

NEWS BRIEFS (www.lausanneworldpulse.com/newsbriefs.php/09-2008)

BRAZIL: Potential for Greatest Mission Movement Ever

Tim Moody of the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism (ABWE) reported that the beginnings of a youth mission movement are happening in Sao Paulo. An ABWE youth ministry called PEPE has led to a mission movement in Brazil that empowers students to evangelize in their own country. Moody said Brazil has the potential to become one of the greatest mission-sending countries in history. (Mission Network News)

CENTRAL ASIA: Restrictions Heavy in Post-Soviet Countries

Immediately after the collapse of communism, mission work was largely unhindered by governments in Central Asia. However, in the mid 1990s those governments began to institute heavy-handed tactics to control the resurgence of religion. One of the most difficult issues facing post-Soviet Christians is the registration of churches, which makes a church legal but also gives authorities greater control of its activities. (Barnabas Fund)

CHINA: Universities Add Christian Studies to Curriculum

More than forty Chinese universities now have Departments of Christian Studies or Religious Studies. With the growing popularity of Christian studies programs, leaders say China's universities are eager for Western scholars to teach in their religion departments. (Christian Studies International)

ECUADOR: Spanish Edition of HIV Devotional Debuts

The only known Christian HIV/AIDS devotional has been translated into Spanish by Professor Galen Yorba-Gray of Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego, California, USA. The original English version, entitled *In His Shadow*, was written by the professor's wife, Joan, who is HIV-positive. *In His Shadow* is now in its second printing and being translated into several other languages. (ASSIST News)

GEORGIA/RUSSIA: Churches Damaged while Assisting Locals

In August, three evangelical churches in the South Ossetia capital city of Chinvali were damaged during the conflict between Georgia and Russia. According to Russian Ministries, the churches were offering physical and spiritual help to refugees pouring out of South Ossetia into North Ossetia and other Russian provinces. (Russian Ministries)

IRAN: Risking Death for Conversion

Frustrated by the lack of social liberties since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iranians are being driven away from the state religion, which accounts for ninety-eight percent of the country's population. Currently, Iranian law does not mandate death for "apostasy"; however, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has introduced legislation that, if passed, would impose execution. Regardless, "apostates" do suffer beatings and death from vigilantes leveling their own judgment. According to Islamic Shariah law, there is no penalty for a Muslim who kills an "apostate." (SFGate)

JAPAN: Poor Nations Discussed at G8 Summit

The G8 Summit (July 2008) concluded with aid agencies hopeful that rich nations will increase funding. Director of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee's U.S. office, Andy Ryskamp, reported President George W. Bush made a strong opening statement stressing the importance of reaching out to Africa while taking into account environmental concerns, which were the primary focus of the summit. (Mission Network News)

MIDDLE EAST/NORTH AFRICA: SAT-7 PARS Connecting Viewers to God's Word

Satellite television is offering programs to millions of people in the Middle East and North Africa who have no church to attend or Bible to read. SAT-7 PARS, in particular, offers programming in Farsi twenty hours a day and features teaching programs, children's dramas, and chatrooms on its website. (SAT-7)

NEPAL: New Government Brings Hope to Christians

Nepal has a new government after two hundred years as the world's only Hindu monarchy. Over the course of those years, Christians have suffered beatings, threats, exclusion, and imprisonment. A Maoist leader in Nepal has initiated meetings with the country's Christian leaders and indicated that the Maoists would guarantee religious freedom. (Mission Network News)

NORTH KOREA: Franklin Graham Makes Historic Visit

Franklin Graham, president of Samaritan's Purse and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, made a historic visit to North Korea in July and August 2008, meeting with high-level government officials, visiting relief projects, and preaching at a newly-constructed church in the capitol of Pyongyang. In the past year, Samaritan's Purse has been involved in two breakthrough projects in North Korea. (Samaritan's Purse)

SAUDI ARABIA: Deportation Ordered for Fifteen Christians

On 5 August 2008, two weeks after King Abdullah called for reconciliation between Muslims and Christians, fifteen Christians were ordered to be deported from Saudi Arabia. In April 2008, the Christians were raided in a house where they were holding a prayer meeting. International Christian Concern reported that police initially accused the Christians of preaching the Bible and singing, but then later changed the charge to holding a "dance party" and collecting money supporting terrorism. (International Christian Concern)

SIERRA LEONE: Bible Society Project Targets Youth

Children under fourteen make up more than forty percent of Sierra Leone's population, and the Bible Society is making the spiritual needs of these children a top priority in their project entitled "Penetrating Youth Culture." Bible Society workbooks and flipcharts have been successful in teaching children scripture in communities torn by civil war. (Bible Society)

SOUTH ASIA: Affordable Tools Needed to Spread God's Word

People in South Asia need an affordable biblical resource for pastors who have little access to libraries and other educational institutions. In response, John Stott Ministries-Langham Partnership International has partnered with other organizations to support the development of the *South Asia Bible Commentary*, a publication to be available by 2012 in English, then later in Hindi, Nepali, and Sinhalese. (John Stott Ministries)

SUDAN: People Uniquely Ready to Hear the Gospel

While Sudan remains a nation in conflict, the southern region has shown promising church growth. E3 Partners Sudan (E3) has started a Bible school to train pastors and leaders, giving them doctrinal training and encouragement to plant new churches. E3 strategic coordinator Mike Congrove says that North Americans on short-term mission trips are also part of the effort. He explained that North Americans are effective in Sudan because Sudanese culture respects visitors and welcomes what they have to say. (Mission Network News)

UNITED STATES: Thrift Centers Help Spread the Gospel

Bible for Missions Thrift Centers across the United States are raising millions of dollars to extend God's message of hope to thousands of people without Bibles. Profits from sales help to fund Bible League ministry worldwide. Last year, the thrift centers provided nearly \$1.5 million USD toward Bibles and training in ten countries; this year's funds are expected to exceed that. Each center adopts a specific country where the Bible League has ministry. (Bible League)

PUBLISHER'S MEMO

God, the Evangelist by Lon Allison, co-publisher of LWP. On an airplane flight from Singapore to Indonesia, Allison once again recognized the saving power of God the evangelist during a conversation with a formerly Muslim woman who had come to Christ. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/leadershipmemo/1010/09-2008

THEMED ARTICLES: THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF STUDENT MINISTRY

Why Bother with Student Ministry? by Lindsay Brown, international director of the Lausanne Movement. Brown offers five reasons why Christian ministry among students is so important: (1) it provides us with an opportunity to

make known the gospel among relatively young people at a time when they are framing their value system, (2) engaging with students provides an opportunity to help believers to put down deep roots as Christians, (3) the impact of graduate student ministry on the life of the Church has been extraordinary, (4) graduates of student ministry are often engaged in taking the gospel to other countries, and (5) society is often impacted by committed Christian graduates who have been helped to put down deep roots in Christ and form a Christian mind while they are undergraduates. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles.php/1008/09-2008

The Strategic Importance of Student Ministry: What Are You Living For? by Jerry Root, *associate director of the Institute for Strategic Evangelism at Wheaton College*. Unique characteristics of university students underscore why mentoring and deploying laborers for Christ's vineyard from among this group is a wise use of time. He explains why a ministry to university students should: concentrate on building infrastructure, be biblically centered, and cultivate an evangelistic passion in the lives of those who associate with it. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles.php/1004/09-2008

Is Student Ministry Important? by Mike Barnett, *professor of missionary church planting at Columbia International University*. Barnett says that student ministry—the kind done by students to/for others—is *most strategic* for the mission of God from biblical times until the present day. God has always worked with and through young people. Because of this, we must look at what sets these young people apart for ministry and what requirements are needed to reach this people group for Christ. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles.php/1009/09-2008

Claiming Back Our Campuses for Christ: An Example from South Africa by Greg Smerdon, *team leader/CEO of African Enterprise South Africa*. Smerdon asks, "What can be done to turn the tide of moral decay, of violence and crime that South Africa is rapidly heading toward?" His answer is that the Church should invest substantially in our children, youth, and young adults and explains how African Enterprise is seeking to make this a reality. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles.php/1005/09-2008

Reaching Future Leaders through Word and Deed by Dana Ryan, *a freelance writer who works with International Students Incorporated*. Ryan shares how International Bible Church in Arizona (USA) is reaching out to graduate students who are both highly intellectual and highly skeptical of Christianity. She tells the stories of three students whose hearts have been changed by continuous interaction with Christians. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles.php/1006/09-2008

PERSPECTIVES

An Agenda for Change: Living Out the Social Gospel by Joel Edwards, *general director of the Evangelical Alliance UK*. Although some people believe that the term *evangelical* should be thrown out, Edwards believes that a better solution is to rehabilitate the term. However, if we are to do this, evangelicals must: (1) humbly reassess some of our tribal theological rigidities, (2) present Christ credibly in cultures which have increasing vendettas against the idea of God in the public square, and (3) integrate long-term thinking. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/perspectives.php/1007/09-2008

Fruitful Harvest from a Small Seed by Gordon Govier, *who works with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA*. In March 2008 members of the Ebenezer Lutheran Brethren Church of Minneapolis hosted Daniel Bourdagné, the general secretary of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students and Lausanne International Deputy Director of Francophone Africa. Bourdagné has a strong connection to Lutheran Brethren missionaries, who helped lead his family to Christ. During his visit, Bourdagné thanked the church and its denomination for sending missionaries to Africa. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/perspectives.php/1003/09-2008

New Religions and Spiritualities: Engaging the Contemporary Religious West by Michael T. Cooper, *director of the master of arts in communication and culture at Trinity International University*. Lausanne Issue Group 16 has partnered with Trinity International University and the Western Institute for Intercultural Studies to co-sponsor an international conference 16-19 October 2008 to address new religious movements and spiritualities. The conference will be an opportunity to hear leading evangelical scholars address the growing significance of the religious shift in Western society. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/perspectives.php/1002/09-2008

URBAN COMMUNITIES

Short-term Student Ministries with Slum Communities by Glenn Smith, executive director of Christian Direction. Thousands of university students from the Global North have moved into urban slum communities in the Global South to live alongside the poor. Smith introduces this issue and highlights helpful resources for those interested in this area of ministry. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/urban.php/1015/09-2008

Community in Post-Genocide Rwanda by Julia M. Smith-Brake, who works with sexually-exploited children in Phnom Penh. Although still struggling with extreme poverty, regional unrest, and the ongoing challenges of reconciliation, the Rwandese are people with a single vision—for genocide not to happen again, development is the answer. Yet any discussion on current trends and policies must include the genocide because it changed the face of Rwanda and every Rwandese was affected in some way or another by the event. Smith-Brake discusses how the genocide is impacting community and development today. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/urban.php/1013/09-2008

Development with the Poor in Kigali: Child-headed Households in a Post-Genocide Context by Julia M. Smith-Brake. A consequence of both the genocide in Rwanda and the AIDS pandemic is the creation of a new family unit: the child-headed household. Traditionally, when one or both parents die, other members of the extended family and community take responsibility of the orphaned children. However, the genocide claimed over a million Rwandan lives and the number of deaths due to AIDS since that time is in the hundreds of thousands. Smith-Brake explains why many of these child-headed households need help—and why they aren't getting it. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/urban.php/1014/09-2008

LAUSANNE REPORTS

Iconoclasm: An Integral Part of the Church's Mission of Reconciliation? by Nanci Hogan, co-founder of YWAM England's Centre for International Justice and Reconciliation. The ministry of justice and reconciliation must first and foremost be an iconoclastic one, Hogan says. Quoting another, she states that since the symbol of God is the focal point of the whole religious system, an entire world order and worldview are wrapped up with its character. Specific ideas of God support specific kinds of relationships and not others. Therefore, the critical questions for those involved in reconciliation and justice ministry, are: "Who is God?" and "Whose view of God is being used to reinforce systemic oppression?" www.lausanneworldpulse.com/research.php/999/09-2008

Lausanne Caribbean by Las G. Newman, Lausanne International Deputy Director for the Caribbean region. Christianity in the Caribbean faces many challenges which arise from other factors at work in the region, including: the deepening social crisis, persistent poverty, a lack of participation from the people, and a need for biblical and theological reflection. Newman offers three ways the Church should respond. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/lausannereports/1001/09-2008

Pan African Christian Women Alliance Leadership Conference by Grace Samson, director of Partner Relations for the Call2All Cape Town office. Thirty-five women from fifteen countries in Africa attended the Pan African Christian Women Alliance (PACWA) in Nairobi 7-14 July 2008. The purpose of the event was to celebrate together, reflect on past victories and challenges, and strategize collectively toward creating a look for PACWA for the next ten years. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/lausannereports/1000/09-2008

October 2008 Theme: The Verbal Proclamation of the Gospel

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