



Mergent Church: For 20 years, church merging has grown in US and Canada. A year ago, 2 thriving churches merged in order to better reach the Phoenix area and, with a third church joining last January, they have grown to 4,800 members, 14% more than their combined total before. Traditional survival-based mergers by dwindling churches often shrink again. But mission-driven model spurs additional growth. 2% of churches have merged in the past 2 years, and 5% are likely to by 2013.

<Christianity Today, christianitytoday.com, September 2011>

Bhutan: The constitution states that Buddhism is the “spiritual heritage” of the nation, and it is one of the few nations where there are no open mosques, Hindu temples, Christian churches or Jewish synagogues. Yet, with 1st election held in 2008 it is now a parliamentary democracy. Though evangelism is still illegal, the number of believers is clearly growing, gathering in house fellowships secretly. What is hopeful is that people widely believe that the government is well aware of the house fellowships and has chosen not to interfere.

<Words of Hope, www.woh.org, 8/22/11>

India: The economic growth and technology advances have reshaped people’s mind regarding support of certain Christian ministries. For 30 years, an agency distributing audio scripture tapes and tape players in the nation received 2-3% from local giving for their budget. This year, they already see it jump to 20% and hope to see it rise to 25% next year. Especially with the younger generation more affluent and technologically minded, they know what technology can do and will have a sense of ownership in supporting these ministries just as supporting mission personnel.

<Audio Scripture Ministries of Holland, www.asmtoday, 8/24/11>

Philippines: In 2008 an agency started a children’s outreach ministry in a slum area. Soon after the program ended, the transformed parents were eager to begin a church. Under the leadership of missionaries, the church has grown to a congregation of over 100 today, despite the devastating effect of a typhoon in 2009 that wiped out many lives and homes across the island nation. A group of gamblers and alcoholics has turned into a troop of Christ-centered citizens, built a three-story structure, and added a daycare with professional teachers.

<Operation Mobilization, www.omusa.org, 7/28/11>

Burundi: 500 churches from different segments came together for an outreach program in early August. The event began with a week of community outreach and service: eyeglass clinic, women gatherings, school for deaf children, youth sports clinics, etc. An American evangelist and his team

assisted the program with some 60,000 crowding a fairground during the weekend. Early counting of decision cards indicated that 8,000 have accepted Christ. It was an historic show of Christian unity.

<Luis Palau Association, www.palau.org, 8/15/11>

Uganda: Malaria is a easily preventable disease, but more children die of it than HIV, war, or any other threat here. The reasons are clinics and hospitals are few in many regions and some of them lack equipment to diagnose and treat it. In a northern region of 1 million people, there are less than 10 clinics, meaning about 1 doctor for 10,000 patients. In 2 months, 520 children in the region died of malaria. Through a church contact with an US agency, equipment and medicine were sent. In a year the problem was essentially solved. Only 2 or 3 children died of it this year.

<International Aid, www.internationalaid.org, 8/9/11>

Mexico: An agency set up a foster group home in Juarez, right in the midst of violence and turmoil. Some of the children are orphans due to the drug war. Last year, the group created their first self-led Vacation Bible School with 130 in attendance. This year over 150 came and 63 of them accepted Christ. Most of this year’s group were teenagers who did not attend last year feeling too old for the event. This gives hope that the next generation could be less violent and avoid being succumbed to the active recruiting of the drug cartels.

<Buckner International, www.buckner.org, 8/10/11>

Cameroon: A team of missionaries witnessed the attack suffered by a village from a neighboring village that resulted in 300 homes destroyed and 6 deaths. The motive for the attack was for land, food and water. The team repaired the homes and wells, and even arranged for 3 new wells to be constructed. Clean water is in critical need. Some 30% of the population does not have it. The team is putting Biosand filters in the new wells that can reduce diarrhea by 40%. This will not only save lives but provide unique opportunities for the gospel.

<Wycliffe Associates, www.wycliffe.org, 8/10/11>

Sudan: An agency conducted leadership training in the recently divided southern part of the nation for a group of Christian leaders with a passion for reaching the unreached. Over 30 of them committed to planting new churches in the most unreached tribes. 138 groups in both north and south, over half of all the groups combined, are unreached. Amazingly, these leaders coming from different tribes from the south, have the heart to reach the northern tribes too, despite the pains they have gone through in the last decade.

<Global Advance, www.globaladvance.org, 7/8/11>