

Theological Commission Leaders on the Move



Leaders of the WEA Theological Commission met in Bonn in early May to discuss current developments and plan for future activities. Chairman, Dr Thomas Schirrmacher met with Executive Director, Dr Rosalee Velloso Ewell, Editor of ERT, Dr David Parker (Australia), and Senior Advisor Professor Dr Thomas Johnson (Prague). High on the agenda were the various publications including *Evangelical Review of Theology*, *Theological News* and the web pages. A report was given on the next special issue of ERT (Oct. 2013) on "The Insider Movements", guest edited by Rob Haskell (USA). Various other topics were also covered, with special consideration being given to the TC's role in the forthcoming WEA Congress (see panel below).

In the past few months Dr. Rosalee Velloso Ewell has given various lectures and keynote addresses in the UK. In April 2013 she spoke at the annual gathering of the Scottish Evangelical Theological Society, with the keynote address "Trinity and Mission: Scandalous Belonging". That same month she and John Baxter-Brown, member of the TC Working Group, lectured at Regent's Park College, Oxford, on the theme of Christian witness in multi-religious settings. In June Dr Ewell returned to Oxford to give the keynote lecture at the Stott-Bediako Forum at the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, followed by travels to India to offer the morning biblical plenary address on Acts 17 –



Dr. Velloso Ewell and the Bible Plenary speakers at the Global Leadership Forum, India 2013.

Paul's time in Athens, at the Lausanne Global Leadership Forum in Bangalore.

John Baxter-Brown is now part of the Mission Theology Advisory Group (MTAG), a collaboration between Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and the Anglican Church, that aims to explore more deeply theological issues as these relate to mission practices. The theme for the recent gathering in Leeds, UK, was Liberation and Entrapment. The group visited particular ministries and discussed forms of urban ministry and the different ways the church opens itself up to welcoming those who are on the margins of society. During the next months MTAG will produce resources for churches and individuals with the goal of engaging such issues in ways that reflect the life and ministry of Jesus in the various contexts of contemporary society.

Invitation to National & Regional Theological Commissions to General Assembly 2014

The WEA and its Theological Commission invites all board members of theological commissions (or groups with similar status) of national or regional evangelical alliances to attend the General Assembly of WEA to be held in Seoul in October 2014. We expect around 500 members of theological commissions at this gathering.

We will participate in the general agenda (including many plenaries and workshops planned by the TC), but every day we will have special planning meetings and discussion times to deal with our own agendas and issues of the TCs. This is the first time in history when all the boards of all the regional and national TCs will be able to meet one another face to face. Such personal interaction is fundamental as we seek to strengthen the service and work of the TCs for the coming years. Please contact TC Executive Chair, Dr Thomas Schirrmacher with your RSVP and for more information chair_tc@worlddea.com

The General Assembly will be held October 18-26, 2014 at the COEX Convention Center, Seoul, South Korea and will involve leaders of Evangelical Alliances, members and partners of WEA commissions and initiatives, WEA associate members and global partners, member church networks and denominations, as well as global and local invited guests. For more information visit <http://www.worlddea.org/ga2014>

Promoting Biblical Truth by Networking Theologians

Baptist Theologians Focus on Holy Spirit

Washington, DC (BWA)--Baptist understanding of the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit will be the focal point of the 8th Baptist International Conference on Theological Education (BICTE) to be held in Ocho Rios, Jamaica, from June 28-30. The conference theme is *In Step with the Spirit: Perspectives on Pneumatology within the Worldwide Baptist Family*.

Presentations include "Baptist Contribution to Theological Reflection on the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit" by William Brackney of Canada; "The Holy Spirit and Social Justice" by Burchell Taylor of Jamaica; "Baptists and Pneumatology: Atonement and Healing" by Graham Hill of Australia; "Baptists and Pneumatology: Atonement and Material Prosperity" by Deji Isaac Ayegboyin from Nigeria; and "The Holy Spirit and Corporate Worship" by Doug Weaver of the United States.

Respondents include Solomon Ishola of Nigeria, Honorina Dela Paz-Lacquan from the Philippines, Otniel Bunaciu from Romania and Phyllis Rodgeron Pleasants Tessieri from the US.

"Baptist theologians and biblical scholars have not produced an extensive literary corpus dealing with the nature and ministry of the Holy Spirit," said Baptist World Alliance (BWA) General Secretary Neville Callam. "A fine array of thinkers at the conference on theological education will contribute to our understanding the relation of the Holy Spirit and the life of faith in the triune God."

Callam will make a special presentation on "BWA in Bilateral Dialogues," a reference to theological dialogues that the BWA has had with other Christian traditions, including the Mennonites, Anglicans and Catholics.

Theological educators from the BWA regions of Africa, Asia Pacific, Caribbean, Europe, Latin America and North America will lead panel discussions on "Emerging Issues in the Theological Formation of Ministerial Students."

BICTE is planned and sponsored by the BWA and is normally held every five years. The 7th edition was held in Prague, Czech Republic, in 2008. BICTE immediately precedes the BWA Annual Gathering that is to be held July 1-6. Both are to be held at the Sunset Jamaica Grande Resort, Spa & Conference Center in Ocho Rios.

More information for BICTE are available on the [BWA website](#).

Developments at Redcliffe College Centre for Linguistics

Redcliffe College, Gloucester UK, will welcome Wycliffe Bible Translators UK training programmes to its campus in July this year. Along with the creation of attractive new teaching spaces and library area, the academic staff at both Redcliffe and Wycliffe have worked together to achieve the validation of the two MA programmes by the University of Gloucestershire.

A report from the college stated, "We are delighted that both MA Field Linguistics and MA Literacy Programme Development have now been successfully validated and, with Wycliffe staffing in place, we are ready to welcome the first students." Redcliffe Principal Rob Hay said "This validation is a tribute to the hard work of Redcliffe College and Wycliffe Bible Translators UK staff as they collaborate on integrating Wycliffe's training for Bible translation into Redcliffe's portfolio of courses. The University commended us in particular for the success of this process so far."

The Centre for Linguistics, Translation and Literacy does not only cater for MA students. Alongside the full MA programmes, Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma study options are also available and individual modules such as Language and Culture Acquisition can be studied as standalone courses. More information about all Centre for Linguistics, Translation and Literacy courses can be found at www.redcliffe.org/ltl

Call for Papers on 'Applied Trinitarianism'

The Theological Commission calling for papers and discussion for a theme issue of the *Evangelical Review of Theology* in 2014 on Applied Trinitarianism.' The church fathers thought many of their pastoral problems resulted from Christians interpreting their faith and the Bible inside the cognitive structures of the various secular worldviews of their cultures (with results such as docetism and Gnosticism); the clear articulation of the biblical doctrine of the Trinity was an attempt to provide a more fully developed cognitive structure in light of which to interpret and apply the biblical message in a balanced and complete manner.

Thomas K. Johnson claims we should now apply the Nicene doctrine of the Trinity as a diagnostic system for diagnosing the health and balance of individuals, churches, and Christian movements, as well as use it as a framework for cultural and ethical questions. (See www.iirf.eu; then click WEA Global Issues Series.)

For this purpose we now invite contributions for a theme issue of *ERT* in 2014. Essays should be 6,000 to 8,000 words, following the *ERT* guidelines. As we started the discussion in the US and have some potential contributions, we now especially invite contributors from other regions.

Articles and enquiries should be sent to johnson.thomas.k@gmail.com.

Lausanne Movement Welcomes New CEO



The Lausanne Movement has welcomed Dr. Michael Oh, a 41 year-old Korean-American, as its new Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer. He took over on 1 March 2013. Oh was founder and president of Christ Bible Seminary in Nagoya, Japan. He was formally installed at The Lausanne Global Leadership Forum in South Asia in June.

Ram Gidoomal, Chair of The Lausanne Movement Board of Directors said, "Michael is a cross-cultural bridge-builder, from East to West and across generations; he knows the overall Movement well and understands the complexity of this leadership calling. He will be able to build on the firm foundation that Doug Birdsall and the global leadership of Lausanne have established, to the glory of God."

He has been involved in Lausanne since 2004, serving as keynote speaker and part of the planning team for Lausanne's Younger Leaders Gathering in 2006, and as a member of the Lausanne Board since 2007.

Oh succeeds outgoing CEO Rev. S. Douglas (Doug) Birdsall, who became the president of American Bible Society on 1 March. Birdsall will continue to serve in leadership with Lausanne as an Honorary Chair. He said, "Michael is an exceptionally gifted younger leader who will serve the Movement with vision and passion in the years to come. As a reflective practitioner, he embodies the essence of the 'spirit' of Lausanne – humility, friendship, study, prayer, partnership and hope."

In responding to his appointment, Dr Oh said, "In the coming months we will seek to find ways to introduce Lausanne afresh to a new generation of Christians and leaders around the world. I'm particularly excited to begin preparations for the 3rd Lausanne Younger Leaders Gathering in 2015. In 2006 in Port Dixon, Malaysia at the 2nd Lausanne Younger Leaders Gathering, I, myself, was a younger leader inspired by the history and vision of Lausanne. The challenges ahead are great, but our God is even greater. His purposes are sure and He will surely have the victory. What a privilege and joy it is to be a part of God's plans together with wonderful brothers and sisters around the world like you. "

Oh's appointment was welcomed by leaders in Japan who expressed pleasure that Oh will live in Japan while serving Lausanne. "We are committed to expanding the network of support and prayer among churches in Japan for Michael. As a board member of the Japan Evangelical Association, I know that General Secretary Kenichi Shinagawa has shared a longtime friendship with Michael."

Oh has a Doctor of Philosophy with a specialization in Cultural Anthropology and Education (University of Pennsylvania), a Master's Degree of Arts with a concentration in East Asian Studies (Harvard University), a Master's Degree of Divinity with an emphasis on Missions (Trinity Evangelical Divinity School) and a Master's Degree of Science (University of Pennsylvania). Michael and his wife, Pearl, have been married 18 years and have five children.

Source: Lausanne Global Leadership Update March 2013 More information: www.lausanne.org

Prominent Evangelical Leader and Theologian Retires

Dr Peter Jensen, Anglican Archbishop of Sydney, Australia, is about to retire after twelve years in the post, reaching the stipulated retirement age of 70 in early July. He was born in Sydney and began a career in law before changing to school teaching. He and his brother, Peter (currently Dean of Sydney) were converts of the famous 1959 Billy Graham Crusade. He entered the Sydney Diocese's Moore Theological College in 1966 and later gained a BD of London University, and a DPhil from Oxford University for a study of "The life of faith in the teaching of Elizabethan Protestantism." He became principal of his alma mater in 1985, a position which he held for 16 years. He has written widely, published a number of books, and delivered the Australian Broadcasting Commission's Boyer Lectures published under the title, "The Future of Jesus".

In his role as Archbishop of Australia's oldest and largest Anglican archdiocese, he became a vocal spokesman for evangelical Christianity and was often in the news for his conservative moral and doctrinal views. He also became well known for his role in Anglicanism around the world through his high profile involvement in the controversial Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) held in Jerusalem June 2008, just prior to the Lambeth Conference of that year, to address concerns that many evangelical Anglicans had about trends in the church.

At a farewell function on 14 June, Dr Jensen called for his church to trust 'in Christ crucified alone'. "The world is always looking for human and divine celebrities, for gods suitable to its own desires. For our part we are always tempted to impress the world and to gain the world's good opinion." But, he said, 'we can never graduate beyond the cross of Christ' because 'the divine substitution is the basis for our fellowship, the motive for our worship and the power which transforms lives'. He went on to make another plea: 'as you live, so preach. Preach Christ crucified'. He warned "Woe betide us if we so glorify religious experience or intellectual attainment and abandon the wisdom of God. Woe betide us if the message of the cross is simply one of the list of things we talk but not the passionate heart of our message". This warning, he said, was for the diocese, and the denomination. "The cross of Christ is the key to answering all our questions - the what and the how as well as the why and the who and the when and the where." (<http://sydneyanglicans.net/news/one-last-thing>)

The Future of Mission

By Rob Hay, Principal, Redcliffe College, Gloucester UK
Reprinted with permission from *Response* Summer 2013 (www.redcliffe.org)

I read the following quote recently and it made me think:

The world is changing so fast for students doing a four year technical degree, half of what they learn in their first year will be outdated by their third year.

Mission is changing too. What are the trends we need to help our students respond to when they leave? Here are just a few of the many issues we see.

Urbanisation

Almost 60% of the world’s population live in urban city contexts and this figure continues to rise. Despite this most people still think of mission work happening on a village or town level. Increasingly, the main unreached are no longer the rural poor but middle class city dwellers. Preparing students for this very different ministry and living style is vitally important.

Radicalisation

I’m writing this article in the week in which the victims of the Boston bombing are buried, and it is very evident that the radicalisation of religion is real. To operate in this environment we need to train Christians who can confidently communicate the good news of Jesus in non-defensive ways, realising that the gospel is strong enough in the lives of the followers of Jesus to speak clearly in each and every environment. A line from the Edinburgh 1910 mission conference is as true today as it was then, “The minds of the people in most countries are more open and favourable to the wise and friendly approach of the Christian missionaries...”

Europe as the main mission field

Mission today is from everywhere to everywhere, but no matter where in the world I go, a major focus of churches is sending people to re-evangelise Europe. Lithuanian Redcliffers Rita and Vidas Rimkai are involved in this sort of work on our doorstep in Gloucester – as are Brazilians, Nigerians, Australians and many many more across the continent. Europe is firmly on God’s heart and Redcliffe is taking this seriously.

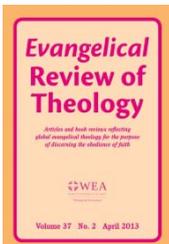
Doom and gloom in West... but not for God's mission – or for Redcliffe

Here in the UK, we are regularly confronted with depressing news about the latest recession statistics, be it economic or in the church. But we are hopeful. The demand for Redcliffe’s ministry in serving the global church has never been greater...but it looks different from before.

A different future

This difference comes not only because the issues in mission are different, but also because the way in which we respond is changing. Through the building work on the campus, the integration of linguistics and literacy and the growth in different ways of teaching we are aiming to better serve the global church.

Evangelical Review of Theology July 2013: *Divine Affectivity and Mission*



The lead article for this issue is an intriguing study by Karen Shaw of how ‘divine heartbeats’ and how these are reflected in our mission! Craig Ott then gives us a new hermeneutic modelled on the games we play, opening up interesting possibilities for understanding the Bible. Patrick Nullens then examines the authority of Scripture in the context of the hermeneutics of love, while Robert Hamd relates the experiences of his church in the Middle East and its compassionate mission. Athena Gorospe urges us to go beyond the old understanding of the environment to a more biblically authentic approach and Christof Sauer gives a thumb-nail sketch of a theology of persecution. Finally, Thomas Schirrmacher reviews a full length history of the Evangelical Alliance.

WEA Theological News ISSN 0260-3705

Published quarterly by WEA Theological Commission

Chairman: Dr. Thomas Schirrmacher
Executive Director: Dr Rosalee Velloso Ewell
Vice-Chair: Dr James Nkansah-Obrempong
Editor: Dr David Parker

Personal Subscription: Voluntary donation US\$15 for 2 years

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US\$15 per annum

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