

[NEWS BRIEFS \(www.lausanneworldpulse.com/newsbriefs.php/03-2008\)](http://www.lausanneworldpulse.com/newsbriefs.php/03-2008)

AROUND THE WORLD: North Korea Tops World Watch List for Sixth Year

For the sixth straight year, North Korea tops Open Doors' World Watch List, as the country where the persecution of Christians is the highest. Rounding out the top ten are: Saudi Arabia, Iran, Maldives, Bhutan, Yemen, Afghanistan, Laos, Uzbekistan, and China. Islam is the majority religion in six of the top ten countries: Saudi Arabia, Iran, Maldives, Afghanistan, Yemen, and Uzbekistan. (Open Doors USA)

AROUND THE WORLD: David Reeves Named President of JAARS

David Reeves has been appointed the next president of JAARS, an organization which provides technical support and resources to speed Bible translation. Reeves, who will assume his new role in January 2009, originally served with JAARS before spending eighteen years in communications and aviation services in Indonesia. (JAARS)

AROUND THE WORLD: Fredrick Boswell Named Executive Director of SIL International

Fredrick A. Boswell assumed his role as executive director for SIL International in January 2008. Previously, he served SIL as vice president for academic affairs, international translation coordinator, and entity director for SIL Solomon Islands. Boswell worked as a field linguist and translation advisor to the Cheke Holo language group in the Solomon Islands on Central Santa Isabel Island. He has also lived and worked in Peru and Papua New Guinea. (SIL International)

CHAD: Fears of Humanitarian Disaster

Amid reports that people are trying to flee the country, World Vision staff in Chad fear the situation could turn from a political crisis to a humanitarian disaster if fighting does not stop soon. Rebel attacks, which are now centered on the presidential palace, have forced international aid agency World Vision to move staff and their families to safe houses and to close its office in the capital. It is feared that a humanitarian crisis could result if a negotiated ceasefire or a mediated transition of power are not achieved soon, as this could trigger factional fighting that would displace civilians. (Christian Newswire)

ETHIOPIA: Center for Orphaned Children Opens

The Adana Children Center, sponsored by Blessing the Children International, recently opened and will accept six hundred orphaned children over five years. Ten new children will be sponsored each month. Ethiopia is one of the countries hit hardest by the AIDS pandemic. With four million orphans in Ethiopia (twenty percent as a result of AIDS), it is a major problem the government describes as "tearing apart the social fabric" of the East African nation. (Blessing the Children International)

FRANCE: Majority of Births Out of Wedlock

In 2007, France became the first non-Scandinavian country in Western Europe where a majority of births are now out-of-wedlock. In France, 50.5% of the 816,500 births registered in 2007 were to unmarried parents, up from 48.4% in 2006 and forty percent a decade ago. Out-of-wedlock births kept pace with the rise of civil unions. In 2007, there were 305,385 civil unions registered in France, compared to only 266,500 marriages. In Sweden, Norway, Estonia, and Bulgaria, out-of-wedlock births have also passed the fifty percent mark. In the United Kingdom, births to the unmarried were forty-four percent in 2006, up one percentage point from 2005. (Christian Newswire)

INDIA: Religious Cleansing by Hindu Radicals

On 23 December 2007 radical Hindus attacked thousands of Christians in India's eastern state of Orissa. Months later, hundreds of believers are still hiding out in the surrounding jungle, and two thousand are in refugee camps. According to a report for CBN News, "The attacks are part of a larger campaign by Hindu radicals to turn India into a Hindu

nation." According to Hindu Umasankar Acharya whose group, Bajrang Dal, is suspected of taking part in the attacks, peace will come only when Christians in India stop proselytizing. (ASSIST News Service)

KENYA: Bible League Continues Work Despite Violence

Violent clashes and deadly riots continue to erupt in Nairobi, as well as in Kenya's eastern and western provinces. Bible League staff members are navigating the country to make sure ministry continues. "Bible League has a strong focus of ministry among the poor who have been very hard hit in the violent conflict that is rocking Kenya," said Joseph Owens, vice president of Africa ministries for the Bible League. "We are continuing to provide Bibles to churches whose members have been displaced and properties destroyed." Due to the conflicts, three Bible League ministry areas are completely shut down and more ministry areas may be forced to close. (Bible League)

NIGERIA: Churches Destroyed in Shari'ah State

Around one thousand people were displaced, several critically wounded, and every church reportedly destroyed in Shira Yana, Bauchi State, Nigeria, on 2 February 2008. This follows recent incidents of religious violence in northern and central Shari'ah states. Tension is also mounting in Kano State, where around two hundred Shari'ah police were reported to have patrolled the streets of the Christian area of Sabon Gari in Kano City during the evening of 1 February. (Christian Solidarity Worldwide)

UNITED STATES: IBS-STL Launches Urban Outreach New Testament

International Bible Society (IBS), a division of IBS-STL Global, launched an updated, newly-revised edition of the popular *My City My God* (NIrV) New Testament last month. The revised New Testament contains seven new testimonies from teens and Christian youth workers in major US cities, as well as a new introduction and notes. IBS collaborated with YouthPartnersNet and other ministries on the project. Teen testimonies in *My City My God* tell of growing up amid violence, drug and alcohol abuse, and poverty. Nearly 476,000 copies of the original *My City My God* New Testament, including English and Spanish versions, have been distributed since its 1998 release. (IBS-STL Global)

WEST AFRICA: New Trans World Radio Transmitting Site in West Africa

Trans World Radio (TWR) is now airing the good news of Jesus Christ into West Africa. Broadcasts in fourteen languages began 1 February 2008 from a powerful 100,000-watt AM transmitter located in Benin, considered the birthplace of voodoo. The new broadcasting outlet marks TWR's fourteenth major international transmitting site; the facility has the potential to reach some sixty-three million people, many of whom belong to another major world religion. (Trans World Radio—Africa)

PUBLISHER'S MEMO

Stepping Outside the Westernization of the Gospel by *Lon Allison, co-publisher of LWP*. Most LWP readers will agree that by and large, our evangelical theology and missiology is derived from a Western, or Enlightenment, worldview. Certainly our "culture" shapes our reading of scripture and our views of life and God. The Church is greatly in need of evangelists, missionaries, pastors, and theologians from non-Western cultures to carefully read and interpret scripture and life from their worldview. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/leadershipmemo/913/03-2008

THEMED ARTICLES: ADDRESSING THE WESTERNIZATION OF THE GOSPEL

Escaping from the Prison of a Westernized Gospel by *Knud Jørgensen, director of the Areopagos Foundation in Norway/Denmark*. Fundamentally, Christianity is universally equal for all; however, the forms of Christianity have not always been so. In order to realize such universality, Christians in all cultures and nations have an equal right to produce their interpretation of the Christian faith. This implies a need for self-theologizing. There can be no authentic theology unless it is based on the pastoral and missiological practice of the Church. Such an authentic theology will demand a personal engagement from the Christian and from the congregation. The questions we need to ask ourselves are: (1) How can Western systematic theology continue to act as if it is universally valid and almost dismiss the contributions coming from the Global South?, and (2) How is it possible for a Western theology to close its eyes to the fact that the Church is confronted with a mission situation—and not with "Christianization"?

www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles.php/906/03-2008

Facing the Empire: Trends in Ministry Formation by Ron Fraser, *president of Alberta Bible College in Calgary, Canada*. A brief glance at ministry formation from Jesus' time to today reveals that the discipline is in great need of a makeover. Fraser shares three hopeful trends in ministry formation: (1) there is an increasing suspicion of information for information's sake, (2) there is a growing desire to integrate faith and learning, and (3) there is a growing desire for community. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles.php/905/03-2008

Imitation in Cross-Cultural Mission: Discussions in an African Context by Jim Harries, *chair of the Alliance for Vulnerable Mission*. Several examples show that learning is strongly rooted in imitation rather than instruction and education. Because instruction seems to be a dominant model in Christian mission from the West to the non-West, the gospel of Christ can seem foreign or unfamiliar. This issue can be resolved by minimizing the cultural gap between the preacher and those being preached to—between evangelist and congregation. Westerners attempting to share the good news of Jesus with African people must imitate Africans in terms of language, and as far as possible, in day-to-day life. Only then will the missionary begin to be in a position to communicate a gospel that is not “foreign.” www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles.php/908/03-2008

A Critical Evaluation of the Westernization of the Gospel by Daniel Kim, *director of Chiang Mai Theological Seminary*. As an Asian who grew up and was educated in the West, Kim shares why the de-westernization of the gospel is needed for the good news of Jesus to take root in a culture. He includes two key ingredients to the de-westernization of the gospel: (1) it should not lead us to “Easternize” or “Africanize” the gospel, but to rediscover authentic, apostolic, biblical Christianity, and (2) it is a long process that requires time, critical dialogue with nationals, and illumination by the Holy Spirit. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles.php/907/03-2008

PERSPECTIVES

The Productivity Myth by John Edmiston, *chairman and CEO of the Asian Internet Bible Institute and www.Cybermissions.org*. The biblical heroes of faith often ministered from weakness, poverty, and isolation—sometimes spending years at a time withdrawn from all public ministry. So too missionaries must repent of seeking significance through corporate paradigms and start embracing the cross, along with all the costs involved in doing that. Two ways we can do this are to: (1) reclaim our times of worship, and (2) study God's methods of ministry and accept them. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/perspectives.php/900/03-2008

Missions with Spanish and Portuguese Accents by Grant McClung, *an advisor to the Missions Commission of the Pentecostal World Fellowship*. Grant demonstrates why “missions with Spanish and Portuguese accents” will be one of the defining trends in the future of world missions. A brief comparison of Ibero-American world evangelization partners between 1987 and 2008 reveals seven areas of growth. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/perspectives.php/901/03-2008

Together as One: Reconciliation in Serving In Mission. During the early twentieth century the colonial governments in parts of Africa did not want African-American missionaries in the countries they controlled, and the Sudan Interior Mission, one predecessor of the current Serving In Mission (SIM), complied with their request by not accepting African-American missionaries. The policy changed in 1957; however, the period of not accepting African-American missionary candidates had never officially been acknowledged by SIM. The SIM USA board discovered this and Steve Strauss, director of SIM USA, publically apologized and asked for forgiveness at Columbia International University's 2008 Missions Strategy Seminar on 18 January 2008. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/perspectives.php/912/03-2008

URBAN COMMUNITIES

Introduction: Ministry with the Urban Poor in Nordic Climates by Glenn Smith, *executive director of Christian Direction and Lausanne senior associate for Urban Evangelization*. In Nordic cultures all over the Northern Hemisphere urban poor are living in substandard situations, facing harsh climatic conditions. It is important to learn from their realities. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/urban.php/915/03-2008

Hochma: A Different Way to Plant a Church with the Urban Poor by Michel and Lyne Monnette, *workers with the poor in Montreal*. Since Canada's first census in 1871, *Hochelaga-Maisonneuve* (better known as *Hochma*) has been

the poorest neighborhood of any large section of a Canadian census metropolitan area. For many reasons, residents of Hochma are negative toward the institutional church. Because of this, the Monnettes and others are using community development models and methods to contribute to the spiritual transformation of the neighborhood. They are seeking to *incarnate* Jesus, not simply seeking to bring people to God. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/urban.php/917/03-2008

Urban Youth Adventures: Winnipeg's North End by *Cornelius Buller, executive director of Urban Youth Adventures*. Urban Youth Adventures (UYA) is seeking to transform the lives of youth who live in the seven neighborhoods that comprise the north end of Winnipeg (Manitoba, Canada). In a climate where poverty is generational; alcohol, substance, and sexual abuse are common; and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorders (FASD) is normal, UYA is seeking to help youth become agents of community transformation by giving them educational, social, and biblical teaching. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/urban.php/916/03-2008

RESEARCH

Doing Strategy as the Whole Church by *Sandi Lee, research associate with the Center for the Study of Global Christianity*. For the Church to be the *whole* Church, it must incorporate the voices of the Majority World where the Church is growing fastest and most dynamically. It must hear, defend, and serve the poor, the suffering, and the disempowered. It must not only proclaim the truth of the gospel, but hear it from unexpected places. And it must address issues such as: women, children, fragmentation, and globalization. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/research.php/909/03-2008

The Unreached Clusters of Southeast Asia by *Justin Long, senior editor for Momentum magazine*. People group clusters are groups of individual peoples clustered together based on language and ethnic affinity. Southeast Asia is made up of ninety-two clusters, totaling roughly 567 million people. One-third of the world's people group clusters are found in this region. Long offers a glimpse into ten clusters with more than ten million members. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/research.php/918/03-2008

LAUSANNE REPORTS

Theological Trends in Africa: Implications for Missions and Evangelism by *Gideon Para-Mallam, associate regional secretary of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students in West Africa and Lausanne International Deputy Director for Anglophone Africa*. As it continues to grow and gain influence, the African Church is facing some negative trends, including: an emphasis on numerical growth rather than spiritual growth; Christianity as a social rather than a spiritual phenomenon; the prosperity gospel and; the de-centralization of the cross. At the same time, the African Church is focusing on several positive trends, including; the uniqueness of the Charismatic movement; the example of the Anglican Communion; and the missionary impact of the African Church. www.lausanneworldpulse.com/lausannereports/920/03-2008

April 2008 Theme: Church Leaders in the Global South Speak on Mission and Evangelism

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