



November 2008 Executive Summary

NEWS BRIEFS, condensed version (for the complete news briefs, go to:
www.lausanneworldpulse.com/newsbriefs.php/1037)

BOLIVIA: Conflict and Violence Escalates while Bishops Call for Peace

Roman Catholic bishops in Bolivia appealed to the country's political leaders to bring an end to recent violence that has reportedly left several people dead and many others injured. Several regions of the country are demanding autonomy and oppose plans by President Evo Morales for constitutional reform. (Ecumenical News International)

BOLIVIA: Evangelical Lutherans Ordain Women for the First Time

The Bolivian Evangelical Lutheran Church has marked its seventieth anniversary by a special service at which, for the first time, the ordination of women as pastors within the church was a highpoint of the celebration. (Bolivian Evangelical Lutheran Church)

EGYPT: Violence against Coptic People Increases

After a fact-finding visit to the fourth-century Abu-Fana monastery building in Upper Egypt, Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) reported on a brutal attack in which three monks were kidnapped and tortured. Estimates are that the monastery has been attacked at least fifteen times by local Bedouins since 2004. Violence against Coptic people, institutions, businesses, and property has escalated recently. (Christian Solidarity Worldwide)

GERMANY: Churches Speak Up for Iraqi Refugees

Churches in Germany pleaded for their country and the European Union (EU) to admit more Iraqi refugees amid reports that the German government was backing off plans to take in a group of Iraqi Christians. Rev. Stephan Reimers, who represents the interests of the Evangelical Church in Germany to the German government and EU authorities, said further postponement of admitting Iraqi refugees could not be justified amid catastrophic conditions in the country. (Ecumenical News International)

GHANA: WACC and CCG Combating HIV/AIDS Stigma

The World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) and the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) have embarked on a 3-year project targeting HIV/AIDS-related stigma and discrimination. Efforts will be aimed at reducing HIV/AIDS-related stigma and discrimination in three districts close to the capital city of Accra. (World Association for Christian Communication)

INDIA: Violence Continues against Christians in Orissa

In September 2008, Christians in Orissa reported continued acts of violence against them by Hindu mobs following the killing of Hindu leader Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati in August. Estimates are that more than half of the 100,000 Christians in the city of Kandhamal are reported to have been made homeless as a result of Hindu extremists roaming villages, trying to forcibly convert Christians to Hinduism, and looting and torching Christian houses. (Ecumenical News International)

IRAN: Parliament Approves Legislation Making Apostasy Punishable by Death

In September 2008, the Iranian Parliament voted in favor of a bill stipulating the death penalty for apostasy. Although news of the vote was withdrawn from the Iranian Parliament website only hours after it was published, official Iranian news agencies, including the Islamic Republic of Iran News Network, announced the decision. The draft of the bill adds a number of crimes to the list of those punishable by execution, including "establishing weblogs and sites promoting corruption, prostitution, and apostasy." (Christian Solidarity Worldwide)

PHILIPPINES: Video Conference Nurtures Understanding among Youth

A 3-hour Internet-based video conference revolved around building peace and mutual understanding through dialogue

between Christians, Muslims, and non-Christian and non-Muslim youth. Organized by PeaceTech, the video conference enabled students in Baguio and Cotabato to reflect upon how ignorance breeds prejudice, which eventually leads to conflict. (PeaceTech)

POLAND: Network of Nigerian Missionaries Appoints New International Facilitator

The Network of Nigerian Missionaries (NNM) has appointed a new international facilitator, Pastor Zion Okuneye. Okuneye, who lives in Warsaw, is a pastor with the Redeemed Christian Church (RCC) in Poland (under Pastor Enoch Adeboye) and serves as the coordinator of mission efforts for the RCC in Eastern Europe. (Network of Nigerian Missionaries)

QATAR: Anglicans Begin Construction of Second Church

The foundation stone of Qatar's second Anglican church was laid 28 September 2008 in a ceremony presided over by the Bishop of Cyprus. According to *Christianity Today*, the event followed the March completion of the country's first ever church, the Roman Catholic Our Lady of the Rosary church, which is on a site nearby. Three more churches are planned in Qatar, where the majority of the population practice a strict form of Islam called Wahhabism. (Assist News)

SOUTH AFRICA: All Africa Conference of Churches Commends Mbeki's Decision to Resign

The general secretary of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) has praised President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa for putting his country first by announcing his resignation after losing the confidence of the ruling African National Congress. Rev. Mvume Dandala, a Methodist from South Africa, who has led Nairobi-based AACC since 2003, said Mbeki demonstrated that "a country is bigger than an individual." Ecumenical News International)

TURKEY: TURK-7 Marks Fifth Year of Ministry

Christian broadcasting company TURK-7 celebrated its fifth anniversary in October 2008. TURK-7 partners with approximately thirty organizations and churches and develops Christian television programming for the Church in Turkey and Turkish-speaking Christians worldwide. According to David Harder of SAT-7, the Middle Eastern Christian television broadcast that shaped TURK-7, TURK-7 also aims to provide a better understanding of Christianity to the wider Turkish community. (Turk-7)

UNITED KINGDOM: Campaign Calls Attention to Brutality in Burma

Change for Burma!, a partnership of Christian Solidarity Worldwide and Partners, Relief, and Development UK, was launched in September 2008, exactly one year after the largest pro-democracy protests in twenty years swept across Burma. The campaign also launched a day before the twentieth anniversary of the seizure of power by Burma's current military junta, the latest in a succession of military regimes which have held power since 1962. Change for Burma! hopes to raise awareness of what it calls one of the world's most brutal regimes. (Christian Solidarity Worldwide)

UNITED STATES: Samaritan's Purse Continues Hurricane Relief Efforts

Following devastating Hurricane Ike, Samaritan's Purse dispatched three disaster relief units and a convoy of supplies on the road toward Texas to help provide aid to storm victims. The convoy included tractor trailers filled with supplies, including heavy-duty plastic sheeting, construction equipment, and building materials. (Samaritan's Purse)

ZIMBABWE: Christian Student Group Seeks Justice

The Student Christian Movement of Zimbabwe urged the country's new government, expected to be forged out of a power-sharing agreement, to ensure that perpetrators of violence marring a presidential runoff election in June face the law. Talks mediated by South African leader Thabo Mbeki, following Robert Mugabe's re-election in a disputed runoff vote, led to a power-sharing agreement on 25 September 2008 between Mugabe, Morgan Tsvangirai of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) party, and Arthur Mutambara, leader of a smaller MDC faction. (Ecumenical News International)

PUBLISHER'S MEMO

Persecution of the Church: Hot, Warm, Temperate by Lon Allison, co-publisher of LWP. Allison discusses three forms of persecution: hot persecution, found in places such as Iraq or parts of India; warm persecution, found in places such as Indonesia; and temperate persecution, found most commonly in the West. Ultimately, Allison concludes, it is

not the *type* of persecution followers of Christ face, but how they respond to the persecution.

www.lausanneworldpulse.com/leadershipmemo/1039

THEMED ARTICLES: THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

Persecution: Normal and Expected by *Nik Ripken (pseudonym), a missionary in North Africa and the Middle East.* What kind of person sees persecution as biblical, expected, and hardly worth mentioning? A person steeped in the story of scripture and well-acquainted with God, Ripken says. And we would be wise to listen and learn the lessons. There are three: (1) persecution is normal for those who follow Jesus, (2) conversion is the primary cause of persecution, and (3) even when missionaries do everything right, the result of a bold and culturally-astute witness will be the persecution, suffering, and martyrdom of others. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles.php/1045

Persecution and Mission by *Thomas Schirrmacher, professor of ethics and sociology of religion in Germany and Turkey.* Persecution has often been related to the growth and mission of the Church. Tertullian's famous words, "The blood of the martyrs is a seed of the Church," forewarned the Roman emperors that their opposition would only enlarge the Church. Jesus, when warning his disciples of future persecution, prophesied that it would turn them into his witnesses. Paul showed that his imprisonment and suffering did not hinder the gospel—but instead, furthered it. Along this line, Schirrmacher touches upon additional important issues Christians need to consider today: mission to persecutors; Jesus, mission, and persecution; the Holy Spirit, the real missionary, and persecution; Christians persecuting Christians; and the state, politics, and persecution. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles.php/1048

Persecution (Modern Ages) by *Thomas Schirrmacher, professor of ethics and sociology of religion in Germany and Turkey.* Martyrdom and the persecution of Christians concerned not only the early Church, but has accompanied all branches of Christianity throughout history. Most of the persecution and killing of Christians can be attributed to one of three groups of persecutors: Islamic states, totalitarian secular states, and countries fighting Christian missionary work. Additionally, Schirrmacher talks about Christians persecuting Christians and includes a detailed bibliography of references on Christian persecution. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles.php/1047

Evangelism and Church Growth in a Culture of Persecution by *Antonia Leonora van der Meer, teacher and principal of the Evangelical Missions Center in Viçosa, Brazil.* Van der Meer shares what Christianity and persecution looked like in Angola from 1984 to 1995. The country was in a state of war to varying degrees the entire time, and persecution and religion tolerance vacillated depending upon how severe the restrictions. Nonetheless, followers of Christ continually clung to their faith and found ways to worship. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles.php/1046

Somalia: An On-going, Overlooked Crisis by *Carl Moeller, president/CEO of Open Doors USA.* The situation in Somalia is probably the most overlooked, under-reported crisis in the world. And the conditions for Christians have continued to deteriorate. Yet despite the difficulties, Christian workers continue to faithfully labor among the Somali people. Christians gather in house churches to study God's word, to worship, and to pray for one another. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles.php/1044

Looking Ahead and Up as Christians Are Persecuted in Iraq by *The Rev. Canon Andrew White, president and CEO of the Foundation for Relief and Reconciliation in the Middle East.* In 2007, Christians were persecuted, killed, and massacred in Dura, south of Baghdad. Many fled Baghdad and went to the safe area of Nineveh (Mosul)—the heart of the Christian community. In recent days, these Christians have again been targeted, killed, and massacred. Meanwhile, back at St. George's Church in Baghdad, White says the congregants keep loving and serving Christians and non-Christians alike, even in difficult situations such as these. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles.php/1038

PERSPECTIVES

To Touch the King: Why We Minister to Those who Suffer by *R. C. Stevens (pseudonym), a missionary in South Asia.* Food, water, clothes, presence: such simple acts of service can be transformed into spiritual acts of worship—if we have eyes to see Jesus in the faces of those we serve. The "least of these"—the poor, the oppressed, the destitute

and deranged, the orphans, and the widows—are all the God of the universe in disguise. Stevens shares how a few, short days trying to help a little boy India led him to see this truth.

www.lausanneworldpulse.com/perspectives.php/1042

The Wimp with the Pen: Witnessing God’s Work inside a South African Prison by *Martin Johnson, manager of communications for Bible Society NSW*. Johnson shares how his visit to a Christian worship service—including baptism and communion—inside of a South African *goal* (prison) impacted the way understands what it means to be a Christian in difficult settings. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/perspectives.php/1041

Internet—The Transition of Everything from Atoms to Bits by *Walt Wilson, founder and chairman of Global Media Outreach*. We are the first generation in all of human history to have the technology to reach every man, woman, and child on earth for Jesus Christ. Wilson shares how Global Media Outreach, a ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ International, is effectively using technology for this very purpose.

www.lausanneworldpulse.com/perspectives.php/1043

URBAN COMMUNITIES

Articulating the Mission of God in the Global Urban Context by *Glenn Smith, Lausanne senior associate for urban mission*. Smith introduces a new series on listening to practitioners in a variety of urban contexts who are ministering on the ground. These stories will be interspersed with reflective theological and missiological articles that will help Christians to better understand how to think biblically so as to act contextually in the global urban context. Smith begins by asking “What is a city/region?” and then discusses the task of the Church in urban contexts. In choosing to “address” the city, Smith says Christians need to remember two foundational issues that are often overlooked by God’s people living in metropolitan areas: (1) we need to place each individual city in its own context, yet understand its place in the larger urban system and (2) when the Church addresses the city, we must direct our attention to urban realities. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/urban.php/1049

Getting to “Yes” by *Glenn Smith, Lausanne senior associate for urban mission*. The very orientation to truth, to history, and to the meaning of life is in a state of constant flux, Smith says. In our situations today, it seems people think that nothing can be known for certain, that history is devoid of any sense of direction, and that all truth is relative. How can Christians handle this dilemma when sharing the truth of the gospel? Smith draws from the book *Getting to Yes* to share four principles followers of Christ need to keep in mind.

www.lausanneworldpulse.com/urban.php/1050

LAUSANNE REPORTS

Lausanne Younger Leaders Gathering in Tomaszów, Poland by *Rike Huettmann and Andy Goodacre, members of the Lausanne Younger Leaders Network*. Nearly twenty younger leaders and mentors gathered in Tomaszów, Poland, earlier this year for the second younger leaders gathering for Europeans. This was a follow-up to the Lausanne Younger Leaders Gathering held in September 2006. The group spent time praying and worshipping God, receiving teaching and input on missions in Europe from Jeff Fountain (YWAM Europe), and working out plans for the future of younger leaders gatherings and networks in Europe. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/lausannereports/1040

December 2008 Theme: Understanding the Influence of Church History in Today's Evangelism

Questions or comments about Lausanne World Pulse may be sent to: editor@lausanneworldpulse.com.