

LausanneWorldPulse.com

Lausanne World Pulse, P.O. Box 794, Wheaton, Illinois, USA, 60187

Email: info@lausanneworldpulse.com

A free, monthly online publication that provides you with evangelism and missions news and information.

July 2007

PUBLISHER'S MEMO

Giving the Gift of Time in Education and Training

By Lon Allison

Two weeks ago, I stood next to a man who shaped my early life in Christ. I met Ed Barr when I was around twenty-one. I had been a Christian a short time and asked Ed, a lawyer, husband and father, to “disciple” me. I was the first believer in my family and had little notion of anything Christian.

Kindly, Ed agreed to my request and gave me an hour or two per week for a couple of years. I had met Ed in his law office, and then, weather permitting, we would go for a walk near a local park and lake. I don't remember any specific Bible texts being used—although there were many—for Ed's thinking was clearly immersed in Christian doctrine. Rather, in classical Socratic tradition, Ed would ask me questions about life and God. He often invited me into questions he was wrestling with and encouraged my response. I am so grateful to Ed Barr. He taught me to think “Christianly” and set me on a life-path of formal and informal learning, which sustains me to this day. Ed and a select few other men and women are my models for learning.

This issue of Lausanne World Pulse is devoted to the concept of **education and training**. I look forward to this dialogue with brothers and sisters from around the world. Cultural traditions and distinctives should inform us with fresh ideas and notions. From my office at the Billy Graham Center at Wheaton College in the USA, I can see hundreds of students coming and going from our building. We do “formal” education and discipleship at Wheaton College. We offer degree programs in the liberal arts at the undergraduate level, and in several ministry areas at the graduate level. Our professors are gifted and godly men and women.

To them and other professors and teachers throughout the world, I offer this encouragement and admonition. Make time to go on long walks with students. Spend time over tea or coffee. Enjoy meals together. We (professors) have much to give outside the classroom and beyond the scope of our formal class curriculum.

This admonition is difficult for full-time teachers who carry immense teaching and research responsibilities. It is difficult to make time to simply spend casual minutes and hours with students. It is equally hard for busy pastors and mission professionals. Yet we must. For it is my opinion, that on the long walks and over the occasional coffee or tea, the real business of life and learning is discussed.

One of the best books I ever read is *The Master Plan of Evangelism* by Dr. Robert Coleman. I have read it at least three times. However, it is not so much about evangelism, as it is about mentoring. Jesus gave large amounts of time to a few followers. But the result was that the few would reach the many. Since then, I am prone to say, “Jesus reached the few who reached the many.” Time is the greatest gift we give to those we seek to educate, train and disciple.

Lon Allison is director of the [Billy Graham Center](#) at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois, USA. He also serves as director for the [Institute for Strategic Evangelism](#) at Wheaton College. He is co-publisher of Lausanne World Pulse.

WORLD NEWS BRIEFS

AROUND THE WORLD

After sixteen years of serving as president of [Asian Access](#), an evangelical mission organization that develops leaders and serves as a catalyst to multiply churches, the Rev. S. Douglas Birdsall, will step down on 30 September 2007 to devote full-time to his position as executive international chair of the [Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism](#) (LCWE). Bruce Johnson, vice president for leadership development, will become interim president. Birdsall will continue as an Asian Access missionary and member of the ministry's board of directors. "After much thought and prayer, I realized that I could no longer effectively lead both organizations...I also realized that Asian Access is at a point in its growth where it needs the undivided time and passion of a new leader who can take the ministry forward." Johnson joined Asian Access in 2004 as vice president for leadership development. He currently oversees the design and implementation of the ministry's pastor training model in twenty targeted countries across Asia ([Asian Access](#))

GERMANY

The leader of the mainline Protestant Churches in Germany, Bishop Wolfgang Huber, is deeply concerned about increasing threats to the lives of former Muslims who have embraced the Christian faith. There are congregations of former Muslims in Berlin, Huber's diocese, who live in constant fear of violent attacks, the Bishop said. According to evangelist Ulrich Parzany, approximately five thousand Muslims become Christians in Germany every year. Many of them change their identity because they are afraid of being killed. ([ASSIST News Service](#))

HONG KONG

Hong Kong Christians have launched their first manual to help combat domestic violence and church leaders have urged communities to renew their pastoral theology to support victims of the home scourge. "When the Church places too much emphasis on forgiveness and acceptance, how can it keep a balance in approaching those victims who are facing domestic violence?" the Rev. Betsy Ng asked at a seminar on "Church Help to Combat Domestic Violence." ([Ecumenical News International](#))

INDIA

More than four thousand protesters took part in a rally in New Delhi, India, recently to demand that the Indian government acts to quell the recent increase in violence against Christians. The rally was called in response to two attacks against Christians which were televised on several news channels. Christian leaders are concerned that copycat attacks could take place in the future unless the government vocalizes opposition to these and other similar attacks, many of which are committed with impunity. The protest was organised by the [All India Christian Council](#) (AICC), the [All India Catholic Union](#), Truth-Seekers International, the Christian Lawyers Association and the All India Confederation of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes. Muslim, Buddhists and Hindu representatives, women's groups and students joined the thousands of Christians from all denominations who took part in the rally. ([Christian Solidarity Worldwide](#))

MALAYSIA

A Malaysian woman who converted to Christianity might be jailed for apostasy, or the rejection of her religion, after the Muslim-majority country's highest court ruled that she does not have a constitutional right to convert from Islam to another religion. Lina Joy has battled for seven years to have her conversion recognized as legal. She finally took her case to a Malaysian Federal Court, which decided in a 2-1 majority decision that she could

not remove “Islam” from the religion category of her government identity card despite her conversion to Christianity in 1998. ([Ecumenical News International](#))

PAKISTAN

Churches in Pakistan are urging the government to protect a Christian community facing threats from Islamic fundamentalists to either convert to Islam or shut their churches and migrate from their native villages in the North West Frontier Province. “The authorities in Pakistan have responded half-heartedly to the situation, sending only one police officer to protect the community, who is stationed at the door of the church,” the National Council of Churches of Pakistan, a grouping of four Protestant churches, said in a statement. ([Ecumenical News International](#))

POLAND

Roman Catholic religious orders in Poland have taken to advertising to try and stem a decline in vocations. “The church has been advertising itself for two thousand years,” Dariusz Kowalczyk, the head of the Jesuit order in Poland, was quoted as saying by the *Gazeta Wyborcza* newspaper. “Today, the adverts are more sophisticated and this isn't surprising; there's the Internet and color printing, and it would be a sin not to use them,” he explained. The newspaper showed a Warsaw church billboard depicting two monks on a country lane above the words “Join us!” Another advertisement, featuring a handsome, unshaven man in a clerical collar, proclaimed “Hard guy? No, a Jesuit.” ([Ecumenical News International](#))

RUSSIA

The Russian Orthodox Church and an émigré church that broke ties in 1927 over a Russian church leader's declaration of loyalty to the then-Soviet state have officially reunited at a ceremony in Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. “Church divisions are being overcome, and the confrontation in society inherited from the times of the revolution is being beaten back,” said Patriarch Alexei II of the Russian Orthodox Church after the signing of an act of canonical union with the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, also known as ROCOR. ([Ecumenical News International](#))

UNITED STATES

Churches need to examine their old mission strategies and reshape them for the twentieth century, according to the Rev. Setri Nyomi, general secretary of the [World Alliance of Reformed Churches](#) (WARC). “Addressing this problem is at the heart of strengthening the relationships we have with one another as we engage in mission,” Nyomi told mission groups linked to the Christian Reformed Church in North America, at a meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA. The WARC leader said the idea that mission involves missionaries or agencies from North America or Europe working in Africa, Asia, Latin America or the Caribbean is a thing of the past. “When it comes to mission abroad, we have the opportunity now to welcome missionaries from other parts of the world to North America and Europe, just as missionaries from here go to other parts,” said Nyomi. ([Ecumenical News International](#))

UNITED STATES

Results from a LifeWay Research study of teenagers in the United States indicates that many teens are confused about what it takes to get to heaven. More than one thousand teens were surveyed in January and February 2007 by mail questionnaire. Results show that sixty-nine percent of teens believe heaven exists. Also, a majority strongly agree with the traditional Christian belief in Jesus Christ's death for their sins as the reason they will go to heaven (fifty-three percent). While many teens believe they will go to heaven because of their belief in Jesus Christ, one-quarter trust in their own kindness to others (twenty-seven percent) or their religiosity (twenty-seven percent) as their means to get to heaven. Out of the sixty-nine percent of the teens who strongly or somewhat agree they will go to heaven because Jesus Christ died for their sins, sixty percent also agree that they will go to heaven because they are religious and sixty percent also agree they will go to heaven because they are kind to others. That leaves approximately twenty-eight percent of American teenagers who are trusting only in Jesus

Christ as their means to get to heaven. (Baptist Press)

WORLD EVANGELISM & MISSIONS REPORTS

Re-thinking Training of Pastoral Leaders?

By J. N. Manokaran

Historical Context

Christianity in India is nearly two thousand years old with the claim that Thomas, one of the twelve disciples, reached the shores of India in the first century. The Protestant mission history begins in 1706 when Bartholomew Ziegenbalg reached Tranquebar in India and translated the Bible into Tamil, one of the languages in India. The real missions thrust came with the arrival of William Carey, considered the father of modern mission, coming in 1793 under the banner of the Baptist Missionary Society. When India received independence from the British, the new governmental policy was not in favour of issuing missionary visas and thus the number of Western missionaries coming gradually dwindled and then almost stopped. Indian Christian leadership emerged to fill the vacuum left suddenly by Western missionaries. The theological training institutions focused on developing leaders to continue the ministries of the church, so they produced pastors and leaders for the existing churches and institutions.

Dedicated Christians in locations such as Tamil Nadu, Kerala and North East India, had a thirst for reaching the unreached. Out of this emerged several lay mission movements, with the vision to reach North India where Christianity was less prevalent. This missionary zeal (which was indigenous in nature and passionate to reach fellow Indians) attracted youngsters to go boldly as missionaries.

Three Eras of Post-independence Missions

This post-independence mission era began in the early 1970s and has evolved into a formidable movement. This evolution has gone through three major phases.

1. First era: Cross-cultural missions. In the early 1970s and until the late 1980s, the focus of mission was to send cross-cultural missionaries from South and North East India to North India. Many young people reached North India; however, most were not trained for this kind of missionary endeavour and struggled to learn the language and culture. In spite of human weaknesses, churches were planted in several pockets of the North, West and East parts of India.

2. Second era: Mono-cultural missions. Some of the cross-cultural missionaries understood the dynamics of mono-cultural evangelism. Cross-cultural missionaries need to take time to learn the language and culture, adapt to the new climate and do ministry. After a period of time, due to family circumstances, sickness or for the education of their children, the cross-cultural missionaries preferred to go back to their native places. These visionary leaders took local leaders (mono-cultural missionaries) from their respective regional or cultural zones, trained them as church planters and sent them out. This strategy proved very successful in several areas. In some places where previous missionaries failed, these leaders were able to penetrate and plant churches.

3. Third era: Local church missions. Beginning in the late 1990s, a new trend began to emerge. Many of the mono-cultural missionaries discovered their own gift of pastoral leadership, apostolic leadership and missional leadership. They started planting and pastoring mature congregations that became self-supporting and in turn began sending out missionaries from their local congregations. This is now happening as a sporadic “mushroom movement.”

Evolution of Training in Three Eras

These three missions eras have in turn also redefined the training of Christian leaders into three dynamic educational waves.

1. First wave: Structured theological education. India has two major accrediting agencies for theological education, the first being the Serampore Senate. The origin of the Serampore Senate goes back to the time of William Carey. Today, most of the theological associations affiliated with the Senate are from the historical mainline churches like Church of South India, Church of North India, Lutheran Church or Mar Thoma Church. Some evangelical colleges are also affiliated with this system.

The **Asian Theological Association** (ATA) was started when many of the evangelicals perceived that the Serampore system placed more emphasis on academics and leaned toward liberal theology. Many of the prestigious evangelical seminaries joined the ATA.

The colleges affiliated with these institutions produced pastors and leaders of institutions. The courses offered were academically sound and mainly residential. It typically took three or more years for students to earn degrees. Students trained in these institutions generally became pastors of churches in various denominations. A few opted to become missionaries with mission agencies.

2. Second wave: Missionary training institutions. Mission agencies felt that sending missionaries for training in the traditional theological education centres did not always prepare them for cross-cultural missions. They felt a need for training that focused on missiology with an emphasis on church planting. Some agencies started such training as orientation programmes for their own missionaries; others started training centres to quickly train church planters for mono-cultural missions.

For all practical purposes, India is like Europe with nearly twenty-five country-sized provinces. With a population of over one billion people, representing various cultural and linguistic blocks, missionary training centres emerged in about fifteen to twenty major language regions in India. Large numbers of grassroots level leaders were trained in these missionary training institutions in many regions or provinces. These trained mono-cultural missionaries made inroads in some of the districts and regions where cross-cultural missionaries could not break through.

In this context, the Indian Institute of Missiology (IIM) emerged, trying to bring about standardization of missionary training. IIM began with the encouragement of **India Missions Association** (a federal body of nearly two hundred mission agencies). The training given by various agencies had varied emphases, duration and topics. IIM tried to bring about standard curriculum for various levels and also conducted a common exam for affiliated institutions on the core subjects. The institutions conducted the exam for optional or elective subjects. Many institutions became part of this affiliating agency.

3. Third wave: Pastoral training movements. The third wave of training coincides with the growth of local church missions. A dynamic growth of the Church is evident in several parts of India. The congregations are not large like those of the historical mainline denominations, but are smaller with an average of less than fifty members. Many of these churches have been planted in the last decade.

The pastors of these little flocks have had basic church planting training of only six to nine months, if any. Training these leaders has become a real challenge and dilemma for three reasons. First, they have a lot of zeal but little or no knowledge. Many think more zeal compensates for a lack of knowledge. Second, a majority do not have many academic qualifications. They find it difficult to learn through the traditional method of education, and do well when it is a more narrative (or oral) style. Third, a majority are first-generation

Christians and struggle with understanding the big picture of the Bible, global church history and global missions.

Emerging New Challenges

In 2006, I had the privilege of being in more than forty cities in India, training local pastors and leaders. Most of these pastors are between twenty and thirty years old and in many cases are responsible for one or multiple congregations. These congregations vary in size from twenty to over 150 members. Additionally, a majority of the church members are first-generation Christians.

These pastors do not have resources (in terms of time and money) to go to a seminary or Bible college and study for three years. In fact, many do not even have the academic credentials for entry into many of these institutions. Very few are bi-vocational while a majority are full-time workers. Adding to these challenges is the fact that there are few institutions that could train them in their vernacular language.

Models of Hope

In the modern world of customization and delivery at our doorstep, pastoral training could also be done in a similar way. The following are good models that have proved to be successful and effective in helping train pastors in various parts of India.

- **Trainers of Pastors International Coalition (TOPIC)** is a network of nearly 185 pastoral training institutions around the world. In 2002, TOPIC held a national consultation along with **Evangelical Fellowship of India** and **Hindustan Bible Institute**. In 2003, TOPIC-India began to facilitate various pastoral training in India.
- **Global Modular Studies (GLOMOS)** is an arm of Action Ministries. Their course runs for thirty days and covers ten subjects (Interpretation of the Bible, Old Testament Survey, New Testament Survey, Church, Missions, Leadership, etc.). The course is taught three days each month over a period of ten months. This is offered to pastors who are unable to leave their ministry and go for residential courses. Presently, this course is offered at Delhi, Lucknow, Kolkata, Kalimpong and Bhuvanewar. There are more than fifty students in each course and many have discovered this training as being life-transforming and effective.
- **Bible Training Centre for Pastors (BTCP)** is used in over 1,500 centres in India. This course includes 520 hours of study and has ten subjects (Bible study methods, Church Management, Doctrines, Leadership, Church History, etc.). The training is done locally and each centre has classes that last between five and ten hours a week. Ideally, the course is completed in two years time. The material is available in ten Indian languages.
- **Training Network (T-Net)** follows a similar model to BTCP, but has a five-day module every three months for a period of two years.
- **Hindustan Bible College, Chennai** offers an evening course which runs for two years. They also offer similar courses in their regional centres in several regions of India.
- **CCARE Institute in Hyderabad** brings pastors together either in the morning or evenings for two years with the end goal of earning a masters degree in counseling. Many city pastors, assistant pastors and bi-vocational ministers enroll in these courses. They are able to upgrade their knowledge and skills by doing ministry and study side by side. This helps them to reflect while they study and experiment with new ideas in their ministry.

- Some theological seminaries like Mission India Theological Seminary, Nagpur offer **summer courses** in the months of May and June. These are “crash courses” for thirty days on various subjects.
- **Short-term courses** are offered by various agencies in areas such as counseling, communication, youth ministry, apologetics, expository preaching and member care. The duration varies from one week to thirty days.
- **Seminars for three to five days** are offered. Leaders like Ramesh Richard, Rick Warren and John Maxwell have offered the seminars to Indian pastors in various cities.

Is This Enough?

There is a need for working out innovative models of delivery of training to pastors. The non-residential and non-formal models of training have helped a good number of pastoral leaders. But this training also needs to percolate further down to smaller cities like district headquarters (India has six hundred districts) and even further down to block levels across the country.

There is also a need for more specific training for leaders who would like to work among targeted groups of people like the urban middle class, modern youth, urban poor or street kids. Training is also needed for Christians who desire to be ministry tentmakers.

Harnessing the potential of modern technology like the Internet and DVDs is another area trainers should explore. Delivering lessons via email or doing exams over the Internet is possible. Video conferencing is another possibility. Recording lectures of leaders on various subjects and distributing to potential candidates using various technology is another option. Group emails could become discussion groups to reflect on important current topics. Blogs could be explored for training, brain-storming and reflection among pastors and Christian leaders.

The need for specialized training for this new wave of pastoral leaders in India is great. The scope to reach them is unlimited and the current training models are symbols of hope pointing to a bright future for reaching leaders in India.

Rev. Dr. J. N. Manokaran is managing director of **Trainers of Pastors International Coalition** (TOPIC) India. He is trained as a civil engineer in South India and served as a cross-cultural missionary in North India for eleven years.

Overview of Missionary Training Resources

By Rob Brynjolfson

When the majority world mission movement was emerging and we still spoke of “new sending countries,” a prevailing attitude was mildly perceptible: *“We won’t make the mistakes that Western missionaries made because we know what it is like to be the receiving field of missionaries.”* Yet, mistakes were made and who among us would dare suggest they are not still being made by us all? In one case, a national mission movement was challenged to provide adequate cross-cultural training for their outgoing missionaries and the response was “we have the Holy Spirit and that is enough.”

After a generation of workers plied the fields of mission, they are returning with the wisdom of praxis and national mission movements are enthusiastically promoting the development or improvement of pre-field training. Along with the wisdom of praxis, the dissemination of significant research and analysis has produced a broader recognition of the need for missionary training. Schools and training programs are not just budding, they

are blooming in a colourful kaleidoscope of diversity in models, methods and practice. The question for many is, how can we do training that ensures the development of effective cross-cultural servants of God?

A Look Back—The Road of Specialized Missionary Training

Specialized missionary training schools are recent inventions. The task of training missionaries was mostly delegated to additional courses added to the curriculum of pastoral training schools; that is, seminaries, and later Bible schools. This approach is efficient, but tended to reinforce the prevailing attitude that all one needed to take to the field in way of training was the Bible and the Holy Spirit.

Victorian England provided a context where the need to train women for missions emerged. The Faith mission movement embraced the service of women and Mrs. Tottenham established the YWCA Testing and Training Home in London, where in 1892 it became one of the first specialized missionary training schools. The purpose was to break down some of the barriers for single women impeding their reception into missionary agencies. From this home, [Redcliffe College](#) eventually emerged and now trains both men and women.

Theological education entered the twentieth century with the Church dividing itself over such issues as the social gospel and the decline of a distinctly Christian cosmology, thus provoking the evangelical reaction known as the Bible School movement. During the first three decades of that century, several institutions focusing on missionary training emerged. Mount Hermon Missionary Training College (1911), Ridglands Bible College (1919) and All Nations Missionary (Union) College are examples. These three eventually amalgamated (1971) and formed All Nations Christian College. Another example is the Sydney Missionary and Bible College which was established in 1916.

Sending agencies, on the other hand, saw a need for specialized training. The emergence of organizational training programs signaled the need for more specialized training. Examples of such are [WEC International](#) which began developing a series of Missionary Training Colleges, first in Glasgow and then in Tasmania, and now include a total six such colleges. Bethany Fellowship opened the school (1949) that continues under the name [Bethany College of Mission](#).

As evangelicals began to rekindle a trust in higher theological education, a new-found interest in the social sciences led to the development of missiological training. The opening of the Fuller School of World Mission in the 1980s signaled a broad recognition of the need for missiological studies, and for deeper reflection and analysis of the missionary movement.

The idea of non-academic missionary training was also kindled in the hearts of some. The vision of Phil Armstrong (FEGC) and R.E. Thompson, along with support from Clyde Taylor (EFMA) spawned a new kind of training that led to the beginning of Missionary Internship (Now [Missionary Training International](#)). In its initial phase, missionary candidates spent seven months in a cross-cultural or urban internship and were coached through the process by experienced people. This was a novelty for missionary training and a program ahead of its time.

Toward Integral Missionary Training

It was only a matter of time before missionary agencies realized that trained missionaries required more than just an understanding of biblical/pastoral subjects. Early efforts to determine the areas of need in training were helpful, but not definitive. The ReMAP projects (Reducing Missionary Attrition Project and Retention of Missionaries and Practices) demonstrated empirically that specialized missionary training can make a difference in field worker longevity. These two projects studied the causes of attrition and factors leading to retention of field missionaries. Although ReMAP I (Reducing Attrition) did not clarify the role specialized missionary training plays in addressing attrition issues, the study helpfully clarified that the majority of preventable reasons of attrition relate almost entirely to character and spiritual issues and that participation in a dedicated missionary

training program was one of the three identifiable factors which helped to reduce attrition. ReMAP II (the study of practices leading to the retention of field workers) demonstrated that dedicated missionary training played an important role in the longevity of workers.

After the findings of the first ReMAP project were published in the [World Evangelical Alliance](#) (WEA) publication *Too Valuable to Lose* (1997), agencies and schools began to take a serious look at addressing the critical training needs for today's missionaries. Time and again the call was made to address the issues of spiritual and character formation in pre-field candidates. Along with this, a growing interest to provide new workers with "job ready" skills has led to the emergence of whole person, holistic or integral training approaches.

Integral training intentionally balances the whole program of study, redistributing allotted course hours and budget so that needed skills and character/spiritual qualities are not relegated to a role of peripheral learning, which may or may not occur. In this way, the knowledge components (cognitive learning) are merely instrumental and must lead to the intentional development of objectified skills and character/spiritual qualities. Knowledge is not an end in itself, neither is it assumed that an understanding of a subject equals an acquired skill or the formation of some character quality. Learning is transformed as programs embrace some more strategic learning contexts. Skills are learned by practicing. Character is transformed by creating self-awareness through the rub of significant relationships while living in community.

Missionary Training Programs and Resources

In 1995 Ray Windsor edited a WEA publication entitled the *World Directory of Missionary Training Programmes* providing a catalogue of over five hundred missionary training programs from around the world. Apart from contact information, the catalogue provides descriptions of the teaching staff, (Western, non-Western and cross-cultural experience), language of instruction, learning styles (percentage of formal and nonformal), courses offered (programs, degrees, etc.) and training ethos.

Creating this list was a monumental effort, but after Windsor's initial effort, no one has taken up the challenge of maintaining this list. Today, another project based in England is attempting to develop a registry of training programs. The [Evangelical Training Database](#) is offered in English and Spanish and serves the evangelical community by providing a searchable list of training programs. Institutions can submit information and list degrees, diplomas, certificates or even individual courses.

The [International Missionary Training Network](#) (IMTN) has encouraged its members to use and register with this database and is working in cooperation with that ministry to provide searchable criteria identifying the formal, nonformal and informal elements in the training programs. Although the *World Directory of Missionary Training Programmes* provided the service of describing the teaching style, it was not really designed to distinguish between formal and non-formal training or between academic and integral (or holistic) training.

What the *World Directory* did was create an awareness of the rapidly expanding world of missionary training. The 1995 list accentuated the geographical proliferation of missionary training by listing sixty-four countries. Anecdotal evidence leads us to the conclusion that this number would be in the hundreds today. Some regions of the world enjoy very active networks focused on strengthening and multiplying missionary training centers. The [COMIBAM](#) movement in Latin America has a training coordinator, Dr. Omar Gava, who promotes holistic missionary training in the region. The diverse continent of Africa is challenged by language and cultural differences, but both Francophone and Anglophone countries offer missionary training for cross-cultural workers. Asia, Southeast Asia and China all rose to the challenge of sending missionaries and provide formal and nonformal missionary training. [Bethany International's "Go100" ministry](#) has established a large network of missionary training schools in Africa and Asia.

Trends and Issues in Missionary Training

The world of training today now includes opportunities for distance learning. Most schools have developed distance learning initiatives or have looked seriously into doing so. The Internet provides a delivery vehicle that allows for an interactive and virtual classroom learning context. E-learning does not look like the well-weathered correspondence courses of old.

In-service training is emerging as the new development in missionary training. Motivated from a desire to provide the very best in education, and not merely to ease the burden of pre-field requirements, well-designed in-service training should provide new missionaries with information so that their urgently needed skills can be developed on the field. This will require the development of new training courses aimed at the areas of needed skills like cultural adaptation, language acquisition, and later, interpersonal skills, and eventually leadership skills. Recognizably, there is a relationship between in-service training and member care. In-service training is both life-long and initial entry in focus.

Even as missionary training has become more practical with a focus on skill development and critical spiritual/character formation, many missionaries continue to leave for their field appointments without receiving cross-cultural specific training. In-service training may assist in the initial development of needed skills and ongoing formation of character and spirituality, but there continues to be a need for sending agencies and churches to value and promote pre-field cross-cultural training. Evidence supports that this kind of training produces effective missionaries.

Available Resources

The IMTN seeks to promote integral missionary training by strengthening and encouraging the multiplication of holistic missionary training programs. The primary task of the IMTN is to resource trainers and this is done through the development of training materials, books, articles and courses in a variety of languages.

Printed materials are available through [William Carey Library](#) and many resources are available for download upon registration at www.TheIMTN.org. Training resources in languages other than English is slowed by the challenges of developing new materials or translating existing ones into strategic languages. Volunteers are encouraged to assist in this development. Online courses are now being offered in both English and Spanish. The first of these, [Working Your Way to the Nations](#), is an immensely practical mobilization and preparatory tool for those in the process of following through on a missionary commitment.

The newest [World Evangelical Alliance Mission Commission](#) publication and training resource is *Integral Ministry Training Design and Evaluation* (2006) and can be previewed electronically at www.TheIMTN.org and is available for purchase from William Carey Library. This book provides the “how to” of developing an integral missionary training program, and includes valuable tools for evaluating and improving existing missionary training programs.

Rob Brynjolfson is director of the [International Missionary Training Network](#) of the [World Evangelical Alliance Mission Commission](#).

WORLD PERSPECTIVES

Training for Mission: A Case Study at Redcliffe College

By Jo Appleton

Nelleke and her husband Maarten are teachers from the Netherlands. Along with their four children, they have spent the last two years at **Redcliffe College, Centre for Mission Training**, in Gloucester, United Kingdom, preparing for church planting in Europe. This interview was done with Nelleke.

Q. Why did you decide to train for missions?

A. In August 2005, after a spiritual journey concerning missions, we were accepted by a mission organisation in the Netherlands. As we both were teachers but had no background in theological study, we were advised to go to a Bible college for at least a year to prepare ourselves for mission work.

We chose Redcliffe College because it offers a mission-centred curriculum and would give us the opportunity to meet, study and live with people from many different cultures. Moreover, we have four children and Redcliffe offered us living accommodation opposite the main college building. This gave us the opportunity to be very involved with student community life as we were only across the road.

Q. What are you studying at Redcliffe?

A. We each chose to study for different qualifications, but both are validated by the University of Gloucestershire. Maarten is doing the two-year diploma in applied theology and I am studying the one-year professionals in mission course part-time over two years. Redcliffe also offers short courses, a certificate and honours degree in applied theology and a masters degree. Being able to choose from a variety of courses enables students to tailor their study depending on their future plans.

Q. What has been helpful?

A. The professionals in mission course offers you many subjects relating to cross-cultural issues, mission vision and biblical basis of mission, and a choice of biblical subjects. These have helped me understand mission more and have prepared me for living abroad with kids.

Redcliffe College works from the holistic idea of being, doing and knowing and the personal growth programme is an important part of the course. Each student has a number of sessions with a pastoral counsellor. He or she also spends time with a tutor who helps him or her set goals for his or her personal growth plan. I found this part of Redcliffe's approach very helpful as I worked through a number of issues that arose from living and studying in a multi-cultural community.

The programme of placements also allowed Maarten to spend time on placement in the area where we plan to minister, enabling us to test our calling to missions in Europe.

Q. What has been the biggest challenge?

A. The biggest challenges inevitably come from living in community and time pressures. It has not always been easy to find a balance between studies and spending time with our children and each other. Also, living in a shared house means having to "socialize" continually.

Q. How do you feel your time at Redcliffe has prepared you for your future ministry?

A. Living in an international community with Christians from different continents and cultural backgrounds has taught me that my faith comes with some cultural baggage. I discovered the core of my faith through what I have studied, but I have also gained a broader perspective through listening to how people with different

worldviews interpret biblical issues. Living with different nationalities in a shared house has made me realise my cultural arrogance. It has been very good to learn that my way is not the best way. That has been humbling!

Moreover, looking at life from an African, Asian or East European outlook has been enriching and has made me see more of the inequality in the world. This has encouraged me to rethink my lifestyle.

Through studying at Redcliffe, I have developed as a person and as a Christian and this experience has been invaluable to me in my preparation toward working in missions.

Jo Appleton is communications officer for **Redcliffe College, Centre for Mission Training** based in Gloucester, United Kingdom.

Asia Theological Association

By Brian Wintle

Who Is the ATA?

The **Asia Theological Association** (ATA) is a body of theological institutions, committed to the evangelical faith and scholarship, and networking together to serve the Church in equipping God's people for the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The ATA was established in 1970 as a direct response to the need expressed at several Asia-wide conferences and consultations. Since then, it has grown into a movement committed to serving its members in the development of evangelical biblical theology by strengthening interaction, enhancing scholarship, promoting academic excellence, fostering spiritual and ministerial formation and mobilizing resources to fulfil God's global mission within diverse Asian cultures. ATA seeks to:

- **Strengthen interaction** through inter-institutional fellowship and programs, regional and continental activities and faculty and student exchange programs.
- **Enhance scholarship** through consultations, workshops, seminars, publications and research fellowships.
- **Promote academic excellence** through accreditation standards, faculty and curriculum development.
- **Foster spiritual and ministerial formation** by providing mentor models and encouraging the development of ministerial skills and a Christian ethos.
- **Mobilize resources** through library development, information technology and infra-structural development.

Evaluation and Accreditation Services

The ATA is primarily a regional accrediting agency and a member of the **International Council for Evangelical Theological Education**. The ATA seeks to facilitate the improvement of the quality of educational programs of its members through accreditation of programs, including those that are residential, extension or a combination of systems.

The accreditation process involves the preparation of a self-study by the institution, followed by an evaluation visit by a team of theologians and educators, and, finally, the approval of the Commission on Accreditation and Educational Development. The accreditation model that ATA has adopted is based on four key principles:

1. **Values.** Values are central to the design and practice of education. Throughout the accreditation process, an attempt is made to focus attention as much on why policies or practices are observed, as on the policies and practices themselves. Four categories of values inform the accreditation philosophy. These are administrative values, relational values, theological values and educational values.
2. **Process.** A basic premise is that the accreditation process should lead to significant institutional improvement. Therefore, it is expected that the self-evaluation study that institutions do as part of the evaluation process will reveal areas that require further attention. In fact, this self-evaluation is a fundamental part of the evaluation process and can provide important benefits.
3. **Cooperation.** Another premise is that the accreditation process should involve both the accrediting agency and those who are stakeholders in the programmes being evaluated. While roles are different, cooperation in the evaluation process affords the surest route to just and significant conclusions.
4. **Prayer.** Evaluation of theological education should be undertaken prayerfully, just as all ministry training is undertaken. Prayer should be part of every step in the evaluation and accreditation process.

Consultancy Services

As an educational development agency, ATA seeks to facilitate the following consultancy services:

1. **Organizational structure** has to do with developing school structures and cultures that best facilitate the formation of Christian ministers. ATA accepts requests to coach institutions through the process of institutional renewal and organizational change.
2. **Curricula and program development** are more than the arrangement of courses and the shaping of syllabi. The objective is to develop a comprehensive program relevant to the lives and ministries of students. ATA may be requested to assist faculty of the various disciplines in updating and expanding curricula.
3. **Vision** is essential if schools are serious about relevant ministries. ATA may be requested to guide participants through a strategic planning cycle for their institution.
4. **Library development** involves both policies guiding management and acquisitions as well as personnel development for the efficient operation of library resources. ATA may be requested to help by examining libraries, conferring with librarians and making recommendations for development.
5. **Faculty development** recognizes that teachers are the greatest resource of the school. ATA may be requested to confer with the faculty and dean and make recommendations for faculty development programs and policies.
6. **Governance** has to do with the exercise of authority and control and the system whereby authority is controlled and distributed. ATA may be requested to work with the board and CEO in shaping patterns of governance for institutional development.
7. **Finance** ties directly to good stewardship. The objective is to review and improve the financial management and capacity of the organization. ATA may be requested to work with the institution's business office in reviewing and developing practices of financial stewardship.
8. **Leadership development** for the church is a principal aim of theological education. ATA may be requested to provide guidance for faculty and administration in addressing principles of leadership development through modelling, mentoring, coursework, internship and other curricular activities.

9. **Teaching methodologies** shape the learning experience. ATA may be requested to lead a seminar or clinic to improve teaching methodologies and to establishing ongoing peer-based, in-service teacher development programmes.
10. **Self-reliance and interdependence** involve two forms of capacity building in institutions. ATA may be requested to help the school explore fund-raising and communication strategies as well as possibilities for alliances and networks.

The General Assembly 2007

The ATA meets in general assembly once every three years, and the next general assembly is scheduled to be held 6-10 August 2007 at The Legend Villas in Manila, Philippines.

The theme is "The Prophetic Voice of the Gospel in Contemporary Asia" and the sub-themes and proposed speakers will be:

- Globalization and Its Effects in the Asian Context (Ben Pwee, Singapore)
- Theological Education in the Context of Persecution (David Wang, Hong Kong)
- Shifting Paradigms in Theological Education (Vinay Samuel, India)
- Theological Education for the Marketplace—Desirable Options (Quek Swee Hwa, Singapore)
- Social and Environmental Concerns in Theological Education. (Joseph Suico, Philippines)
- The role of Christians in the task of nation-building in a context of religious plurality. (Rev. Wong Kim Kong, Malaysia)

The ATA is committed to theological education and ministerial training that is evangelical and biblical in theology and relevant to the context. The membership of the association is scattered all across Asia, in countries that are throbbing with life, and varied in context. It is in this light that the theme and sub-themes can be seen as very relevant and contemporary.

More information on the Asia Theological Association is available at www.ataasia.com.

Brian Wintle is regional secretary of India and acting general secretary of the **Asia Theological Association**. Previously he served for eighteen years in the biblical studies department at Union Biblical Seminary in Pune, India. He lives in Bangalore.

WORLD PERSPECTIVES

Education and Training for Missions and Evangelism

By Kumar Abraham

There is a clear difference between missions and evangelism. Missions includes evangelism but is not limited to evangelism. Evangelism could be defined as the sharing of good news of Christ with those who do not believe and calling them to faith and repentance. Missions (which is different from "Mission") has been defined by George Peters as "the total biblical assignment of the church of Jesus Christ."¹ The final purpose of all this activity is the transformation of society so that God will be known and glorified.

Prayer is indispensable in our training for the mission field and in evangelizing the lost. Take prayer out and evangelism and mission becomes a work of the flesh devoid of God, his grace and his favor. The best curriculum should be prepared with the most qualified trainers. However, training is ultimately directed by God. Surprises are always a part of any training program.

Looking at the Example of Jesus

While on earth, Jesus constantly turned situations into opportunities for training. When there was a storm, it gave him the opportunity to teach about faith (Matthew 8:26). In John 6:5-6, when there was no food, we read that Jesus “said to Philip, ‘Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?’ He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do.” When the disciples could not cast out a demon, “the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, ‘Why couldn't we drive it out?’ He replied, ‘Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you” (Matthew 17:19-20). After Peter almost drowned, Jesus said, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?” (Matthew 14:31).

Like Jesus, the wise trainer will not protect trainees from tough situations by providing quick solutions to problems that are faced. There will be many such situations that will arise especially in the hands-on, practicum part of the training. These are ideal times for trainees to pray, listen to God, unite to talk and determine what God is trying to say. As the trainer progresses through training, he or she should always keep in the back of his or her mind issues to be covered. When the class has not experienced a certain issue, the trainer can also discuss it verbally.

Training should be held in careful balance in the following three areas: character, knowledge and skills.

I. Character

Those desiring to be missionaries need to have a fruitful devotional life, a healthy marriage (if married) and a prayerful and caring church support base. The missionary should also be part of a mission agency that holds its missionaries accountable.

A missionary carries the formidable stress of adjusting to culture, learning a language and relating not just to nationals but to expatriates as well. Missionary cross-cultural skills are vital, along with a willingness to be a servant of the national Church. There is no room for feeling racially superior. Probably the most humbling role on earth is being placed in a foreign culture with no rights to claim. Often, expatriate missionaries stay with their own countrymen in their “missionary hideouts” to help avoid this pain. Learning a simple lifestyle will help immensely in preparation: a disciplined Hudson Taylor submitted himself to this lifestyle in his teens. John Wesley points to character as the primary qualification of church leaders:

Be diligent. Never be unemployed. Never be trifling employed. Never while away time. Be serious. . . Avoid all lightness, jesting and foolish talking. Converse sparingly and cautiously with women, particularly with young women. Take no step toward marriage without solemn prayer to God and consulting your brethren. Believe evil of no one unless fully proved...Speak evil of no one...Tell everyone what you think wrong in him, lovingly and plainly, and as soon as may be, else it will fester in your own heart. Do not affect the gentleman...Be ashamed of nothing but sin; no, not of cleaning your own shoes when necessary. Be punctual. . .Do not mend our rules, but keep them . . .You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore, spend and be spent in this work.²

II. Knowledge

The Apostle Mark records that Jesus “appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they may be with him” (Mark 3:14; Luke 8:1). It is from this verse that we get the “with him” principle. The disciples had to first be “with him” before they could be “sent out to preach” or do ministry. Leroy Eims discovered in his experience the very significant difference between “with him” training and mere classroom type instruction. In his words,

*I have made mistakes in this regard. I have tried to train men by gathering them together in a quiet basement once a week to discuss the Christian life and then supplement this with occasional seminars or special meetings. It didn't work. But men who have ministered with me in the push and shove of life, out where we face victory and defeat daily, out in the world of real living, are today productive for Christ. I have watched them bear fruit that remains.*³

For Jesus, life was the classroom. As situations developed, it was an opportunity to teach theology, display and teach character or demonstrate a skill. Then after some time, he gave them instruction on evangelism, and they were ready to go (Matthew 10:5-20; Luke 9:2-6). How did Jesus achieve his goals of evangelism so fast? He was training his disciples right alongside himself. Every moment of being “with him” was an opportunity to observe how he ministered to a myriad of needs. Because he associated with the disciples, they observed all his methods. According to Robert Coleman, “Evangelism was lived before them in spirit and in technique...His training classes were never dismissed.”⁴

Jesus is what we might term a “playing coach.”

With the presence of the Holy Spirit and with the equipping they had received, the early disciples turned their “world upside down” in one generation. The Church today, on the other hand, has taken many generations to reach the nations and peoples around her even with thousands of educational institutions to help do the training. The disciples’ professor, Jesus, was willing to show them how, even though he knew “all” the theologies one could know. Bruce Larson says,

*Years ago, before seminaries existed, future ministers were trained by sitting under the mentorship of pastors, studying the scriptures with them and working alongside them. Now this process is available to lay people through the mentoring relationship. I believe that there is no more significant ministry for gifted pastors and strong churches than to mentor younger Christians in their daily walk.*⁵

It is not involvement in programs that matters, but involvement with people, qualifying us to know who our audience is. Making time for people is costly. The “with him” method of training is very slow and can seem to be tedious; however, it can have amazing results. Michael Green states it like this:

*These are believed to be vital elements in this “hands-on” training. First, do the ministry yourself, learning as you go and reflecting on how others can be involved. Second, draw others into doing the ministry with you. Third, let them do the ministry as you stay alongside, supervise and encourage. Then comes the transfer of the responsibility for the ministry to them: They report back to you on how they got along. And finally, the responsibility for training others is passed on to them.*⁶

Here are some suggestions for your own personal study and reading:

1. **Missions reading.** Missionary biographies such as Hudson Taylor, Adoniram Judson and William Carey. Resources such as *Operation World* and *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*. Books such as David Bosch’s *Transforming Mission* (1996, Orbis Books). Books about the culture you will be entering.
2. **Evangelism reading.** Biographies of Billy Graham, Luis Palau, D. L. Moody, George Whitfield, Alvin Reid⁷ and Michael Green.⁸
3. **Classroom missions topics.** Intercultural Communication, Foundations and History of Christian Mission, Perspectives on the World Christian Movement, Urban Ministry, Theology of Mission, Contextualization, Mission Internship, Introduction to Church Planting, Religious Pluralism, Biblical

Theology of Mission, Foundations of Church Growth, Anthropology for Christian Mission and Intro to World Religions.

4. **Classroom evangelism topics.** Foundations of Evangelism, The Content of the Gospel, Evangelism in the Local Church, Theology of Evangelism, Evangelism Internship, Discipleship and Evangelism, Witnessing to the Cults, Evangelism Methodology and Evangelizing the Secularists.

III. Skills

This is an aspect that is “more caught than taught.” Training should be on the job and missionaries should be trained by those who have apostolic gifts.

Ministry Exposure—Mission

Every missions student must have a map of the world and a copy of Operation World. Before short-term mission trips are undertaken overseas, trainees should be encouraged to (1) learn about other religions; (2) observe other religious practices and forms of worship, cultures and how to relate the gospel to those who practice other religions; and (3) learn another language, if possible. Churches or mission groups who wish to take a short-term team overseas to reach a particular ethnic group also should not ignore the same group in their own city. They should first be exposed to this ethnic group in their own country before proceeding overseas.

Ministry Exposure—Evangelism

Every student of evangelism should have an extensive list of unbelievers for whom he or she is praying. This will include friends, relatives and acquaintances. In addition to the list, there should be a plan to build a relationship, praying everyday for the people on the list, that God will give you opportunities to share his love with them and cultivate friendships. Along with friendship evangelism, the trainee should be exposed to a various methods of evangelism so they can gain broad knowledge about other appropriate ways to share their faith.

Evangelism trainers should ideally be evangelists who are gifted teachers who can help their trainees grow in character, knowledge and skills. In the early Church, it was not education but character that was considered the primary qualification to be a leader over others. However, all three components are essential to a well-trained missionary or evangelist.

Endnotes

1. Peters, George W. 1972. *A Biblical Theology of Missions*. Chicago, Illinois, USA: Moody Press, 11.
2. Ayling, Stanley. 1984. *John Wesley*. Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Abingdon Press, 176.
3. Eims, Leroy. 1981. *The Lost Art of Disciple Making*. Colorado Springs, Colorado, USA: NAVPress, 36.
4. Coleman, Robert. 1983. *Master Plan of Evangelism*. Old Tappan, New Jersey, USA: Spire Books, Fleming H. Revell Company, 78 and 80.
5. Cited in Davis, Ron Lee. 1991. *Mentoring: The Strategy of the Master*. Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 220.
6. Green, Michael. 1992. *Evangelism Through The Local Church*. Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Oliver-Nelson, 96-97.
7. Reid, Alvin. 1998. *Introduction to Evangelism*. Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

8. Green, Michael. 1992. *Evangelism Now & Then*. London, UK: Darton, Longman and Todd.

Dr. Kumar Abraham is a Sri Lankan national living in Melbourne, Australia and has served as a missionary in the Philippines for twenty-one years. He is an evangelist, a trainer of evangelists, equipper of Christ-followers in evangelism and a Bible school lecturer. He can be reached at: kumarabraham@bigpond.com.

Training for Missions Requires Passion

By Adriaan Adams

Early in 2003 a group of young people in South Africa came together and shared their frustrations in ministry with one another. Through these discussions and previous research they came to the following conclusion: “We can wait until we are in leadership to change the way things are done or start now to influence our generation and the upcoming generation so that when we are in leadership things are already moving in a different direction.”

This group of young people had and still have the passion to see ministry training take on a new dimension. This dimension has four strategic focuses: focus, team, leadership and training.

- **Focus** is when the leader articulates a compelling vision for tomorrow that captures the imagination of the followers and energizes their attitudes and actions in the present.
- **Team** is when each player commits to being a friend both now and in the future. It means committing to the relationship even when the other person follows a path that you cannot walk.
- **Leadership** is a relationship in which one person seeks to influence the thoughts, behaviors, beliefs and values of another person.
- **Training** is not done in an institution, university, college or school. Educational development is done through mentoring/coaching. It is a relational experience in which one person empowers another by sharing him or herself and his or her resources. It is an intentional, exclusive, intensive, voluntary relationship between the leader and the follower.¹

Focus Team Leadership Training

Today these young people are all still involved in various ministries; however, together they have started a missionary training school called **Focus Team Leadership Training** (FTLT).

With a vision statement “Training the Mission Leaders of Tomorrow,” they are passionate about shaping, training and equipping a person who will have (1) a passion for impacting his or her sphere of influence with godly, biblical values and (2) a passion for missions and church planting among some of the least-reached people groups of the world.

In their attempt to achieve the above, these young people desire to see generations of mission leaders trained and equipped who are prepared to lay their lives and personal dreams down for the sake of expanding God’s kingdom.

One student wrote her reflections after listening to one session entitled “The Call of the New Generation”:

“The vision is an army of young people; thousands of soldiers in God’s army. Young men and women trained as warriors in his battle and they are wild at heart—history-makers.”

The army is disciplined. This new generation is obedient. Who can stop them? Can failure succeed? Can fear scare them or death kill them? Whatever it takes they will give, shaking mediocrity from its cosy little hide, laying down their rights and their precious little wrongs, laughing at labels, fasting essentials. The advertisers cannot mould them. Hollywood cannot hold them. Peer pressure is powerless.

This is an army that will lay down its life for the cause. They shake foundations; they allow revolutionaries to dream again; they pray as if it all depends on God and live as if it all depends on them. They are mobile like the wind, they belong to the nations and they need no passport, for they carry the ultimate passport in their hearts—the message of the new generation. They walk tall and trees applaud, skyscrapers bow, mountains are dwarfed by these children of another dimension.

We were born to manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not in some of us—it's in everyone. So why are we stuck on the thought that we are the leaders of tomorrow? Why not the leaders of today? Our greatest fear is not that we are inadequate; our greatest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.

The world is undoubtedly shaking like never before. Everywhere you look the evidence of shaking is near. God has given us a calling for our time and for the time to come. The great changes that the world is undergoing will require a believing, creative and professional generation who realize that their strength in Christ is real and that it is not just religious jargon.

Jesus often spoke of changing the world. Not in terms of military force or political intrigue, but by changing people. We are all called of God. Called to Christ, called to worship and serve him, called to walk worthy of our calling in him, called to obey the biblical creation mandate, called to share Christ with others.

The purpose of missions, however, is not to fulfil the Great Commission. Rather, it is to increase the number of people on earth who worship the one true and living God with reverence and awe, giving him the glory he deserves. It is to raise up a generation of fathering believers who inspire, worship and practically exercise the passion to serve Christ in a risky venture larger than this life.”

FTLT makes use of the **Live School** curriculum. The Live School is a video curriculum developed by the **World Mission Centre** (WMC), available on DVD. Some of the important issues addressed are:

- Character development
- The high rate of attrition
- The difficulty of adjusting to culture and ethnic customs
- The skills needed for a successful mission outreach

The length of the training program is eleven months. For the first month, the major focus is on character development and dealing with personal issues of the past. Thereafter the students are introduced to the biblical fundamental issues regarding missions: why missions, who we are in Christ, perseverance in ministry, etc. In the fifth month they are taken on a one month “Bush Phase” training where they are exposed to some of the realities they might face in a pioneering field: sleeping in tents, limited water, food preparation on an open fire, hiking, training in radio communication, navigation and even evacuation. After the bush phase there is a greater focus on the practical issues important to missions: cross-cultural communication, cultural anthropology, ethnographic process, chronological approach, etc.

For the last three months students are sent on outreach to one of the least-reached people groups of the world, situated in a least-targeted geographical area. After their outreach they go through a re-entry phase lasting one week, after which comes graduation.

FTLT firmly believes that true leaders are people of character, and that it is character that gives credibility with people. They therefore believe strongly in the “CAR” of leadership: character, accountability and responsibility.

While FTLT may be a young school, the aspiration is to see a generation that will rise up prepared to live a non-compromising lifestyle for God.

To date nearly every person that has gone through FTLT is serving in some ministry capacity. Some are mobilising their congregations to missions; some are at university mobilising their friends. Some have gone into the business world supporting missions financially. On a more full-time basis there are graduates currently serving FTLT in a leadership capacity, some in the WMC office, others in Malawi. Another graduate has started a mission school with the help of WMC in Zanzibar, training locals to reach out to their own people.

The school has a policy of continual change. The objective is to train young people who will impact their sphere of influence through a focused lifestyle, working with others in a team, expressing godly character and continuing to develop themselves and those around them into more effective leaders.

For more information, visit www.ftlt.org.

Adriaan Adams is the founder and co-director of **Focus Team Leadership Training** (FTLT), an organisation focused on “Training the Mission Leaders of Tomorrow.”

P.L.A.N.T.S.: Equipping Seminary and College Students for Church Planting

By J. D. Payne

Over the past nine years, I have had the privilege of serving as a professor, equipping students in the area of missions and evangelism. When it comes to teaching church multiplication, I have found that effective training programs should be designed around P.L.A.N.T.S.

P—Provide the Biblical and Theological Foundations

One of the dangers of teaching practical subject matter is that we focus on the “how-tos” and fail to establish the “whys.” We must not be so quick to teach students the methods of church planting that we fail to begin with the biblical and theological foundations. I have found it to be of the utmost importance to establish a healthy understanding of the relationships of Christology, Ecclesiology and Pneumatology (Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit) to church planting.

1. Christology. Beginning with Christology, it is extremely important to assist students in looking to the scriptures to answer questions such as: “What is the relation of the incarnation and atonement to mission?” “What is a disciple of Christ?” and “What does it mean to be a kingdom citizen?”

2. Ecclesiology. Ecclesiology is the most critical issue in church planting today. Because of the natural tendency to define the local church in terms that are more reflective of cultural preferences than the biblical prescriptions, I strongly encourage spending a significant amount of time establishing a healthy doctrine of the Church. How students answer the question, “What is the Church?” will affect everything they do in church planting. Their answers will significantly shape their strategies, methods, understandings of leadership development and understandings of themselves as missionaries.

Assist students in finding biblical answers to questions such as: “What is the Church, both universal and local?” “What are the necessary New Testament components for a church to exist at any time, in any place, among any people?” In other words, “According to the Bible, what is the basic essence for the Church to be the Church?”

3. *Pneumatology*. The role of the Holy Spirit in church planting is neglected in many circles today. As educators, it is important to assist students in understanding the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as related to missionary work. Questions such as: “What is the role of the Holy Spirit in church planting?” “What is his role in making disciples?” “What is his role in sanctifying the new churches?” and “What is his role in appointing elders over new churches?” are important questions to address in the classroom before students begin their work.

L—Layout Missiological Principles

Embrace and teach missiological principles that support the multiplication of disciples, leaders and churches. These principles include those related to indigenous church planting, contextualization, receptivity, locating persons of peace, evangelizing oikos networks and leadership development.

Biblical principles of mission require us to develop and to teach a multiplication-oriented philosophy of church planting. Keep it simple, and instruct students to do likewise. It is easier to multiply the simple expressions of contextualized churches, than complex cultural preferences of the church. Remember that all institutions, including churches, evolve in their structures and organization from the simple to the complex. Lay out missiological principles advocating the planting of the basic essence of the Church among the peoples.

A—Allow for Hands-on Training

Church planting cannot be taught in a sterile classroom alone. By its very nature, it is a hands-on activity. Provide opportunities for hands-on training. Wed the classroom to field-based experience. As much as institutional policies allow, provide credit to students for field-based ministry experiences. For example, give opportunities to students to conduct survey work, prayer walk communities, engage in personal evangelism, work to begin Bible studies and participate in church planting internships. Allowing for hands-on training allows educators to blend the theoretical and the practical.

N—Involve Practitioners

By allowing missionaries to speak in classes and to share their recent experiences, students have the opportunity to hear a diverse range of perspectives and how the theory and principles are presently impacting various peoples. Involving practitioners puts “flesh” on the theory.

A second way to involve practitioners in equipping church planters is by providing mentors for students. Connect students with those practitioners who can coach them as they move out into the field to begin their ministries.

T—Teach Various Models and Methods

In light of the biblical and theological foundations and missiological principles which have been advocated, teach students how to think critically about various church planting models and methods. For example, expose students to methodologies that address house churches, cell churches, purpose-driven and traditional paradigms. Teach students how to sift through the sediment of various church planting methodologies to locate the golden nuggets of truth to apply to their contexts, rather than how to clone different expressions of the Body of Christ that are not necessarily biblical, culturally translatable or easy to reproduce.

S—Support Strategy Development

Do not embrace strategies that are designed to plant a single church; rather, support strategy development that is focused on churching a region, people group or population segment. Teach students how to think strategically about the multiplication of disciples, leaders and churches. Allow this component of church planting training to be the most practical, assisting students in developing strategic plans.

A word of caution: Help students to understand that although strategies are important, they must be held loosely because strategies must be flexible and subject to the Holy Spirit. Even the Apostle Paul made adjustments in his strategy (Acts 16:6-13). Having taught the students a healthy doctrine of the Holy Spirit, they will be better prepared to apply their strategies in light of what God is doing throughout the world.

Whether we are just beginning to equip others in the area of church multiplication, or are looking for ways to improve our well-established programs, it is my hope that all of us will use P.L.A.N.T.S. as a guide in equipping students to make disciples of all nations.

J. D. Payne is a national missionary with the [North American Mission Board](#) and assistant professor of church planting and evangelism at [The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary](#) in Louisville, Kentucky, USA. He is the founder of www.northamericanmissions.org, a web-based resource for the multiplication of disciples, leaders and churches.

Effective Prayer

By John Godson

"We are constantly on a stretch, if not on a strain, to devise new methods, new plans, new organizations to advance the Church and secure enlargement and efficiency for the gospel. ...What the Church needs today is not more machinery or better, not new organizations or more and noble methods, but men whom the Holy Spirit can use—men of prayer, men mighty in prayer. The Holy Spirit does not flow through methods, but through men. He does not come on machinery, but on men. He does not anoint plans, but men—men of prayer." - E. M. Bounds

The Importance of Prayer

"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed." (Mark 1:35).

Prayer is communion with God. It is that act of going into God's presence to be with him. It is bringing God and his resources into our earthly realities. It is drawing upon divine resources to influence human reality. It is breathing the breath of heaven. It is the master key to everything we have been called to do. Without prayer, our activities are empty, human and lack the breath of heaven. They are temporal and will never last.

In looking at the life of Jesus, I see a man who prays. If there is an aspect of his life that seems so conspicuous to me, it is his prayer life. It was his habitual practice to wake up early in the morning before day to go to a quiet place to pray. Often, he would depart from the people he was ministering to, and go to a quiet place to pray. Many times he spent all night in prayer. What is this thing called prayer that Jesus loved to do so often? What is in prayer that is so important that Jesus, the Son of God, spent a large portion of his life doing and encouraging his disciples to do? If Jesus, being whom he was, needed to spend so much time in prayer, do we not need to spend even much more time than Jesus in prayer? Why is prayer so important?

1. We get to know God through prayer. One of the most important reasons why we need to pray is that we get to know God better through prayer. Prayer is communion with God. Those who know God better are those who spend quality time in his presence. These are individuals who know the secrets and the heartbeat of God. It is not possible to know God when we are occasional visitors into God's presence. It is not possible to know God if we are the type of Christian who just pops into God's presence to say "hi" and "goodbye." We cannot get to know God if we are the type of Christians who treat God as a "fire extinguisher," using God for our ends. God reveals himself to those who really care; to those who are willing to pay the price of separating themselves often and long in order to seek him. "Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:12-13).

2. We are empowered through prayer. Prayer is like charging your spiritual batteries. Many of you use a mobile phone. What happens to it if you continue using it and never charge it? The answer is obvious. The battery will run down and sooner or later the phone will stop functioning until it is adequately and fully charged. No matter how good or modern a mobile phone may be, it is useless unless it is charged. In the same way, we cannot afford not to pray. God renews our strength when we pray. No matter how strong or gifted you are, if you do not pray, you are on your way to death, destruction and irrelevance. No matter how large and demanding our ministry is, we should spend enough and adequate time in prayer. The task that has been committed to us by God can only be fulfilled by people who are constantly filled with spiritual life.

3. Prayer makes us dangerous for the devil and for the kingdom of darkness. There is nothing that is as dangerous to the devil as a Christian who prays. The devil will not bother with Christians who are lukewarm, prayerless and banal. They pose no threat to him. Praying Christians are the greatest dangers to the kingdom of hell. And the devil will do everything in his power to stop you or discourage you from praying. The devil loves those Christians who are too busy to pray. He hates those Christians who make time to immerse themselves in God's presence. These are his greatest threats. Their presence cast out demons. Their words are like fire. They change spiritual realities around them because they pray.

4. Prayer changes us. Prayer not only changes situations and circumstances, but one of the most important reasons we need to pray is that God changes us in prayer. Jacob was a cheat and a deceiver and it was not until he really began to pray that God changed him. He was so afraid of meeting his brother Esau that he decided to set time aside to pray. He prayed all night and came out a different man. His name changed from Jacob to Israel. His destiny also changed (Genesis 32:24-28). Maybe you have struggled your entire life to be good but nothing seems to change. Prayer is the key. It will change you.

5. God does things in answer to prayer. God does answer prayer. The Bible says, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him" (Matthew 7:7-11).

Another verse says, "You do not have because you do not ask" (James 4:3). God gives to those who trust him to the point of asking him. God is able to answer your prayers even beyond your expectations: "Now unto him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us" (Ephesians 3:20). No matter what your situation is, take it to God in prayer. He is more than able to answer your prayers. He wants to know that you trust him, that you believe in him to the point of coming to him with all that touches you. It is his joy to answer your prayers.

6. Prayer involves God in what we do. When we pray, we invite God into our situations. It is like bringing heaven into earth. It makes eternal values real. The presence of God in any situation delivers, releases and builds. It transforms the temporary and earthly to become eternal.

7. Prayer clarifies our perspectives. When we pray, we receive wisdom, our perspectives are clarified and we are able to make wise and godly decisions. Prayer gives us an understanding of the spiritual powers behind activities and realities visible to the human eyes.

8. Through prayer, we are delivered from temptations. "And when he was at the place, he said to them 'pray that you enter not into temptation'And he said to them, why do you sleep? Rise and pray lest you enter into temptation" (Luke 22:40, 46). Many people have fallen and been defeated because they neglected prayer. Our

enemy is at the business of weakening and destroying believers. Jesus encourages us to be in the place of prayer lest we fall into temptation.

There are many more reasons why it is expedient to pray. Prayer is God's key. No matter what your situation is, God wants to teach you to pray. Are you willing to learn?

John Abraham Godson, a native of Nigeria, has been serving as a missionary in Poland for the past thirteen years. He is international director of **Pilgrim Mission International**. Godson also serves as chair for the Lausanne Intercession Working Group in Eastern Europe/Eurasia and as international facilitator for the Network of Nigerian Missionaries Overseas.

PEOPLES OF THE WORLD

Learning from Ants: Missionary Teams and the Skyscraper Analogy

By Justin and Heidi Long

Our question from the last issue was: How many pioneer missionary teams do we need to serve the unreached of the world, to help find and raise up the local evangelists who can complete the task? If we assume any given missionary team can mentor a local church planting movement that will impact at least 100,000 people over the space of a decade, then we arrive at a simple number: forty-three thousand teams.

So, then, how can we recruit and send that many teams? That is a question we will begin to address in this issue.

The Task Before Us

First, we need to remember that this number is too simple and that we must not take it too literally. The unevangelized world is far more complicated. For example, many ethnics are very large. How should teams be allocated? By countries, provinces or cities? By sociopolitical grouping? By age group? For men, for women? We may indeed need more than one team per 100,000 people.

And, some ethnics are very small, perhaps only ten thousand people. Do they still need a team? Should teams be sent to "clusters" of peoples? Does an ethnic having different castes within it need separate teams? How many people should be on a typical team? These are truly very difficult problems that will affect the total number of teams needed and the number of workers required.

The real value of the forty-three thousand figure is this: it opens our eyes to the scope of what is required. Let us assume each team has, at minimum, two people (a stretch, but the bare minimum for the word "team"). Think of D. L. Moody and Ira Sankey. With two people each, we need eighty-six thousand individuals.

Does anyone come close to this? Let's look at the big picture in rough estimates:

- The **JESUS film**, four thousand workers
- **Campus Crusade for Christ International**, fifteen thousand workers worldwide
- **Gospel for Asia**, 12,500 workers (Many of these are not cross-cultural workers.)
- **The Navigators**, four thousand workers (including short-term)
- **Operation Mobilization**, three thousand workers

- **New Tribes Mission**, three thousand workers
- **Youth With a Mission** (YWAM), twelve thousand workers (many short-term)
- **Wycliffe Bible Translators**, seven thousand workers

For denominations,

- **International Mission Board** of the Southern Baptist Convention (IMB-SBC), four thousand workers
- **Assemblies of God**, 3,500 workers
- Mormons, forty-three thousand workers (mostly short-term)
- Catholic Society of Jesus (Jesuits), twenty-five thousand workers

This gives one pause for thought. How can forty-three thousand teams—perhaps eighty thousand to 160,000 people—be recruited, deployed and sent? Trained and equipped? Networked and informed? Cared for? We might be tempted at this point to throw up our hands and say, “It can’t be done.”

Yet the simple fact is that it *must* be done. Black and white digits on the page hide the people. In your mind’s eye, seek them out. Billions of faces: red, yellow, brown, black, white. Men, women, children. Old, young. Being born, living, growing up, dying—without ever once hearing the name of Jesus, without understanding the good news.

If they are to hear the good news, workers *must* go among them, bringing them the gospel. Whether the workers are nearby locals or foreigners from around the world, *someone* has to go. And if someone is to go, then they have to be *sent*. This implies some structure for *sending* them. They must be recruited, given a certain amount of training, have their support issues resolved and be able to get to their destination. For maximum impact and sustainability they should be linked with others as well.

Three Types of Sending Structures

There are probably three “types” of sending structures: skyscrapers, pyramids and swarms. In this issue we will discuss skyscrapers. In the months to come we will discuss the latter two.

Skyscraper Analogy

Skyscrapers are huge buildings. They must be at least five hundred feet tall to be given the title. For skyscrapers, *wind* is usually a greater problem than the weight of the building itself. Most are built using steel and reinforced concrete. The Empire State Building, the World Trade Center and the Sears Tower (all located in the United States) each briefly held the record as the tallest skyscrapers in the world. The Petronas Towers (452 meters high) in Malaysia took the record in 1998, but it was surpassed by Taipei 101 (509 meters high) in Taiwan in 2004.

Taipei 101 was the first (and currently only) building to break the half-kilometer mark in height. It opened on New Year’s Eve 2004 as one of the most advanced buildings ever built. It features one-gigabit Internet connections and the world’s fastest doubledecker elevators (running at 37.5 miles per hour; able to go from the main floor to the eighty-ninth floor in thirty-nine seconds). A mass damper on the eighty-eighth floor can reduce up to half the tower’s movements, stabilizing it against earthquakes, typhoons and wind. It is designed to withstand events such as catastrophic earthquakes and super typhoons that occur only once every millennia. It has over 214,000 square meters of office space, 77,500 square meters of retail space (with a six-floor retail mall)

and seventy-three thousand square meters of parking space. There was some concern that its' sheer weight might re-open an ancient underground fault that could cause future earthquakes.

The interior of the skyscraper was designed by a *feng shui* master (this is Asia, after all) and is filled with symbols of financial success. The exterior design represents eight gold ingots, the ancient royal currency of China. Each "ingot" has eight floors. The number eight sounds like "earn fortune" in the Chinese language. And someone spent one. The entire project cost US\$1.7 billion from start to finish.

Taipei 101—like all other skyscrapers—is well known. They are huge towers that draw the eye for miles around. They become well-known "addresses." Their fame can bring them good publicity—and bad publicity. As we have all seen, it can bring outright hostility. Skyscrapers are unavoidably very public.

Taipei 101 may soon be surpassed by several other buildings planned for 2008, including the International Commerce Center in Hong Kong, the Fordham Spire in Chicago, the Shanghai World Financial Center and the Freedom Tower in New York.

None of these, however, are the most likely future "tallest building." The next record-holder—at least, according to its promotional literature—belongs to the Middle East. "At the crossroads of India and the Middle East, equidistant between Europe and Asia, Dubai is fast becoming the financial and cultural hub for over a billion people. At the center of that hub stands the most exclusive address in the world." The exact planned height of the Burj Dubai is kept secret, but when it is finished in 2008 it will probably be at least seven hundred meters (2,296 feet—nearly half a mile) high. "Only a privileged group of people will call it home," says the promotional material.

Skyscrapers are certainly highly technological, very *modern* creations. Each has had a great deal of pride associated with it. For its short time in the sun, the owners have bragging rights to "the tallest building." There have been gentle (and not so gentle) debates over which tower is highest, and what can be counted for the purpose of computing height (the general conclusion: things that are part of the architecture can be counted, but things like radio antennas or satellite dishes cannot).

Skyscrapers are also *concentrated strength*. Within their offices are high-value businesses with power and influence. They have a tremendous collection of intelligence, money and technology. The Burj Dubai is promoted as "a structure with the power to change history."

Yet this means skyscrapers also tend to be elite. Only the best of the best have access. Of the Burj Dubai, it is written, "There are a select few who possess the vision, resources and opportunity to live in the world's tallest building. If you have that opportunity, you are assured not just unparalleled luxury, but a place in history and in Dubai's future." A modern Babylonian tower indeed.

Ultimately, skyscrapers are *self-contained units*. The best cooks, shops, offices, recreational and fitness centers, theaters and so forth are found there. Those who live inside may never need to interact with anyone outside because a skyscraper has everything a person needs.

Can a mission be a skyscraper? Think of a single agency with the capacity to recruit, screen, train, commission, send, support and retire forty-three thousand mission teams or some 100,000 workers. It is safe to say such a "skyscraper" does not exist—right now. It would be the "Burj Dubai" of the Christian mission world. It would require a vast global presence, an enormous budget, a sizable administrative staff and an incredible donor base.

For an idea of the size, consider the largest mission agencies today. In order to provide for a workforce of four thousand career missionaries and one thousand short-term workers, the Southern Baptists have created a

recruitment arm, the largest evangelical missionary training center in America (if not the world), a corporate structure and a well-polished fundraising campaign (the Lottie Moon Offering) that raises US\$150 million over a single week.

Building a “skyscraper” capable of supporting 100,000 workers would be the equivalent of building an organization twenty times larger than the International Mission Board—both benefits and problems would be twenty times larger as well. Looking at our example of skyscrapers, we can see most buildings incrementally improve on the most recent “tallest building.” Building an organization with such a magnitude greater than any mission agency presently in existence would be a very tall task indeed.

It is not without precedent. There is a company that certainly is monolithic. The largest employer in the world, and the second largest company in terms of revenue: Wal-Mart.

Wal-Mart is an American public corporation founded by Sam Walton in 1962. It is the largest retail store chain in the world, with 6,500 stores employing 1.8 million workers in fifteen countries, having 176 million customers weekly—roughly twenty-four million per day. It is the second largest company worldwide in terms of revenue. In 2006, it had US\$316 billion in sales and a net income of US\$11.2 billion.

Wal-Mart operates a variety of stores in different cities, depending upon the market. It has discount stores, supercenters, neighborhood markets and warehouse clubs. It operates 2,700 stores (one-third of all its stores) in countries outside the United States; together, they are responsible for about twenty percent of Wal-Mart’s sales.

However, being huge, Wal-Mart is often a target for criticism.

Certainly, being “big” makes a company more visible. Skyscrapers have been targeted by hostile people. A monolithic mission agency would be more visible too. It would be criticized by those who dislike missions. It would be a target for those who are hostile. It would become politicized by workers, staff, donors and other stakeholders. Like skyscrapers, it could possibly become overly-expensive, self-contained, proud and uncooperative. *We don’t need anyone else*, such an agency might say. *We have everything we need within our own organization. We are the best.*

I rather doubt a single, monolithic agency is possible. But perhaps something a little smaller? Next time, we will talk about pyramids.

Justin Long manages strategicnetwork.org and is senior editor for **Momentum**, a magazine devoted to unreached peoples. He can be reached at justinlong@gmail.com. Justin and his wife **Heidi** minister in Southeast Asia.

A Focus on Northeast Asia: 624 Least-reached People Groups Remain

Overview

The seven countries of Northeast Asia are lands humming with action. China, Japan and South Korea have economies that are growing at rates that almost defy imagination. The twenty-first century could easily be the time when Korean and Chinese missionaries take the lead in reaching the world for Christ. Presently, Korea is the second largest sending base in the world and is preparing to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the great Korean revival of the early 1900s when Pyongyang (A) was known as the “Jerusalem of Asia.” But China may soon catch up and surpass them because of their “Back to Jerusalem” vision to send Chinese missionaries back along the old Silk Roads carrying the gospel back to Jerusalem. Also, this is the first time when Mongolia has had a lasting Church and they too are already sending missionaries to other nations. Yet, over 450 people groups in Northeast Asia remain least-reached. North Korea, Mongolia and Japan remain formidable challenges with

over ninety-five percent least-reached. China has over 499 least-reached peoples remaining; however, these people constitute only fourteen percent of the population. God's time for Northeast Asia is now!

Prayer Points

- **Fulfillment.** Pray for God to show the peoples of Northeast Asia that true fulfillment and prosperity is found only in Jesus Christ who gives us life and that more abundantly.
- **Freedom from fear.** Pray these peoples living in fear of spirits and of the future to experience peace, joy and freedom from oppression.
- **False teachers.** Pray for discernment to recognize false teachers and to know the truth that sets them free.
- **Father's heart.** Pray that the Father's heart of love, acceptance and forgiveness will be experienced by every person among these least-reached peoples of Northeast Asia.
- **Faithfulness.** Pray for new believers to daily experience God's faithfulness and to be faithful in their walk with him, letting their light shine before others so they glorify God in heaven.

Links

- [Resources](#) to pray, mobilize prayer and do outreach.
- [Discover](#) Northeast Asia's 624 least-reached peoples.
- [Pray](#) for the peoples of Northeast Asia.
- Obtain [daily prayer guides](#) for peoples of this region.

Background

As the Wealth Gap Widens, the Spiritual Void Deepens

(Written by Keith Carey, managing editor of Global Prayer Digest)

The Han Chinese peoples are noted for their business savvy and their love of gambling. Perhaps the two dovetail when considering China's urbanization efforts. According to a 7 November 2006 article in the *BBC News*, about thirteen million rural Chinese move to the cities each year. That is the same number as the entire population of Beijing. In the same article, it was also noted that at the current rate, China's population will be fifty percent urban by 2010. Has there ever before been such a rapid rate of urbanization?

Ironically, the Communist Revolution of 1949 glorified the rural peasant. Millions of urbanites were sent to the countryside during the disastrous Cultural Revolution to learn proper communist values from the peasants. Millions of lives were ruined, and starvation was rampant.

Fortunately, after Mao's death in 1976, China's new leaders understood that they had to make drastic changes. They immediately began to soften the hard-line communist economic policies that were destroying China. The Chinese were once again free to do what they have always done well: run businesses. As time went on, the Chinese government learned that the country could greatly benefit were they to switch to an export-driven economy. Some, ironically the communist elite, were allowed to own their own businesses.

Brent Fulton is president of China Source, an organization that provides consulting and research on China's societal trends mainly for humanitarian, business and educational organizations. In a 2000 interview with *World Pulse*, Fulton commented, "China is moving more toward a service, information-oriented economy. And you need a critical mass of people and in one place to make that happen. The agricultural economy is declining."

The Wealth Gap Widens

There is a downside to China's rapid urbanization. One obvious problem is the increasing gap between urban and rural China. According to a 17 December 2006 article in the *Los Angeles Times*, the average amount of disposable income for rural dwellers is less than a third of that for the urban population. It is clear that the gap between the rich and poor is also widening, especially since a capitalist economy does not offer the same guarantees as a socialist economy. To make matters worse, corrupt local officials are grabbing up land from farmers who have no recourse. It is no wonder that the rural population is fleeing to the cities. In 2005, the Chinese government reported eighty-seven thousand public disturbances, up fifty percent in two years.

According to a 26 August 2003 article in the *New York Times*,

There is also a dark underside of China's economic success, which has been marked by annual growth of eight percent for more than a decade and exports to the United States growing so fast that they have surpassed Japan's. In general these people [rural migrants] are vulnerable, pliable, cheap to employ and easy to suppress. The migrant workers number well over 100 million, staffing the factories of Asia's export powerhouse. They work long hours in dangerous jobs for low salaries and no benefits. They are barred from forming unions. The Communist Party allows just one union, its own.

Some are forced into sex slavery and others have been physically abused by the police. But all in all, they would not come to the cities if the opportunities did not outweigh the dangers.

The government of China is facing its own dangers coming from the urban culture. They are finding out the hard way that loosening up the economy also brings pressure to loosen up in other ways. Even seven years ago there were an estimated ten million "netizens" or computer users in urban China. "I love the Internet because you have complete freedom to talk with people all over the world, hear music from any point on the planet and you never know where you're going to end up next," said one of these netizens to a *Christian Science Monitor* reporter in 2000. Such a situation may not work very well for tomorrow's leaders of a totalitarian country.

China's government is trying to keep some control over information, but it is a losing battle. According to a 5 February 2007 article in the *New York Times*, they are probably the ones responsible for blocking access to Chinese-language texts from the Marxist Internet Archive. Perhaps they see the past and realize that it did not work.

The Spiritual Void Deepens

Not only is the wealth gap widening, but the spiritual void is deepening. *BBC News* has printed two articles, one in October 2006 and another in February 2007, both of which show that there is a growing spiritual hunger in the Middle Kingdom. A poll of 4,500 people by East China Normal University professors found that 31.4 percent of the Chinese people over the age of sixteen consider themselves to be religious. That is triple the number that a government survey revealed. Although the survey demonstrated that the peoples of China are turning to spiritual answers from traditional sources like Buddhism and Taoism, Christianity is a big winner of spiritual adherents among the younger generation. Gone are the days when church is associated with those in their sixties and seventies.

The reasons are not surprising. Many people are disillusioned with the direction life is taking them. Unbridled materialism is leaving many people out in the cold. Even some who are part of China's privileged middle and

upper classes are aware of the emptiness in their lives. “People are so busy making money that they’ve lost sight of the most important things in life,” explained one churchgoer to a *BBC News* reporter. In general terms, the Church is growing because people need support—to the poor its monetary support; to the wealthy it is emotional support.

“It used to be said by Chinese politicians of this Western faith, ‘One more Christian—one fewer Chinese.’ Now, they are more likely to say, ‘One more Christian—one fewer criminal.’” Although the government may appreciate the internal changes that faith in Christ brings, they want to keep Christianity under their control. China still has a communist government, meaning that they want allegiance to themselves, not to God. They do not want anyone to rival their role in setting the moral standards. Realizing that they cannot stamp out religious activity, there are government-sanctioned “Three Self” churches, filled with registered believers. The churches that they fear are the unregistered house churches.

What Future Church Growth in China’s Cities Might Mean

Paul Hattaway, author of several excellent books on the people groups of China, suggested that the vast majority of China’s urban population is from the reached Han Chinese groups. However, his book *China’s Unreached Cities, Vol. 1* indicates that there are small communities of unreached people groups residing in many of China’s cities. Jim Nichols, former director of the U.S. Center for World Mission’s *Institute of Chinese Studies* think-tank, wrote the forward to the book. In it, he made a significant statement:

The cities of China are gateways to the unreached of the country. Most efforts to reach the unreached peoples of China, especially among the minorities, have focused on taking the gospel to the villages that comprise their traditional homes. However, sizable populations of most if not all of these peoples may be found in the cities of China. Urban migration has resulted in ethnic ghettos springing up in many cities—“Chinatowns within China” one pundit has dubbed them. There is a high probability that discipling unreached peoples in the cities will result in the rural peoples they represent being reached as well.

Later in the article he pointed out that rural migrants to the cities frequently return once or twice a year for festivals. This can potentially be an excellent time for them to share Christ. He went on to say,

One of the advantages of this approach is that in the cities the differences between various subgroups of a given unreached people group become less important than their shared identity as part of the larger group. Our research has found that the migrants in urban centers from various Hani tribal villages, though they spoke as many as fourteen mutually unintelligible dialects at home, identified with one another as Hani, using Mandarin to communicate. This dynamic considerably simplifies the task of reaching the many people groups among the Hani with the gospel! The same may be true for many of the other unreached people groups of China.

Let Us Pray!

Thank the Lord that the efforts to reach China’s unreached millions are being simplified in the cities. Pray that the pockets of unreached people groups in China will be reached with the gospel, and that they will in turn take Christ back to their rural villages.

Into Their World...The Akto Turkmen of China

By Laurie Fortunak

The Akto Turkmen, who live in the conflict-ridden Akto region of China, are part of the Kirgiz nationality; however, their language and customs are more closely related to Uygur. This ethnic group claims to have originated in Samarkand (present-day Uzbekistan). Throughout recent years, the Akto Turkmen have endured much conflict, including a 1990 armed counter revolutionary rebellion which led to several deaths

of Islamic minorities and later to the closure of fifty mosques and halting of construction for 153 additional mosques.

Despite the harsh landscape where they must raise their animals, the Akto Turkmen are skilled shepherds and goatherds. Their diet consists of animal by-products supplemented with cabbage, potatoes and onions. They store their butter in dried sheep or cattle stomachs.

The Akto Turkmen are predominantly Sunni Muslim and very few, if any, have ever heard the gospel of Jesus Christ. They observe Uygur and Kirgiz religious festivals, along with some pre-Islamic and shamanism rituals. They are strongly bound to their Islamic beliefs and to several shamanism and black magic beliefs. There is no known record of any mission work having been done in the Akto Turkmen people group. Because of this, the best opportunity for these people to hear the gospel is through the Uygur gospel radio broadcasts, which are aired in the region.

Pray that God would raise up missionaries to take the gospel to this unreached people group. Pray the Akto Turkmen would hear the message of Christ and respond accordingly. Pray that lives and communities will be transformed as a result.

For more information on the Akto Turkmen of China, visit:

www.ethne.net/resources/03-en/bookmarks/Northeast%20Asia%20Prayer%20Bookmark.pdf

(Information compiled from www.joshuaproject.net)

Laurie Fortunak is editorial coordinator of Lausanne World Pulse. She also serves as editorial coordinator for [Evangelism and Missions Information Service](#) (EMIS) at the Billy Graham Center at Wheaton College and managing editor of [Evangelical Missions Quarterly](#) (EMQ).

STRATEGY, TRENDS & STATISTICS

[Pulling Out of the Nosedive in the United Kingdom!](#)

By Peter Brierley

The good news emerging from the 2005 English (United Kingdom) Church Census is that the number of people going to church in England did not drop as much between 1998 and 2005 as it did from 1989 to 1998. Between 1998 and 2005, half a million people stopped going to church; however, between 1989 and 1998, one million stopped attending. Perhaps we are pulling out of the nosedive!

This key finding from the Census, along with many other results, was published in a book called, appropriately enough, *Pulling out of the Nosedive*, published in September 2006. For those interested in the detailed figures, especially at county and local authority level, there is an associated volume, *Religious Trends No 6, 2006/2007*, also published in September. Both books are available from Christian Research at www.christian-research.org.uk.

An Excellent Response

In May 2005 there were 37,501 churches in England; information was received from more than half of them. “More new churches than Starbucks” was the headline of a news release issued for the Mission 21 Conference

on church planting held in Sheffield in March 2006. Between 1998 and 2005, 481 Starbucks branches started; the organisers knew of at least five hundred new churches which had started in the same period. However, there were actually over one thousand new churches started in this period, when the independent, black and other ethnic diversity churches were included. Behind this headline is an exciting story of growth, even if some 1,200 churches also closed in the same seven years.

Church Attendance Continues to Decline

The actual number of people attending church on a Sunday decreased from 3.7 million in 1998 to 3.2 million in 2005. This covers all denominations, and represents 6.3% of the population, down from 7.5% in 1998. If midweek attendance is included, the proportion increases to 6.9% of the population. If the rate of decline continues, even at a reducing rate, the percentage attending in 2015 is likely to be under five percent.

Why have the numbers dropped? Is no one being converted? Aren't Alpha and other similar courses working? Yes, they are working and people are coming to faith both inside and outside such courses. Perhaps some 250,000 people came to faith in the seven years ending 2005. There were also some 100,000 babies born to churchgoing parents in the period, giving a rough total of 350,000 people who have started coming to church, equivalent to fifty thousand people a year or one thousand new people every week. That sounds great; however, it is spread across 37,500 churches!

At the same time, some 300,000 people died (more deaths than conversions!) and a further 250,000 stopped attending church altogether. In addition, we lost the equivalent of 350,000 people who now come less often, giving a rough total of 900,000 people who have stopped coming to church, equivalent to losing 2,500 people a week.

A gain of 350,000 people and a loss of 900,000 people make up the 550,000 drop seen in the total figures (3.72 million in 1998 less the 3.17 million in 2005). The picture is confused at local church level by some 500,000 people having moved around the country or from one church to another in these seven years, with perhaps ten percent not finding a church where they could settle. This is offset by ten percent coming back to church after perhaps eight or ten years away.

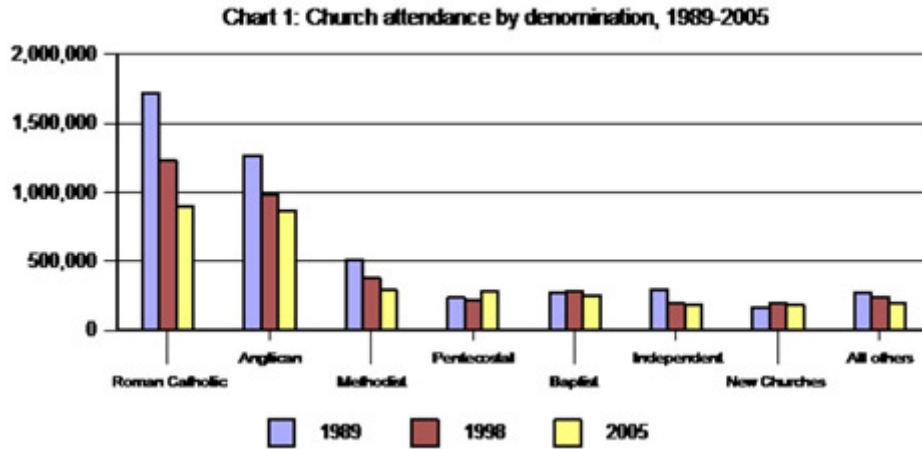
Why do people stop coming or come less frequently? Partly due to the sheer pressure of life (Sunday is a much more competitive day for activities than it was) and partly because, for many, the church seems irrelevant. Behind this is Satan's strategy to weaken and ultimately destroy the Church.

Against this somewhat sombre background, the Census nevertheless found that a number of exciting developments are taking place:

1. Some Denominations Are Growing

As Chart 1 indicates (where "All others" includes the United Reformed Church, Orthodox and other smaller denominations), the decline in numbers has not affected every denomination. The Pentecostals, Orthodox and the rather miscellaneous group of "Smaller Denominations" all grew. The Pentecostals grew primarily because of the black churches, the large majority of which are charismatic, and the Smaller Denominations grew because the various Overseas National Churches, mostly non-charismatic, grew. However, those of a different spirituality, like the Quakers and the Orthodox also saw some growth, although small.

The Roman Catholics decreased most in numerical terms (300,000 people); the United Reformed Church (URC) dropped most in percentage terms, declining fifty-three percent over the seven years to just under seventy thousand people. Both the URC and the Methodists have forty-seven percent of their attendees aged sixty-five or over.



2. Ethnically Diverse Churches Are Growing

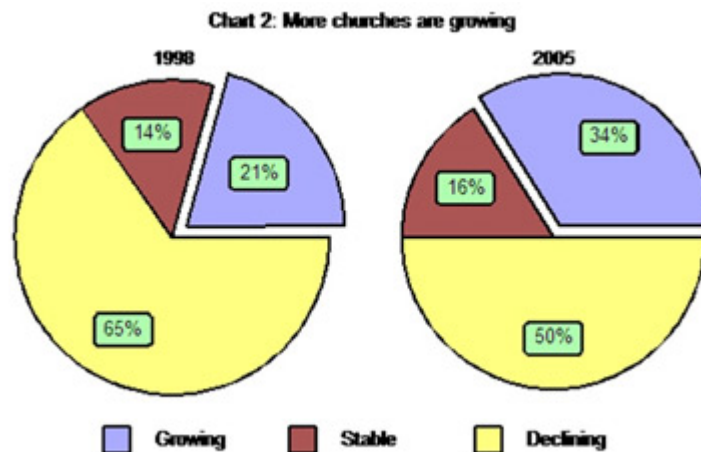
Black churchgoers are now ten percent of all English churchgoers. They have grown very rapidly, especially in Inner London, where there are more black people in church than white (forty-four percent to forty-two percent) despite there being several very large mainly white landmark Anglican churches in the capital's centre.

Churches with nationals from other parts of the world (Chinese, Korean and Indian churches) have also seen growth and in 2005 amounted to a further seven percent of all churchgoers overall. Churches fed by immigrants (Italian, Spanish and Swiss) from Europe have grown too, especially since the turn of the century. Seven new Croatian Catholic churches started between 2000 and 2005.

Non-white churchgoers are younger than white churchgoers, bringing to their churches more energy and more children, as many have families.

3. More Growing Churches

The proportion of growing churches has increased from twenty-one percent which grew during the 1990s to thirty-four percent which have grown from 1998 to 2005, as illustrated in Chart 2. The percentage of declining churches has dropped from sixty-five percent to fifty percent, the remaining percentage being stable (congregations remaining within ten percent of what they were).



While this is positive, part of the reason for more growing churches is that some people are simply transferring from the declining churches. In the last few years, especially emphasised by the Archbishop of Canterbury, a number of “Fresh Expression” churches have started, some of whom responded to the Census; these proved to have smaller and also younger congregations. Could these be the answer for the declining numbers? They may well be part of an answer; however, there are still far too few of them.

4. Larger Churches Are Growing

The 2005 English Church Census found that the larger the church, the more likely it was to be growing. This is especially true of churches with congregations of more than two hundred people, and is particularly true of the larger Anglican and Baptist churches. Why do they grow? As other research has shown, this is partly because the preaching is relevant (a very important factor), the welcome received is warm, there are suitable activities for children and adults midweek and especially because there is likely to be strong leadership with a clear vision for the future.

The Census found other factors were important as well. The larger the church:

- *The greater the proportion of people under age thirty.* Could this be because of suitable midweek activities? Young people also like to be part of larger groups for friendship and interaction.
- *The greater the proportion of non-white churchgoers in attendance.* Could this be because they like to attend “successful” churches which a growing church appears to be? Perhaps they feel more at home because they are less conspicuous.
- *The greater the proportion who come to church least frequently,* that is, less often than once a month.
- *The greater the proportion of visitors.* Could this be because of the friendly welcome or because in a larger church there is a greater likelihood for anonymity? This is perhaps especially true of the Cathedrals.

The larger churches are likely to become increasingly important as the years move on.

5. The Challenge of Greater London

In seven Inner London Boroughs there are over fifty Black Majority Churches, and thirteen out of the eighteen Inner London Boroughs saw churchgoing numbers increase between 1998 and 2005. In Greater London there are:

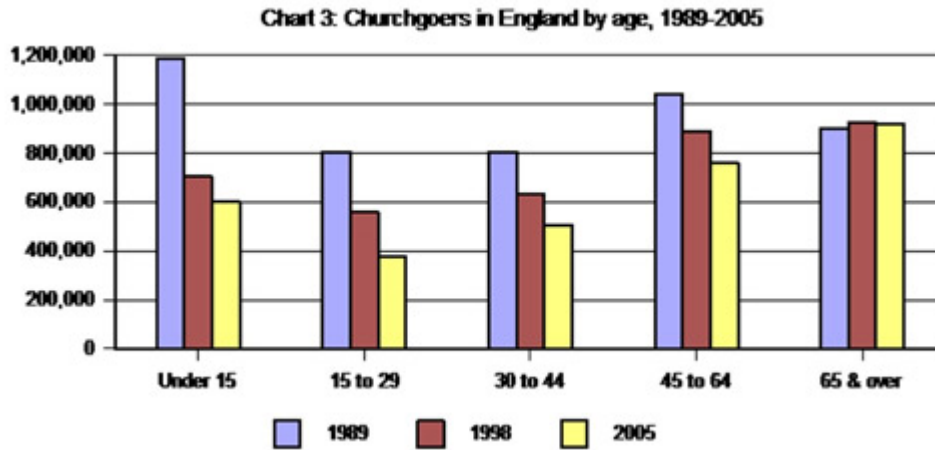
- eleven percent of all the churches in England
- twenty percent of all the churchgoers, making London’s churches twice as large on average as those elsewhere
- twenty-three percent of all the Evangelical churchgoers
- fifty-three percent of all the Pentecostal churchgoers
- fifty-seven percent of all churchgoers who are in their twenties (against nineteen percent of the population)

Such is the strength of London’s church attendance. It will find its supreme test in how they can work together for mission with the coming 2012 Olympic Games. Is it possible for the rest of the country to learn from London?

The flipside of London’s strength is that other parts of England are relatively weak, especially in having relatively few churchgoers in their twenties. If 131,000 of the country’s 231,000 people aged twenty to twenty-nine who go to church go in London, that leaves 100,000 people to be spread across thirty-three thousand churches! As this implies, not everything is good news. There were some serious weaknesses exposed by the Census as well.

6. The Church as a Whole Is Aging

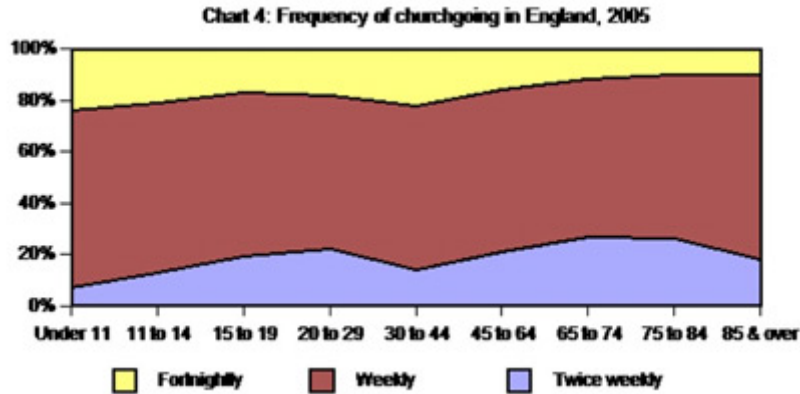
The average age of those going to church has increased to from age forty-three to age forty-five; this is against a population average of forty. This is because twenty-nine percent of churchgoers are sixty-five or over. This means that we lose many people through being “promoted to glory.” Chart 3 illustrates the gap.



The Church is weakest among those aged twenty to forty-four (the age of many parents) and comparatively strong among those aged sixty-five and over (the age of many grandparents). Some church children are brought up by their grandparents, not their parents. Grandparents can hold an important position in their families, and often in a church. They are frequently asked to help with Sunday School. A few churches have experimented with holding “Being an Effective Grandparent” sessions.

7. Less Frequent Attendance

Judging by the decline in frequency of attendance (seventy-two percent which is among women) shown in Chart 4, there is considerable pressure on those aged thirty to forty-four. This was a similar finding to that in Scotland in 2002, where focus groups showed that this was primarily because of the strains of looking after a home and family while going to work, many having to take jobs on Sunday partly because many such jobs were available and partly because childcare would be provided by their partner.



How can churches help alleviate stress and strain on those aged thirty to forty-four, especially if they have a young family? Can services be held for them at more convenient times, either during the week, or even on a Sunday? One Baptist church switched its morning service from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm and found its numbers doubled!

8. Evangelicals Are Declining

The number of Evangelicals in England is fewer in 2005 than it was in 1998, dropping nine percent from 1,390,000 to 1,260,000. The decline was least among the charismatic (five percent) but greatest among those describing themselves as Broad Evangelicals (twenty percent). The overall smaller rate of decline among Evangelicals is, however, because of the growth of the non-white church community, not because of the growth of conservative or strongly Evangelical churches which are mostly white.

9. Midweek Opportunities Not Being Taken

The numbers attending midweek meetings were greater in 2005 than in 1998. However, this was not because more churches were holding midweek meetings; rather, it was because more people were attending the midweek services that were being held. The percentage of Anglican churches holding a midweek event dropped from fifty-one percent to forty-five percent, and Baptists from forty-five percent to forty-one percent, but it increased in other denominations, especially the Methodists, United Reformed and New Churches, so that the overall percentage of forty-two percent remained unchanged. Almost three-quarters of attendees at these meetings also came on Sunday.

However, only twenty-seven percent of churches held a midweek youth meeting. This was partly because there is still a dire absence of young people in many churches:

- thirty-nine percent of churches had no one attending under eleven years of age
- forty-nine percent of churches had no one attending between eleven and fourteen years of age
- fifty-nine percent of churches had no one attending between fifteen and nineteen years of age

These are horrific figures and indicate the huge amount of work that churches must do to reclaim the lost ground among young people today. We may be emerging from the nosedive, but without the support of more young people, we will never begin the climb back to a safe level.

However, where churches do hold a midweek meeting for young people, they were shown to be particularly effective in helping those aged eleven to fourteen to stay connected with a church. Some 330,000 young people

attended a midweek meeting (more than a third of whom were in Anglican churches), and of these, over half did not attend on Sunday. So midweek youth meetings are worthwhile, which is presumably why up to one-fifth of churches now have their own or shared youth or children's worker, or both.

Challenges

It is clear that the Census provides some fascinating material. Can the English church pull out of the nosedive? YES! We need to either start new congregations or increase our existing ones. We need to hold more midweek activity and strategically plan ahead! The newspaper columnist, Andrew Brown, wrote last year, "Almost nothing that's possible is too improbable ever to happen." In other words, "with God, all things are possible."

Dr. Peter Brierley is the Senior Lausanne Associate for Church Research. He attended Lausanne I in 1974 and has been involved with the Lausanne movement since 1984. Formerly a government statistician, he is currently executive director of **Christian Research**, a UK charity which produces resource volumes like *Religious Trends* and the *UK Christian Handbook*. Brierley can be reached at admin@christian-research.org.uk.

LAUSANNE REPORTS

WINGS—Women's International Network in God's Service

By Elke Werner

"You will never know to what heights you can soar, unless you spread your wings and fly."

On 14 January 2007, our plane took off in Frankfurt, Germany. Together with my friend and supporter Annette, I flew via Singapore to Sydney, where we met with Robyn and David Claydon.

At the 2006 Lausanne Younger Leaders Gathering in Malaysia, Robyn had handed over to me the role that she had served in, that of Lausanne senior associate for women in evangelism. During our time together in Sydney we planned our next steps and I was able to meet supporters of Robyn as well as some friends of the Lausanne Committee in Sydney. Together we went on to Hawaii, where David Hamilton was holding a conference at the University of the Nations. What started at the Lausanne 2004 Forum for World Evangelization in Pattaya, Thailand as Issue Group 24, "**Empowering Men and Women**," has turned into a working group which has continued to meet and discover opportunities for teaching and modelling the way God wants men and women to fully use their spiritual gifts. The conference drew many students as well as a large group of Korean pastors and their wives. Afterward, our working group continued with planning and praying for the release of women in the churches to the full use of their gifts.

From Hawaii, Annette and I flew to Chicago, Illinois, USA, where I was able to spend some time looking over the Lausanne archives, which are housed at the **Billy Graham Center** at Wheaton College. My research included the role of women in the history of the Lausanne Movement. During our stay in Chicago I met with a group of ten outstanding women who were interested in helping form the Women's Network of Lausanne.

We were also joined by Marie Little, whose husband Paul was one of the leaders of the first Lausanne International Congress on World Evangelization in 1974. Well into her nineties, Mary was excited to hear that Lausanne is still strong and alive. It was special as she also prayed for me and blessed me in my ministry.

Our journey was truly remarkable as we felt the Lord's presence and guidance and are glad that we can work to encourage women around the world to "spread their wings" and soar into the full heights of their calling. My newly-founded ministry, which supports my Lausanne and other involvements, bears the title "WINGS" ("Women's International Network in God's Service"). Thank you for your prayers!

Lausanne continues; the work among women continues. The blessing of the Lord is passed on from generation to generation and around the world!

Elke Werner is the senior associate for women in evangelism for the [Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization](#). She is the co-leader of a vital interdenominational church fellowship (Christus-Treff) with centers in Marburg, Berlin and Jerusalem. Elke resides with her husband Dr. Roland Werner in Marburg, Germany.

Terms and Conditions of Use

All material from LWP is copyrighted by Evangelism and Missions Information Service (EMIS), its partners, and authors. All rights are reserved. Except for personal use, no part of LWP may be reproduced by any mechanical, photographic or electronic process, or in the form of an audio recording, nor may it be stored in a retrieval system, transmitted or otherwise copied for public or private use without written permission of EMIS. For information regarding reprints or permissions, email permissions@lausanneworldpulse.com.