Lutheran Mission Matters

Quincentennial Celebration: The Paradigm Shift from Martin Luther Then to Ours Now—Part One

Enoch Wan

Editor's Note: Dr. Wan served as the keynote speaker at the 2017 Multiethnic Symposium at Concordia Seminary, Jan. 24–25, 2017. He has graciously consented to the publication of his presentation, which is here presented in two parts. This first installment focuses on his analysis of the contextual paradigm shifts of both the Reformation era and our contemporary age. The second installment will deal with his "personal proposal to the leadership of Lutheran church bodies in North America in the twenty-first century," based on the three global trends identified in this first segment: the shifting landscape of Christendom, the phenomenon of diaspora, and the rise of socio-cultural relativism.

Abstract: Historical review of the paradigm shift of Martin Luther occurred five hundred years ago, followed by a personal proposal to the leadership of Lutheran church bodies in North America in the twenty-first century for a contextual paradigm shift, based on three selected global trends (i.e. the shifting landscape of Christendom, the phenomenon of diaspora, the rise of socio-cultural relativism which includes postmodernist epistemology, religious, ethical, and cultural pluralism), leading to the embrace of new paradigms (i.e. multiethnic ecclesiology and strategic Kingdom partnership, diaspora missiology, and relational realism).

I. Introduction

It is an honor to participate in the 2017 Multiethnic Symposium, especially in this year of celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

This paper will begin with a brief historical review of the paradigm shift of Martin Luther and the reformers that occurred five hundred years ago, followed by an analysis of three selected global trends that characterize the paradigm shift of our

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contemporary mission context. My **assumption** for this topic is as follows: during the quincentennial celebration of the Reformation and its enduring accomplishments, the Lutheran churches in the US in the twenty-first century are encouraged to have vision and action for facing the present and future challenges in the mission of Christ in the spirit of responsible stewardship of these great gifts and legacies.

II. The Paradigm Shift of the Reformation Era

Martin Luther and other reformers of the time were part of the wave of change in various areas of life.

> Luther was the central figure of the Protestant reformation. There were religious reformers prior to him. However, it was Luther who brought the reformation to fruition and defined its essence. Today Luther stands in the direct line of some 58 million Lutherans and indirectly of some 400 million Protestants. He also helped set in plan forces that reshaped Catholicism and ushered in the modern world.[1]

There was a "paradigm shift,"[2] i.e., a radical change in the understanding of all reality of life, from the old paradigm of Medieval Catholic tradition to the new paradigm during the Reformation as shown in Figure 1. Listed in Figure 1A are three aspects of the paradigm shift (doctrine, religion, and spirituality) with more in Figure 1B (politics, communication, etc.) In accordance with Medieval Catholic tradition, doctrinal authority was exclusively the monopoly of the pope and dominated by church tradition and church councils. Salvation was accessible only through the Catholic Church and by good works of both clergy and laity, i.e. work-based merit and law-based salvation. The sale of indulgences was motivated by monetary gain for massive construction of Catholic edifices motivated by the desire to earn God's favor and reduce time in purgatory for both the living and the dead. At the time, the ultimate end of all was to the glory of individuals and the institutional church. Doctrinally, the reformers ushered in a paradigm shift by replacing the Medieval Catholic tradition with the Reformation "solas" as listed in Figure 1A.

Under "religion" in Figure 1A, three aspects of the Medieval Catholic Church included church tradition, Scripture, and rule. The paradigm shift was marked by a major departure from Roman Catholic Church tradition. The interpretation of Scripture was no longer dominated by papal authority and clergy alone but by the community of believers, and the Latin vulgate was replaced with the vernacular of the land for the common folks. Spirituality was no longer institutionally sanctioned by the Catholic Church but based on individual conscience and free personal pursuit of spirituality.

Figure 1—Paradigm shift: Old paradigm of Medieval Catholicism
→ New paradigm of Martin Luther & fellow reformers

Figure 1A—Doctrine, Religion, & Spirituality

Aspect	Old paradigm of Medieval Catholic Tradition	New paradigm of Martin Luther & company
Doctrine	Medieval Catholic Tradition: • Authority: papal declaration, church tradition, and church councils • Salvation is located in the church -Good works → atone spiritual debt • Work/law-based salvation • Indulgences: God's favor, purgatory • Ultimate end of all to man's glory or church's glory	Reformation: The Reformation "solas" • Bible only (*Sola Scriptura*) -inspired authoritative Word of God • Christ only (*Solo Christo*) -salvation by grace through faith in Christ • Grace only (*Sola Gratia*): grace-based • Faith only (*Sola Fide*): faith-based[3] • God's Glory only (*Soli Deo Gloria*) -efficacious call of God to His glory
Religion	Church tradition: • Auricular confession, celibacy, indulgences, papacy, pilgrimages, purgatory, monastic vows, relics, saints, worship practices, etc. Scripture: • In Latin vulgate alone, handled by clergy alone • subordinated to church authority Rule: • Principle of papal & clergy authority • Judaic legalism and superstition	Reformation: • freed from church tradition: the 7 sacraments, celibacy, performance of the sacrificial Mass, magisterial authority Scripture: • in vernacular, by common folks • interpretation done in community of believers Rule: • Principle of freedom in Christ, priesthood of believers, and authority of Scripture
Spirituality	Institutionally sanctioned spirituality	Individual conscience & pursuit of spirituality

Based on Medieval Catholic tradition, the church (papal authority) was above the state (kingdom and political order). In ethics, Luther's understanding of *Vocatio,*[4] to glorify God and serve neighbors through work, led to a productive work ethic and self-reliance. Leaders of the Reformation like Martin Luther had successfully ushered in the great creativity and prosperity of the modern era. In terms of economy, the theocracy of Medieval Catholicism would be replaced by a new mentality, "the Protestant ethic," as termed by Max Weber.[5] The monopoly of the Catholic establishment in communication was broken when movable-type printing became available to the public to be better informed.

In Figure 1B, several other aspects are noted: politics, law, social order, ethics, science, economy, and communication. The modern era of Western civilization was ushered in by the confluence of two major factors, i.e., the massive, extensive, and transformational socio-cultural changes of the Reformation and the Renaissance.

Figure 1B – Politics, Communication, etc.

Aspect	Old Paradigm	New Paradigm
Politics & law	Power: church governed politics Authority: the church ruled over every sphere of life	Power: separation of church & state Liberty: right & obligation of the individual conscience (modern democracy)
Social order	Papal authority & concentration of power in Rome	The Peasants' War, the indigenous movements, & "Protestantism"[6]
Ethics	Subject to the authority of the pope and ecclesiastical order	Individual liberty & conscience[7] "*Vocatio*"[8]
Science	Conformism: no individual pursuit	The Renaissance—free to explore all aspects
Economy	Monasticism & church vocations	"The protestant ethic"—Max Weber
Communication	Monopoly of the Catholic establishment	Printing and literacy: • Movable-type printing & informed public • Linguistic & literary legacy

III. An analysis of global trends in the twenty-first century, leading to a personal proposal to the leadership of Lutheran church bodies in North America for a contextual paradigm shift (*Ed. note*: The focus of Part Two)

I wish to identify three global trends that will require a paradigm shift in the twenty-first century North American context. Figure 2 summarizes these, with action points to be considered by leaders in the Lutheran church.

Figure 2 – A modest proposal for action in the context of North America in the twenty-first century

Global Trends	Old Paradigm	New Paradigm	Action Point
#1A -- Shifting landscape of "Christendom: northern hemisphere → southern; West→ rest;	Euro-centric	Multilinear & multidirectional	Multiethnic ecclesiology & multiethnic leadership, strategic Kingdom partnership
#1B -- The emergence of the global South	Paternalist approach	"mission of majority world"[9]	Global theology & contextualization
#2 -- The phenomenon of diaspora: internationally to G7 & internally to urban centers	Traditional missiology: territorial, unilineal, etc.	Traditional missiology; → Diaspora missiology	New strategy, e.g. BAM,[10] holistic mission,[11] diaspora missions, missions at your door step & "glocal"[12]
#3A -- The failure of traditional institutions: marriage, family, & ethics	Traditionalist approach	Relational realism paradigm; Relational approach in discipleship, counseling, missionary training,[13] etc.	Relation-oriented approach in ministry
#3B -- "socio-cultural relativism" - "post-modernism, religious, & cultural pluralism, i.e. multiculturalism	Modernist paradigm and critical realism		Revitalizing Christian faith and practice as counter culture

Global Trend 1—Shifting Landscape of Christendom and the Rise of the Global South

There is a shifting landscape of Christendom from the northern to the southern hemisphere as observed by Philip Jenkins and Andrew Walls.[14] This is evidenced by various phenomena, such as the fact that the current pope is from South America (not Europe) and that the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization (LCWE) II and LCWE III occurred in Manila and South Africa respectively (not in Europe, but in Asia and Africa). In light of the demise of the West in a post-Christian mode and the surge of mission forces in the global south in Christian missions (see #1B in Figure 2), there are many practical implications for contemporary ministry to be considered by the leadership of the Lutheran churches here and now. Here I will note several key aspects to be discussed further in Part Two: replace the Euro-centric and paternalist paradigm of traditional

> There is a shifting landscape of Christendom from the northern to the southern hemisphere.

missiology with a multilinear and multidirectional paradigm, embrace multiethnic ecclesiology to reflect the population reality, promote multiethnic leadership and adjust to Kingdom-orientation by active involvement in contextualization, and engage in multilevel strategic partnership with churches in the global south.

Global Trend 2—The Phenomenon of Diaspora and Diaspora Missions

I would offer a definition of "diaspora" and description of the phenomenon as follows:

> Etymologically, the term "*diaspora*" is a derivation from the Greek word "*diaspeirein*" which means "to scatter about" or "disperse" (from, *dia*– about, across + *speirein*—to scatter). . . . The size and significance of diasporas have increased in the 21st century. Approximately 3.2% of the global population lives in countries other than their places of birth because of urbanization, international migration, and displacement by war and famine. According to a recent UN report, diaspora population was 175 million in year 2000, 192 million in year 2005, and 154 in 1990 and the total sum of international migrants will hit as many as 405 million by 2050.[15]

The trend of the global phenomenon of diaspora is reversing the historic direction of shifting Christendom (from the West to the rest and from northern to southern hemisphere), with massive numbers in the diaspora moving toward the G7 countries, that is, toward the northern hemisphere and from the rest to the West. Therefore, there are no more "unreached people" and no more unilineal/unidirectional missionary deployment as in traditional mission. The diaspora phenomenon described thus far does not include the unprecedented internal migration of the two most populous countries, China and India, due to urbanization[16] and the ever-increasing population shift that results.

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"Diaspora missions" can be defined as "Christians' participation in God's redemptive mission to evangelize their kinsmen on the move, and through them to reach out to natives in their homelands and beyond." There are four types of diaspora missions:

- Missions *to* the diaspora—reaching the diaspora groups in forms of evangelism or pre-evangelistic social services, then discipling them to become worshiping communities and congregations.

- Missions *through* the diaspora—diaspora Christians reaching out to their kinsmen through networks of friendship and kinship in host countries, their homelands, and abroad.

- Missions *by* and *beyond* the diaspora—motivating and mobilizing diaspora Christians for cross-cultural missions to other ethnic groups in their host countries, homelands, and abroad.

- Missions *with* the diaspora—mobilizing non-diasporic Christians individually and institutionally to partner with diasporic groups and congregations.[17]

The implications of the importance of this phenomenon will be discussed in Part Two.

Global Trend 3 (see Figure 2)—Failure of Traditional Institutions and the Rise of Socio-cultural Relativism

There are many factors contributing to the failure of traditional institutions of marriage and family,[18] such as the women's liberation movement that began in the 1960s–1970s, the common practice of co-habitation, publicly recognized same sex marriage, etc. The advent of the feminist movement and homosexual marriage have caused the demise of the traditional family.[19]

The term "socio-cultural relativism" is a reference to "post-modernist epistemology," religious, ethical and cultural pluralism (multiculturalism). By "postmodern epistemology"[20] I refer to the newly emerged worldview that denies the idea of a single universal truth. From a postmodern perspective, it is futile to attempt systematically to define or impose a logic on events due to our limitations.[21] "Religious pluralism" is an attitude or posture regarding the coexisting diversity of religious systems in society.[22] Cultural pluralism (multiculturalism) has endured from antiquity to postmodernity. Ethical pluralism is the conviction that moral theories of what is "right" and "wrong" validly coexist, though a theory might be incompatible and/or incommensurable with the holder's personal view. The terms "value pluralism," "ethical pluralism," "moral pluralism" may be used in ethics interchangeably[23] to recognize that several values (even conflicting ones) may be equally correct and valid, because there is no objective judgment call.

"Multiculturalism" ("cultural pluralism") can be a description/conviction or government policy, e.g. the "cultural mosaic" of the Canadian government, recognizing the coexistence of diverse cultures. However, the term "diverse cultures"[24] is a fluid term applicable to "racial, religious, or cultural groups" (macro-

level) or "behavioral pattern, cultural assumptions, cognitive patterns, communicative styles and worldview" (micro-level).

Due to the failure of traditional institutions and the rise of socio-cultural relativism, a paradigm shift is proposed that embraces a "relational realism paradigm," by which I mean "a conceptual framework for understanding reality based on the interactive connections between personal beings/Beings."[25] The philosophical element of the relational paradigm is based on "relational realism,"[26] and the methodological element is based on "relational theologizing,"[27] all of which will be dealt with in Part Two of this article.

> Due to the failure of traditional institutions and the rise of socio-cultural relativism, a paradigm shift is proposed that embraces a "relational realism paradigm."

IV. Conclusion

In this paper, I have offered an historical review of the paradigm shift that occurred five hundred years ago and was a significant part of the social context of the Lutheran Reformation. Correspondingly, our present century is witnessing similarly consequential social changes that form the context for mission and missiology today. In what follows, I will offer some practical implications and a proposal to the leadership of Lutheran church bodies in North America in the twenty-first century for a contextual paradigm shift, based on three global trends: the shifting landscape of Christendom, the phenomenon of diaspora, socio-cultural relativism. The proposal should lead to the embrace of new paradigms appropriate to missiological thinking today, including multiethnic ecclesiology, strategic kingdom partnership, diaspora missiology, and relational realism.

Endnotes

[1] "Martin Luther," *New World Encyclopedia*
http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Martin_Luther (retrieved Dec. 20, 2016.
[2] Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. 1962; second edition 1970. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press).
[3] Martin Luther, "Faith is a living and unshakable confidence, a belief in the grace of God so assured that man would die a thousand deaths for its sake." *Preface to the Epistle to the Romans.* As quoted by Debra Ronca, "Martin Luther and the New Paradigm," www.reasons.org, July 23, 2014 (retrieved Dec. 29, 2016).
[4] Marc Kolden, "Luther on Vocation" Oct. 1, 2001. Journal of Lutheran Ethics https://www.elca.org/JLE/Articles/1015 (retrieved Dec. 29, 2016).

[5] Enoch Wan, "Protestant Ethic and Chinese Culture: A Reflection of Max Weber's Theory and Methodology," in *East & West: Religious Ethics and Other Essays*, ed. Zhang Zhigang & M.Y. Stewart. (Beijing: Central Translation & Publication of China, 1996).

[6] Originated from a "protest" from Lutheran princes, e.g. Phillip of Hesse, in Lutheran territories in response to the attempts of Emperor's representative to reestablish Catholicism in Lutheran territories at the Second Diet of Speyer.

[7] Luther's tract, "The Freedom of a Christian" (1520)—"A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none; a Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all."

[8] Luther's contribution to the Protestant understanding and practice of *Vocatio* is widely recognized. See Marc Kolden, "Luther on Vocation," Oct. 1, 2001. (Luther Seminary, 1983) from *Word & World*, Volume III, no. 4, 382–390, https://www.elca.org/JLE/Articles/1015 (retrieved Dec. 20, 2016).

[9] Enoch Wan and Michael Pocock (eds), *Missions from the Majority World: Progress, Challenges, and Case Studies* (Evangelical Missiological Society Series Book 17) (William Carey Library, 2009).

[10] BAM (business as mission) is not easily defined but can be described by the characteristics such as: "Profitable and sustainable businesses; Intentional about Kingdom of God purpose and impact on people and nations; Focused on holistic transformation and the multiple bottom lines of economic, social, environmental and spiritual outcomes; Concerned about the world's poorest and least evangelized peoples." From "Business as Mission," *The BAM Review*. January 14, 2015, http://businessasmission.com/what-is-bam/
An extensive coverage (88 pages) on BAM in the document produced by the LCWE Issue Group entitled, "Business as Mission." Lausanne Occasional Paper No. 59, 2004, https://www.lausanne.org/docs/2004forum/LOP59_IG30.pdf (retrieved Dec. 20, 2016).

[11] Holistic Christianity is done with strong integration of the Great Commandment and the Great Commission, engaging in pre-evangelistic Christian charity towards the diaspora.

[12] Tuvya Zaretsky, "Glocalization, Diaspora Missiology, and Friendship Evangelism," May 2010, http://www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles.php/1280/05-2010?pg=all and Sadiri Joy B. Tira, "Filipino International Network: A Strategic Model for Filipino Diaspora Glocal® Missions," Global Missiology, (October 2004); available at www.GlobalMissiology.org.

[13] Enoch Wan & Mark Hedinger, *Relational Missionary Training: Theology, Theory and Practice* (CA: Urban Loft Publishers, 2017).

[14] Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity.* (Oxford University Press, 2002). Andrew Walls, "Culture and Coherence in Christian History," Evangelical Review of Theology, 9, no. 3 (1984): 215.

[15] Enoch Wan. *Diaspora Missiology: Theory, Methodology, and Practice*. Rev. ed. (Portland, OR: Institute of Diaspora Studies, 2014): 13–15.

[16] Enoch Wan & Joe Dow, "Serving China's internal diaspora: motive, means and methods," *Global Missiology*, www.GlobalMissiology.org, January 2016.

[17] Wan, *Diaspora Missiology*,7–8.

[18] A case in point is the current state in the US as quoted below, by John W. Whitehead, "The Breakdown of the Traditional Family: Why Conservative Christians Should Rethink Their Blame Game," *The Huntington Post*, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-w-whitehead/the-breakdown-of-the-trad_b_675444.html—"Since 1974, about 1 million children per year have seen their parents divorce, and children who are exposed to divorce are two to three times more likely than their peers in intact marriages to suffer from serious social or psychological pathologies. In their book *Growing Up with a Single Parent: What Hurts, What Helps*, sociologists Sara McLanahan and Gary Sandefur found that 31% of adolescents with divorced parents dropped

out of high school, compared to 13% of children from intact families. They also concluded that 33% of adolescent girls whose parents divorced became teen mothers, compared to 11% of girls from continuously married families. And McLanahan and her colleagues have found that 11% of boys who come from divorced families end up spending time in prison before the age of 32, compared to 5% of boys who come from intact homes. . . .

Sociologist Paul Amato estimates that if the United States enjoyed the same level of family stability today as it did in 1960, the nation would have 750,000 fewer children repeating grades, 1.2 million fewer school suspensions, approximately 500,000 fewer acts of teenage delinquency, about 600,000 fewer kids receiving therapy, and approximately 70,000 fewer suicides every year."

[19] Gretchen Livingston, in a Pew Research Report dated December 22, 2014, "Fewer than half of U.S. kids today live in a 'traditional' family." http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/12/22/less-than-half-of-u-s-kids-today-live-in-a-traditional-family/

"Fewer than half (46%) of U. S. kids younger than 18 years of age are living in a home with two married heterosexual parents in their first marriage. This is a marked change from 1960, when 73% of children fit this description, and 1980, when 61% did, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of recently released American Community Survey (ACS) and Decennial Census data."

[20] There is an interesting introductory chapter entitled, "The Failure of Traditional Ethics" linking it to the emergence of postmodernist ethics, Stephen G. Morris, *Science and the End of Ethics* (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 1–12.

[21] Phil Johnson & Joanne Duberley (eds.) *Postmodernist Epistemology—Relativism Unleashed?* (Sage, 2000).

[22] Recent publications of this persuasion are as follows:

- Eck, Diane. *A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation*. San Francisco: Harper, 2001.
- Hutchison, William R. *Religious Pluralism in America: The Contentious History of a Founding Ideal*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.

[23] "Ethical pluralism," *New World Encyclopedia*, http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Pluralism

[24] The term "diverse cultures"[24] is a fluid one, for there are 140 synonyms and 91 antonyms according to "Power Thesaurus," https://www.powerthesaurus.org/ multicultural (retrieved Dec. 20, 2016). A helpful guide amidst the confusion is *Mapping Multiculturalism* (University of Minnesota Press, 2008), edited by Avery Gordon and Christopher Newfield with twenty-six helpful essays mapping the terrain of multiculturalism in its varied dimensions in the US.

[25] Wan & Hedinger, *Relational Missionary Training*.

[26] Enoch Wan, "The Paradigm of 'Relational Realism'," *Occasional Bulletin*, EMS, vol. 19, no. 2 (Spring 2006):1–4.

[27] Enoch Wan, "Relational Theology and Relational Missiology," *Occasional Bulletin*, EMS, vol. 21, no. 1 (Winter 2007): 1–7.

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Lutheran

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Editor's Note: Dr. Wan served as the keynote speaker at the 2017 Multiethnic Symposium at Concordia Seminary, Jan. 24–25, 2017. He has graciously consented to the publication of his presentation, which is here presented in two parts. The first installment (in the May 2017 issue of *LMM*) focused on his analysis of the contextual paradigm shifts of both the Reformation era and our contemporary age. This second installment deals with his "personal proposal to the leadership of Lutheran church bodies in North America in the twenty-first century," based on the three global trends identified in this first segment: the shifting landscape of Christendom, the phenomenon of diaspora, the rise of socio-cultural relativism. It is the third trend that is the major focus of his proposal.

  Abstract: Based on significant global trends that affect the mission of the kingdom of God, the Lutheran Church is encouraged, first, to be engaged in a shift from traditional missiology to a multilinear, multidirectional missiology and multiethnic ecclesiology. Further, in light of diaspora communities literally "at our doorstep," a "diaspora missiology" understands not only missions "to" the diaspora, but also "through," "by and beyond," and especially "with" such communities as full partners in mission. Finally, Dr. Wan articulates a "relative realism" paradigm that counteracts the cultural relativism and mistrust of institutions that dominate the mission context and that restores an authentic Christianity based on our relationship with God and then with one another as human creatures. This leads to practical implications for Gospel-driven mission within the realities of a changing social-cultural and technological context.

In reviewing the paradigm shift that formed the social context of the Reformation now five hundred years ago, I highlighted three global trends in our contemporary social climate. (*Ed. note*: See previous article and its summaries in

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Figures 1A and 1B and 2.) These should prompt us toward a paradigm shift in missiological approaches, and I will offer a modest proposal for specific action points consistent with Lutheran theology and its insights and contributions.

Global Trend 1—The Shifting Landscape of Christendom and the Rise of the Global South

Action: A Paradigm Shift to Multiethnic Ecclesiology and Missiology

The first global trend already identified and briefly discussed is the shifting landscape of Christendom and the rise of the global south. Practical implications of the demise of the West in a post-Christian mode and the surge of mission forces in the global south in Christian missions should be considered by the leadership of the Lutheran churches here and now. First is the need to address and replace the Euro-centric and paternalistic paradigm of traditional missiology with a multilinear and multidirectional paradigm.[1] Further, we must embrace a multiethnic ecclesiology that should reflect the reality of the population all around us and promote multiethnic leadership and adjust to Kingdom-orientation by being actively involved in contextualization. By contextualization I mean "the efforts of formulating, presenting and practicing the Christian faith in such a way that is relevant to the cultural context of the target group in terms of conceptualization, expression and application; yet maintaining theological coherence, biblical integrity and theoretical consistency."[2] Following from this is the need to engage in multilevel strategic partnership with churches in the global South.[3]

> Further, we must embrace a multiethnic ecclesiology that should reflect the reality of the population all around us.

While multiethnic issues and ecclesiology need to be a major focus of any denomination, especially those who are highly Anglo-dominant, let me move on to the second and, most specifically, the third global trends, as these tend to be less developed and thus worthy of more detailed discussion and more challenging responses: (2) the phenomenon of diaspora and diaspora missions and (3) the failure of traditional institutions and the rise of socio-cultural relativism.

Global Trend 2—The Phenomenon of Diaspora and Diaspora Missions

Action: A Paradigm Shift from "Traditional Missiology" to "Diaspora Missiology"

I have previously defined "diaspora missions" as "Christians' participation in God's redemptive mission to evangelize their kinsmen on the move, and through

them to reach out to natives in their homelands and beyond." I have also highlighted four types of diaspora missions:

- Missions *to* the diaspora—reaching the diaspora groups in forms of evangelism or pre-evangelistic social services, then discipling them to become worshiping communities and congregations.

- Missions *through* the diaspora—diaspora Christians reaching out to their kinsmen through networks of friendship and kinship in host countries, their homelands, and abroad.

- Missions *by* and *beyond* the diaspora—motivating and mobilizing diaspora Christians for cross-cultural missions to other ethnic groups in their host countries, homelands, and abroad.

- Missions *with* the diaspora—mobilizing non-diasporic Christians individually and institutionally to partner with diasporic groups and congregations.[4]

"Diaspora missiology" is "a missiological framework for understanding and participating in God's redemptive mission among diaspora groups"[5] and is an emerging new paradigm,[6] different from "traditional missiology." The following charts (Figures 3 & 4) highlight key contrasts.

Figure 3–"Traditional missiology" vis-à-vis "Diaspora missiology"—4 elements[7]

#	ASPECTS	TRADITIONAL MISSIOLOGY ←→	DISPORA MISSIOLOGY
1	FOCUS	Polarized/dichotomized • "Great commission" ←→ "great commandment" • Saving soul ←→ social Gospel • Church planting ←→ Christian charity • Paternalism ←→ indigenization	Holistic Christianity with strong integration of evangelism with Christian charity • Contextualization
2	CONCEPTUAL IZATION	• Territorial: here ←→ there • "Local" ←→ "global" • Lineal: "sending" ←→ "receiving" • "Assimilation" ←→ "amalgamation" • "Specialization"	• "De-territorialization"[8] • "Glocal" • "Mutuality" & "reciprocity" • "Hybridity" • "Interdisciplinary"
3	PERSPECTIVE	• Geographically divided: foreign mission ←→ local, urban ←→ rural • Geo-political boundary: state/nation ←→ state/nation • Disciplinary compartmentalization: e.g. theology of missions/strategy of missions	• Non-spatial, • "Borderless," no boundary to worry, transnational & global • New approach: integrated & interdisciplinary

#	ASPECTS	TRADITIONAL MISSIOLOGY ←→	DISPORA MISSIOLOGY
4	PARADIGM	• OT: missions = gentile-proselyte / "coming" • NT: missions = the Great Commission / "going" • Modern missions: E-1, E-2, E-3 or M-1, M-2. M-3, etc.	• New reality in the 21st Century—viewing & following God's way of providentially moving people spatially & spiritually. • Moving targets & move with the targets

Figure 4–Comparing Traditional Missiology &
Diaspora Missiology in Ministry[9]

#	ASPECTS	TRADITIONAL MISSIOLOGY ←→	DISPORA MISSIOLOGY
1	MINISTRY PATTERN	OT: calling of Gentiles to the God of Zion (drawing in, "centripetal") NT: sending out disciples by Jesus in the four Gospels & by the H.S. in Acts (going out, "centrifugal") Modern missions: • Sending missionary & money • Self-sufficient of mission entity	New way of doing Christian missions: "mission at our doorstep" • "Ministry without border" • "Networking & partnership" for the Kingdom • "Borderless church,"[10] "liquid church"[11] • "Church on the oceans"[12]
2	MINISTRY STYLE	• Cultural-linguistic barrier: E-1, E-2, etc. Thus various types M-1, M-2, etc. • "People group" identity • Evangelistic scale: reached→←unreached • "Competitive spirit" "self-sufficient"	• No barrier to worry • Mobile and fluid, • Hyphenated identity & ethnicity • No unreached people • "Partnership,"[13] "networking" & synergy

Let me highlight only a few key features from the details of these figures. First, the paradigm shift in diaspora missiology in terms of "perspective" (see Figure 3, no. 3) includes non-spatial deployment of missionaries, borderless/transnational and global movements of people, and an integrated and interdisciplinary "perspective." Thus the "orientation" of diaspora missiology is characterized by "the Gospel from everywhere

> Thus the "orientation" of diaspora missiology is characterized by "the Gospel from everywhere to everyone."

to everyone," viewing and following God's way of providentially moving people spatially and spiritually, "moving mission fields" of diaspora everywhere, and mobile/flexible missions and strategic kingdom partnership. All these items can be considered by Lutheran leadership as action points. For example, due to the phenomenon of diaspora movement internationally to G7 countries and internally to urban centers, leadership of the Lutheran churches in the United States is encouraged to practice the four types of diaspora missions: missions *to* the diaspora, missions *through* the diaspora, missions *by* and *beyond* the diaspora, and missions *with* the diaspora.[14]

> The diaspora phenomenon offers many advantages in the practice of missions to the diaspora. Diaspora missions: (1) is economically sustainable; (2) is geographically accessible in reaching the target groups; (3) has fewer political and legal restrictions; (4) involves partnership among people and organizations committed to the Great Commission; (5) is not carried out by just a few "experts" or "international workers"; (6) is a way to encourage self-supported diaspora Christians to be "kingdom workers," especially those working in limited access contexts; (7) is putting the "priesthood of believers" into mission practice—a heritage from the Reformation.[15]

Second, I will expand specifically some of the practical applications of the "with" approach in diaspora missions.[16]

Figure 5–The Concept and Practice of "*With*" Approach in Diaspora Missions[17]

CONCEPTUAL	PRACTICAL	
	Relational Pattern	Practical Way
Bridging & Bonding	Networking: • Bridging by regional proximity or linguistic/racial affinity • Bonding: kinship/friendship/mutual interest	• Hospitality • Reciprocity • Connectivity & complexity • Solidarity • Unity
	Partnership: • National & transnational individual • Local congregations or institutional entities of multiple variety	

The best way to explain the **"*with*"** approach is by way of illustrations. It can be an ex-missionary returning home (due to retirement, health or family reason) from Japan but continue to work with diaspora Japanese or Chinese. He/she has the language facility to evangelize (or partner with) Japanese

diaspora and the cultural sensitivity to work with Chinese diaspora. A missionary return[s] to the U. S. from South America but continue[s] to work with all kinds of Hispanic Americans. . . .

Networking and partnership in the "with" approach of diaspora mission may vary in form, size, shape and flavor because our Lord is creative and impressively surprising in His miraculous ways of building His Kingdom. We stand in awe when observing how He orchestrated things to His glory and our astonishment.

The key concepts of the "with" approach are **"bridging and bonding"** and the practice may take the relational pattern of networking or partnership. "Bridging" may be based on regional proximity (e.g., same continent such as south Asian or South America), linguistic affinity (e.g., Portuguese from Portugal, Brazil, Mozambique and Angola), racial [cultural] affinity (e.g., Hispanic from South America and Spain). Bonding may be based on kinship, friendship or mutual interest. Partnership may occur among national, expatriate and transnational at congregational or institutional entities of multiple variety (e.g., charity or faith-base).[18]

Another practical suggestion for the leadership of Lutheran churches in the U. S. is the employment of a "missions at our doorstep" approach. In light of the trend of the emerging phenomenon of diaspora, new immigrants from the so-called "unreached people-groups" are now at our door own doorstep. This means that we can now seize the golden opportunity to practice "the Great Commandment" of loving this new neighbors pre-evangelistically first, then fulfilling "the Great Commission" to make disciples out of them. The presence among us has created an opportunity for us to engage in cross-cultural missions without crossing the ocean. Some key features of this new strategy are noted below (Figure 6):

Figure 6–"Mission at Our Doorstep"[19]

NO	YES
No visa required	Yes, door opened
No closed door	Yes, people accessible
No international travel required	Yes, missions at our doorstep
No political/legal restrictions	Yes, ample opportunities
No dichotomized approach	Yes, holistic ministries
No sense of self-sufficiency or unhealthy competition	Yes, powerful partnership

Practical applications of "diaspora missiology" will need to be discussed and implemented within a Lutheran framework, but the opportunity for "missions at our door step" is a key factor. May God open our eyes to see the unprecedented opportunity, stretch out our hands to reach these new people groups, open our hearts/homes/sanctuaries to embrace/host them, and share with them our lives and hearts enlivened by the Gospel! Helpful references with practical guides are: *The World at Your Door: Reaching International Students in Your Home, Church, and School,*[20] *Missions Have Come Home to America: The Church's Cross-Cultural Ministry to Ethnic,*[21] *Missions within Reach,*[22] *Reaching the World Next Door,*[23] *Strangers Next Door: Immigration, Migration and Mission,*[24] etc.

Global Trend 3—The Failure of Traditional Institutions and the Rise of Socio-cultural Relativism

Action: Paradigm shift to a "relational realism paradigm"

A. Definition and Description

Due to the failure of traditional institutions (marriage, family, institutional church, etc.) and the rise of socio-cultural relativism (postmodernism, relaxed regulation on marijuana, extramarital sex, same-sex/gender marriage, etc.), a paradigm shift is proposed that embraces a "relational realism paradigm." By this I mean "a conceptual framework for understanding reality based on the interactive connections between personal beings/Beings."[25] The philosophical element of the relational paradigm is based on "relational realism"[26] and the methodological element is based on "relational theologizing."[27] In a "relational paradigm," there is the emphasis on "being" over "doing," "essence" above but not without "existence," "relationship" above "function," "vertical relationship with God" above "horizontal relationship with others within the created order." The insistence of a God-centered relationship and Christian epistemology grounded in the Word is an excellent response to the trend characterized by the "failure of traditional institutions and the rise of socio-cultural relativism."[28]

Theologically, the relational paradigm is grounded on the fact that man was created in the image of God and his existence (ontologically) is solely dependent on God at all times (Gn 1:26–27; Rom 11:36; Heb 1:3). His ability to know (epistemologically) and his undertaking in missions (*missio Dei*) are all dependent on God, who is the great "I AM" (Ex 3), as I have sought to summarize in the following three statements[29]:

- "'I AM' therefore i am" ontologically[30]

- "'I AM' therefore 'i know'" epistemologically

- "'I AM' (*missio Dei*) therefore 'i am'" missiologically[31]

These three statements are in contrast to the rationalist's maxim of Descartes—"I think therefore I am."[32] The motto, "I think therefore I am" provided an impetus for the rationalist orientation ("I think") and existential element ("I am") with its individualistic and humanistic tendency based on the capital "I" in the entire undertaking.

The relational paradigm is based on "relational realism," which is different from the "critical realism" of Paul Hiebert.[33] Both assert realism, but in different ways. As shown in the table below, critical realism is too closely aligned with science epistemologically and empirically. The "umpire's response" in critical realism is too man-centered, too dependent on human perception and human objectivity, i.e., "I call it the way I see it." In contrast to critical realism, "relational realism" is God-centered both ontologically, epistemologically, and existentially.

Figure 7–Hiebert's "Critical Realism" vis-a-vis Wan's "Relational Realism"[34]

REALISM X 2	NATURE OF KNOWLEDGE	RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SYSTEMS OF KNOWLEDGE	THE UMPIRE'S RESPONSE
Critical Realism (Hiebert)	"The external world is real. Our knowledge of it is partial but can be true. Science is a map or model. It is made up of successive paradigms that bring us to closer approximations of reality and absolute truth."	"Each field in science presents a different blue-print of reality. These are complementary to one another. Integration is achieved, not by reducing them all to one model, but by seeing their interrelationship. Each gives us partial insights into reality."	"I call it the way I see it, but there is a real pitch and an objective standard against which I must judge it. I can be shown to be right or wrong."
Relational Realism (Wan)	The external world is real, but that reality is based primarily on the vertical relationship—on God and His created order (Acts 14:14–17, 17:24–31)— and secondarily on horizontal relationships within the created order, i.e., spirit world, human world, and natural order.	God is the Truth: His Word (incarnate with personhood, inscripturated, and revealed in written form) is truth; His work (creation, redemption, transformation, etc.) is truthful. Therefore, truth and reality are multidimensional, multilevel and multicontextual.	Man without God and His revelation (incarnate and inscripturated Word) and illumination (H.S.) can be blinded to truth and reality. Therefore, he is not the umpire to make the final call of being: real or illusion, truth or untruth, right or wrong, good or bad.

Relational Realism (Wan) continued	God is the absolute Truth. Science is a road map and may provide a human-based paradigm that cannot exclusively claim to be the only way to closer approximations of reality and absolute truth. A scientist with a modernist orientation has neither a monopoly on truth nor can dogmatically/conclusively/exhaustively make pronouncements on reality.	All human efforts and disciplines (science, theology, philosophy, etc.) without a vertical relationship to God (the Absolute Reality) at best are defective ways to approximate truth and reality (for being unidimensional = horizontal; single-level= human playing field; unicontextual = shutting out the spirit world of God & angels (Satan & fallen angels included). Truth and reality are best to be comprehended and experienced in relational networks of God and the created 3 orders, i.e., angels, humanity, and nature.	No human judgment is final, nor can it be dogmatic/conclusive without the vertical relationship to God— the absolute Truth and the most Real.

B. Factors for the proposed contextual paradigm shift of embracing a "relational realism paradigm"

In Western society today, a lack of "relational reality" can be observed in the following socio-cultural phenomena: (a) a high mobility in general and a high density of population in urban centers; (b) the prevalence of failed marriages and broken/dysfunctional families; (c) the prevalence of virtual relationships over actual personal interaction, e.g., the popularity of social networks such as Facebook and Twitter; (d) the Christian church's obsession with programmatic and managerial aspects of ministry for quantitative growth instead of "body life" of genuine Christianity and "personal touch"; (e) the increasing popularity of the "gospel of health and wealth" without relational intensity.

In the face of postmodernist epistemology and socio-cultural pluralism in the twenty-first-century United States context, the relational paradigm is the most appropriate contextual response to the challenges for several reasons:

(1) The rediscovery of "relationship" in Christian faith and practice is desperately needed in order to revitalize Christian faith and practice to form a counter-cultural force.

(2) It is an excellent Christian response to the cry for relationships from people of the twenty-first century who are starving for genuine face-to-face relationships.

(3) It is a practical way to rediscover "relationship," which is the essence of Christian faith and practice.

(4) It has been proven to be effective in ministering to diaspora communities and individuals in need of Christian charity.

(5) It is a paradigm that enables the synthesizing of diaspora missiology and diaspora missions.

(6) It is transculturally relevant to societies in the majority world, which are highly relational.

(7) It nurtures a Kingdom orientation and strategically fulfills the Great Commission (a vertical relationship with God), and a working relationship with fellow "kingdom workers" (horizontally with one another).

(8) It enables the practice of "strategic stewardship" and "relational accountability."

(9) It is in line with the various approaches in diaspora missions, e.g., *to, through, by/beyond* and *with*, which are "relational" in nature.

(10) In light of the shift of Christendom's center from the West to the majority world, strategic partnership and synergy require the practice of the relational paradigm rather than the popular managerial tendency and entrepreneurship of the West.

The relational paradigm is a timely Christian response to the general cry for relationship in the twenty-first century (see 1–4 above). Factors contributing to the relational deprivation in the twenty-first century include: failed marriages, broken families, and a growing sense of alienation resulting from urbanization and globalization. Communication technology and social media have enabled people to be connected in real time virtually, but not with face-to-face human interaction. The growing acceptance of digital relationships via the vast and various social media in virtual reality is an indication of the relational deprivation of contemporary society in our time. In this socio-cultural context, the relational paradigm is offered as a timely approach to rediscover the fundamental relational nature of the Christian faith and practice when reaching out to individuals and communities in diaspora.

> In light of the shift of Christendom's center from the West to the majority world, strategic partnership and synergy require the practice of the relational paradigm rather than the popular managerial tendency and entrepreneurship of the West.

Furthermore, the relational paradigm provides a way to rediscover relationship in Christianity—the essence of Christian faith and practice that can foster a counter-cultural force against postmodernist epistemology and socio-cultural relativism. If Christianity is likened to "chicken soup" and "relationship" is the genuine chicken (with flesh and bones), then the contemporary Christian church and individual believers have often settled for canned chicken soup that only has the flavor of the chicken but lacks the substance and nutrition of a real chicken.[35]

A personal touch and relational intimacy are part of the uniqueness of Christianity. Individually, every human being is known by God before birth and every Christian is intimately called by God before the foundation of the world. He/she is God's beloved, chosen in Christ by the Father (Eph 1:4), destined to be a joint heir with Christ the Son (Rom 8:17), known to the Good Shepherd by name (Jn 10:3), transformed by the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:3; Rom 12:1–4), and indwelled by the Spirit as His temple, both individually and collectively (1 Cor 3:16–17; 6:19).

Collectively, the Church is the bride and body of Christ (Eph 5:22–33), who purchased it by His precious blood (Acts 20:28), interceded for it as the High Priest before His crucifixion (John 17), and now reigns at the right hand of the Father (Rom 8:34). However, over the course of time, as the church bodies have focused on quantitative growth, relied on programs and management skills, and became steeped in the secularization process, the relational distinctiveness of Christianity was gradually lost; yet it is an excellent alternative to revitalize Christian faith and to withstand the onslaught of socio-cultural relativism.

C. Effective ministry and mission in light of a relational realism paradigm

The figure below presents a synthesis of the relational paradigm (left side) and diaspora missiology and diaspora missions (right side). If the relational paradigm is likened to the skeleton (as in biology) or syntax (as in linguistics), then diaspora missiology and diaspora missions is the flesh/face (as in biology) or word/sound (as in linguistics).[36]

> Furthermore, the relational paradigm provides a way to rediscover relationship in Christianity— the essence of Christian faith and practice that can foster a counter-cultural force against postmodernist epistemology and socio-cultural relativism.

Figure 8–Relational Paradigm: Synthesizing Diaspora Missiology & Diaspora Missions

RELATONAL PARADIGM		DIASPORA MISSIOLOGY & DIASPORA MISSIONS
5 ELEMENTS	**5 RELATIONAL ASPECTS**	
PARTICIPANTS • Triune God & Christians carry out the Great Commission • Resistant: Satan, fallen angels	**RELATIONAL NETWORK** • Triune God is the originator of relationship; the center and foundation of all networks • Two camps: God, obedient angels & Christians ⬅ ➔ Satan	• Not programmatic, not entrepreneurial, not outcome-based • Strong emphasis on relational dimensions between person Being (the triune God) and beings (of humanity and angelic reality) • Recognizing the dimension of spiritual warfare
PATTERN (➔sending) • Father ➔ the Son & together ➔ H. S. • Father ➔ the Son ➔ Christians (Jn 17:18), Christians obeying • H. S. sending (Acts 10:19; 13:2) Christians empowered	**RELATIONAL DIMENSIONS/ CONTEXT** • Vertical dimension to God • Horizontal dimensions within the Church & beyond • Multi-context: divine, angelic, human; changing human contexts due to globalization, diaspora movement, etc.	• Vertical dimensions, e.g. "relational accountability" • "Glocal" missions in the globalized context • Non-spatial, "borderless," no boundary to worry, transnational • Different approach: integrated ministry & interdisciplinary study of missiology • Learning of new demographic reality of the 21st century & strategize accordingly with good stewardship
PRACTICE • Christians participating in God's mission, carrying out the "Great Commission"	**RELATIONAL REALITY** • God: reconciling the world to Himself in Christ through Christians • Satan & fallen angels at enmity with God and His followers	• New reality in the 21st century • Viewing & following God's way of providentially moving people spatially & spiritually. • Moving targets & move with the targets (diaspora)
POWER • God's love transforms Christians & compels them carrying out His mission	**RELATIONAL DYNAMICS** • Doing missions out of love for God & compassion for the lost • empowered by the Holy Spirit	• Micro: love, compassion, Christian hospitality • Macro: partnership & networking • Holistic Christianity with strong integration of evangelism with Christian compassion & charity

PROCESS	RELATIONAL INTERACTION	
• God: plan of salvation provided & the Church carrying out God's mission	• God's calling, Christ's commissioning, H.S. empowering • Christians obedient to God; Satan resisting God's mission	• "Great commission" + "great commandment" • Diaspora mission: ministering *to*, *through*, *by/beyond*, and *with* the diaspora • Relational accountability • Strategic stewardship and partnership

In light of this synthesis of the insights of both diaspora missiology and a relational realism, let me conclude by offering some specific practical implications that can impact our approach to mission and outreach, whether at the denominational, local, or even personal level.

1. Kingdom orientation

A person with kingdom orientation is someone who embraces the perspective, sentiment, and motivation of the kingdom at heart and in action. Kingdom orientation enables practitioners of Christian missions to overcome denominationalism, parochialism, and territorialism. It will remove relational barriers in communication and reduce the tendency of being managerial and paternalistic, which tend to be impersonal. The relational paradigm will aid the cultivation of relationship among all parties. It will nurture partnership between the dwindling church in the West and the thriving church in the global south.

With kingdom orientation, diaspora Christians and congregations can be motivated and mobilized to become kingdom workers and kingdom partners.[37] With the exception of refugees, most diaspora people are gainfully employed. As kingdom workers, their kingdom orientation will help to multiply mission forces without draining the scarce resources of mission agencies, while at the same time fulfilling the Great Commission. This is an effective and economical way of engaging the "priesthood of believers" in the twenty-first century.

2. Partnerships that mimic the Trinity

"The relational reality of the Triune God figures prominently in both the Old and New Testaments scriptures."[38] The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit relate to one another in perfect unity, though distinct from one another with diverse roles and operating interdependently. This theological understanding of the Trinity has implications for the practice of strategic partnership in Christian mission, including diaspora missions. The figure below offers seven principles derived from the model of the Trinity for the practice of ministerial partnership.

Figure 9–Partnership in Light of the Trinity[39]

PRINCIPLES	PRACTICE OF MINISTERIAL PARTNERSHIP
1. relationship	know, confer, plan with one another
2. unity	spiritual unity leading to unity of goal
3. diversity	difference in gifts and distinct roles
4. interdependence	not self-sufficient
5. love	self-sacrificial love within the Trinity and beyond
6. peace	harmony; freedom from anxiety and inner turmoil
7. joy	Christians are to be joyfully serving God and others

3. Strategic stewardship

According to Jenkins,[40] places where Christianity is thriving and mutating are also places where population is shifting. He projects that this demographic trend will continue throughout the next century. Given this global demographic trend, the church must strategically minister to receptive people in developing nations where population and church are growing at a higher rate than the post-Christian West. This strategy also applies to ministries to diaspora groups, who are usually more receptive to the Gospel while on the move from the security of their homeland.

Christian stewardship has two dimensions: endowment by God **vertically** and entrustment by others **horizontally**. Strategic stewardship (Lk 12:32–48) and relational accountability (Lk 15:1–16:13) also have vertical and horizontal aspects. Resources, spiritual gifts, and ministry opportunities all originate from God; thus, those who are custodians of various measures of grace from the Father (Jas 1:16–18), the Son (Eph 4:7–11), and the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:1–11) are to be good stewards. Therefore, Christian individuals and institutions are accountable to the Triune God for their stewardship of endowments and entrustments vertically and strategically.

Likewise, resources and ministry opportunities oftentimes come from other Christian individuals and institutions by means of contribution, donation, and entrustment. There is to be strategic stewardship on the part of recipients who are accountable horizontally to the contributors and donors.

4. Biblical basis of relational accountability[41]

Relational accountability is the understanding and practice of accountability within the relational paradigm. It consists of two dimensions: vertical and horizontal. The relational paradigm is contextually more relevant within the context of "Missions in the Majority World"[42] than in modernist, postmodernist, or rationalist paradigms. The reason is that in the socio-cultural context of the majority world, social structure is primarily the interweaving of myriads of networks at multiple levels.

Traditionally, mission agencies in the West were accountable to donors but not necessarily to those among whom they were establishing missions. When Western mission organizations became hard pressed by dwindling resources in finance and personnel, accountability was no longer based solely on finance from the West. A new pattern of relational accountability between partnering entities in the West and the majority world is to replace the pattern of Western paternalism and dominance. When the relational paradigm is being practiced in diaspora missions, mutual "relational accountability" is to replace the traditionally "unilateral accountability" by entities of the majority world to those of the West.

For example, historically, Western-based mission agencies had always funded mission operations in the majority world. They, as the dominant force, often ignored issues and concerns raised by the local people. The only relational accountability for these missionaries from the West was to their own sending agencies in the West. The relational paradigm and relational accountability proposed in this paper is to counter such "one-way" relationships. The same principle applies to Christian ministry in general.

5. Strategic partnership and "reverse missions"[43]

"Partnership" is a "unique opportunity" to work with the Triune God and the Body of Christ to accomplish the *missio Dei* under the power and direction of the Holy Spirit.[44] "Strategic partnership" is partnership characterized by wise use of God-endowed resources and God-given opportunity to His glory and for kingdom extension.

> "Partnership" is a "unique opportunity" to work with the Triune God and the Body of Christ to accomplish the missio Dei under the power and direction of the Holy Spirit.

Strategic partnership is a fitting replacement for Western paternalism and Euro-centric style missions. Members of thriving diaspora churches in host countries must be challenged to practice "reverse missions." It is the carrying out of mission work in the post-Christian West by diaspora Christians or Christians of the global south. It is also the sending of diaspora groups back to their homelands and to other countries for mission work. Success of these mission endeavors depends on the collaboration and partnership among parties concerned, i.e., mission entities from the West, maturing congregations in the global south, and diaspora churches. The synergy from such partnership will enhance Christian stewardship and advance kingdom ministry.

A good case of "reverse missions" is the trend of church planting by Africans in Europe that began in the latter part of the last century with momentum:

The 1990s witnessed the rise of New Pentecostal Churches (NPC) with African origins. For example, one of the largest Churches in Western Europe is Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC) founded in 1992 by Pastor Matthew Ashimolowo (Nigerian); also one of the largest Churches in Eastern Europe was founded in 1994 by an African, Sunday Adelaja pastor of Embassy of God in Kiev, Ukraine. African Churches in Europe are making many contributions and are bringing renewal to a continent that is fast losing its Christian roots and values. The contributions of African Churches can be seen in the following areas: Church growth, social cohesion among ethnic minorities, community development, women's ministries and discourses, immigration services, *diaspora* studies, revival, missions and a host of others.[45]

It is, therefore, critically important for church bodies in Europe and North America to practice strategic partnership with the vibrant diaspora churches in the context of post-Christian West and for the fulfillment of the Great Commission globally.

Summary

The Reformation era was a time of significant paradigm shifts in cultural landscape, with a parallel in the changing landscape of Christianity in the twenty-first century. Five hundred years ago, Martin Luther exercised his theological leadership in light of such socio-cultural changes. This paper (in two parts) has been written to inspire Christian leaders today, especially those who are direct heirs of Luther and the Reformation, to do likewise.

Three global trends have been identified in Part One: the shifting landscape of Christendom, the phenomenon of diaspora, the rise of socio-cultural relativism. In Part Two, a personal proposal to the leadership of Lutheran church bodies in North America has been presented in response to the these three trends: a paradigm shift to multiethnic ecclesiology and missiology, a paradigm shift from "traditional missiology" to "diaspora missiology," and a paradigm shift to a "relational realism paradigm." I have offered some practical implications as a starting point for further discussion within a Lutheran framework of mission, building on the model of the Reformation to embrace Gospel-centered and Gospel-driven mission within the realities of a changing social-cultural and technological context.

Endnotes

[1] Samuel Escobar, *The New Global Mission: The Gospel from Everywhere to Everyone* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2003).
[2] Enoch Wan, "Jesus Christ for the Chinese: A Contextual Reflection," *Global Missiology* (Oct. 2003), www.globalmissiology.net. Sample works on "contextualization" and Sino-

theology by Enoch Wan are listed below:

- "Liberating Paradigm Shift: Theologizing from the East" (unpublished paper presented at the EMS SE Regional Meeting, March 7–8, 1997).
- *Banishing the Old and Building the New: An Exploration of Sino-theology* (in Chinese) (Ontario, Canada: Christian Communication Inc. of Canada, 1997).
- *Sino-theology: A Survey Study* (in Chinese) (Ontario, Canada: Christian Communication Inc. of Canada, 1999).
- "Christianity in the Eye of Traditional Chinese," *Chinese Around the World* (July 1999): 20–24.
- "Critiquing the Method of Traditional Western Theology and Calling for Sino-theology," *Chinese Around the World* (November 1999): 12–17.
- "Practical Contextualization: A Case Study of Evangelizing Contemporary Chinese," *Chinese Around the World* (March 2000): 18–24.
- "Theological Contribution of Sino-theology to the Global Christian Community," *Chinese Around the World.* (July 2000): 17–21.

[3] Enoch Wan and Michael Pocock, eds., *Missions from the Majority World: Progress, Challenges, and Case Studies*, Evangelical Missiological Society Series Book 17 (William Carey Library, 2009).

[4] Enoch Wan, *Diaspora Missiology: Theory, Methodology, and Practice*, rev. ed. (Portland, OR: Institute of Diaspora Studies, 2014), 7–8.

[5] See "The Seoul Declaration on Diaspora Missiology," accessed March 25, 2010, http://www.lausanne.org/documents/seoul-declaration-on-diaspora-missiology.html.

[6] There is the IDS-USA Series (Institute of Diaspora Studies) edited by Enoch Wan as listed below:

- Enoch Wan, ed., *Diaspora Missiology: Theory, Methodology, and Practice*, rev. ed. (Portland, OR: Institute of Diaspora Studies, 2014).
- Yaw Attah Edu-Bekoe and Enoch Wan, *Scattered Africans Keep Coming* (Spring 2013).
- Enoch Wan and Thanh Trung Le, *Mobilizing Vietnamese Diaspora for the Kingdom* (Spring 2014).
- Enoch Wan and Ted Rubesh, *Wandering Jews and Scattered Sri Lankans: Understanding Sri Lankan Diaspora in the GCC Region Through the Lens of OT Jewish Diaspora* (Spring 2014).
- Enoch Wan and Elton S. L. Law, *The 2011 Triple Disaster in Japan and the Diaspora: Lessons Learned and Ways Forward* (Summer 2014).
- Enoch Wan and Anthony Francis Casey, *Church Planting Among Immigrants in US Urban Centers: The Where, Why, and How of Diaspora Missiology in Action* (Summer 2014). A more recent publication is Michael Pocock and Enoch Wan, *Diaspora Missiology: Reflections on Reaching the Scattered Peoples of the World*, EMS, vol. 23 (2015).

[7] Enoch Wan, "Diaspora Missiology," originally published in *Occasional Bulletin*, EMS (Spring 2007): 8; posted in "Featured Article" of www.globalmissiology.org in July 2007.

[8] "Deterritorialization" is the "loss of social and cultural boundaries" due to the large scale diaspora.

[9] Enoch Wan, "Diaspora Missiology," originally published in *Occasional Bulletin*, EMS (Spring 2007): 9.

[10] David Lundy, *Borderless Church* (Authentic, 2005).

[11] Peter Ward, *Liquid Church* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2002).

[12] A church was founded by the chief cook, brother Bong, on board of the container vessel Al Mutannabi in Nov. 2002 (see Martin Otto, *Church on the Oceans* [UK: Piquant, 2007], 65). From personal communication of March 29, 2007, a staff worker reported that "Last week I met the second cook on another ship and I was very happy to see that the second cook already started planting a church. . ."

[13] "Partnership" is defined as "entities that are separate and autonomous but complementary, sharing with equality and mutuality." More discussion on "partnership" in another section later.

[14] See extensive discussion and explanation in Chapter 8, Enoch Wan, *Diaspora Missiology* (2014): 123–134.

[15] Enoch Wan, *Diaspora Missiology* (2014), 183.

[16] The "with" approach is a relatively new development, discussed in the second edition (2014) of my *Diaspora Missiology*.

[17] Enoch Wan, *Diaspora Missiology* (2014), 132.

[18] Ibid., 132–133. Bold emphasis was in original.

[19] Enoch Wan, "Diaspora Missiology." *Occasional Bulletin*, EMS, 20 no. 2 (Spring 2007a): 3–7.

[20] Tom Phillips and Bob Norsworthy, *The World at Your Door: Reaching International Students in Your Home, Church, and School* (Minnesota: Bethany House, 1997).

[21] Jerry L. Appleby, *Missions Have Come Home to America: The Church's Cross-Cultural Ministry to Ethnic* (Missouri: Beacon Hill, 1986).

[22] Enoch Wan, *Missions Within Reach: Intercultural Ministries in Canada* (Hong Kong: Alliance Press, 1995).

[23] Thom Hopler and Marcia Hopler, *Reaching the World Next Door* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1995).

[24] J. D. Payne*, Strangers Next Door: Immigration, Migration and Mission* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2012).

[25] Enoch Wan and Mark Hedinger, *Relational Missionary Training: Theology, Theory and Practice* (CA: Urban Loft Publishers, 2017).

[26] Enoch Wan, "The Paradigm of 'Relational Realism,'" *Occasional Bulletin*, EMS, vol. 19, no. 2 (Spring 2006):1–4.

[27] Enoch Wan, "Relational Theology and Relational Missiology," *Occasional Bulletin*, EMS, vol. 21, no 1 (Winter 2007): 1–7.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid., 2–5.

[30] The "I AM" is God's self-identification and "i am" (lowercase) is an intentional designation for man in contra-distinction to "I AM."

[31] Our Triune God is characterized by love, communion, commission (sending), and glory. Also see Kevin Daugherty, "*Missio Dei*: The Trinity and Christian Missions," Evangelical Review of Theology 31 (April 2007). John A. McIntosh, *All Things New: The Trinitarian Nature of the Human Calling in Maximus the Confessor and Jurgen Moltmann* (Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2014).

[32] Wan, "Relational Theology and Relational Missiology," 2.

[33] Paul Hiebert, *Missiological Implications of Epistemological Shifts: Affirming Truth in a Modern/Postmodern World* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999), 37–38.

[34] Wan, "The Paradigm of 'Relational Realism,'" 4.

[35] Chicken soup is valued in most majority world cultural traditions. The use of the "chicken soup" analogy was included in video presentations by Enoch Wan in presentations at Tokyo 2010 and Cape Town 2010:

- Tokyo 2010 – Plenary Session Video, video clip available at http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/6897559 and paper (pp. 92–100) available at http://www.tokyo2010.org/resources/Handbook.pdf.
- Cape Town 2010 – "Multiplex" Session Video, video clip available at http://www.enochwan.com/english/confvideos/index.html and paper available at http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/conversations/detail/10540.

[36] For an explanation of this figure, refer to Enoch Wan, "Global People and Diaspora Missiology," in *Handbook of Global Mission: Consultation, Celebration, May 11–14, 2010*: 92–106. Video clip available at http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/6897559.

[37] See two publications for elaboration: Enoch Wan, "Korean Diaspora: From Hermit Kingdom to Kingdom Ministry," Korean Diaspora Forum, May 18–21, 2010 (Seoul, Korea); Sadiri Emmanuel Santiago B. Tira, "Filipino Kingdom Workers: An Ethnographic Study in Diaspora Missiology." EMS Dissertation Series (Western Seminary, 2008).

[38] Enoch Wan, "Partnerships Should Mimic the Trinity," *Faith Today* (July/August 2010): 27.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2002).

[41] The content of this section is adapted from "Global People and Diaspora Missiology" Tokyo 2010 Global Mission Consultation, Plenary Session, Tokyo, Japan, (May 11–14, 2010) p. 92–106.

[42] See Enoch Wan and Michael Pocock, eds., *Missions in the Majority World* (William Carey Library, 2009).

[43] Enoch Wan, "Diaspora Missiology and Missions in the Context of the 21st Century," *Torch Trinity Journal*, vol. 13, no.1 (May 30, 2010): 46–60. Also in *Global Missiology*, October, 2010; available at www.GlobalMissiology.com.

[44] For detailed discussion on "partnership," see the three articles below:
- Enoch Wan and Kevin P. Penman, "The 'Why,' 'How' and 'Who' of Partnership in Christian Missions," *Global Missiology* (April 1, 2010), available at www.GlobalMissiology.com;
- Enoch Wan and Johnny Yee-chong Wan, "Partnership—A Relational Study of the Trinity and the Epistle to the Philippines," *Global Missiology* (April 1, 2010a), available at www.GlobalMissiology.org;
- Enoch Wan and Geoff Baggett, "A Theology of Partnership: Implications for Christian Mission & Case Study of a Local Congregation," *Global Missiology* (April 2010), available at www.GlobalMissiology.org.

[45] "Reverse Missions: African Churches in Europe," (accessed Dec. 20, 2013), http://israelolofinjana.wordpress.com/2012/01/25/reverse-missions-african-churches-in-europe/.