



# centerline

ACCELERATING GLOBAL EVANGELISM

SUMMER 2010

News from the **Billy Graham Center at Wheaton College**, Wheaton, Ill.

## A Slice of Heaven in Boston: The 10<sup>th</sup> Ethnic Ministries Summit

LAURIE NICHOLS

Nearly six hundred people from at least a dozen major language backgrounds came together in what some called “a slice of heaven on Blue Hill Avenue.” Church leaders and lay people gathered for the 10<sup>th</sup> Ethnic Ministries Summit in Boston to learn best practices in multicultural, multiethnic worship; listen as key practitioners shared what it means for the Church to be a “city without walls”; and interact with others who are passionate about helping churches become increasingly diverse.

“This type of consultation is invaluable,” shared Glenn Smith, executive director of the Montreal-based Christian Direction. “Churches throughout history have been multiethnic; however, the magnitude and multitude of the diversity is different today—it is changing so quickly. We cannot let our fears lead us to continue in our homogenous churches. Homog-

enous churches eat up culture—they don’t give back to the city.”

Those attending the three-day Summit from April 15-17, 2010 had their choice of fifty-six seminar/track topics, including Building the Multicultural Church, Ministering to the Second Generation, Women in Intercultural Ministry, Understanding Cultural Openness to the Gospel, Muslim Outreach, and more. Forty-one people attended the two-day Pre-Summit Research Consultation and Training, during which they learned about both national and local examples of research regarding ethnic communities and church development. Additionally, eighty Bible school and seminary students earned academic credit



Nearly six hundred people attended the 10th Ethnic Ministries Summit in Boston.

by attending the Summit.

Plenary speakers included Smith; Alvin Padilla, dean of the Center for Urban Ministerial Education at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary; Soong-Chan Rah, Milton B. Engebretson assistant professor of church growth and evangelism at North Park Theological Seminary; Alvin Sanders, executive director of reconciliation with the Evangelical Free Church of America; and Jeanette Yep, pastor of global and

*Continued on page 4*



### **Bound for Glory: First Exhibition of New Work by Timothy Botts** Through September 8, 2010

Timothy Botts’ new series, *Bound for Glory*, which illustrates the lyrics of gospel spirituals, is currently on display at the Billy Graham Center Museum. The exhibit features more than thirty works by the masterful calligrapher. Botts chose the museum as the first venue to display his pieces. Inspired by African American spirituals, the series depicts the themes of struggle and perseverance, faith in God, and the hope of heaven. Each illustration is accompanied by a caption from award-winning African American author and journalist Patricia Raybon.

**Museum Hours:** Monday–Saturday, 9:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. Sunday, 1:00–5:00 p.m.

For more information, call the museum at 630.752.5909

[www.bgcmuseum.org](http://www.bgcmuseum.org)



# director's dialogue

LON ALLISON

## The Rest and the West...A Mission of Mutuality

**M**y parents (86 and 80) tell me parenting never stops. Even with their 57-year-old son they continue to care, pray, and listen to me. My wife, Marie, and I are adjusting to a similar evolving relationship with our three young adult children. I have noticed three stages. The first stage was their full dependence upon us. Now, they are bridging into independence (stage two). As they do, a third stage occurs—increasingly, they are teaching and instructing us. For example, through Tara (24), I'm learning about marketing and leadership as she relates knowledge from her MBA studies. From Courtney (22), we are learning how to ask good questions and listen deeply—skills she has in abundance. And just a few weeks ago I learned from Eric (19) about the movement from impressionism to cubism in art. Small examples, but clearly during stage three children reciprocate and become guides to their parents. I call this "mutuality."

If we examine global evangelization using similar constructs, then the Church has clearly entered stage three. The Church in the Global South and East (a.k.a. the "The Rest") is now larger than the Church in the West, just as Eric at 6'2" now eclipses his 5'9" dad. "The Rest" is a Church possessing theological wisdom derived from the con-

text of suffering and poverty. In this they are our teachers. "The Rest" espouses and experiences in many places a deeper and more vibrant life of faith, understanding of the Holy Spirit, and seamless integration of the role of saving souls and transforming societies than we possess in the older parent Western Church. These are broad strokes. Others could be added, but that is not my point. Global evangelization is no longer in stage one (dependence) or two (independence). We are at stage three (mutuality). In my mind, this is the key question facing the Global Church in the early twenty-first century: *How do we embrace and shift our understanding and methodologies in the new reality of stage three?*

This summer, the Billy Graham Center, in cooperation with a few other agencies and churches, is doing a "case study" on this very issue. In July, I will accompany a group of ten leaders to Rwanda. My role is to preach the gospel in a region-wide festival (est. ten thousand people in attendance), meet with Rwandan church and political leaders, and minister with the team in urban and rural settings. Ministries of compassion will accompany proclamation. We will also learn from Rwandan Christians. The 1994 genocide, during which over one million people were killed, is deeply ingrained on the minds of those in the Church. The Church in Rwanda ministers reconciliation between people at levels we can barely imagine. The

doctrine of forgiveness is theologically and organically understood in Rwanda. Our team—and the entire Church of the West—has much to learn.

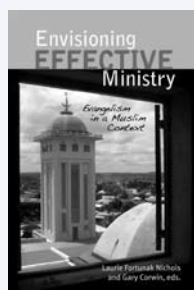
However, our visit to Rwanda is only the first aspect of mutuality. We are asking our hosts to then come to the U.S. and minister to us. Plans of their ministry to the U.S. are in early development. The BGC will host meetings with area church leaders to discuss forgiveness and reconciliation from the Rwandan context. Rwandans will be our scholars-in-residence. We also hope to open classrooms throughout Wheaton College so our students, staff, and faculty are likewise taught through our Rwandan friends.

The next decade will open new understandings and practices as the Church steps boldly into stage three of mutuality between "The Rest and the West." This is an exciting time to serve Jesus Christ. Please pray for our ministry to Rwanda on July 16-28. Grace to you all.

Lon Allison

*P.S. The Rwandan Mission requires that the BGC raise nearly \$20,000. This covers our costs of going and ministering in Rwanda and helps us invite them to come to us within the next year. If you can help, we'd be most grateful. See insert.*

## New BGC Publications!



**Envisioning Effective Ministry: Evangelism in a Muslim Context.** Laurie Fortunak Nichols and Gary R. Corwin, eds. \$19.95.

Are you, your church, or your mission agency involved in ministry to Muslims? Do you wrestle with the significant issues of Muslim contextualization? Are you hoping to effectively share the gospel with followers of Islam—but unsure of where to start? In this one volume you will

find fifty of the top Muslim ministry articles published over the past forty-six years in *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*. Sections include: understanding Islam, theology, contextualization, building relationships, and evangelistic methods & church planting.



**Manteniéndose Bien: Estrategias Para el Personal Penitenciario.** Caterina Spinaris Tudor. Antonio Prieto Surmay, trans. \$3.95.

Spanish version of *Staying Well: Strategies for Corrections Staff*, the 4<sup>th</sup> booklet in the Institute for Prison Ministries Library, published in 2009. Corrections staff need both the permission to safely acknowledge their struggles and effective practical tools for dealing with the impact of their jobs. This booklet provides information to

increase your awareness of how your job may be changing you and ways to deal with those changes.

Visit [www.emisdirect.com](http://www.emisdirect.com) or call 630.752.7158.



The Summit, sponsored by the Ethnic America Network (EAN), was based on Zechariah 2:4-5.

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regional outreach at Grace Chapel in Lexington, Massachusetts.

"Anybody looking at demographic trends sees what *Time* magazine calls the 'browning' of America," says Sanders. "By 2050 there will be no majority ethnic group. Any ministry serious about reaching America must be serious about multiethnic ministry." Smith agrees: "Diversity is the very essence of the Trinity. It is God's project for human history. It is what the Celestial City looks like. Reflection on good practices in multicultural ministry is indispensable for those in urban missiology. It is a major issue that the Church needs to deal with."

The Summit, sponsored by the Ethnic America Network (EAN), was based on Zechariah 2:4-5: "Jerusalem will be a city without walls because of the great number of men and livestock in it. And I myself will be a wall of fire around it," declares the Lord, "and I will be its glory within." For the first time the Summit was hosted by two churches—Jubilee Christian Church International and Morning Star Baptist Church (both located on Blue Hill Avenue)—thus creating a sense of unity and partnership for churches in the Boston area. According to Chandler Im, director of ethnic ministries at the BGC and director of the EAN, "It helped create a sense of community. The whole atmosphere was warm and comfortable—a place where people from different walks of life could meet each other."

Both venues provided prayer rooms open throughout the Summit. There, African Americans and Koreans got to know each other while lifting up the needs of ethnic churches in North America. Many who attended these prayer times committed to ongoing prayer collaboration in the future.

For Im, Smith, Sanders, and others, in a time when first, second, and third generation immigrants from nearly every nation have joined our communities, there are few greater tasks for the Church than engaging those who are ethnically, culturally, and linguistically different than us. "It is not enough that we tolerate each other," said Im. "We, in the Church, need to stand up together and embrace each other as one family of God. This will also be a witness to the world. And for this to happen, we must be intentional in reaching out to our neighbors."

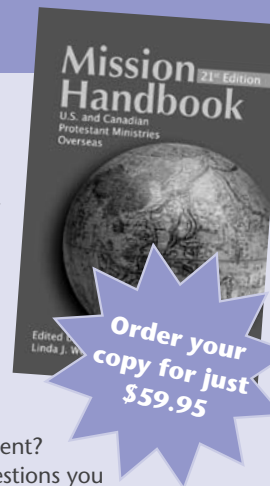
"Multiethnic Colorado," EAN's regional conference, will be held April 8-9, 2011 in Denver. The theme is "Unity in Diversity—Learning from Ethnic America." The next National Summit will be held in Spartanburg, South Carolina, in April 2012.

This year's Summit concluded with a 75-member multiethnic, multinational, multigenerational choir singing "How Great Is Our God." "It was very powerful for me and for others," shared Im. "It was a foretaste of heaven."

## New 2010 Edition!

**Mission Handbook: U.S. and Canadian Protestant Ministries Overseas, 21st Edition.** Linda J. Weber, ed. \$59.95.

Are you considering a short-term trip to Kenya? Do you wonder what ministries are working in parts of the Middle East? Are you looking to join the Business as Mission movement? If these are the kinds of questions you are asking, the *Mission Handbook* is for you!



It is the most comprehensive guide to nearly 1,000 North American-based mission agencies working overseas. Each listing includes contact information, types of mission activity, areas of service, personnel statistics, mission statement, and more. An in-depth analysis of North American missions gives you a synopsis of trends and comparisons in North American missions.

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The Billy Graham Center accelerates global evangelism, partnering with Christian leaders to develop strategies and skills for communicating the gospel. The Center serves the Church in evangelism and missions through leadership training, research, and strategic planning.

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