

CCT E-newsletter

Volume 4, No. 4

December, 2010



Annual Meeting January 11-14, 2011 in Birmingham!

The 2011 Annual Meeting will focus on domestic poverty through the lens of racism. Drawing on Dr. King's "Letter From Birmingham Jail", we will examine the personal and systemic elements of racism and poverty in the United States and conclude by issuing a "Letter From Birmingham" to our own churches and the public. Since we are in Birmingham, we will be able to draw on the wonderful historical resources there such as the Civil Rights Institute, the 16th Street Baptist Church, and Kelly Ingram Park. Highlights of the meeting include:

January 11: The meeting will begin on Tuesday evening with opening worship followed by a keynote from Dr. Bernard LaFayette, Jr., Freedom Rider and co-founder of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). He will speak to us about the non-violent quality of Dr. King's leadership.

January 12: Wednesday morning, we will visit the Civil Rights Institute, and the iconic 16th Street Baptist Church and Kelly Ingram Park. At the 16th St Baptist Church, Dr. Cheryl J. Sanders, Professor of Christian Ethics at Howard University, will speak on the theme, "How has the situation regarding racism in America improved since 1958 and how has it worsened?" Weather permitting, in the Park, we will have a prayer service remembering those saints who dared to challenge racism in the 50's - 60's and beyond (if the weather is poor, we will move this prayer service to the 16th Street Baptist Church).

January 13: In the morning, we will hear from David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World, and recipient of this year's World Food Prize, reflecting on what the churches need to do now to respond to poverty and racism. In the afternoon, we will begin drafting a "Letter from Birmingham" addressed to our own churches and to be "overheard" by the nation.

January 14: A final draft of the "Letter From Birmingham" will be prepared and Joshua DuBois has been invited to preach (Executive Director of the White House Office of Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnerships).

Registration forms are still available from Dick Hamm at dhamm@ddi.org. But the hotel block will be released soon.

Reflections from Executive Director, Richard L. Hamm

Seeking A Deeper Fulfillment of John 17:20-21

“I do not pray for these only, but also for those who believe in me through their word, that they may all be one.....so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”



It has often been pointed out that, so far as we know, this was Jesus’ last earthly prayer before he was crucified. We can safely assume, I think, that this means that the subject of the prayer was extremely important to him.

Why did Jesus think the unity of his believers was so important? *So that the world may believe!* When the world sees Christians bickering with one another, and placing their individual perspectives above the saving grace of God made known in Christ, well, the Gospel message is undercut and subverted.

But being a believer in Christian unity means more than “just getting along” with other Christians. It means realizing and understanding at a deep level that every expression of the church of Christ has part of the puzzle, but not the whole picture.

On vacations, I sometimes like to work a jigsaw puzzle. If you like jigsaws too, you know that there is nothing so maddening as working on a 1,000 piece puzzle for hours or days only to discover that there are pieces missing! That must be something like the frustration Christ experiences when looking upon the puzzle that is his church and seeing pieces missing.

In fact, every individual expression of the church has some pieces missing. No one church is the whole body of Christ unto itself. We help complete each other as the body of Christ on earth when we pool our strengths and we see our own weaknesses revealed in the strengths of other churches. It is not enough to “get along”. We need to understand one another at a deep level, deep enough to see how our individual approaches work and don’t work, deep enough to see the pieces that are missing or broken in our own church tradition, deep enough to see how we need each other.

I’m grateful to be a part of this endeavor of the Spirit, in whom we are all one. May CCT increasingly reflect the unity of the body of Christ and the wholeness of the Christ, through our getting to know each other deeply as churches and as individual church leaders, and through working and witnessing together.

Grace and peace,

Dick Hamm

Evangelism Resources Posted

Statements that have come out of our CCT Annual Meetings are now posted on the website. Go to www.christianchurchestogether.org and click on Evangelism Resources from the menu on the left side of the front page. These resources include statements from all five families of CCT.

Poverty Action Report On Line

A Poverty Action Report, detailing what CCT participants are doing to combat domestic poverty, is available on our website. Go to www.christianchurchestogether.org to see the link to this report on the front page. Thanks to Bread for the World's David Beckmann and Sarah Turner for preparing this report.

Three Task Forces To Be Formed

Three task forces are currently being formed: 1) an "Outreach Task Force" to encourage more communions/denominations to join in CCT participation; 2) a "Funding Task Force" to develop more sources of income for CCT beyond church and organization dues; 3) a "Communications Task Force" to develop more effective communication between and beyond CCT participants, including the media.

If you have an interest in serving on one of these task forces, please contact Dick Hamm at dhamm@ddi.org.

Global Christian Forum

The second Global Christian Forum Gathering will take place on 4 – 7 October 2011 at Hotel Seruni in Cisarua, near Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia. The gathering will bring together some three hundred participants from the widest possible range of Christian traditions and from all parts of the world. It will focus on stories reflecting what the Spirit is saying to the churches, on the rapidly changing and multiple faces of world Christianity today and what these mean for Christian unity and common witness. The gathering will also be asked to provide guidance for the GCF beyond 2011. In deciding to go to Indonesia, the GCF Committee wants to recognize once again the shifting of the centre of Christianity to the global South (the first Global Forum Gathering was in Limuru, Kenya, in November 2007). Four national church bodies in Indonesia: the PGI (Ecumenical), the PGPI (Pentecostal), the PGLII (Evangelical) and the KWI (Catholic) will join forces to receive the second Global Forum Gathering and to take care of all the local arrangements.

(see **Father Leonid Kishkovsky's excellent article at the end of this newsletter**)

Welcome to the world Jacob Matthew!



Many of us have the pleasure of knowing Bowie Snodgrass as she served on the CCT Steering Committee and attended several annual meetings. She and her husband, George Matthew, welcomed Jacob to the world on September 11. Mother and child are doing well! Bowie continues her work with Manhattan House at St. John's Episcopal Church. Congratulations Bowie and George!

Archbishop Gregory named bishops' moderator for Jewish affairs

Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON – Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory of Atlanta has been named to succeed Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan of New York as moderator of Jewish affairs for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, effective Dec. 12.

Archbishop Dolan resigned the post, which he had held since October 2009, after his Nov. 16 election as USCCB president. Bishops elected to the post of president ordinarily resign from all conference chairmanships and committees.

In announcing the appointment, Archbishop Dolan said Archbishop Gregory “has reached out to members of the Jewish community from the moment he was elected chairman” of the USCCB Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs in 2008.

“He listens attentively to the concerns of others, is sensitive to building constructive relationships and has already begun to attend our meetings of the Jewish-Catholic dialogues,” he added.

Jewish dialogue partners praised the appointment, with Rabbi Gil Rosenthal of the National Council of Synagogues calling Archbishop Gregory “warm, caring, compassionate and intelligent.”

“And above all, Archbishop Gregory is committed to the goal of building bridges of trust and friendship between Jews and Catholics,” he added. “We enthusiastically welcome his appointment.

Rabbi Alvin Berkun, president of the Rabbinical Assembly, said Archbishop Gregory already has been an active participant in Catholic-Jewish dialogue and brings “the benefit of his experience and wisdom” as USCCB president from 2001 to 2004.

Until 2009, the role of Jewish moderator had been held for more than two decades by Cardinal William H. Keeler, the now-retired archbishop of Baltimore

“The relationships between the Catholic bishops of our nation and the Jewish community have made huge strides over the past 50 years,” said Archbishop Gregory in a statement. “Owing to Cardinal Keeler and the late Cardinal John O’Connor of New York, we have in place a deep trust and friendship that allows us to face problems together in a manner that would have been impossible prior to the reconciliation brought about by Vatican II and Pope John Paul II.”

In addition to chairing the USCCB ecumenical and interreligious committee, Archbishop Gregory is a member of the standing consultation between the National Council of Synagogues and the USCCB and serves as the “Catholic president” of Christian Churches Together, an association of Catholic, mainline Protestant, Orthodox, evangelical and African-American churches for common witness on poverty, racism and other issues.

A bishop since 1983, he was named to his present post in Atlanta in 2005.

Third Lausanne Congress Closes with Ringing Call to Action

CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA 25 October 2010 The Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization closed today in Cape Town with a ringing call to the Church. This Congress, perhaps the widest and most diverse gathering of Christians ever held in the history of the Church, drew 4,000 selected participants from 198 nations. Organizers extended its reach into over 650 Globalink sites in 91 countries and drew 100,000 unique visits to its web site from 185 countries during the week of the Congress.

‘Our vision and hope was firstly for a ringing affirmation of the uniqueness of Christ and the truth of the biblical gospel; and a clear statement on evangelism and the mission of the church - all rooted in Scripture,’ said Lindsay Brown, Lausanne Movement International Director, in his closing address. ‘The evangelical church has rightly put an emphasis on bringing the gospel of Jesus Christ to every people group, but we have perhaps been a little weaker in our attempts to apply biblical principles to every area of society, and to public policy: to the media, to business, to government. We need to engage deeply with all human endeavour - and with the ideas which shape it.’ The Congress included an Executive Leadership Forum and a Think Tank for leaders in Government, Business and Academia. ‘There is a groundswell of conviction,’ said Mr Brown, ‘that greater concerted effort is needed to apply biblical truth in these arenas.’

The Cape Town Commitment, a declaration of belief and a call to action, will stand in the historic tradition of *The Lausanne Covenant*, which issued from the 1974 Congress, held in Lausanne, Switzerland. *The Lausanne Covenant* became widely-regarded as one of the most significant documents in recent church history. The Lausanne Movement, since its founding by the US evangelist Billy Graham, has worked to strengthen evangelical belief, and to reawaken the evangelical church’s responsibility in God’s world. *The Cape Town Commitment* is therefore in two parts. The first part, a Trinitarian statement, fashioned in the language of love, is the fruit of discussion by senior evangelical theologians drawn from all continents. This is available now on the Lausanne website, www.lausanne.org. The consequent call to action, shaped from discussion at the Congress around critical issues facing the Church over the next ten years, will be completed by December. It is expected to engage in principle with such issues from all parts of the world. Chris Wright, International Director of Langham Partnership International (John Stott Ministries / USA) is chief architect.

‘We would like *The Cape Town Commitment* to be seen as “a gift to the local church from representatives of the global church,”’ said the Revd Doug Birdsall, Chairman of The Lausanne Movement. He then outlined the Board’s plans for the movement’s future: ‘*First*: to stay light on its feet, remaining agile in its ability to respond to new challenges and opportunities. *Second*, to be strong theologically, firmly rooted in Scripture and nourished by the best reflection on how we take the Word to the world. *Third*, to provide a reliable and credible contribution to Christian discussion and mission. *Fourth*, to keep a focus on identifying and developing younger leaders. And *fifth*, to be strategic in gathering the right people at the right times in the right places.

‘Lausanne gatherings will breathe oxygen into the fire that sparks more fires, and track progress made on the priorities established in Cape Town,’ he said. Mr Birdsall sketched out plans for a series of Davos-like gatherings, drawing thought leaders from the Church and from mission agencies, from government, business and academia. The first is planned for June 2012.

The Lausanne Movement is rooted globally under regional leadership around the world. The funding for the Congress had been raised from all regions, and from a ‘healthy combination’ of significant major gifts and many smaller gifts, often sacrificially-given.

The Congress extended to an estimated audience around the world of a further 100,000 people through its GlobaLink sites. It was also possible to participate virtually. Prior to the Congress, The Lausanne Movement launched a multi-lingual online Lausanne Global Conversation to begin the discussion process. This was complemented by a series of radio programmes in countries in the Global South. The Global Conversation, the first of its kind, has gained significant momentum and will continue. A round-

