

As an institutional history the book is very well done. However, as an ex-missionary I would like it also to have more deeply explored theological and missiological issues thrown up by its narrative. Is conversion essentially individual or is it often a group phenomenon? Is it fundamentally a crisis or is it also very significantly a process (noting John Calvin's comment that we are converted little by little and in stages, and noting sad examples of post-conversion lapse (pp. 9, 329)). Is revival essentially a movement of the Spirit, or does culture play a part, and human nature (noting John Wesley's phrase 'nature mixed with grace'). And how should development projects start and is it essential that they be genuinely birthed first in the hearts of the recipient people — noting the digging of 80 wells in Zambia, followed by the lingering question: will the locals maintain them afterwards (p. 368)?

My questions are those of an outsider. But for insiders this is a *magnum opus*, a very fine work telling the story of Australian Baptist global mission work (including some amongst Australian Aboriginals) and providing some levels of reflection on an evolving world and evolving mission policy.

LIS GODDARD ET AL. *AWESOME VOICES: GOD WORKING THROUGH ORDAINED WOMEN TODAY*. MALTON: GILEAD BOOKS, 2013. 185 PP.

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This small book is a collection of women's voices from the Church of England who tell of their journey to ordination. *What relevance has that for Baptist men and women in the Pacific?* you might ask. Certainly the Church of England landscape spoken of in this book is not the experience of NZ ordained Anglican women who have considerable scope for employment and engagement in the church of Aotearoa, NZ, but their voices nonetheless resonate with those in the wider church. From an Australasian Baptist church perspective, this is an extremely helpful and appropriate book if you want to hear about the journey of women into a largely male world.

Lis Goddard begins the book with the history of the AWESOME network: Anglican Women Evangelicals: Supporting our Ordained Ministries. The network began after the NEAC4 (Fourth National Evangelical Anglican Congress) where Women Bishops was the presenting issue. Women, who began networking over the washbasins in the ladies toilet, felt "marginalized, voiceless and unsupported" (p. 13). They recognized that the discussion happening in Blackpool that year was symptomatic of a "wider malaise" in the church that needed to be taken seriously. They began sharing something of their stories:

They were told that by definition, because of their gender and calling, they could not be fully evangelical. There were dreadful stories of being slow-handclapped by male colleagues, of female curates or associates being marginalized. Alternatively, evangelical women just could not find jobs

in evangelical churches and found themselves going to jobs outside their churchmanship...it was taken as proof that...the women were indeed not really evangelical (pp. 12-13).

This was beginning of the AWESOME network. A key strength of this group is that it holds together voices who disagree on the context for women to minister and the nature of their ordination; some are "permanent deacons" and follow a headship principle of being "under" a male leader. This is an admirable quality of the group where listening and dialogue is central; they support one another regardless of their theological views. The facts in the UK Church of England are stark; women fill only 18% of stipends and there are only a couple of women who work in a "larger church" (over 350). While these numbers are not reflected in NZ Anglicans, the numbers of women pastors in NZ Baptist churches is equally small (perhaps smaller). If God calls women, why are they not employed, and when they are employed, does their job reflect their calling and capability? NZ Baptists need to ask some very hard questions — men and women together. This is not a "women's issue" it is "men's issue" too for it is about the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The following six chapters are individual stories of women. They are varied as each person's calling and gifting is unique. Jane Plackett and Suse McBay's stories are interwoven in chapter two; they are both currently undertaking their training at a residential college; one is heading toward urban parish ministry and one into theological teaching. Their chapter centers on their "calling" making it a helpful chapter for those considering their own call to ministry, particularly because their contexts for ordained ministry is clearly different; not everyone who will be ordained will be a standard vicar (stipended senior or sole pastor). The chapter, like the rest of the book, is written in informal prose that is simple and honest. At first this was a little irritating but I came to appreciate the style for I heard something of the person behind the words which is very important for this type of book; if you're after a theological consideration, this is not the book to read. If, on the other hand, men want to listen to what it is really like for a women leader to journey in the church, or if women want to find out about some honest highs and lows of life as an evangelical minister, it is worth a read. I read it in a couple of hours.

Sally Hitchiner talks of her training at Oxford as a 25 year old, her subsequent ministry as a university chaplain at Oxford and her role with TV and radio, which she fell into by default. She is clearly a woman who can think on her feet and communicate well and she has seen evangelistic spins offs with non-Christians eager to attend an Alpha course with a BBC presenter. Sally makes an interesting comment about young girls and church; she writes,

I come into contact with so many young girls and women who feel that the church is not for them. Young women are one of the fastest rising groups to drop out of church attendance in the UK and the least likely to put themselves forward for ordination. As someone who has worked with youth, students and young professionals for over 10 years I feel strongly that one of the contributing factors to this is the lack of role models (p. 90).

This is food for thought for men who often hold the ability to give a woman an opportunity (or not); where are the female role models in our NZ churches? These comments alone make her chapter worth a read.

This review cannot include a comment on each chapter (as much as I would like), but I will end with thoughts on two more chapters which widen the scope of the book; Clare Hendry's chapter on being called as a "permanent deacon," and Kate Wharton's on being a single Priest-in-Charge.

Clare's theology is complementarian and her call was unexpected. She was about to start a two-year Masters in Marriage and Family Therapy at the Reformed Theological Seminary in Mississippi, when God spoke to her about working in the Church of England. When she applied, she was rejected and instead began teaching Pastoral Counselling at Oak Hill Theological College where she trained other ordinands. For Clare her journey to ordination took many years; this is not an uncommon story for women or men. In each step she has sensed "God had the place" for her. She now works as an honorary assistant minister (yet another unpaid woman) in a church plant on the edge of Muswell Hill.

Kate Wharton is an inspirational young woman who talks openly about the reality of life as a single women minister. When she was aged 14, the vote was passed in favour of women priests; "*how could there be any other view*" she mused, "*but [the vote] didn't have much bearing on my day to day life*" (p. 164). How wrong we can be! As Kate continues with her story she is clearly a women who thrives on the challenges of pastoral ministry and who takes being young, single and a women in her stride. "In the first week of my curacy," Kate writes, "I was greeted cheerily with, 'Morning Father!' People often ask 'so what do we call you then love?' to which I tend to reply 'well I'll answer to most things, but Kate will do for a start!'" (p. 174). Kate has gone on to speak about singleness in large gatherings (she had planned to say no!) and later to write a book, *Single Minded*, and is now an Area Dean in Liverpool. Her story is one where there was little angst around her gender and so maybe as the final chapter, is one which leaves increased hope for what may lie ahead for women in the church and a good place to end this book.

I think there is also hope for women evangelicals in NZ, but I want to leave this review with a plea: Getting to know and appreciate the challenges for women is critical for men; we need to think about what we say and how we say it; we need to think theologically and relationally; have you begun this journey? This book may be a start for you but it will not be all you need. It is a light read, and it offers no answers, but it might make both men and women think more deeply. The church is in desperate need of women's voices in key leadership roles; how can we image God with only one gender doing most of the thinking and planning, let alone all the pastoral caring, prayer and teaching. Women and men notice different things in the biblical text, we "see" different opportunities and viewpoints. Together these give a wider, deeper, richer picture of God. Together.

DONALD P. MOFFAT. *EZRA'S SOCIAL DRAMA: IDENTITY, MARRIAGE AND SOCIAL CONFLICT IN EZRA 9 AND 10*. LIBRARY OF HEBREW BIBLE/OLD TESTAMENT STUDIES 579. NEW YORK: BLOOMSBURY, 2013. xiii + 218 PP. [ISBN 978-0-567-60912-0].