



World Mission News

Compiled by Samuel C. Y. Ling

China: Disagreement has arisen among overseas mission agencies whether Bibles should be smuggled into China. Some argue that the new press of the Amity Press capable of printing 1 million pieces each month has made smuggling unnecessary. Also, as smuggling is illegal it could harm local believers if caught. Others counter that of the 11 million Bibles and New Testaments in 2008 printed by Amity and about 72 million since it opened in 1988, only 3 million are sold inside China each year. The rest were exported to more than 60 nations. So there is a critical shortage for the most conservative estimate of 40 million Protestants and 14 million Catholics.

<Christianity Today, February/09>

Microfinance: The world financial crisis and credit crunch have forced some agencies to cut back their projected growth for 2009, severely affecting hundreds of thousand people's chance to improve their lives. Though many agencies fund initial start-ups with donations, they also leverage donations to fund loan pools thus tied to the banking systems. But they are somewhat insulated to the economic shock due to funding by donation and extreme high rate of repayment of loans.

<Christianity Today, January/09>

USA: Urban blacks have been leaving the city for suburbs as they reach the middle class same as what whites did for decades. Traditionally, blacks drive back to the home church in the central city. But the second generation do not, causing churches to leave also. As black churches have been the major institution in the black communities, their leaving created huge void in the life and services especially for the poor. New strategies to serve them are needed.

<Christianity Today, January/09>

USA: A 15-year old youth on a mission trip to Belize last summer noticed, with her father from the hotel roof, barefoot kids were playing soccer on a nearby field with balls made out of paper. Herself a volleyball player, she thought of the unused equipment in her closet and similar stuff of the soccer players. Thus was born Christmas for Belize project to donate good used soccer equipment. It elicited enthusiastic response from schools, churches and even the local professional soccer team. Hundreds of balls, shoes, jerseys, etc were collected to be delivered.

<Dallas Morning News, 12/22/08>

Persecution: According to a monitoring agency, persecution likely will continue to intensify in 2009, partly because, preoccupied with economic crisis, the world will pay less attention to the fate of Christian minorities in nations with totalitarian rule or large elements of radical militants such as Iran, North Korea, Nigeria and India.

<Open Doors USA, www.opendoorsusa.org, 1/2/09>

Central Asia: Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and now Kyrgyzstan have all passed very restrictive religions laws that all but force the evangelical church into hiding. These laws require churches with 200 or more people to register officially, prohibit evangelism outside the church without a permit, restrict what can be taught to youths, and require official approval to cooperate with foreign missionaries, etc.

<Russian Ministries, russian-ministries.org, 1/26/09>

Mongolia: 15 years ago, less than 20 of 6 million people were Christians. A popular Christian radio station and six other stations were set to air the drama 'The Life of Christ' last Christmas throughout the nation.

<Far East Broadcasting, www.febc.org, 12/24/08>

Romania: An evangelist went in recently to preach a series of gospel meetings and found that the people were as hungry for the gospel as he saw the first time in 1980. The church with 3,000 capacity was overflowed and many came to the Lord. But instead of being persecuted for their faith under communism then, they are now dealing with materialism. Due to poor economy many have left for other parts of Europe. The evangelist hopes that they will bring revival to Western Europe as they have experienced revivals, great awakenings and the moving of the Holy Spirit.

<Sammy Tippit Ministries, www.sammytippit.org, 1/28/09>

Middle East: The gospel broadcast in Arabic has generated a growing response via text messaging since early 2007. That year they received text messages from 4,000 different individuals. The number in 2008 was over 6,000. The messages were widely interactive, allowing the agency to disciple believers and encourage non-believers. And it is much more reliable than using the mail.

<Words of Hope, www.woh.org, 12/26/08>

Indonesia: When earth quake tsunami hit Banda Aceh province at 2005 Christmas, all the hospitals were destroyed completely. But even some were repaired or replaced, they did not have nor ever had anyone on site to maintain or repair the equipment. Responding to official's call, one agency help constructed a service and training center. Now the hospitals are able to provide better and faster service than they could ever before. The opportunity to minister to them and living in the community would not have been there before the tsunami. The agency recently has turned over the operation of the center to the provincial health office.

<International Aid, www.internationalaid.org, 12/18/08>