

Paper Proposal Deadline: January 31, 2026 (*extended*)

Regional Conference Date: Friday, April 10, 2026

Format: Multi-provincial hybrid gatherings across Canada:

Tyndale University (ON)

Steinbach Bible College (MB)

King's University (AB)

Trinity Western University / TEDS (BC)

INVITATION & CALL FOR PAPERS

About EMS. The [Evangelical Missiological Society \(EMS\)](#) exists to advance the cause of world evangelization through the study and evaluation of mission concepts and strategies from a biblical perspective. We are a professional academic society of several hundred members – **missiologists, reflective practitioners, professors, pastors, marketplace professionals, mission administrators, and students of missiology or affiliated fields** – based primarily in North America with members globally.

The [Evangelical Missiological Society \(EMS\) Canada Region](#) welcomes contributions from scholars, reflective practitioners, and students seeking to deepen understanding of the *imago Dei* and its implications for missional engagement in the Canadian and global contexts.

2026 THEME: "THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY FOR MISSIONAL ENGAGEMENT"

Theological anthropology is central to missiological reflection and practice, since acts of gospel witness, service, and cultural engagement all rest on assumptions about human identity, dignity, and destiny. In a rapidly changing world—marked by shifting views of spirituality, ethnicity, gender, technology, and ecology—the church must embrace a biblically faithful and missionally engaged understanding of the *imago Dei*.

At the heart of this year's theme is the exploration of *Imago Dei in missional engagement*—how human dignity, human rights, and gospel witness flow from being created in God's image. **This perspective grounds reflection on the meaning of being human and how the *imago Dei* shapes evangelism, discipleship, community, and global mission**

Together we will ask:

"How do theological anthropology and Christian responses to debates about personhood and identity inform the theory and practice of mission?"

Participants are encouraged to frame their papers through one or more of the following areas of engagement, known as the **Four As Framework**¹:

¹ For more on this Canadian-developed framework, see [The Past, Present, and Future of Evangelical Mission: Academy, Agency, Assembly, and Agora Perspectives from Canada](#), ed. Narry F. Santos and Xenia Ling-Yee Chan, Evangelical Missiological Society Monograph Series (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2022)

- **Academy** - theological and educational institutions
- **Assembly** - local church communities and denominational life
- **Agency** - missions organizations and networks
- **Agora** - marketplace, workplace and public life

2026 SUB-THEMES

Submissions may approach the theme through theological, cultural, or practical lenses. The following sub-themes offer possible entry points for engagement:

A. Humanity and the Image of God

Exploring foundational questions of human identity, dignity, embodiment, and vocation.

- **Imago Dei in Mission:** Human dignity, human rights, gospel witness.
- **Disability and the Image of God:** Rethinking inclusion, personhood, and the missionary task among vulnerable populations.
- **Psychology and Neuroscience:** How research on consciousness, sin, suffering, and human flourishing informs missionary work.

B. Embodiment, Relationship, and Culture

Considering how personhood and community are lived out through gender, family, ethnicity, and culture.

- **Gender and Sexuality:** Engaging the ways that questions of gender, sexuality, singleness, and family affect missionary work.
- **Theology and Culture:** How specific cultural patterns, traditions, and beliefs impact the missionary task.
- **Race, Ethnicity, and Reconciliation:** Anthropological foundations for ethnic identity, justice, and unity in Christ within the context of mission.

C. Creation, Technology, and Human Flourishing

- **Technology, Transhumanism, and New Humanity:** Artificial intelligence, bioethics, the value of embodiment, and the limits and telos of humanity in light of the Christian story.
- **Ecology and Creation Care:** Humanity's vocation as stewards of creation and its missiological implications.
- **Theology of Work and the Arts:** How human capacities and vocation shape our approach to work, commerce, and the arts.

D. Language, Translation, and Public Witness

- **Bible Translation and Theological Anthropology:** Translating *imago Dei*, personhood, and kinship concepts across languages; theological implications for orality, literacy, and intercultural witness
- **Political Theory and Practice:** Human dignity, civil rights, migration and borders, and the realities of violence and war in relation to the missionary task.

WHO SHOULD SUBMIT

Proposals are invited from scholars, educators, pastors, missionaries, students, and reflective practitioners engaged in theology, mission, or cultural engagement. Papers may draw from academic research, case studies, or ministry experience that illuminate how theological anthropology informs missional practice.

SUBMISSION PROCESS AND KEY DATES

Proposal Deadline: **January 31, 2026**

Submit a title and 200-300-word abstract to **Dr. Narry Santos, EMS Vice President for Canada Region**, at nsantos@tyndale.ca or canada@emsweb.org

Paper Deadline: **March 27, 2026**

Accepted presenters will submit either:

- a paper of at least **2,000 words** for the regional presentation (standard track), or
- a **full-length paper (4,500-7,000 words)** for the regional presentation **and** consideration for the national conference.

Papers Guidelines:

- **Length:** Minimum 2,000 words (regional) or 4,500–7,000 words (full-length).
- **Content:** Present clear arguments, research questions, and findings grounded in scholarship, fieldwork, or ministry practice.
- **Style:** [Chicago Turabian \(author-date\)](#) citation format preferred. Reflective practitioner papers may adopt a less formal style suitable for storytelling, case studies, or ministry reflection, provided arguments remain coherent, sources are acknowledged, and theological or missiological claims are supported by credible references.
- **Pathway:** Outstanding regional papers may, **by invitation**, be expanded (to 4,500-7,000 words) for consideration at the EMS Annual Conference in October 2026 in Dallas, TX (and potential inclusion in the [EMS Annual Compendium](#)). Expanded papers must demonstrate additional scholarly depth, align with the Annual Conference theme, and follow the *Journal of the Evangelical Missiological Society* [submission guidelines](#).

Full-Length Paper Deadline (*for Annual National Conference*): **May 15, 2026**

EMS Annual National 2026 Conference: October 9-10, 2026 (Dallas, TX & Virtual)

Join us on April 10, 2026, as we collaborate, learn, and shape the missiological reflection and practice through theological anthropology. If you would like to volunteer or support the conference in any capacity, please contact Dr. Narry Santos nsantos@tyndale.ca and Bosco Tung at canada@emsweb.org.

PLENARY SPEAKERS FOR EMS Canada 2026

- **Dr. David Guretzki** – President, *Evangelical Fellowship (EFC) of Canada*
- **Dr. Victor Ezigbo** – Prof. of World Christianity & Intercultural Ministry, *Wycliffe College (TST)*
- **Dr. Shari Russell** – Global Director, *NAIITS: An Indigenous Learning Community*