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PUBLISHER'S MEMO

Cape Town Commitment: Finding Our Place

By Naomi Frizzell

What is one of the first things you do when you see a photograph of a group of people? You look for yourself or people you know. Admit it, you do.

For most, it's a natural reaction, not born out of pride, but rather curiosity and a sense of finding one's place in the crowd. For those of us who consider ourselves less than photogenic, it's a reaction of self-preservation. Did they catch me scratching my nose, or looking bored, or even asleep? Did my hair/make-up/suit look okay that day? Or perchance did they get a photo of me that was so nice that I can repost it on my Facebook page or blog and send a 5X10 glossy to my mother?

Cape Town 2010 was likely one of the most photographed international gatherings of Christian leaders in history. Our official photography team, headed by Bill Bangham, did an amazing job in chronicling the gathering. His team took a staggering 30,000+ photos (see some of them here: www.lausanne.org/cape-town-2010/photos.html).

Add in the photographs taken by each participant and the volunteers/stewards and likely hundreds of thousands of photos were taken at/of the Congress. They included everything from the poignant or funny shots and obligatory leadership "grip and grins" to the "look mom, I'm in Cape Town" shots.

What does this have to do with the Cape Town Commitment?

Do a search on [the Cape Town Commitment](#) and you'll find hundreds of references to it online. (Born out of the Cape Town 2010 Congress, it was released in its entirety at the end of January 2011.) The comments range from positive and affirming to those that criticize the intent of the Commitment and what was "left out of" or "put into" the statement. It's been called everything from "stunning" (in a good way) and a "powerful resource for the global Church" to "deeply disappointing" (not so good) and "lacking the important issues."

Finding Your Place in the Commitment

Regardless of the positive or negative comments, it seems many people are looking to "find their place" in the Commitment. Just as we look at photographs to find ourselves in the crowd, so too are people looking at the Commitment trying to find themselves. I see people who are serious about their faith,

serious about their personal calling, who are getting serious about this thing we call evangelism and their part in it. I see people finding their place as a believer in Jesus Christ the Messiah—and all that means for how we serve our Lord and his world.

People are interested in what the document says about leadership, ministry to/with people with disabilities, business as mission, men and women working together in ministry, Bible engagement, partnership and collaboration, human trafficking . . . and the list goes on. What does the Commitment say about the things that I care about, about the things in which I am investing my life?

Leaders at many mission agencies and theological colleges are already looking carefully at the Commitment. Alongside that, Lausanne’s International Deputy Directors are planning consultations on the implications of the Cape Town 2010 themes for Christian witness in each region in the world. Issues include:

- Media and the Gospel
- Work and Witness (Business as Mission)
- [Mobilizing Resources](#)
- Ethnicity and Identity (Ethno-religious identity)
- Environmental Crisis/Creation Care
- Other Religions
- Megacities
- Ethics/Emerging Technologies
- Poverty, Prosperity, and the Gospel
- Truth in the Academic World (How do we get a moral framework in government and in universities based on truth?)
- And many others

These consultations will be taking place later this year and next. For more information on what’s happening in your region, email idd@lausanne.org.

Cape Town 2010 participants are also organizing national and regional post-Congress “debriefing events.” Several have already taken place in Italy, Eurasia, across the continent of Africa, and in the U.K. Groups are asking the questions, “Now what?” and “What does the Cape Town Commitment mean to our region, community, and church?”

Finding Our Place in the Commitment...as the Body of Christ

Perhaps we should look at the Cape Town Commitment as a mosaic or tapestry of what is before us as believers, rather than a one-size-fits-all document. Let’s find our place together in the outworking of the Commitment, looking for others in the mosaic with whom we can partner, but also seeking those who are not yet a part, but whose involvement is essential. In doing so, we express the beautiful unity of the Body of Christ, to the glory of God. It’s in this dialogue together—across regions, age groups, and cultures—that we can clearly hear the voice of God leading, prodding, and guiding us in the way we should go.

The Commitment is an admittedly heavy document, not just because of its 50+ pages, but also because of the distinct desire of its writers to address the issues from both a theological and a practical perspective. It’s not a “pick it up and read it in ten minutes” kind of a document. Nor is it intended to be.

How are we, in this age of 140-character Tweets, supposed to digest and apply the Commitment? As a common saying goes, you eat an elephant “one bite at a time.” In this digital age, perhaps it’s “one byte at a time.” Look for “your” issue in the Commitment and see if the statement and challenge on that issue resonates with you. If it does, prayerfully, what will you do about it?

(By the way, in writing this article, the use of the phrase above concerning the elephant came into question. Would we hear from people who were offended at the implication of eating elephants? This led to an interesting discussion on Facebook, during which time we heard from a friend who is a church planter. He said, “I’ve used this saying in our Karen [Burma] church. The Karen used to actually eat elephants on occasion. The answer, ‘One bite at a time’ sounds to them a ridiculous way to eat an elephant. In their view, the correct answer is, ‘It takes the entire village.’” Wow. I couldn’t have said it better myself. An entire village—or in this case, the entire Body of Christ.)

Now What?

In this issue of Lausanne World Pulse, we’re unpacking the Commitment to help you understand the process behind its development and why it was written. We’re also sharing some perspective on the “Now what?” question of how it can be applied by the global Church.

Lausanne as a Movement is also asking the “Now what?” question. As we move forward from Cape Town 2010, we’re adjusting and streamlining structures as a Movement in order to serve the cause of global evangelization and the momentum of the Congress.

Our goal is to encourage the global Church “to bear witness to Jesus Christ and all his teachings in every area of the world, geographically as well as in every sphere of society and in the realm of ideas.” To this end, we’ll be focusing our efforts on investing in the lives of leaders around the world (including younger leaders and women leaders); convening gatherings to address important issues facing the Church; and communicating ideas, strategy, and action.

Undergirding all of this is a strong commitment to humility in service, faithful study of God’s word, and steadfastness in prayer. Lausanne will be fine-tuning and formalizing our shared vision at a leadership meeting in June. Please be praying for this meeting.

We hope you’ll join the conversation on The Cape Town Commitment and let us know your thoughts on the document and how it can be used in your church, community, and nation. And, stay tuned for additional resources and ideas from Lausanne on how to take the Commitment “one byte at a time.”

Naomi Frizzell is chief communications officer for the [Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization](#). She also serves as managing editor for Lausanne World Pulse.

NEWS BRIEFS

April News from around the World

EGYPT: Army Fires Live Ammunition at Monastery

The recent Egyptian uprising has left Coptic Orthodox monasteries exceedingly vulnerable, as the police who normally guard the monasteries have either deserted their posts or been redeployed to the cities.

Exploiting the security vacuum, Arab raiders, jihadists, and prison escapees have attacked and raided several monasteries. When the monks requested protection at the fifth-century Monastery of St. Bishoy in Wadi al-Natroun, north of Cairo, they were told they would have to fend for themselves. Islamic law mandates that Christians cannot build or repair churches. On 21 February 2011 soldiers arrived at the monastery in tanks and bulldozers. The demolition was filmed and can be viewed [here](#). The monks held their ground, singing and praying, "Kyrie eleison" ("Lord, have mercy"). ([Assist News Service](#))

ETHIOPIA: Christian Students Attacked by Muslim Mob

According to [International Christian Concern](#), a Muslim mob assaulted and wounded seventeen Christian college students on a short-term mission trip in Oma village on 26 February 2011. The students, who were from Meda Welabu University, went to the Muslim village in Bale province. After the students started to distribute Bibles and speak with the Muslims, one of the villagers argued with them, inciting a mob to attack the students. The Muslims shouted "Allah Akbar" ("Allah is greater") and hurled stones at the Christians and beat them with rods. The mob overwhelmed the government militia, who attempted to protect the students. When the Christians fled, the mob unsuccessfully attempted to set fire to their car. While Ethiopia's constitution guarantees freedom of religion, Muslims occasionally attack Christians living in Muslim-majority areas. ([Voice of the Martyrs Canada](#))

IVORY COAST: Political Deadlock Degenerating into Civil War

Internationally-recognized president Alassane Ouattara has yet to take office in spite of the appointment of a parallel government. The November 2010 election results are being ignored by incumbent, Laurent Gbagbo, who refuses to step aside. Curt Cole, [HCJB Global](#) vice president of international ministries, says one of their partners, *Fréquence Vie* (Life Frequency), was caught in the crossfire in Abobo, a northern suburb of the capital of Abidjan. HCJB Global Voice has partnered with *Fréquence Vie* since 1999. The crisis in Ivory Coast is creating another "forgotten emergency," Cole explains, saying up to forty thousand refugees are fleeing into Liberia. Although Liberia has welcomed the refugees and is trying to meet the immediate emergency, HCJB Global is readying their response. ABC University, in the northern part of Liberia, is looking at assisting in some of the refugee camps. ([Mission Network News](#))

LIBYA: Radio Broadcasts Bring Hope Despite Bombings

Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi recently launched an air raid on eastern Libya after oil installations appear to have been switching hands between pro-Gaddafi forces and rebel forces. Libya has been in an uproar for weeks. With anti-Gaddafi protests having led to air strikes on protesters, military personnel have fled the country and Tripoli is now surrounded by military tanks, and rebels across the country are armed and ready to fight. The number of deaths associated with the weeks-long, violent uprising in Libya are unclear. Thousands are trying desperately to flee the country. In the midst of tragedy, however, hope has broken through, thanks to radio programming. [HCJB Global](#) president Wayne Pederson says, "The satellite provider we have from Europe beaming into North Africa has been able to stay on the air. Other satellite signals have been blocked, but the Lord has enabled our radio signal to continue 24/7 into the households of North Africa and the Middle East." HCJB broadcasts are able to reach 1.5 million households a week across North Africa and the Middle East. ([Mission Network News](#))

NEW ZEALAND: 6.3-Magnitude Quake Leaves Shattered Churches, Grieving Parishioners

The death toll from the 22 February 2011 6.3-magnitude quake in ChristChurch reached 113, with more than 200 people missing and hundreds injured. About 600 search and rescue workers were working in shifts searching the central city, where several major office buildings were completely destroyed. Estimated damage is \$10 billion. Church leaders were searching for alternative places of worship ahead

of Sunday services to accommodate parishioners whose buildings are either damaged or in ruins. As many churches are inaccessible, a range of worship options were being considered, from schools to churches that are safe, to open air meetings. ([Ecumenical News International](#))

PAKISTAN: Pakistani Churches Mourn Assassinated Christian Minister

Christian schools and colleges across Pakistan began shutting down for three days to protest the 2 March 2011 assassination of Shahbaz Bhatti, a Roman Catholic and Minister for Religious Minorities. In addition, churches observed Sunday, 6 March as a day of prayer and fasting. On 3 March, Christians and secular groups marched in the cities of Lahore, Karachi, Hyderabad, and Faisalabad to protest Bhatti's killing. Bhatti, 42, was ambushed and shot dead as he was being driven to his office. A critic of Pakistan's blasphemy law, Bhatti initiated a clemency petition for Asia Bibi, a Christian woman currently in prison on blasphemy charges. "This is a big loss to the Christian community," said Joseph Francis, founder director of CLAAS (Centre for Legal Aid Assistance and Settlement). "We are stunned by the failure of the government to provide proper security to Bhatti. When his car was ambushed, there were no security men around." Bhatti launched the Christian Liberation Front in his student days and later founded the All Pakistan Minority Alliance. He joined the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) in 2002. When the PPP assumed power in early 2008 under President Asif Ali Zardari, Bhatti was nominated to Pakistan's National Assembly under the reserved quota for Christians. ([Ecumenical News International](#))

SOMALIA: Somali Islamists Kill Twenty-fourth Christian Convert

[International Christian Concern](#) has learned that members of the Somali Islamic radical group, Al-Shabaab, killed Abdirahman Hussein Roble, a Christian convert from Islam on 26 January 2011 in Mogadishu. Roble was accused of spying and promoting religious discord by evangelizing Muslims. He is the twenty-fourth Christian to be killed by the Somali Islamists since 2009. Al-Shabaab is an al-Qaeda-linked organization known for enforcing a strict version of Sharia law by stoning adulterers to death, cutting off the hands of thieves, and murdering Christian converts from Islam. According to ICC sources, Al-Shabaab is losing broad support in Somalia due to its brutality. ([Assist News Service](#))

THEMED ARTICLES: The Cape Town Commitment

The Cape Town Commitment: The Inside Story

By Chris Wright

Early in 2009, Lindsay Brown, international director of [The Lausanne Movement](#), proposed that there should be a statement from Cape Town 2010 that would comprise a clear statement of evangelical Christian faith, and a clear call to action from Lausanne and the gathering to the world Church. There followed some months of discussion with myself as chair of the Lausanne Theology Working Group, and members of that group, which include representatives from the [World Evangelical Alliance](#), reflecting on the shape and purpose of such a document.

The Beginnings of a Long Journey

In December 2009, Lindsay convened a conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA, hosted at John Piper's church (Bethlehem Baptist), to which a representative group of theologians was invited (eighteen women and men from each of Lausanne's global regions). Each person was recommended by the Lausanne international deputy directors.

Preparation for the meeting included compiling and reading significant evangelical documents written since 1966, from Lausanne and wider, to remind ourselves of the recent heritage and tradition in which we stand. The meeting was chaired by Sinclair Ferguson, and I was appointed to be recording secretary.

Many of the Lausanne senior leaders were also present. There was extended discussion on the shape of the desired document and the thrust of its content. Some initial, but inconclusive drafting was done by a small committee of the larger group. As Cape Town 2010 came to a close, I was invited to prepare a draft document that would be circulated to the Minneapolis group for comment and revision. I accepted this responsibility with great trepidation, but with the warm encouragement by many in the group.

Hearing the Voice of God

So it was that I found myself early in January 2010 driving the five hours from London to The Hookses, John Stott's writing retreat cottage in Wales, to spend a week alone working on the requested draft. As I drove, I prayed in some desperation, "Lord, how is this thing to be done? How should it be structured? What is the primary, fundamental message that it needs to carry?"

It was as if I heard a voice replying, "The first and greatest commandment is: 'Love the Lord your God...,' and the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'" Then a whole bundle of other "love" texts came tumbling into my mind like a waterfall. I thought, *Could we frame a statement in the language of covenant love—love for God, for Jesus, for the Bible, for the world, for one another, for the gospel, for mission....?*

As I drove, I sketched an outline in my mind, and when I arrived at Hookses, I phoned John Stott, shared what I was thinking, and asked if he thought it could work. He not only thought it could, but strongly encouraged me to follow the idea through. Somehow, it felt that an idea born in a moment of prayer, and then approved by John Stott, was perhaps on the right lines!

I spent that week in January creating a first draft, and then sent it back to the Lausanne leadership and the Minneapolis group of theologians for comment and refinement. There followed several months in which I got a lot of feedback and the document was extended and revised with their helpful comments and advice, including wider input from others, such as the Lausanne Theology Working Group.

At that point, a smaller group of eight was appointed to be the official Cape Town Statement Working Group, with myself as chair. had been present in Minneapolis, with one or two additions, and again, every continent was represented. When the Lausanne leadership met in Cape Town in May 2010 for the final preparations for the event, some of this group met with me, and we went through the document line by line. It was also at this time that two other key decisions were made.

- The format of the Cape Town Commitment would be in two parts. Part I would be the document we had virtually finished—the Commitment of Faith, or our statement of core Christian belief. Part II would be generated at the Congress itself, out of all that would be said there, and would be our Call to Action.
- There would be no formal adoption of the Commitment, or signing ceremony (as at Lausanne 1974) within the Cape Town program itself. However, participants would be given a draft of Part 1 at the Congress, and some of its key themes would be woven into the liturgy of the closing ceremony as an affirmation of it in the context of worship.

From July to September 2010, I asked all those who were due to speak in plenary sessions, or leading multiplexes, to send me as much advance materials as possible, particularly the outcomes they hoped for and the challenges they wanted to express. All of this was shared with our Statement Working Group, so that when we assembled in Cape Town, we had some sense of the scale of the task facing us.

A Daunting Task in Cape Town

Nothing, however, quite prepared us, as a Statement Working Group, for the sheer volume of “stuff” we had to deal with. We were told that we were not to think of ourselves as just reporters trying merely to record everything. We were tasked to discern what was significant, what the Congress as a whole was in some way agreeing on.

We sought to listen for the voice of the Lord coming through the deluge of voices in all the plenaries and groups. And “deluge” it was. It was like standing under the Niagara Falls trying to catch it in a bucket. Since there were eight of us, each day at the Congress we divided ourselves up so that there were usually two at each multiplex. We also selected as many of the dialogue sessions as we could.

For the plenary sessions, we met together in a room, and were provided with all facilities, including a monitor with a live feed of all the sessions. We formed our own table group and were able to discuss and respond to all that happened on stage. Each day, we tried to begin some writing of key themes and “calls to action” emerging from the day’s events. I tried not to go to bed until I had a preliminary idea of an outline for what we would eventually have to develop for that day’s input.

We had chosen to use the six Congress themes as the architecture for Part II of the Commitment, and to group all that seemed important to include within those broad themes. It had been my fond hope that we might have been able to have some draft statement ready by the final day of the Congress, but by Day 3 that hope had been blown out of the water. There was simply no time or space for the necessary crafting of words, sentences, and paragraphs within the constant pressure of the Congress itself.

By the end of the week, I had bulging folders in my laptop for each of the six days, full of all the original scripts from presenters, the input from the reflections of my team, and all the suggestions that had come from participants in emails. Alongside all these raw materials was some initial verbal scaffolding that we hoped would eventually enable an adequate building to arise. When people asked me how the Statement was progressing, all I could say by the end of the Congress was that it looked like a building site with tons of construction materials lying around, waiting for an architect and builders to do their work.

A Document Completed

In the weeks following the Congress, in the midst of a return to a heavy travel schedule and responsibilities with the Langham Partnership International, I worked whenever I could on each section, sharing the results with the group and getting feedback and editorial help.

By the end of November, I sent a first completed draft of Part 2 to the group and to the Lausanne senior leadership. This was followed by the detailed process of trimming it down to a more manageable size, with the help of Julia Cameron and her team of proofreaders. Eventually, we were able to release the full Cape Town Commitment, Parts 1 and 2, in January 2011.

It is the end of an amazing journey and an immensely demanding task for all of us involved in it. We can only pray that it will express something of the “voice of Cape Town,” but more importantly, something of what the Holy Spirit wanted to say through that event, and still wants his people to hear.

The full Cape Town Commitment can be viewed here: www.lausanne.org/ctcommitment.

Dr. Chris Wright, from Northern Ireland, taught in India and at All Nations Christian College, U.K., and then followed John Stott in leadership of the [Langham Partnership International](#). His books include *The Mission of God* (IVP Academic, 2006) and *The Mission of God's People* (Zondervan, 2010). Wright is chair of the Lausanne Theology Working Group.

The Cape Town Commitment, Part 2: A Call to Action, a Summation

By Rose Dowsett

(Editor's Note: This document was originally designed for the Cape Town 2010 participants from the U.K. Its purpose is to introduce Part 2 of the Commitment and to begin to explore how to act on the Commitment, rather than simply reading it.)

Part 1 of The Cape Town Commitment: The Cape Town Confession (CTC) was circulated at the end of the Congress, in several languages. It is primarily a confessional document, providing a foundation in biblical, theological, and missiological terms. This is the faith we profess and confess. What we do and how we do it, how we live, and our priorities and responsibilities—as individuals, congregations, agencies, or networks, in every dimension of life—should flow out of that faith and be shaped by it.

Part 2 of the Commitment: A Call to Action, should not be separated from Part 1, because to do so would leave us with unrooted activism, just as Part 1 on its own could leave us with theory, but no action. We need both parts, and to see them as interdependent. It is constructed around the topics for the six plenary days of the Congress:

1. Bearing witness to the truth of Christ in a pluralistic, globalised world
2. Building the peace of Christ in our divided and broken world
3. Living the love of Christ among people of other faiths
4. Discerning the will of Christ for world evangelization
5. Calling the Church of Christ back to humility, integrity, and simplicity
6. Partnering in the Body of Christ for unity in mission

Each section has various subsections, with explanatory and introductory text, followed by specific calls to action.

Please note that Part 2 is a reflection of, and on, what was said at the Congress, within the terms set for the Statement Group. So, depending upon where in the world or where along the spectrum of world evangelicalism and Pentecostalism we come from, there may be some things we personally (or even nationally) would not highlight as much, or note to be missing and wish they weren't.

Nobody is being asked to sign this document as proof of being “in” or “out,” but as with The Lausanne Covenant, we trust it may prove a unifying statement of shared belief and commitment to action, even if any one of us might have written some things differently.

The question we need to address most of all is how we might use the Commitment within our diverse contexts. In the near future there will be study guide materials on the web, and within a few months, a Didasko file booklet containing both Part 1 and Part 2. Very likely, Mrs. Jones leading the missionary prayer meeting, Mr. MacLeod as local church deacon, or young Dave and Anna in the youth fellowship are not likely to read the whole document at a sitting—and it certainly doesn't yet lend itself to Tweets and Twitters. But if we believe this represents some of the wisdom of the world Church, listening to God's word and Spirit, then we need active, not passive, response.

So we have several questions that flow from this one: *How do we convey the substance of each Part to our constituencies?* This is a *communication* issue: format, method, occasion, etc. But after that:

1. How do we interact with the substance to endorse it, dissent from it, understanding it, perhaps modifying it in our own contexts? This is an *identification* issue.
2. How will this document change our understanding and praxis of mission, locally, globally, and cross-culturally? Implementing change, and persuading others, can be difficult, as well as necessary. This is an *application* issue.
3. What do you think are the most urgent parts to work on within the U.K. (or elsewhere)? This is a *priorities* issue.
4. Are there issues that we can work on together, bridging some of the tribal squabbles that afflict U.K. (or elsewhere) evangelicals? This is a *corporate* and *unity* issue.
5. Are there already bodies/structures in place in the U.K. (or elsewhere) that address some of the areas cited in The Call to Action, and if so how can we strengthen them together? This is an issue of *information, support, and consolidation*, without re-inventing wheels or wasting resources through duplication.
6. Are there further resources, in a variety of media, which we could produce that would help us? If so, who will do what? This is an issue of *planning for ongoing momentum*, and of *imaginative creativity*.

We need to address these questions at the level of church leadership, agency leadership, Bible and theological colleges, and each sphere of "Christian leadership" from which the majority of Congress participants came. But equally urgently we need to address the same questions to:

- "ordinary" church members as they go about the business of bearing witness to the Lord Jesus in every sphere of life;
- people who influence decisions in professions and councils and communities;
- media and homemakers; and
- the elderly and the young.

Mission is the calling of every disciple of the Lord. Can we translate Cape Town into London and Liverpool, Belfast and Bristol, Glasgow and Gloucester (and elsewhere around the world)? City, town, and village? Church and marketplace? United across our diverse ethnicities? And all to the glory of God...

Rose Dowsett is a retired [OMF International](#) missionary, having served in the Philippines, in the U.K., and in other parts of the world. She is a missiologist, speaker, and author, and wife, mother, and grandmother. Dowsett is vice-chair of the [World Evangelical Alliance's Mission Commission](#).

Why Today's Church Needs the Cape Town Commitment

By C. Rosalee Velloso Ewell

The Christian life is lived between two poles: memory and vision. Both are necessary for the life of discipleship to Jesus and the faithful witnessing to which Christians are called. Throughout history, God has raised up prophets and visionaries within God's people who serve to admonish, instruct, and guide the people in the ways God has for them. The ability to call God's people back to God and to point them in the ways in which they should go is a necessary characteristic of the Christian leader. It has been so in the past and must continue to be so in the future.

The Cape Town Commitment (CTC) is needed today as a tool for such calling back and pointing forward.

On the one hand, it recalls the changes that the world has witnessed over the past forty years, noting in particular the challenges and difficulties that churches face around the globe. The CTC reminds us of our calling to love God and serve our neighbour.

On the other hand, it points us forward, indicating ways in which such love of God and service to neighbour can take place in ever-changing contexts.

When over four thousand leaders from around the world gathered in Cape Town in October 2010, there were feelings of both excitement and apprehension. Excitement about what God could do when so many Christians gathered together in his name, and apprehension over the daunting task before us, and the responsibility upon each participant to take the lessons and challenges learned in South Africa back to our local churches and communities.

One of Lausanne's greatest gifts to the Church today is to remind it over and over again of the task of Christian evangelism and the character of Christian witness. The CTC has captured some of the main themes that arose out of the Congress and has framed them once again within this call to faithful Christian witnessing.

Of the many themes and issues raised at Cape Town 2010, two stood out as recurring problems within Christian communities around the world:

1. The decline in biblical literacy
2. The Church's failure to see peace and reconciliation as integral to the gospel message

Concerning biblical literacy, it was noted that from north to south, east to west, **there is an alarming failure in teaching and preaching the Bible.** This is clear in Sunday school settings, seminary classrooms, and pulpits. The Church needs the strong reminder offered in the CTC that *the Bible is central to our self-understanding and identity as Christians*—it is the word of God that shapes us, that challenges, that revolutionizes God's people, and that serves as the primary tool for disciple-making.

It is the hope of The Lausanne Movement and those involved in the drafting of the CTC that God's people will hear the words of the CTC that remind us of the need to study God's word diligently and faithfully, and the call to teach and preach it with perseverance and clarity. In so doing, the Church is not only called back to faithful living, but learns also to discern the signs of the times and to live as a prophetic voice in service to God's world.

The second theme of peace and reconciliation appeared in plenary addresses, dialogue sessions, and dinner conversations at Cape Town 2010. Its importance was felt by those involved in discussions about what characterizes the Christian family, about issues of war and violence, racism, and oppression of women.

Peace and reconciliation are also marks of Christian unity and the witness of God's people—if **Christians cannot work toward peace with one another, how can we have a genuine witness to a watching world?** In various ways, the CTC calls Christians to work toward such unity, bearing in mind Christ's words in John 17—unity and evangelism go hand in hand and are signs of the presence of the Spirit in our midst.

To claim Jesus as Lord is to say no to other gods that might try to claim us, including those of violence and greed that divide homes, churches, and communities. The Church needs to heed the call of the CTC to reflect more deeply about the causes and issues that divide Christians from other Christians, and Christians from other peoples, seeking in the gospel message ways toward reconciliation and peace. In doing so, the Church can exist also as a prophetic voice of hope in a world torn by violence and strife.

The two main parts of the CTC, "For the Lord We Love: The Cape Town Confession of Faith" and "For the World We Serve: The Cape Town Call to Action" are both memory and vision for today's Church. We look back to the scriptures to shape our vision of creation, repenting of the many ways we have failed to live up to God's will for us as a people. And we look to the scriptures and to our many contexts to envision ways by which we might be faithful today and in the future.

Our collective memories and repentance help us avoid mistakes that were committed in the past. Our collective readings and prayer offer us a vision of faithfulness that needs to be heard by all God's people, in all churches, everywhere.

Dr. C. Rosalee Velloso Ewell is a theologian from São Paulo, Brazil. She was on the CTC drafting group and on the Lausanne Theology Working Group. She is the New Testament editor for the forthcoming *Latin American Bible Commentary* and is executive director of the World Evangelical Alliance Theological Commission. She is married to Samuel Ewell. They have three children.

We Have a Gospel to Proclaim: Cape Town 2010 Concludes

(Editor's note: This is an abbreviated version of Lindsay Brown's closing address at Lausanne III: Cape Town 2010. For the whole address, go to www.lausanne.org/conversation, where you will find other presentations, and be invited to contribute your comments.)

The gospel of Jesus Christ is unique, wonderful, powerful, and true. It is the greatest message in the history of the world. That is why we've met together. What will be the legacy of this Congress? Only God knows—we don't, at this stage. But I can tell you our four-fold vision and hope.

Firstly, for a ringing re-affirmation of the uniqueness of Christ and the truth of the biblical gospel, and a crystal clear statement on the mission of the Church—all rooted in scripture. We cannot engage in mission unless we know what we believe. The historic missionary conference of Edinburgh 1910 set in motion great missionary endeavour. But it had a flaw—the organisers sidelined doctrine.

So they aimed to launch a missionary movement without biblical consensus. That's folly. We need to have clarity, especially on four things: (1) the exclusive claims of Christ; (2) the meaning of Christ's death; (3) the necessity of conversion; and (4) the lostness of humankind. The Cape Town Commitment (www.lausanne.org/ctcommitment) seeks to give this clarity.

Secondly, to identify key issues which the Church needs to address in the coming decade. The mission statement for this Congress was that "...we would seek to bring a fresh challenge to the global Church to bear witness to Jesus Christ and all his teaching, in every part of the world—not only geographically, but in every sphere of society, and in the realm of ideas." I love the words of Abraham Kuyper, the Dutch theologian and prime minister, who said, "There is not one centimetre of human existence to which Christ, who is Lord of all, does not point and say, 'That is mine.'"

Thirdly, to facilitate many fruitful friendships and partnerships. That's why great care was taken in forming the small groups [at the Congress]. In a needy and broken world we cannot be driven by a spirit of competition; such a spirit must give way to a spirit of partnership where, under Christ, men and women, and people of different ethnicities, join hands to bring the gospel of Christ to the ends of the earth.

We need a new generation of evangelical leaders who are driven by their commitment to the cause of Christ, and genuinely rejoice, like Paul in Philippians 1, when the gospel goes out, no matter who is leading the charge. Our prayer has been that many would leave with a fresh commitment to partnership with like-minded believers.

Fourthly, for many new initiatives. We maintain too much, and pioneer too little. In 1974, there was a great surge of interest in unreached people groups. From this Congress, we may see new initiatives in reaching oral learners, young people, diaspora, or the cities. Or fresh energy in communicating biblical truth in the public domain through the media, the arts, business, the university, and government. These arenas all shape the value systems in nations and require bold, clear, and coherent Christian testimony.

Mission Is Christocentric

We see in our reading [2 Corinthians 4] that mission is Christocentric. A journalist here this week asked me, "Bishop Stephen Neill says that when mission is everything, mission is nothing. What is *not* the mission of the Church?" My answer: "Mission is driven by a desire to proclaim the deity, incarnation, death, resurrection, and lordship of Christ. Anything without this at its core is not mission." Look at Paul's emphasis on Christ in this chapter:

- v. 4: the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God
- v. 5: preaching Christ Jesus as Lord
- v. 6: the glory of God in the face of Christ

There is no substitute for testifying verbally to his lordship. It is amazing how creative the early evangelists were in this. They spoke in local synagogues, but they also spoke on neutral territory—think of Paul on Mars Hill. Some of us will be called to the public arena, to engage in dialogue with the thinkers and influencers, and to bring that clear and coherent testimony to the truth in Christ in the public sphere.

Our communion meal this evening focuses around John the Baptist's ecstatic claim when he saw Jesus and called him "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." When I was a student in Oxford University, I studied in the same college where John Wesley had been a professor 250 years previously. I took the opportunity to read through his journals, which he recorded every day during his itinerant ministry.

One phrase struck me, which he repeated day after day—"I offered Christ to the people...today I offered Christ to the people." That is our primary calling—to offer Christ to the peoples of the world.

The Need for Integrity

The Apostle Paul exhorts us to retain a distinctive lifestyle. We are to watch our walk! Our words must come from godly lives. We are not called to bear witness to Christ in an arrogant way. We do so as fallen, fragile people, or as earthen vessels (v. 7). We need to be careful not to rely on technique, or clever approaches; the gospel should be shared by setting forth the truth plainly (v. 2), out of our weakness (v. 7), focusing on the power of God.

We dare not think we will succeed because we have the money and the technology. We depend only upon the greatness of the gospel, the power of God, the help and power of the Holy Spirit, and the power of the word of God. As we go out, let us focus on the truth of the gospel (v. 2), the gospel of the glory of Christ (v. 4), the lordship of Christ (v. 5), and the glory of God in the face of Christ (v. 6). And may this word of truth be backed up by authentic, transformed, joyful lives.

John Stott said in his last published sermon that the greatest hindrance to the advance of the gospel worldwide is the failure of God's people to live like God's people. We are to demonstrate godly lives before a watching world—in compassion by caring for the underprivileged, the poor, those affected by pandemics, the brokenhearted. Jesus' approach was very simple. He spoke to the five thousand and he fed them. So should we.

A Call to Perseverance

Finally, the apostle exhorts us not to lose heart (v. 1). Many of us will return to difficult circumstances. Then we are to remember our calling to persevere to the end and not to lose heart or to give up.

I remember talking with the only person from Somalia at the last Lausanne Congress in 1989. He was employed by the United Nations to work in Mogadishu. He was the only Somali elder in the only evangelical church in the capital, made up of seventy believers. He had received an invitation to go and work with the UN in New York, but turned it down so he could work among his own people.

As a consequence, he lost his life in 1990. Gospel service is costly, but we are to continue because of the glory of the gospel and the commission of our Lord.

Samuel Escobar, one of the grandfathers of The Lausanne Movement, has said the only thing twentieth-century man discovered was speed. Christian ministry is rarely quick. We thank God for rapid growth, but often the word of God takes root slowly. We are to adopt a long view.

Let me illustrate this. Professor Jerry Gana, a senior politician in Nigeria, has served five consecutive presidents, Muslim and Christian. Jerry is known for remaining free of corruption. I asked him how he had managed to retain his reputation for integrity and fairness. This was his answer. He learned as a

student what it meant to abide in Christ and keep short accounts. We need to teach that, too. He chose his colleagues and partners slowly because he said even some Christian politicians make foolish mistakes. For if it all goes wrong, you have to face the consequences, and it can damage your testimony.

He realized the importance of legacy. He said,

God has given me the privilege of serving in public life for thirty years. I hope I can continue for another twenty-five. I'd like to mentor and develop a generation of young evangelical politicians in Nigeria who will multiply that influence. My prayer is that God will impact the political life of this nation through evangelical Christian politicians over a 60-year period.

That is a tremendous long-term vision and aspiration! "Therefore, beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

Let me leave you with the words of John Wesley. As you seek to bear witness to Christ—and with God's help:

Do all the good you can,
by all the means you can,
in all the ways you can,
in all the places you can,
at all the times you can,
to all the people you can,
as long as ever you can.

Until Christ returns or calls us home, let us all press on to the end in serving Christ, our King. God bless you.

Post-Cape Town 2010 Meeting in Denmark

By Lasse Holmgaard Iversen

(**Editor's note:** This summary was written by Lasse Holmgaard Iversen on behalf of the Danish Cape Town 2010 participants.)

The 24 January 2011 meeting was the first time the Danish participants who attended Cape Town 2010: The Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization, met after the Congress. The meeting included the following:

Bible reflection on Ephesians 2:11-22 on unity in the Church. We discussed the challenges in unity across organizations and denominations, which we recognized as a significant challenge in Denmark. It is easy to talk about being one in the Body of Christ. But how do we express this unity in concrete actions? We agreed that unity begins with personal relations and tearing down false images of the "enemy."

In groups, we shared what made the largest impression on us at Cape Town. We believe the best way to carry on the inspiration from Lausanne III is when each participant reflects on what challenged,

encouraged, or made the biggest impression on him or her, because that is what this person will integrate in his or her practice and thinking. Our time spent on individual stories was very valuable and we had great conversations.

The Cape Town Commitment. We gave each person the possibility to express what the Cape Town Commitment meant to him or her, and how he or she had used it since we returned to Denmark.

Follow up on Lausanne III in Denmark. We had a short status report on what has already been done to pass on the inspiration from Lausanne III to the Church in Denmark. The primary things are: (1) a booklet with contributions from almost all participants and stewards (read more at this [Danish-language website](#) and (2) articles in magazines and on Internet websites.

Some organizations have put Lausanne III as a theme for their annual meetings. We also discussed what we wished to do from this point forward. Two things should be mentioned here:

- A Danish Lausanne Congress for leaders, pastors, and “mission-thinking laypeople” in 2012. The Congress could be the culmination of a study process and should equip the participants to mission.
- Development of study material for Bible study groups in the local churches. This study could take its starting point from the Cape Town Commitment.

Prayer. We ended the day in prayer for the world and our country, and gave thanks for the inspiration we received through Lausanne III.

The Evangelical Alliance Denmark board now has the responsibility to engage people in the work of Lausanne. (The work of Lausanne and the Evangelical Alliance merged in Denmark seven years ago, which is why the Evangelical Alliance will play such a large part.)

Lasse Holmgaard Iversen studied at Aarhus University in Denmark. He was the Danish project employee for Lausanne III: Cape Town 2010.

PERSPECTIVES

More than a Name: Wycliffe Global Alliance

By Susan Van Wynen

A Bible Translation Movement

What does a Bible translation movement look like? In May 2010, ninety-five leaders from more than fifty organizations in the Americas gathered to encourage each other to work in unity. Representing the many voices of the Bible translation movement, they came wanting to bridge the gaps between expatriate, Latin, and indigenous churches.

Across the Atlantic, Wycliffe India currently serves sixty-five translation projects involving eleven organizations and independent translators. In Kenya, urban churches are raising awareness of the need for Bible translation and getting involved in reaching the minority language communities in their own country and beyond.

Korean churches in North America, representing the GLOCAL mission network are working with Korean leaders of Wycliffe to dream of new ways of getting their entire Church involved in Bible translation. These are just a few examples of Bible translation movements and advocacy growing worldwide.

Change to Name Reflects Ongoing Journey

In February 2011, Wycliffe International became [Wycliffe Global Alliance](#). The change seemed subtle to some onlookers, sudden to others; in reality, it was one more step of an ongoing journey. Although much has changed along the way, the direction of our journey will remain the same.

Kirk Franklin, Wycliffe Global Alliance executive director, puts it this way:

We have a new name that reflects a transition that has been taking place over the past twenty years, particularly as we have seen the growth of these Bible translation movements. We continue in our commitment of serving with the people groups still without the scriptures in the language(s) that best communicate to them. And we want to serve in the context of what we see God doing around the world.

Wycliffe was, and continues to be, held together by people with common vision and goals, serving together as a part of God's Church. But we recognized that the structures, policies, and ways of working and thinking that had grown up around the vision were not necessarily in sync with who we now or who we wanted to become. As we saw the growth not only of Wycliffe organizations, but of partner organizations all across the globe, we knew we needed to find new ways of thinking and serving together.

Wycliffe Global Alliance recognizes both the diversity and the common vision of Bible translation movements around the world today. These movements include partners who have been involved in Bible translation for generations and an entirely new generation of partners. Bible translation movements are a growing aspect of the worldwide Church's participation in God's mission. These movements are not restricted to just a few organizations, structures, strategies, or regions. They are worldwide and are seeking community, collaboration, and opportunities for effective (not just efficient) ministry.

Wycliffe Global Alliance associate director Min Young Jung reflects,

As the number and size of non-Western constituencies grew, Wycliffe International eventually had to face the challenge of making itself truly global, instead of keeping the status quo as a West-centered multinational "club." Now both westerners and non-westerners have to adjust and meet each other partway. It has been an exciting journey of discovery, a process towards a healthy multicultural community, which I believe is a crucial prerequisite for kingdom partnership.

As the leadership team talked and met with member organizations and partners, it became increasingly apparent that the name that could best describe who and what we were becoming was Wycliffe Global Alliance.

States Franklin:

We've discovered that the name "Wycliffe" is recognized across the globe as representing people and organizations committed to language communities and Bible translation. Our new name simply adds new dimensions: "Global" indicates that the organizations, churches, and movements that identify with this vision are able to find a welcoming place for networking and participation. "Alliance" clarifies that these organizations, churches, and movements are held together by this common vision and work together in complementary partnerships for the good of the people groups who do not have God's word in the language(s) that serve them best.

José de Dios, Wycliffe Global Alliance Americas area director, expresses our transition from "organization" to "alliance" this way:

Becoming an alliance is a step of obedience along the path on which God has put Wycliffe.

- It's recognition that no one agency owns the ministry of Bible translation.
- It's recognition of what God has been doing among his people in the Majority World.
- It's recognition that we are part of the Body of Christ worldwide.
- It's recognition that partnership and communion of unity is the only biblical model for ministry.
- It's recognition that to be fully obedient to God's will in our organizations we have to look beyond institutional structures and strategies.
- It's a recognition that the future of missions lies in non-centralized, global, diverse, and dynamic structures.
- It's a recognition of the legacy of Cameron Townsend and Wycliffe, that we were a catalyst and we are still an important means by which Bible translation and scripture impact have taken place.

I believe God is not done with us. Wycliffe is undergoing a metamorphosis. As God transforms us, he is keeping the best of our legacy to carry us into the twenty-first century, but he's asking us to see the things that cloud our vision and that keep us focused on ourselves.

Although Wycliffe Global Alliance is announcing its new name, the focus is not on ourselves, but on all of the Body of Christ that is engaged and could engage in Bible translation and related ministry.

Our goal is not to preserve an organization in changing times, but to pursue God's glory at all times. What we become must be shaped by his intentions and purposes. De Dios reflects,

As we become a global alliance, the unique cultural perspectives from around the world will contribute to the ministry, making us effective in ways we could never have been in our previous forms. We will be able to say legitimately that the Wycliffe Global Alliance represents the global Church, with all of its facets, different ways of doing things, and unique historical and cultural traits.

Franklin recalls how quickly the Wycliffe board adopted the new name:

Last November, we came to the board meetings with a number of recommendations for change. We expected the discussion of the name to extend into the next year, but the board had obviously recognized the same things we were recognizing. It was time for a name that reflected current realities and that could also serve us well in the future. The board approved the new

name immediately. We'd already been referring to ourselves as an alliance for a while, so this seemed like the natural next step.

Wycliffe's Legacy of Impact

The journey of Wycliffe Bible Translators began in the 1930s. It wasn't until the 1980s, however, that Wycliffe International was created. During its first ten years, it was a single organization with "divisions" in a growing number of countries around the world.

In 1991, the "divisions" became autonomous member organizations of Wycliffe International. Wycliffe International's role became one of giving global direction and support, facilitating, and providing standards and guidelines rather than policies governing the participating organizations. It became the "umbrella" organization for more than forty autonomous Wycliffe member organizations and more than sixty official partner organizations.

In 2008, Wycliffe International began a new phase of its journey with a new executive director and global leadership team. The leadership team is diverse and distributed, bringing a wide range of experiences and perspectives to our discussions.

The new leadership began to look at how God was at work in his Church worldwide and how Wycliffe could best participate in his global mission. Like many ministry leaders, the new Wycliffe leadership team has noted changes in the Church and mission environments. We've been watching, listening, and trying to discern how to best participate in God's mission to redeem and restore his creation. God's mission has not changed, but our contexts have. We noted a number of facts, trends, and new realities. Among these were:

- Continuing growth of the worldwide Church
- Two-thirds World engagement in mission
- Increasing understanding of and interest in holistic mission
- Growing partnerships and collaboration among Christian organizations and ministries
- Growing Bible translation movements around the world

These factors and others led our leadership team to pray, reflect, and discuss how we could continue to adapt to make the most of changing contexts and opportunities. Our leadership team has taken great interest in exploring the missiological nature of our journey and the opportunity we have to participate in God's great story.

Knowing that he means for us to serve in unity and as a part of the body, we are looking at how his word and the need for his word fits into the larger picture of God's kingdom come and coming. We are not "building" an organization, but looking at how God's people, serving together, can participate in the demonstration and proclamation of the gospel so all can understand.

Susan Van Wynen is the director for communications and serves on the senior leadership team of [Wycliffe Global Alliance](#). She and her husband, Tom, have served with Wycliffe in various locations for twenty-five years.

Partnering to Reach 200 by 2025: A Snapshot of Wycliffe Singapore

By Nicky Chong and Soak Wan Leong

When we hear the Bible read in Bahasa Indonesia, it is like the sound of birds singing among the tree branches—beautiful to hear, but we cannot understand what it means. But when we read God’s word in our language, we are like a man suddenly being woken up and rubbing his eyes, he could see clearly and understand what God is saying to him!

A leader from the Orya people group, who live in Papua, Indonesia, said this at the dedication of the Orya New Testament in November 2005. For this man and his people, the word has come alive because God now speaks to them in a language they understand.

Imagine a world where you cannot access God’s word simply because there is none translated into your mother tongue. This is the reality for some 340 million people speaking 2,078 languages.¹

In contrast, many of us who speak the major languages of this world have enjoyed the privilege of more than one version of the Bible. A quick look at the Christian book rooms in countries which use English as a major language would show that there are more than ten versions with derivatives, as well as numerous dynamic translations, and the numbers keep growing!

In a society like Singapore, where the literacy rate is 95.9%², how does one convince believers that the world has some 340 million people with no access to God’s word in a language that makes sense to them? Singaporeans learn English and a mother tongue in school and these are majority languages with an abundance of published literature to feed the mind and soul.

Singapore is home to five million people, of which some eighteen percent of the population is Christian. For these believers, there are some seven hundred churches they may attend. The Singapore Church enjoys freedom of worship and material blessings. For the many blessings given to it, there is a responsibility to forward those blessings to others as God leads.

Such is the situation [Wycliffe Bible Translators](#) faces in Singapore. Churches are willing, even eager, to take up their responsibility in world missions, but what they need is information and a sense of conviction with regard to what forms missions would take.

Vision 2025 in Singapore In 2007, after a time of protracted corporate prayer and intensive meetings, [Wycliffe Singapore](#) decided to concentrate its efforts more intentionally in ensuring that the team was pushing toward Vision 2025: the vision to see a Bible translation program in progress in every language still needing one by the year 2025.

Before Vision 2025 was adopted by Wycliffe organizations worldwide, statistics showed that the last of the more than two thousand people groups would not even see a translation program started until the year 2150. And thus was born the Wycliffe Singapore response to Vision 2025—“[Reaching 200 by 2025](#)”:

By 2025, in partnership with the Singapore Church, we will be engaged in 200 languages needing a Bible translation program.

Beginning from the Go Forth 2008 National Missions Conference, Wycliffe Singapore launched “Reaching 200” by informing churches and individuals of the vast needs of the 340 million people. The major launch was in February 2009, when Wycliffe Singapore hosted an anniversary banquet to thank

supporters and issue a fresh challenge to continue their faithful support toward new translation projects.

The End Goal of Bible Translation

However, Bible translation alone is not the end goal. Church leaders need to see that the translated word is for a purpose—to transform lives. To this end, Wycliffe Singapore works hard at explaining how translation is not what defines Wycliffe, despite the fact that it is wrapped up in the name of the organization. Translated scriptures is for the greater purpose of seeing lives transformed as hearts are confronted by God’s word and his Spirit convicts people of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

God, ever faithful and gracious, has opened doors to new partnerships. Since the start of the Reaching 200 campaign, more than seven projects for seventeen language groups have received some form of support from Singapore churches in partnership with Wycliffe Singapore.

These projects cover almost 2.9 million language speakers in Asia. Church leaders are excited as they come to understand that the availability of mother tongue scriptures is vital to the discipleship and development of the local churches in the field. The projects launched under Reaching 200 are full translation projects. The amount raised to date is about SGD 85,000.

Overall, the involvement from Singapore churches has been far-ranging. Some adopt a people group for prayer. Some get involved in community development. Some send leaders on prayer walking trips. Some members have also gone for short-term trips. Others give financial support. As of today, the team continues to engage more and more church leaders through visits and giving them prospective field projects to help them come to a decision as they seek God’s desire regarding their mission involvement as a partnering church in Bible translation.

Networking with other mission agencies is also an important aspect of partnership. Wycliffe recognizes that they cannot accomplish everything by themselves. Through other agencies, information can be found that will help the cause of missions, especially since Wycliffe does more than Bible translation.

Many Wycliffe members are engaged in literacy work, such as teaching and curriculum development, community development, information technology support, and countless other types of ministries. When networking happens, the field is much better supported as the Body of Christ complements one another in seeing God’s purposes fulfilled.

As an outflow of such a ministry philosophy, Wycliffe and fourteen other mission agencies form the [Fellowship of Missional Organizations of Singapore](#) (FOMOS). Several mission education seminars were conducted in the past three years, largely for believers who want more in-depth understanding of mission issues.

One such event was in October 2010, when Wycliffe Singapore invited Mary Lederleitner whose book, *Cross-Cultural Partnerships: Navigating the Complexities of Money and Mission* (InterVarsity Press, 2010), has garnered high commendation for her insights into the complexities of financial matters in missions. Another fruit from the collaborative efforts of FOMOS members was the publication of a Singapore Missions Series, a series of booklets that address missions from a Singaporean perspective.

At the end of time, as in the vision of the Apostle John recorded in Revelation 7: 9-10, we will see

...a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

This is the day for which we all yearn, as we see people of all languages come together, saved and redeemed by God, to worship him. For Wycliffe members and supporters who have partnered in this mission endeavour, what a thrill it would be to know that God had worked through our meagre efforts to draw people to himself as he spoke to them in their mother tongue!

Endnotes

1. www.wycliffe.net. Linguistic research shows that there are 6,860 languages spoken around the world by 6.9 billion people. Of these spoken languages, the Bible is already available to 2,500 languages. What this means is that about 4.7 billion people have a Bible available in their first language, a further 542 million people have at least the New Testament but only portions of the Old Testament.

2. www.singstat.gov.sg/stats/keyind.html

Nicky Chong is executive director of [Wycliffe Bible Translators Singapore](#). **Soak Wan Leong** is communications executive for Wycliffe Bible Translators Singapore. Prior to that, the couple trained nationals in Kartidaya (Indonesia) for cross-cultural ministry.

LEADERSHIP PROFILE

Leadership Profile: Hannelore Illgen, Women's Ministry, Prayer Warrior, Evangelist, Germany

Q. Please tell us about your family.

A. For forty years I have been married to a freelance graphic designer. We have three children, two of whom are married. I was a primary school teacher and have worked in this profession for twenty-six years. I belong to the Pentecostal Church and live in northern Germany.

Q. Please give us a brief overview of your work and ministry.

A. For the past thirty years I have been involved in women's ministry, starting with a meeting for young mothers in my church. I became familiar with [AGLOW International](#), a charismatic movement among women, and was involved on all levels of leadership for twenty years. I am now chairing the women's ministry, called "Women with Vision," of my Pentecostal denomination. I am also coordinating the women's branch of the European Pentecostal Fellowship (PEF-Women), a network of fifty European Pentecostal movements.

From 2000 to 2008 I chaired Filia—Christian Forum for Women in Germany, a German expression of the [European Evangelical Alliance](#) and [The Lausanne Movement](#). We held nationwide days of prayer and two big evangelistic days for women, where we reached many thousands in my nation.

I am the first female on the board of my Pentecostal denomination and am co-publisher of my denomination's national publication.

I also work in different networks for prayer and evangelisation. These include "Jesus Day"; a prayer-chain before Easter for social, political, and spiritual needs in our nation; and an initiative to impact our nation from a Christian worldview on our national celebration day (3 October). On the European level, I am a member of the steering committee of "Women in Leadership," a branch of [Hope for Europe](#), a European expression of the European Evangelical Alliance and the Lausanne Movement.

Q. What is your favorite thing to do in ministry?

A. I like to facilitate new challenges. In my nation, this means reaching out to Turkish women with the gospel. It started in 2009 with an invitation to hold an evangelistic women's day in Istanbul/Turkey, a first in this nation. Across Europe, I enjoy motivating women in every Pentecostal movement for creative, evangelistic outreaches for women. I also enjoy networking.

Q. Who has been the most influential person in your life/ministry, and why?

A. Betty (from the U.S.), who was called to establish AGLOW International in Europe and especially in Germany at the end of the 1970s. When I did not see my gifts and calling, she did. Her prayers, spiritual training, and encouragement laid the foundation for everything that followed in my life.

Q. What is the best piece of advice you've received?

A. It actually came from the Holy Spirit, when I had to face a new challenge in leadership: *I don't have to be perfect, and will grow through practising.* Betty also helped me to love my nation, which until only recently has not been self-evident in my generation due to our history. Only when you love your nation can you minister to it.

Q. What one issue do you believe is the greatest barrier or opportunity to evangelism, and why?

A. There are three: a lack of Christ's love, a lack of relationships with unbelievers, and a self-centeredness in not only our personal lives, but also in our churches and denominations. I have seen how God sometimes comes into this "circle" and throws persons into the harvest field. For if he didn't, no one else would!

Q. What book do you most often recommend to others to read, and why?

A. I mostly like to read biographies of Christian leaders. They inspire me, and I can identify with them in certain areas of their struggle and leadership. So I often say, "Read the biography of Billy Graham, or... how he faced..."

Q. What would you like to be doing in five years?

A. In the coming years I would like to give over each one of my responsibilities to persons who are visionaries like myself and can bring forth new things for the sake of growing the Kingdom of God. Concerning Lausanne in Germany, I would like to bring in young leaders from my denomination (there are none at the Lausanne Round Table!), because the Pentecostal leadership still does not see the necessity of the Lausanne network.

Evangelism. On Point.

Q. Please describe a time in which you shared your faith in Christ with someone who didn't know him, and then saw God clearly work in that situation.

A. I was a young mother and had contact with other young mothers because I was working as a teacher. We saw some come to Christ through personal witnessing and an evangelistic meeting for women (a breakfast meeting, for example). In one case, years after sharing my testimony, one woman came to a meeting and received Christ. This also changed her family; her son is now studying to become a pastor!

Q. How can people be praying for you?

A. Because I am so busy in many areas (including helping out my husband), I need to know how to best divide my time, where to set priorities, in what areas to delegate, wisdom not to overburden myself with too much vision, and that my health remains well. I am thankful for every prayer!

INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHING

When President Obama Met with Hugo Chávez...Publishing in Latin America

By Ian Darke

When U.S. President Obama met with his Venezuelan counterpart in 2009, he received an unusual present: Hugo Chávez presented him with a copy of Eduardo Galeano's *Open Veins of Latin America*, a classic survey of five centuries of foreign domination in the continent. An unusual gift from one president to another perhaps, but one that says much about the region. For Latin America, despite its poverty and social ills, is a continent where books matter and literacy is high.

While politicians are often viewed with suspicion, writers like Galeano from Uruguay, and novelist Gabriel García Márquez from Colombia, are widely read and deeply respected. New titles sell by the millions, while old copies of their books circulate among friends, and are cherished and re-read.

It's not surprising that books played an important role in the growth of the Protestant Church during the first half of the twentieth century. In countries where a traditional Bible-bereft Roman Catholic Church represented the establishment, both the Bible and books about the Bible were sold from door to door, in marketplaces, and through a growing number of Christian bookstores. In this way, seeds were sown that changed the continent.

Meeting the Church's Needs

Over the last fifty years, the religious scene has changed drastically. The evangelical Church, particularly the neo-Pentecostal wing, has boomed and now accounts for perhaps fifteen percent of the population. Lest evangelicals should be tempted to triumphalism, it is important to recognize that the religious marketplace also offers many other alternatives. Charismatic Catholic Renewal groups, Andean Native spirituality, and Afro-Caribbean religions like Umbanda, Candomblé, and Santería are all growing rapidly.

What is of concern is a tendency to self-absorption and superficiality among church attendees. Many researchers note that people opt for a religious group on the basis of its promises to solve their immediate problems of health, self-esteem, loneliness, or financial security. Churches that are attractive and offer instant solutions to life's crises may find huge numbers coming through the front entrance—but also many leave through the back door, feeling disillusioned.

It is tempting for booksellers to offer only those titles which match the core preoccupations of the public. A challenge for publishers is to produce books that speak to the heart of Latin Americans, but also show that true joy and lasting peace is only found through a new, living relationship with God, which will also be reflected in life changes that impact family, work, and society. True conversion, grace, spiritual disciplines, and discipleship must have priority over self-help.

From the isolated communities of the high Andes, to jungle villages along the Amazon River and the shanty towns of the continent's megacities, key agents for change are the hundreds of thousands of pastors who give heart and soul to caring for the Church. Many are lay pastors, with little or no formal training, who combine leadership of the church's activities and preparation for services with a secular job.

The fact that many of these pastors have little formal education does not mean that books for them can be simplistic. Churches face complex ethical and political situations unknown in the North. On the one hand, in Colombia, pastors may find they live in areas ruled by drug lords and guerilla leaders.

On the other hand, some evangelical leaders have been courted by powerful, right-wing politicians, because of the size and influence of their churches. Pastors need great wisdom to handle those pressures, to know how to act justly, and to respond to pastoral needs. Given their limited access to formal theological education, suitable books are a priority. Of particular importance are materials to develop biblical preaching in a way that is culturally relevant.

Publishers of Letra Viva

Apart from those U.S.-based publishers that produce books in Spanish, around thirty evangelical publishers exist within Spanish-speaking Latin America, linked together in the [Letra Viva](#) network.

One newcomer to the Christian publishing scene is [Editorial Sagepe](#), based in Buenos Aires. With a background in graphic design, publisher Sandra Pedace is aware of the importance of presentation as well as content. *Crónicas de un Camello & Cia* (Chronicles of a Camel and Company) by Elena Caride challenges readers to consider those whose wealth might place them as "camels who cannot pass through the eye of a needle." It is a reminder that the rich in Latin America have spiritual needs that can only be met by the gospel.

Also in Argentina, but far from the capital city, Córdoba-based [Ediciones Crecimiento Cristiano](#) specializes in manuals for use in churches. *El Evangelio que Leen los Adolescentes* (The Gospel that Adolescents Read; see book cover graphic) by Gabriel Salcedo is used in conjunction with workshops on working with young people, and how adults' lives will be "read" by the adolescents in our midst.

Several Christian publishers are located in Lima, Peru. [Ediciones Verbo Vivo](#) was created by Patricia Adrianzén de Vergara, an accomplished communicator and poet. In a new series of materials for women, she contributes a book on the challenges of motherhood, while [Keila Ochoa Harris](#) of Mexico challenges and guides young women to lead exemplary lives (see book cover graphic). These subjects are universal, but developed here in uniquely Latin ways.

Challenges among Publishers

Among the challenges publishers in Latin America face, three are particularly acute.

1. Developing writers. Strategic Christian leaders in Latin America, who have a message that should be "published abroad," may not have the opportunities of their peers in the North to hone skills of research and writing, nor the time or resources.

Urgent needs include identifying leaders and biblical scholars who can communicate a profound message with Latin passion, enabling them to participate in writers courses, linking them with mentors, and facilitating sabbatical time—preferably with a library on hand.

Writers such as René Padilla and Samuel Escobar have been models for many in Latin America. New generations of writers are needed, who will write for both the Church and also wider society. [Media Associates International](#) has published two books to equip Christian writers in Latin America: *La Aventura de Publicar* ([The Adventure of Publishing](#)) and *La Aventura de Escribir* ([The Adventure of Writing](#))

2. Growing mentor-editors. Key persons in the publishing process are mentor-editors—people who understand how books work and are published, and who have the ability to work with potential authors. Most publishers report the lack of creative editors, with the theological, personal, and editorial skills to develop people and books.

3. Strengthening publishers. Publishing is not a matter of trading in paper and ink, but of “making public” an ongoing debate. The challenge is not to print materials, but to publish them in such a way that members of the public want to pick up the book, buy it, read it, and be transformed by the process.

Maintaining high production standards is clearly important. As in other areas, book design and print quality are important. While there have been major improvements over recent years, there is a need for thinking Christian graphic designers.

Printed book stocks that are stuck in a stockroom are like soldiers confined to barracks. One of the major obstacles in the chain of communication from writer to reader is in distribution. In many countries, Christian bookstores exist; however, they may not carry a wide range of titles, nor know much about books!

Members of the Letra Viva network joined forces in 2000 to create a continental book distribution centre, which has played a significant role in improving distribution between the countries of Latin America. However, much remains to be done, and there is need of men and women who will take on the challenges of book distribution in this complex environment, as an important aspect of Christian mission.

To help promote books published within Latin America, the Letra Viva network created a web-based service, with regular updates on new books and book-related activities. Book stores and distributors can link through to the publishers in order to order supplies, while the general public can now [buy titles through Amazon](#).

One consequence of Chávez’ gift to Obama was that sales of Galeano’s book soared on Amazon. Within hours, it moved from a ranking of 54,295 in sales, to number two. Few Latin American Christians have the bank facilities or access to postal services that enable them to use Amazon. Few have Kindle readers or iPads. Nonetheless, Christian publishers are actively exploring appropriate technologies, including digital print, that will serve the Church well.

We long to see Christian books, written by Latin American leaders and published by national publishers, that will have impact on society, change lives... and be gifted from one president to another.

Ten Latin American Writers to Look Out For

Milton Acosta. *El Humor en el Antiguo Testamento (Humour in the Old Testament)*

A revealing study of the way humour is used in the Old Testament, often hidden by translation. [On Amazon.](#)

Pedro Arana. *Providencia y Revolución (Providence and Revolution)*

A look at how God is at work in history, including the complex contexts of Latin America.

Jorge Atienza. *Hombres de Dios (Men of God)*

Bible studies that remind us that great men and women of God were normal people. [On Amazon.](#)

Orlando Costas. *Evangelización Contextual: Fundamentos Teológicos y Pastorales (Liberating News! A Theology of Contextual Evangelization)*

A missiology grounded in a commitment to the church, community, and culture. [On Amazon.](#)

Samuel Escobar. *Como Comprender la Misión (The New Global Mission: The Gospel from Everywhere to Everyone)*

Christian mission is no longer a matter of missionaries from the West going to the rest of the world. Rather, the growth of Christianity in Latin America, Africa, and parts of Asia is eclipsing that of the Western Church. [On Amazon.](#)

Justo González. *Historia Del Cristianismo (History of Christianity, 2 vols.)*

A magisterial survey of the history of the Church. [On Amazon.](#) In [English on Amazon.](#)

Jorge León. *Psicología Pastoral para Todos los Cristianos (Pastoral Psychology for All)*

How psychology can serve in pastoral work. [On Amazon.](#)

Darío López. *La Misión Liberadora de Jesús (The Liberating Mission of Jesus)*

Luke's Gospel from a missiological perspective. [On Amazon.](#)

René Padilla. *Discipulado y Misión (Discipleship and Mission)*

The connections between Christians in history and in the life of the Church today. [On Amazon.](#)

Harold Segura. *Ser Iglesia para los Demás (Being a Church for Others)*

A powerful challenge to commitment and service.

Ian Darke is Latin America regional trainer for [Media Associates International](#). He serves as coordinator of [Letra Viva](#), a network of 30-plus evangelical publishers in Spanish-speaking Latin America. Ian and his wife, Brenda, have lived in Latin America for over twenty-five years and are missionaries with Latin Link.

A Glimpse at Brazilian Publishing

By Katie Main Hautamaki

(**Editor's note:** This article was updated from its first release in MAI's Trainer Network newsletter article, "Brazil's Publishing Universe," May 2006.)

The size of Brazil's evangelical Church continues to soar. Pentecostals (by far the largest evangelical group), together with Presbyterians, Methodists, and many other Protestant denominations comprise about thirty-six million people, or nearly twenty percent of Brazil's population. "Evangelical churches are growing at around seven percent per year," said Sinval Filho, coordinator for the [Associação de Editores Cristãos](#) (ASEC), the nation's Christian publishing association.¹

As the Church grows, Christian readers are growing the publishing industry, according to Whaner Endo, founder/publisher of [W4 Editora publishing house](#) and former executive director of ASEC. Besides seventy-three publishers affiliated with ASEC, he estimated that more than one hundred small Christian publishers are connected to churches and produce one or two books per year.

Despite this plethora of publishers, challenges abound. "Many publishers in Brazil are producing what they like, but not what readers want," said Ricardo Costa, director of [PublishNews Brazil](#), a news and analysis service. In addition, Christian publishers need a boost in professionalism to contend in the competitive market and reach readers beyond the Church. "Often, Christians are so focused on their own world that they lack the vocabulary to talk with people outside of their 'ghetto,'" Costa said. But the opportunities are huge. For example, general readers buy self-help books, which Christians could produce well.

Christians read an average of five books a year, forty percent more than the average Brazilian, Endo says. They also prefer nonfiction—self-help, Christian living, and Bible studies. Inspirational and gift books are also popular. Rick Warren's *The Purpose Driven Life* sold more than 380,000 copies, sales second only to the Bible.

Brazil's publishing industry is healthy, but more skilled Christian professionals are needed to maximize the potential of the written word to transform society.

Endnote

1. Cited in a press release by Christian Trade Association International, 14 February 2011.

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