

World Mission News

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USA: In 2002, city officials in South Carolina, USA rejected the expansion plan of a church that had grown from 68 members in 1988 to 3,000. The church rented an empty store and set up off-site worship service with live music and videotaped sermon. It was so successful that they now have seven more such sites with total of 7,000 members. Today, some 1,000 mega-churches in the US embrace this **multisite** model with satellite feed or cheaper DVDs. The model works with staff pastor at each site providing personal contact and feedback, core set of teaching, standardized ministry but some flexibility in approach, share resources and economies of scale.

<Christianity Today, September/05>

AIDS Relief: In 2002, student leaders from a Christian high school west of Chicago, USA accepted the challenge of **sacrificial giving** to the AIDS relief project in Zambia of World Vision. They pledged to raise \$53,000 to build a schoolhouse for orphan children of AIDS parents in a village. At first the student body of 575 were not enthusiastic. Advised by an adult mentor, the leaders prayed every day. They got \$80,000 at the end, most of it from the students themselves forgoing movies, Starbucks runs, Christmas gifts and prom dresses. 2003/04, they raised \$60,000 to feed the children for one year, and raised \$110,000 in 2004/05 for a maternity ward when some adults pitched in. For 2005/06, they launched AIDS Student Network (www.aidsstudentnetwork.org), aiming to recruit 1,000 US high schools in the fight against HIV/AIDS in Africa.

<Christianity Today, August/05>

Hong Kong: In Hong Kong a recent survey shows that the average attendance of church worshippers has increased by 41,418 persons in the last five years. It also shows that there has been 88 new churches. Yet the total number of churches increased by only 52. And

the number of churches with less than 100 members reduced by 72 in the last 10 years while those with more than 100 members increased by 187. This suggests consumerism mentality of many attracted to the better facility and services of the larger churches.

<HK Christian Ministry Institute News, www.hkcmi.org, August/05>

North Africa: An agency reports very significant church growth in North Africa with estimated tens of thousands of Berber and Arab Christians in the last 15 years. It began when tribal Barber people found the Lord through the media and chance meeting with itinerate believers. The church has then developed with no historic Christian presence and little direct involvement with outside Christian workers.

<Strategic Resource Groupe, www.srginc.org/Assist News Service, 8/4/05>

Bhutan: For nearly five decades, Bhutan was closed to missionaries. Recently the door is open and God has brought over 2 thousand converts to worship Him. They have a heart to preach the gospel to their compatriots. Having translated the New Testament into their national language, they have a plan to deliver a copy to every home.

<Mission Network News, www.mnnonline.org, 8/18/05>

Nicaragua: Since 1960, God has used various means to bring explosive evangelical church growth in Nicaragua (1.8% of 5 million population in 1960 to 21.4% in 2000). One example is the work of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship. They now have 530 chapters around the nation and expect to open a new one each week. Each chapter holds an evangelistic dinner each week with an average of ten new people attending. That is 275,600 new guests every year. 3 or 4 times each year, various regions hold revivals. One

year there were 2,500 such events with 94,500 people accepting Christ. The men regularly go to schools, shops, bus stations, offices, etc giving personal testimony and invitations to chapter dinners.

<www.fgbmfi-europe.com/FridayFax, 9/3/05>

Chechnya: With war still swirling all around, a Christian camp was held in Grozny, the capital of Chechnya, for the first time since 1992 when the war started. A Russian Ministries team came to tell the children mostly from Muslim families about Jesus. Prayers are requested for these seeds to grow and safety to hold more camps.

<Mission Network News, www.mnnonline.org, 8/2/05>

Somalia: For 15 years, Somalia has stood for anarchy, hunger, death, violence and refugees. Now they have a new government. Though many of the few Christians still pay for their faith with their life, couples and even entire families are coming to Jesus, and children hearing Word of God in church. Even officials admit that the nation is no longer 100% Muslim.

<FridayFax, 8/12/05>

Indonesia: The head of Indonesia's huge traditionalist Muslim organization (40 million memberships) has spoken out against the actions of radical Islamists shutting down churches. And at the demonstration of a thousand Christians for religious freedom in capital Jakarta, they were joined by the former Indonesian president and parliamentary speaker. It is reported that over 35 churches have been shut down over the past year. And three women were jailed for holding VBS type of program attended by Muslim children with parental permission.

<www.crosswalk.com, 9/12/05>