

# Editorial

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*Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* (SHE) releases one volume with three issues each year, and 2025 will be no exception. Typically, one of these issues is thematic, focusing on the proceedings of the Church History Society of Southern Africa (CHSSA) annual conference. In August 2024, the Society hosted its annual conference at the Zimbabwe Open University, marking the first time this academic society's conference had been held outside South Africa. The event was a success and demonstrated the potential for expansion beyond African borders. Notably, the society has begun attracting members from countries outside Africa, which benefits both CHSSA and SHE. This development enables the publication of historical works that extend beyond Africa's geographical context while highlighting the African Christian influence in regions beyond the continent. The 2024 theme was "Storytelling in the History of the Christian Churches in Southern Africa."

The first volume of SHE was non-thematic and covered a variety of topics, presenting articles ranging from research papers to pieces that may not have been part of conference proceedings. The authors and co-authors of these articles have effectively illustrated the historical depth of the discipline of Christian History across various denominations. Notably, Mookgo Kgatle explored the Pentecostal Church, while Oluwasegun Peter Aluko and Caleb Abiodun Adeleye collaborated on another insightful article on the growth of Pentecostal Christianity in Nigeria. The expansive Christian historiography highlights the significance of human beings and their relationship to the development of the Christian Church within specific contexts. This can be attributed to the contributions of Paul Henry Gundani, Ayanda Mdokwana, Mlamli Diko, and Phillip Musoni, whose articles clearly situate the Christian Church within sociopolitical, cultural, and colonial hegemonic environments, drawing on diverse perspectives.

Papers from the 2024 CHSSA annual conference were published in Issue 2 of 2025. The articles in the thematic area of the conference are particularly intriguing, revealing both shared and untold stories. These pieces stand out for the variety of methodologies employed in exploring storytelling, including narrative techniques that showcase how



*Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*

Volume 51 | Number 3 | 2025 | #21246 | 2 pages

<https://doi.org/10.25159/2412-4265/21246>

ISSN 2412-4265 (Online)

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authors convey their tales and messages. For example, Lisel Joubert utilises newspaper accounts to narrate specific stories, whereas Julius Gathogo offers a distinctive perspective on storytelling through a comparative technique he refers to as “Beyond African Ecclesiastical History.” Additionally, Ntandoyenkosi Mlambo presents a fascinating, deeply philosophical article that reflects on Foucault’s concepts of discontinuity and continuity.

Additionally, the issue features articles centred on the lived experiences of women and their roles in faith and leadership. One article highlights the participation of young children in shaping and developing their Christian faith as they aspire to careers within the Ordained Christian Ministry. This ministry effectively demonstrates how children engage with scriptural stories and actively participate in preaching to audiences of all ages. Such children’s ministries have played a crucial role in the development and upbringing of young lives.

Issue 3, the final issue of 2025, is dedicated to Christian History and features a diverse range of articles exploring various topics in Church History. Some contributions explore themes related to faith and interfaith dialogue, while others address issues such as trauma, land, freedom, and oral history, notably through the work of Julius Gathogo. Among the articles, “Tracing Solomon’s Maritime Trade in Southeast Asia,” contributed by David Ming and Isak Suria, highlights contemporary research in history and biblical interpretation. Additionally, Bernard Pindukai Humbe and Zorodzai Dube examine the histories of traumatic experiences for women in selected African Initiated Churches (AICs) in Zimbabwe. Philippe Denis offers insight into the survival of Jean-Baptiste Hategeka in the genocide against the Tutsi in Nyundo, emphasising the historical intersection of geopolitics and the Church’s involvement. Another noteworthy piece, co-authored by Dakalo Takalani and Mokhele Madise, discusses the significance of language and translation, specifically addressing the strategies for translating the English, Greek, and Hebrew Bible into Tshivenda.

Volume 51, covering the year 2025, will be followed by *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* Volume 52 of 2026, which will feature 2025 conference papers on the conference theme “Church and Music in Christian History.” A special issue with a Guest Editor will also be issued with articles focusing on the theological interpretation of the Freedom Charter and the Church’s involvement and understanding of it, reflecting on its significance 70 years after its foundation.