

Graham Duncan Dedication – A tribute

**Author:**Johan Buitendag¹**Affiliation:**¹Dean of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Pretoria**Corresponding author:**Andries Van Aarde,
andries.vanaarde@aosis.co.za**Dates:**

Received: 11 Oct. 2016

Accepted: 11 Oct. 2016

Published: 01 Dec. 2016

How to cite this article:Buitendag, J., 2016, 'Graham Duncan Dedication – A tribute', *HTS Theologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 72(1), a4342. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v72i1.4342>**Copyright:**© 2016. The Authors.
Licensee: AOSIS. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution License.

Professor Graham Alexander Duncan was born in Aberdeen, Scotland, in 1949, where he grew up and was educated. He became a Deacon in 1967 and was ordained to the Eldership in 1971 in his local congregation in Northfield, Aberdeen. Graham served as the congregation's Presbytery Elder from 1972 to 1974. He received his Bachelor of Education (BE) in Religious Studies (1971) and BD (Hons) Church History/Practical Theology (1977) from the University of Aberdeen. In 1971, he was awarded the Certificate in Primary Education (Merit) and the Higher Diploma in Religious Education (Distinction) by Aberdeen College of Education. He taught in Beechwood School for the people with disabilities in Aberdeen for three years. He married Sandra Todd in 1973 and they have three children.

He was licensed to preach the gospel by the Presbytery of Aberdeen in the Church of Scotland and was ordained a minister of the Bantu Presbyterian Church of South Africa (which was renamed the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa [RPCSA] in 1979) on 12 March 1978 on receiving a call to be Missionary-in-Charge of the historic Lovedale Missionary Institution and minister of the Lovedale Institution and Lovedale District congregations. In 1979, he became Secretary/Treasurer of the Church of Scotland South Africa Joint Council and was responsible for the sale and transfer of Church of Scotland properties and assets in South Africa. In 1982, he was appointed to the staff of Albert Luthuli College at the Federal Theological Seminary of Southern Africa (Fedsem) in Pietermaritzburg, where he was the Convener of the Practical Theology Department and Reformed Chaplain. Sandra studied theology at Fedsem and was awarded the Joint Board Diploma in Theology (with distinction) in 1984. Prof. Duncan was also Moderator of the Presbytery of Natal from 1984 to 1987. He served on many committees and commissions of the General Assembly of the RPCSA.

In 1988, the Duncan family returned to Scotland and Graham was called by the Cumbernauld: Old congregation where he served for 10 years. During that time, he was a member of the Ministry and World Mission Committees (and a number of their subcommittees) of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. After returning to South Africa to study in 1995, he was awarded the degree of MTh in Missiology (with distinction) by the University of South Africa in 1997 for a dissertation entitled *Scottish Presbyterian Church Polity in South Africa, 1898–1923*. The award of a Chancellor's Scholarship enabled him to study for the Doctor of Theology degree, which was awarded to him by the University of South Africa in 2001 with a thesis entitled *Coercive Agency: James Henderson's Lovedale, 1906–1930*.

In 1998, the Duncans were recalled by the RPCSA, and Graham was appointed to the staff of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Fort Hare. Following the union of the RPCSA and Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa in 1999 to form the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa (UPCSA), Graham was transferred to the University of Pretoria, which was designated as the main training centre for ministers of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa. From Senior Lecturer he was promoted to Associate Professor and Professor, and to Head of the Department of Church History and Church Polity in 2008, a position from which he retired in 2014. During that time, he was awarded the degree of *Philosophiae Doctor* by the University of Pretoria for a thesis entitled *Partnership in Mission: A critical-historical evaluation of the relations between 'older' and 'younger' churches with particular reference to the Church of Scotland*.

Teaching and learning is his passion, and in 2011, he was awarded the University of Pretoria's Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education with distinction, making him unique in being qualified to teach from Grade 3 to doctoral level. He has successfully supervised 12 master's and 13 doctor's degrees and has mentored one Vice-Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellowship. He was chosen as Lecturer of the Year by the Faculty of Theology students and the Department of Church History and Church Polity, the best department in the Faculty of Theology in 2013.

Read online:

Scan this QR code with your smart phone or mobile device to read online.

In 2013, he was awarded a C rating by the National Research Foundation (NRF). For 15 years, he has been an Evaluator and Chair of evaluation panels for the Council on Higher Education and was appointed to the Specialist Panel for Religion and Theology of the NRF in 2015. He is a member of the South African Missiological Society and the Church History Society of Southern Africa (having been its Vice-president, 2009–2012). All of the faculties of theology and departments of religion in South Africa have used him as an external examiner in addition to a number of colleges and seminaries. He was also a member of the South African Council for Theological Education.

He was elected Moderator of the General Assembly of the UPCSA for 2004–2005. In all this time, he has remained active in congregational work and has served a number of congregations in the Presbytery of Tshwane.

His commitment to ecumenism is recognised in his membership of the Church Unity Commission and the Theological Commission of the South African Council of Churches during the 1980s. Currently, he serves on the Senate of the Roman Catholic St. Augustine's College in Johannesburg.

Seven years ago, the Department of Church History and Church Polity had an international audit and the one major point of concern was that it had been too exclusive and very narrowly focused. As Head of the Department, he turned that around, and today, Church History is among, or perhaps, the most ecumenical department in the Faculty.

Since that time, the department has expanded from two staff members to include three full-time and two part-time lecturers, an NRF A-rated scholar, a postdoctoral fellow and three extraordinary professors.

It is evident that Graham has brought diversity to the Faculty and has re-defined the Faculty to one where *African Christianity* is becoming one of its strengths.

His retirement was a huge loss for the Faculty. Not only because he is an excellent academic and a superb teacher, but, more importantly, he was and still is an immense contributor to the *esprit de core* of the Faculty. You hear him in the offices talking, in the corridors laughing and in the lecture halls singing. I struggle to imagine a Faculty without 'that professor with the Scottish accent', as a member of the Executive once referred to him. But fortunately, the University has the retention programme for rated scholars, and we have succeeded in appointing Graham since his retirement as a researcher in the Faculty. Like good single malt whiskey, he becomes better and better with time.

The Faculty is proud to dedicate this special edition to one of its most valued scholars and our best wishes accompany him on his onward journey!

Papers and publications: Graham Alexander Duncan

Publications

Books

- 2003, *Coercive Agency: Power and Domination in Mission Education*, Cluster Publications, Pietermaritzburg.
- 2011 (co-author), *The Native School that Caused all the Trouble: A History of the Federal Theological Seminary of Southern Africa*, Cluster Publications, Pietermaritzburg.
- 2016 (under review), *The Manufacture of Dissent: Reflexive Christian Traditions in a Global Setting*, Oxford History of Dissenting Protestant Traditions, Volume 5.

Chapters in books

- 2001, 'The Reformed Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa – Heritage and Legacy', in P. Coertzen (ed.), *350 Years Reformed: 1652–2002*, pp. 187–196, CLF, Bloemfontein.
- 2005 (co-author/editor), 'Bakuzufu: Revival movements and indigenous appropriation in African Christianity' in G.A. Duncan & O. Kalu, *African Christianity: An African story*, pp. 278–308, University of Pretoria, Pretoria.
- 2008, 'Steve Biko's Religious Consciousness and Thought and its Influence on Theological Education with special reference to the Federal Theological Seminary of Southern Africa', in C. du Toit (ed.), *The legacy of Stephen Bantu Biko: Theological Challenges*, pp. 115–140, Research Institute for Theology and Religion, UNISA, Pretoria.
- 2012, 'Spiritual/Ministerial formation in the South African Presbyterian tradition', in M. Naidoo (ed.), *Between the real and the ideal: Ministerial formation in South African churches*, pp. 63–72, UNISA Press, Pretoria.
- 2015, 'Survey on Contemporary Christianity in South Africa', #86 in I. Phiri & D. Werner (eds.), *Anthology of African Christianity*, WCC, Geneva.

Articles

- 1985, 'Faith apart from work is dead', *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 53, 47–53.
- 2000, 'Theological Education: Mission Birth – African Renaissance', *Missionalia* 28(1), 23–40.
- 2001, 'Lovedale Press between the Centuries: A Celebration of 177 Years of Service', *Missionalia* 29(3), 486–493.
- 2002, 'A Place in the Sun? The Role of the Church in Moral Renewal and Social Transformation', *Verbum et Ecclesia* 23(2), 33–42.
- 2002, 'Presbyterian Expressions in Southern Africa in the Context of 350 Years of the Reformed Tradition', *Nederduits Gereformeerde Teologiese Tydskrif/Stellenbosch Theological Journal* 43(3/4), 423–431.
- 2002 (co-author), 'Leadership through Theological Education: Two Case Studies in South African History', *Verbum et Ecclesia* 23(3), 642–657.
- 2003, '350 years Reformed in South Africa: The Contribution of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in

- Southern Africa', *HTS Theological Studies/Teologiese Studies* 59(1), 47–64.
- 2003, 'Presbyterian Spirituality in Southern Africa', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 56(4), 387–403.
 - 2003, 'Back to the Future', *Verbum et Ecclesia* 24(2), 359–373.
 - 2004, 'Its end foreshadowed in its beginning: The closure of the Federal Theological Seminary', *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 31(2), 1–31.
 - 2004, 'Crisis in Mission and Unity: The Closure of the Federal Theological Seminary in Southern Africa', *Missionalia* 32(1/4), 39–67.
 - 2004, 'Coercive Agency in Mission Education at Lovedale Missionary Institution', *HTS Theological Studies/Teologiese Studies* 60(3), 947–992.
 - 2005, 'Reconciliation through Church Union in Post-Apartheid South Africa: The Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa', *Verbum et Ecclesia* 26(1), 35–63.
 - 2005, 'Historiography and Ideology in the (Mission) History of Christianity in Africa', *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 31(1), 51–69.
 - 2005, 'State of the Union: The Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa, 1999–2004', *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 31(2), 189–219.
 - 2005, 'Ex Africa semper aliquid novi?', *HTS Theological Studies/Teologiese Studies* 61(3), 809–827.
 - 2006, 'Winning Hearts and Minds: Character Formation in Mission Education with Special Reference to Lovedale Missionary Institution', *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 32(1), 1–47.
 - 2006, 'Ministerial Dress for Worship in the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa', *HTS Theological Studies/Teologiese Studies* 62(3), 926–943.
 - 2006, 'The Prehistory of the Federal Theological Seminary of Southern Africa: A Study in Ecumenical Ancestry', *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 32(2), 69–97.
 - 2006, 'The Foundation of the Federal Theological Seminary of Southern Africa', *Verbum et Ecclesia* 27(3), 836–855.
 - 2007, 'Some Thoughts on Cultural Transformation Theory as a Tool in Historical Research', *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 33(1), 1–21.
 - 2007 (co-author), 'Augustine's Historiographical Method', *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 33(1), 207–219.
 - 2007, 'Historiographical issues Related to the Writing of Contemporary History', *Verbum et Ecclesia* 28(1), 127–149.
 - 2007, 'The Growth of Partnership in Mission in Global Mission History during the Twentieth Century', *HTS Theological Studies/Teologiese Studies* 63(3), 1033–1065.
 - 2007, 'Partnership in Mission: A critical-historical evaluation of the relationship between "older" and "younger" churches with special reference to the World Mission Council of the Church of Scotland', *Missionalia* 35(1), 54–79.
 - 2007, 'The passage to ordination in the Southern African Presbyterian tradition: A historical perspective and prospect', *Nederduits Gereformeerde Teologiese Tydskrif/Stellenbosch Theological Journal* 48(3 & 4), 471–480.
 - 2008, 'Early Presbyterian Influences at the University of Pretoria', *HTS Theological Studies/Teologiese Studies* 64(1), 51–71.
 - 2008, 'The Church of Scotland's Historic Approach to Partnership in Mission: 1929–1965', *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 34(2), 203–222.
 - 2008, 'Towards partnership in mission: The Church of Scotland's World Mission Council policy', *Missionalia* 35(1), 54–79.
 - 2009 (co-author), 'Church History and Church Polity in the Faculty of Theology at the University of Pretoria', *Verbum et Ecclesia* 30(3), Art. #131, 6 pages. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/ve.v30i3.131>
 - 2010, 'Church Discipline – *Semper Reformanda* as the basis for transformation', *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 136(3), 57–75.
 - 2010, 'Church Discipline – *Semper Reformanda* in Reformation perspective', *HTS Theological Studies/Teologiese Studies* 66(1), 6 pages. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v66i1.789>
 - 2010, 'Coercive Agency: Lovedale Missionary Institution under Principals Arthur Wilkie and RHW Shepherd', *Missionalia* 38(3), 431–453.
 - 2011, "'Ever old and ever new, keep me travelling along with you": 21st century *Notae Ecclesiae* specifically necessary for Churches in Southern Africa', *HTS Theological Studies/Teologiese Studies* 67(1), Art. #851, 8 pages. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v67i1.851>
 - 2011, 'The Church Unity Commission: South African Ecumenical perspectives on ministry (1968–1983)', *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 37(1), 19–38.
 - 2011, 'F.F. Bosworth: A historical analysis of his ministry development using social cognitive career theory', *Verbum et Ecclesia* 32(1), Art. #368, 8 pages. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/ve.v32i1.368>
 - 2012, 'The role of Mission Councils in the Scottish Mission in South Africa: 1864–1923', *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 37(1), 217–234.
 - 2012, "'Pull up a good tree and push it outside"? The Rev Edward Tsewu's dispute with the Free Church of Scotland Mission', *Nederduits Gereformeerde Teologiese Tydskrif/Stellenbosch Theological Journal*, 53(1&2), 50–61.
 - 2012, "'Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?" (Juvenal *Satires*:§345) (Who guards [nurtures] the guardians?): Developing a constructivist approach to learning about ministerial and spiritual formation', *HTS Theological Studies/Teologiese Studies* 68(1), Art. #1251, 7 pages. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v68i1.1251>
 - 2013, 'A Protestant Perspective on Vatican II + 50 years: an engagement with dissent', *HTS Theological Studies/Teologiese Studies* 69(1), Art. #1911, 11 pages. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v69i1.1911>
 - 2013, 'The "enemy within" the post Vatican II Roman Catholic Church', *HTS Theological Studies/Teologiese Studies* 29(1), Art. #1915, 8 pages. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v69i1.1915>
 - 2013, 'Passive-aggressive resistance at the Federal Theological Seminary of Southern Africa', *Acta Theologica* 33(1), 54–78.

- 2013, 'The origins and early development of Scottish Presbyterian mission in South Africa (1824–1865)', *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 39(1), 205–220.
- 2013, 'African churches willing to pay their own bills: The role of money in the formation of Ethiopian type churches with particular reference to the Mzimba Secession', *African Historical Review* 45(2), 52–79.
- 2014 (co-author), 'Southern African Cosmogenic Geomythology ("following a star") of the Zion Christian Church', *Transactions of the Royal Society of South Africa* 69(2), 81–89, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0035919X.2014.905880>
- 2014, 'Inculturation: Adaptation, Innovation and Reflexivity in African Christian Perspective', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 70(1), Art. #2669, 7 pages. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v70i1.2669>
- 2015, 'Celtic Spirituality and the Environment', *HTS Theological Studies/Teologiese Studies* 71(3), Art. #2857, 10 pages. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v71i3.2857>
- 2015, 'Celtic Spirituality and Contemporary Environmental Issues', *HTS Theological Studies/Teologiese Studies* 71(1), Art. #2835, 10 pages. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v71i1.2835>
- 2015 (co-author), 'The Ecumenical Struggle in South Africa: The role of ecumenical movements/organizations in liberation movements to 1965', *Journal of Ecclesiastical Law (ISI)*. (2015) 17 Ecc LJ 269–282 # Ecclesiastical Law Society <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0956618X15000423>
- 2015, 'The migratory dimension of Scottish Presbyterianism in Southern Africa', *African Historical Review*, 47(2), 85–114.
- 2015, 'Ethiopianism in Pan-African perspective, 1880–1920', *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 41(2), 198–218.
- 2016, "'One in Christ": Fedsem spiritualities of solidarity', *Acta Theologica* 36(1), 27–51.
- 2016 (co-author), 'Through the past into the future: Jean-Francois Bill – Pastor, Activist, Theologian, 8 July 1934–12 March 2005', *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*. Forthcoming.

Published full-length conference papers

- 2001, 'The role of the Church in Moral Renewal and Social Transformation: Christianity sat the Crossroads', *Conference on The Role and Function of Traditional Leadership and its institutions: A Reflection on ethnic-cultural identity, African religion and Customs for moral renewal and Social Transformation*.
- 2002, 'The Reformed Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa – Heritage and Legacy', *Conference on 350 Years Reformed, University of Stellenbosch*.
- 2002, 'Expressions and Challenges: Through the Eyes of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa', *Conference on 350 Years Reformed: Expressions and Challenges*.
- 2003, 'The Closure of the Federal Theological Seminary of Southern Africa', *Church History Society of Southern Africa*.
- 2004, 'History, Historiography and Research', *Post-graduate Seminar in the Discipline Church History, UNISA*.
- 2005, 'Union, Reformation and Renewal: A case study of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa (1999–2004)', *Church History Society of South Africa, University of the North-West (Potchefstroom Campus)*.
- 2006, 'Character Formation in Mission Education with Special Reference to Lovedale Missionary Institution', *Church History Society of South Africa, University of Stellenbosch*.
- 2009, 'Church discipline - semper reformanda in a time and space warp', *Inaugural Address, University of Pretoria, 16 April 2009*.
- 2011, 'The Role of Money in the Mzimba Secession', *Church History Society of South Africa, University of KwaZulu-Natal*.

Non-refereed publications or popular articles

- 2004, 'Ministerial Formation in Christian Worship in Southern Africa', *The Record of the Church Service Society*, 39, 17–29.
- 2006, 'Theological Training in South Africa with particular reference to the "English-Speaking" Churches', *South African Outlook*.

Conference Papers

- 'The role of the Church in Moral Renewal and Social Transformation: Christianity sat the Crossroads', paper presented at the Conference on The Role and Function of Traditional Leadership and its institutions: A Reflection on ethnic-cultural identity, African religion and Customs for moral renewal and Social Transformation, University of Fort Hare, May 2001.
- 'Expressions and Challenges: Through the Eyes of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa', paper presented at the Conference on 350 Years Reformed: Expressions and Challenges, University of Pretoria, April 2002.
- 'The Closure of the Federal Theological Seminary of Southern Africa, Church History Society of Southern Africa', Redacres, Pietermaritzburg, January 2003.
- 'History, Historiography and Research', Post-graduate Seminar in the Discipline Church History, UNISA, 2004
- 'Union, Reformation and Renewal: A case study of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa (1999–2004)', paper presented at the Church History Society of South Africa, University of the North-West (Potchefstroom Campus), January 2005.
- 'Some thoughts on Cultural Transformation Theory as a tool in historical research', *Church History Society of South Africa, St Augustine College, January 2007*.
- 'The Reformed Tradition', *Conventus Reformatus, Benoni, 2009*.
- '21st Century Notae Ecclesiasticae Specifically Necessary for Churches in Southern Africa', *Conventus Reformatus, Benoni, 2010*.
- "'God has chosen ... mere nothings, to overthrow the existing order" (1 Cor 1:28) Passive-aggressive resistance to apartheid at the Federal Theological Seminary of southern Africa', *Conference on 'The Reformed*

- churches in South Africa and the struggle for justice: remembering 1960–1990’, Stellenbosch University, May 2012.
- ‘The Reformed Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa – Heritage and Legacy’, Conference on 350 Years Reformed, University of Stellenbosch, April 2002.
 - ‘Character Formation in Mission Education with Special Reference to Lovedale Missionary Institution’, Church History Society of South Africa, University of Stellenbosch, January 2006.
 - ‘The Influence of Biko’s Thought on Theological Education with special reference to the Federal Theological Seminary of Southern Africa: Derived from a life of integrity’, South African Science and Religion Forum, UNISA, Research Institute for Theology and Religion, August 2007.
 - ‘Ministry as a determining factor in the work of the Church Unity Commission, 1968–1983’, Church History Society of South Africa, North-West University, August 2010.