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## Editorial

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## EDITORIAL

DENIS KAISER

Editor, Andrews University Seminary Student Journal

We are one and a half years behind our publishing schedule, but we are grateful that we can present to you here the combined issue for the year 2018. We want to thank the authors, the reviewers, the copy editor, and the editorial team for their service in making this current issue a reality and for ensuring the high quality of the published material. The articles and the entire issue are accessible on <http://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/aussj/>. We hope that this issue, and its articles, are beneficial to you.

The invited article in this issue comes from Dr. David A. Williams, Assistant Professor of Worship and Sacred Music. In his study of the Eucharist as sacrifice in the writings of the church fathers of the first and second centuries, he focused specifically on martyrdom as sacrifice, the transition from the Old Testament concept of sacrifice to the spiritual sacrifice of the believer, the Eucharist as a business transaction, and the priesthood in relation to the Eucharist. He concluded that whereas the early church moved away from the Bible in its primary teachings of the Eucharist, it maintained a biblical notion of the spiritual sacrifice of the worshiper, a notion that is found nowhere in Adventist literature. Often, it is easier to reject a given practice completely, with all its ideas, than to dissect the different elements and decide what to keep and what to discard.

The next article comes from David J. Hamstra, a ThD student in Theological and Historical Studies. In his article, he addresses the question of whether or not contemporaries of Jesus may have been sufficiently capable of recognizing him as the prophetically foretold Messiah. Based on Melchizedek (11Q13) and the writings of Josephus, he shows that the interpretation of the seventy weeks of Daniel 9:24–27 led to a climate of messianic expectation among certain sectors of first-century Jewish society, suggesting that this biblical prophecy was, in principle, intelligible to first-century Jews.

A third article comes from Michael F. Younker, PhD, graduate of the Theological Seminary and currently a historical research specialist at the General Conference Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research. A few years ago, the Seventh-day Adventist Church discussed the subject of ordination and whether divisions should be permitted to decide, for their territory, if women could be ordained as pastors. The Theology of Ordination Study Committee (TOSC), which studied the biblical, theological, and historical arguments, and their ramifications, did not arrive at a unified position. Based on different supportive arguments, three different positions emerged as a result. In his article, Younker addresses the interpretation of Genesis 4:7 and its relationship to Genesis 3:16 as advocated by the members of Position 1. He shows how the interpretation by TOSC Position 1 contradicts the content and context of Genesis 4:7, as well as

Ellen G. White's understanding of that passage. His article is intended as a basis for dialogue and an attempt to avoid continuous unpleasant confrontations.

The following article is from Eric A. Louw, an MDiv student with an emphasis in Systematic Theology. Surveying the historical sources concerning the 1901 reorganization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Louw focuses primarily on how and why union conferences were created and what their relationship was to the General Conference. His research led him to four conclusions: first, the establishment of union conferences addressed the needs of local fields; second, the establishment of union conferences attempted to minimize the limitations and abuse of the centralized decision-making of a few church leaders, enabling the church to reach the world more effectively; third, there was a clear intention to maintain accountability of union conferences to the General Conference on matters of policy; and fourth, the autonomy of union conferences was built on a relationship of bilateral trust. The findings of this research may have implications for those involved in the current tensions over authority, leadership, and organization in the church.

The last article of this issue comes from Christopher R. Mwashinga, a PhD candidate in Systematic Theology. In his article, he discusses the missional efficiency of the three initial mission strategies—establishing educational institutions, medical facilities, and publishing houses—of Adventist missionaries in East Africa from 1903 to 1953. His research leads to the conclusion that the dedication and sacrifice of those foreign missionaries and native African believers, coupled with clear mission strategies, facilitated the training of local missionaries, the spreading of Christian literature, and the conversion of new believers. As a result, this led to a rapid growth of Seventh-day Adventism in East Africa during the period under study.

This issue will be the last one under my supervision. The journal began as a student-led endeavor to mentor doctoral students in writing academic articles, reviewing manuscripts, and gaining an experience in the different stages of editorial work. The ultimate goal of the journal was that doctoral students would apply those skills and talents as they continued to write, review, and edit in their careers as professors and teachers. Three years ago, in early 2017, the journal underwent some major changes. As three members of the editorial team completed their studies or resigned due to time constraints and so forth, I was hired as a faculty member in the Theological Seminary. To ensure the future of the journal, I decided to stay on the team and mentor the next generation of doctoral students in the editorial team. After three years, they are getting closer to the completion of their doctoral studies, and it is wise at this point to add new members to the editorial team in order to train them, enabling a smooth transition. Iriann Irizarry Hausted, our associate editor, has received a dissertation grant that will allow her to complete her dissertation in the next year. We want to thank her for her outstanding service to the journal in the last year and wish her many blessings for her future career and service. We also want to thank the Jiří

Moskala, Dean of the Seminary; Alayne Thorpe (and before her Christon Arthur), Dean of the School of Graduate Studies & Research; and John W. Reeve (and before him Tom Shepherd), Director of the PhD in Religion and ThD programs for their support. Without them, this journal would never have seen the light of day and would not have continued until now. I wish the journal a bright future, that it may continue to serve students as a tool to sharpen their skills and serve readers as a stimulating and thought-provoking resource.