Editorial

This is the first issue of *Spes Christiana* in its new appearance. But a new cover design and some typographical modifications are not the only novelties.

In the past three decades this journal was sponsored and published by Friedensau Adventist University. During that time many noteworthy issues were published that will retain their place in many book cases. However, from this issue onwards *Spes Christiana* will be the official publication of the European Adventist Society of Theology and Religious Studies (EASTRS).

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Europe owns and operates a significant number of educational institutions, with departments of theological and other disciplines of the humanities. For a long time, the teaching staff of these departments have met for a biennial study conference. During the conference of 2017 it was decided to strengthen the bond between the European professors of theology and related fields by forming an association. This association is *European* in its geographical spread and most definitely *Adventist* in its approach to the study of theology and religion in general, as well as in other fields that are usually classified as the humanities. As this new organization was getting established, Friedensau Adventist University negotiated with the EASTRS leadership to assume the responsibility for the publication of *Spes Christiana*, which already had members of Newbold College and the Faculté adventiste de théologie, Collonges-sous-Salève, on its editorial board. This was approved by the members of the EASTRS during their conference of 2019, when also a General Editor and an Editorial Board were elected. This was with the understanding that, at least for the foreseeable future, Friedensau Adventist University would continue to give technical and logistical support. Stefan Höschele, the previous General Editor, continues to be available as a valued advisor, while Kerstin Maiwald, a research scholar at Friedensau, plays a key role with regard to the organizational aspects and in the editorial process that gives the articles their final form. Considering my background in editorial and publishing work, and my lifelong interest in academic pursuits, the EASTRS members asked me to serve as the General Editor of the journal for the next four years.
The mission of the journal has not changed. The plan is to publish a Spring issue and an Autumn issue. Different from the past, its primary distribution will be in digital form, but printed copies are available through Amazon.com/Amazon.de. The aim of our journal is to offer the members of EASTRS a platform where they can share the results of their research with their fellow-members, and to include relevant contributions from others who wish to publish in Spes Christiana. The journal will, also in the future, aim at maintaining a high academic standard and will ensure that all articles are peer-reviewed.

This first issue in this new form offers a few contributions that are based on papers read during the 2019 EASTRS conference, and a few other important articles. But in addition to these quite lengthy articles a section of book reviews is now included.

The journal can only flourish if a constant stream of articles is assured. I therefore appeal to all EASTRS members (and other men and women with relevant expertise) to consider this journal for the publication of their research. I look forward to receiving a significant number of contributions in the disciplines that the journal wants to cover. Suggestions as to where the editor might look for such contributions are certainly also welcome, as well as suggestions regarding books that might be reviewed. Offers to be a book reviewer are also appreciated.

Our journal proudly bears the name Spes Christiana. As a journal by and for Seventh-day Adventist scholars, it is anchored in the basic convictions of the Adventist tradition, and SPES – HOPE – remains one of the key elements of the Adventist faith. However, the title of the journal is not Spes Adventistica but Spes Christiana. It wants to explore topics and questions that are also of interest to other Christian scholars.

This issue of our journal is sent on its way with the hope – and the prayer – that it will be a first modest step in developing our journal into a valuable tool for Adventist (and other) professionals in the fields of theology and other humanities.

Reinder Bruinsma, General Editor