.mennoniten.de/digitaler-donnerstag

November: Digitaler Donnerstag zu Verletzlicher Mission – Webinar series in November in German

The German Mennonite Mission Committee (Deutsches Mennonitisches Missionskomitee – DMMK) have invited the AVM to run a webinar series on each of the four Thursdays in November 2026. Topics will include “Mission as accompaniment in the Argentine Chaco”, “Incarnational mission among unchurched working-class people in Germany” (both with Ute and Frank Paul), “Rethinking mission in the Buddhist world” (Deborah Bernhard) as well as “Considering reconciliation through mission in South Africa” (Marcus Grohmann).

The link to the webinars will be available [here](#).

Evangelical Missiological Society

Facilitating scholarly support of the Great Commission

2026 Conference: 9-10 October 2026

Theological Anthropology for Missional Engagement

In-person and virtual

Evangelical Missiological Society 2026

The Alliance for Vulnerable Mission encourages participation in this event.

2026 CONFERENCE THEME:

Theological Anthropology for Missional Engagement

October 9–10 2026

In-person and virtual

Dallas Theological Seminary

[3909 Swiss Ave, Dallas, TX 75204](https://www.emsweb.org/conferences/annual/)

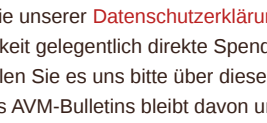
<https://www.emsweb.org/conferences/annual/>

This year’s theme “**Theological Anthropology for Missional Engagement**” is central to missiological reflection and practice, since acts of gospel witness, service, and cultural engagement all rest on assumptions about human identity, dignity, and destiny. In a rapidly changing world—marked by shifting views of spirituality, ethnicity, gender, technology, and ecology—the church must embrace a biblically faithful and missionally engaged understanding of the *imago Dei*.

At the heart of this year’s theme is the exploration of *Imago Dei* in missional engagement—how human dignity, human rights, and gospel witness flow from being created in God’s image. This perspective grounds reflection on the meaning of being human and how the *imago Dei* shapes evangelism, discipleship, community, and global mission.

Executive Board	Governing Board	Advisory Board
Dr. Marcus Grohmann (Director)	Dr. Jim Harries (chair)	Dr. Chris Flanders
Deborah Bernhard (Deputy Director)	Dr. Daniel Albert	Frank Paul
Maria Richter (Secretary)	James Alongi	Dr. Jay Gary
	Rev. Dr. John Macdonald	Jean Johnson
	Dorothea Witte	Rev. Gernot Spies
		Tim Reeves

– **Relating to people through their languages and local resources** –



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