



Mexico: Due to the violence of drug cartel war on the US border, many US churches have canceled short-term mission trips there this year. Some still went with added precautions like not allowing anyone younger than 21, avoiding dangerous places and going out at night. Locals remain hopeful. One church has seen attendance up as violence increases and people more open to receive the gospel.

<Christianity Today, May/09>

Vietnam: Officials granted rare permission to unregistered house churches to hold a large, public Easter-related service last April 21 in Ho Chi Minh City. For the first time since 2007 more than 15,000 came to worship in a stadium openly. 1,200 made decision for Christ in a gathering normally considered unlawful. Permission did not come until 3 hours before the scheduled evening service just as an unseasonal rain stopped. The huge crowd sang with joy exhibiting a unity that belies the divisiveness and provincialism of the house churches.

<Christianity Today, June/09>

China: June 4 marked the 20th anniversary of Tiananmen Square massacre, when soldiers killed an estimated 2-3,000 peaceful demonstrators protesting for anti-corruption, democracy and human rights. This resulted in widespread despair and disillusionment and a revival of interest in the gospel among the students as well as intellectuals like writers, lawyers, etc. Today, every university has at least a Bible study group, sometimes hundreds of them. Also, there are now hundreds of businessmen fellowships in major corporations and in homes. Though officials frown upon this, they leave them alone because they need their honesty and integrity.

<China Aid Association, www.chinaaid.org, 6/2/09><Global Advance, www.globaladvance.org, 4/29/09>

USA: A recent survey of ~25,000 people in 12 megachurches found that they are younger (average age 40), single (nearly a third), committed to Christ (98%), have much spiritual growth (62%), less active (45% never volunteer at the church), and less giving (32% give little or none). Each week, an estimated 5 million attend about 1,300 Protestant megachurches with attendance of 2,000 or more.

<Dallas Morning News, 6/10/09>

Arabic Bible: The newly translated Easy-to-Read Bible was released recently in the Middle East and met with much enthusiasm. It replaces the older version that was translated in 1860 with outdated vocabulary and grammar very challenging to read. Arabs have a deep-seated respect for Jesus and more likely welcome it as a book about Jesus. After almost 10 years of work the publisher already got a demand for 50,000 copies.

<World Bible Translation Center, wbtcc.org, 6/5/09>

BBM: Similar to church planting, business-based ministry goes into a restricted area and start an openly Christian business. When surrounding Muslim farmers ask Christians in the chicken farm how they raise such healthy chickens, it creates openings for sharing the gospel. BBMs provide jobs for the community, access to otherwise difficult fields, and opportunity for early business retirees to enter mission field. Other successful ventures have been software companies, steel and handicraft businesses.

<SIM International, www.sim.org, 6/1/09>

Mission: The economic downturn has hampered the sending out of missionaries. Last year an agency sent out 1,088 new missionaries to the field. This year they sent 101 so far and likely <100 more the rest of the year.

<International Mission Board, imb.org, 5/28/09>

Canada: A group of hockey fans decided to donate a goat to a needy family in the mission field every time their favorite professional club won in the playoff. They set a goal of 16 goats hoping the club would win the championship. But with the help of a website and coverage of a radio station, they have now reached 1,008 goats (\$25,200 donations) even their club has already lost. They are considering making this an annual event.

<Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, www.crwrc.org, 6/3/09>

India: Around 20,000 farmers in central India commit suicide each month. Trouble starts when they must use genetically modified seeds by the officials at higher cost and more water. As crops fail due to lack of money for water, borrowing from moneylenders at 100-460% interest left them in hopelessly vicious cycle. An agency has stepped in to help educate the children and counsel the families. 90% of these families come to Christ.

<Serve India Ministries, www.serve-im.org, 5/28/09>

Peru: The August 2008 earthquake killed >600 people, mostly children in school at the time. In a village of 90 families, no markets were open after the quake, so people started a soup kitchen for those in need. Today, one third of the houses are still in ruin, but the soup kitchen continues with help from an agency. Seeing the love of God in motion of houses rebuilt and material provided, many have reassessed their lives and come to Christ.

<Food For the Hungry, www.fh.org, 6/2/09>

N Korea: As the government tests nuclear bomb and missiles, Christians are harshly persecuted with 40,000 to 60,000 of them among estimated 200,000 political prisoners. Yet, they have started a prayer campaign to evangelize the entire country.

<Open Doors USA, www.opendoorsusa.org, 5/27/09>