

Editorial Comment

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The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) challenge is unprecedented. It has caused enormous trauma, disrupted economies, social life, mass transportation, work and employment, supply chains, leisure, sport, international relations, academic programmes; literally everything. Churches and religious communities have not been spared; they have been severely affected and, in all likelihood, permanently transformed by the pandemic. The pre-COVID-19 world is gone, replaced by a 'new normal'. In the light of this unusual experience it is necessary to assess the effects of the pandemic from theological perspectives. This is precisely the aim of this particular edition.

The collection of these articles explores the impact of COVID-19 on theology, church, mission, worship and ministry in the world. It reminds us that the new landscape calls for both resilience and adaptation, embracing new ways of doing things and of being church. Churches have to adapt; they have to ask themselves questions about the implications for being the church in this 'new normal' context. The contributors to this volume come from the University of Pretoria and other national and international researchers who have embedded knowledge and experience in academia, church and society.

I am so pleased that the authors responded immediately to my call for articles to respond theologically to the current COVID-19 crisis. My sincere hope is that their contributions would continue to stir further academic and theological dialogues but, more significantly, offer support and guidance to church and society as they seek to address, understand and embrace the 'new normal'.

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Note: Special Collection entitled COVID-19 from a Theological Perspective, sub-edited by Jerry Pillay (UP).