



# billy graham center centerline

Winter 2007

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

## 550 Leaders from 112 Nations: A Gathering of God's People at the Lausanne Younger Leaders Gathering

**Laurie Fortunak**

For most of the participants, it was their first time attending an international Christian conference. For many, it was their first time interacting with Christians of other cultures, backgrounds and languages. For a few it was even their first time worshipping with other Christians. More than 550 younger leaders in evangelism and missions from 112 nations attended the Lausanne Younger Leaders Gathering (YLG-06) in Port Dickson, Malaysia this past fall 2006 to learn how to "Live and Lead like Jesus," the theme of the conference. The conference was sponsored by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE). Participants spoke dozens of languages, came from a variety of denominational backgrounds and were involved in countless types of ministry to men, women and children around the world. And they all came together for the purpose of advancing God's kingdom around the world.



Participants at the YLG-06 began each day by worshipping God either in English or in their national language via earpieces, like the ones shown here.

"This is our time as younger leaders!" exclaimed Grace Samson, a native of South Africa who serves as video production leader at Media Village, a ministry of Youth With A Mission. "Many great leaders have paved the way for us to serve. We should stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us and make a mark for God. It is time for us to bring the nations to God!"

For more than a year, members of the YLG-06 planning, selection, administration and operations teams worked as a "virtual team" from all areas of the world to hand-pick participants from eight regions. To represent the activity of the gospel being spread worldwide, two-thirds of the participants came from the global South (including Asia, Latin America, Africa and parts of the Middle East); the other one-third came from the global North. The confer-

ence included plenary sessions, break-out times, workshops, small group interaction and worship and was translated from English into Portuguese, French, Spanish, Korean and Chinese.

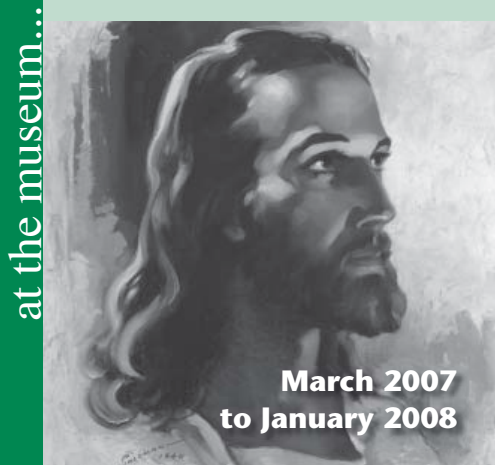
"There's something very powerful about Christians from around the world being in one room together," said Doug Bird-sall, executive chair for the LCWE. "This

**Continued on page 4**

### Face to Face: Warner Sallman's Images of Christ

The Billy Graham Center Museum is excited to showcase a new temporary exhibit starting in mid-March, entitled *Face to Face: Warner Sallman's Images of Christ*. While Warner Sallman (1892-1968) may not be a household name, his artwork, especially his *Head of Christ*, is instantly recognizable to millions of people around the world. This exhibit features several of Sallman's oil paintings, sketches and chalks depicting Jesus. It also includes memorabilia from his career as an artist and illustrator for the religious magazines *Covenant Companion* and the *Salvation Army's War Cry*.

In the past year over thirty-six thousand people have visited the Museum. Three hundred people made either a first-time commitment to Christ or rededicated their lives to the Lord.



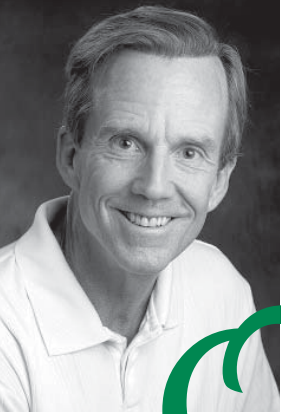
**March 2007  
to January 2008**

**Museum Hours:** Monday-Saturday, 9:30 AM-5:30 PM • Sunday, 1:00-5:00 PM

For more information, call the Museum at 630.752.5909

[www.billygrahamcenter.org/museum](http://www.billygrahamcenter.org/museum)

at the museum...



# director's devotional

Lon Allison

## Aspen Glow

One of the largest organisms on planet earth is an aspen tree. Found throughout the United States, aspen trees shimmer in the spring and summer, turn a splendorous gold in the autumn and shed their leaves in the winter cold. One aspen tree in Utah weighs over six thousand tons (that's twelve million pounds!). How can an aspen be so large and yet live on average only one hundred years? The answer is because an aspen tree is actually a limb that grows both into the air and into the soil, sending its roots both deep and wide. Thus, it gives birth to another limb. Over and over again goes the process. One such aspen has birthed more than forty thousand other limbs, each appearing to be its own tree. When we see such an aspen on a mountainside it looks to be a large grove of trees. In actuality, it is only one aspen tree. The original limb dies almost unseen amidst its children, while the limbs it births go on for thousands of years.

Of course there is a leadership lesson here. We are best at being leaders when we are freely giving ourselves to birthing and nourishing other leaders. Such leaders care little about who gets the credit for ministry success, as long as the kingdom grows. They market neither their own name nor their achievements; rather, they gather limbs all around them until soon they blend into the glorious beauty of God's larger work. In today's leadership literature we call such leaders "mentors." A dear mentor in my life, Dr. Leighton Ford, taught me of the aspen through his words and deeds.

As a result, I see aspens emerging throughout the kingdom Church world-

wide. Today, I am especially grateful for one aspen-leader I met nearly ten years ago. Dr. Mel Lorentzen was a distinguished professor of literature at Wheaton College. Mel had many talents; he could write, teach, preach and organize ministry with astonishing effect. He served as one of the first leaders of the Billy Graham Center. In fact, he led much of the work behind the scenes to build the Center's impressive structure. He also started the Institute for Strategic Evangelism, a vanguard department of the Center's ministries. Mel's leadership was spread richly and broadly in many ventures close to home and in far away places.

However, I did not know Mel in any of

those roles. Rather, I met him when he was "retired." Re-fired is a better word. He was full of energy. I especially remember how his eyes twinkled when he spoke either personally or in a public setting. His mind was fully engaged, his passion for Christ and his kingdom undiminished. What I most valued, however, were the personal times we had together. He listened deeply to my musings about life and ministry. He tenderly spoke into my life, gave careful and thoughtful advice regarding the Center and deepened my love of literature and the arts. I loved Jesus and life more because of Mel. I miss him. Heaven is richer since he left us, but we are, I am afraid, lessened.

And yet Mel is still with us. You see, he was an aspen. His memories, his teachings and even some of his carefully saved wealth lives on. I was filled with gratitude and yet not surprised when part of his estate was given to the Center nearly a year ago. Mel's life is still ministering to us.

This week I had lunch with Tim, a younger leader who recently assumed his first post-college ministry position. He told me how much respect he has for his supervisors. He voiced how both supervisors spend time with him, both on and off the job. Tim then added that he realized in his job interviews that many ministries talk about mentoring, but few actually practice it. He is probably right. I am glad Tim is where he is. By God's providence, he is among aspens.

Ponder the aspen and its maker. Go and do likewise.

*Lon J. Allison*

## Here's What's Happening at the BGC . . .

**The Institute for Prison Ministries** is coming out with a new booklet series for family and friends with loved ones who are incarcerated. "The IPM Library" will include pocket-sized booklets designed to act as a roadmap for those who have a loved one who is incarcerated. Each booklet will include a situation-appropriate, evangelistic message. The first booklet, *Help! My Loved One Is in Jail: What Do I Do Now?* will be available this spring.

**The Muslim Ministries Department** (MMD) is conducting seminars to help church leaders and lay leaders in Muslim evangelism. Each session includes readings, ministry opportunities and discussion on topics such as the history of Islam, beliefs and practices of Islam, Islamic fundamentalism and cultural and theological barriers in sharing the gospel with Muslims. The MMD is available to help churches train people to reach out to their Muslim neighbors.

**Rob Welch**, evangelist-in-residence at the Billy Graham Center, has seen hundreds of people in South India come to Christ through his ministry, *For His Glory Evangelistic Ministries*, in the past year. After leading two evangelistic teams to India in 2006, he is planning trips to India and the Congo this year. Welch and his team partner with local national churches, thus ensuring effective follow-up and discipleship for those who have responded to the message of salvation.

## The Billy Graham Center Scholarship Program

More than eight hundred international, furloughing missionary, urban ministry and pre-field missionary students have received financial support through the Billy Graham Center Scholarship Program in the past thirty years. These scholarships and grants have allowed students like Myrto Theocharous, a native of Cyprus, to pursue advanced studies in fields such as biblical and theological studies, intercultural studies/ TESOL, clinical psychology and evangelism. Before coming to Wheaton College Theocharous ministered to women in brothels and prostitutes who are part of the slave trade in Athens, Greece.

"Human trafficking is very common in Eastern Europe and the women involved in prostitution need to see the gospel incarnated," she said. "It is an unknown concept when someone wants to give them something and not just take from them. They go crazy when they realize you love them. True change can only come from the word and a social gospel. And yet their perception of who they really are can only be grasped in Christ. They must see themselves as Christ sees them."

Theocharous graduates with a masters degree in biblical exegesis in May 2007. In addition to her continuing work with women in Athens, she hopes to teach theology in a Bible college and go where few have gone before by writing books and biblical commentaries in Greek.

"There are almost no books or commentaries in Greek—they are all in English," she said. "The Evangelical Church in Greece is so small and the workers in biblical studies are so few. We need to have sound theology; at the same time we need to combine this with ministry to marginalized people. We need to look around and ask ourselves, 'How is justice going to be brought about today?'"

Since 1975 generous endowments provided by individuals committed to missions and evangelism have funded the scholarship program. The donors envisioned equipping key leaders for significant ministry in order to strengthen the

his institution.

"Turkey is a secular country and although there is not outright persecution, there is general resistance which makes it very difficult to build churches and Bible schools," he said. "The Christians there are generally all first-generation believers and they need strong pastoral leadership. By having the credentials and the theological education, I can better do that."

Billy Graham scholars come from many regions of the world, including Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe, and have often been serving in a specific area of ministry for years (the exception to this is are the pre-field missionary candidates who are preparing for missionary work outside of North America). The awards are given on a loan/scholarship basis, with twenty-five percent forgiven for each year of ministry after the completion of the masters program.



BGC international scholars. Back row (L to R): Narantuya Bayadaa (Mongolia), Maria Ciupe (Romania), Vivette Henry (Jamaica) and Mboligihe Ndalu (Congo). Seated (L to R): Myrto Theocharous (Cyprus) and Yreille Belizaire (Bahamas).

Church of Jesus Christ worldwide. For the majority of scholars, the dream of further training for more effective service would not come true without this financial assistance. Many are not only involved in ministry full-time, but are also raising their own financial and prayer support.

George Bristow, a furloughing missionary to Turkey, is one example. Nearly twenty years ago he and his wife moved from the United States to Turkey as church planters. Today he is academic dean for the only Christian college in Turkey. With a degree in architecture and in business, Bristow had no theological training before coming to Wheaton in 2006. He will graduate in May 2007 with a masters degree in general theology and will head back to Istanbul, Turkey, to continue teaching biblical theology and related courses at

For many in the scholarship program, getting back into ministry and impacting the world for Christ motivates and excites them. Theocharous, for example, has learned valuable and important lessons and concepts through her time at Wheaton. However, she knows that God has wired her in such a way that she must combine her studies with her desire to help the poor and marginalized.

"The teachers I have had here are also my mentors," she said. "They have given their lives to their studies and are so humble, even with all the knowledge they have. They are continually learning. And yet my own path is to combine what I have learned here with ministry to the marginalized people. We need to have a theology for the oppressed and poor. That is my hope in my future ministry."

continued from page 1

gathering reflects the unity of the body of Christ very clearly. It's awe-inspiring that Jesus gave a command to share the gospel to twelve men and that this command has been carried out so significantly. We need to continue following that command. As



Older leaders and mentors came alongside YLG-06 participants whose hearts beat for a worldwide movement of God.

evangelicals we need to think of the world in its totality."

The participants shared a common passion for evangelism. The goal of the gathering was to encourage and equip them as they seek to continue in their respective ministry settings. Conference speakers included Peter Kuzmic, founding president of Evangdjeoski Teoloski Fakultet in Osijek, Croatia; Ajith Fernando, national director of Youth for Christ in Sri Lanka; Mutua Mahiaini, national director for The Navigators in Kenya; Becky Pippert, founder of Salt Shaker Ministries; and Ramez Atallah, program chair for the Lausanne III World Congress in 2010 and president of the Bible League in Egypt.

The speakers covered topics such as servant leadership, partnership, the state of the gospel, suffering and the cross, discipleship, scripture and the history and future of the Lausanne movement. Each day began and ended with worship. Each day also included small group interaction in which participants from different areas of the world shared personal testimonies, hopes, dreams, passions and sorrows. Regional connect times also allowed individuals from each part of the world to connect with others to form friendships and future partnerships.

Participants came from every region of the world and from nearly every type of background. Some were servants to peoples in the unreached parts of the

world; others were servants in areas where nearly every person has access to the good news of the gospel. Still others serve in places where apathy is commonplace and material distractions are the norm. Although the ministry environments are vastly different—from reaching the animists and spiritists in dense-

ly-populated regions of Africa to reaching hardened followers of the New Age Movements in Europe to reaching devoted followers of Islam in the war-torn parts of the Middle East and North Africa—the passion is still the same. The same cry that echoed in the ears of the prophet Habakkuk three millennia ago is still being sung today: "For the whole earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14).

"Many of the people in my country claim to be Christian," remarked Nicolas Saosogo, a social ministry leader in the Solomon Islands. "But for those who aren't, we fight for them. There are many who are backsliding Christians. We need more wisdom from God in how to lead people to Christ."

During their time at the gathering, Saosogo and hundreds of others gained more of this wisdom as they interacted and learned from older leaders such as Robyn Claydon, vice chair of the LCWE and former senior associate for women for the LCWE, and C. V. Mathew, a native of India and a professor at Uganda Christian University in Uganda.

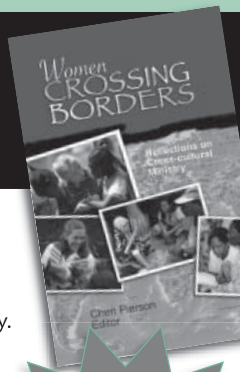
"I often think of Psalm 66, 'Come and let me tell you what the Lord has done for me,'" said Claydon. "The telling of our stories is powerful. We need to tell others about how God has met us."

Mathew agrees. "Whatever area we are in, we need to be world Christians," he said. "We need to be concerned about the Church worldwide and have a heart as big as the world."

Mathew's vision also reflects the heart of those at the Billy Graham Center. The Center partners with Wheaton College and the LCWE to publish *Lausanne World Pulse*, a free, monthly online publication which seeks to share evangelism and mission information, trends and statistics on what God is doing around the world through his people. We invite you to visit it at [www.lausanneworldpulse.com](http://www.lausanneworldpulse.com). ■

# Just Released!

**Women Crossing Borders: Reflections on Cross-cultural Ministry**  
edited by Cheri Pierson



We all have a call to go out and share the good news of Jesus Christ with others. For some this is done in their local community. For others, like the women featured in **Women Crossing Borders**, this means reaching out to people cross-culturally, both in their homelands and in other regions of the world. The women featured in this book reflect on lessons learned in seeking to share Christ around the world.

Only \$9.99  
(\$11.36 Can.)

**Women Crossing Borders** can be used to:

- promote discussion in academic settings and missions classes
- encourage women either involved in or going into missions
- help women discern where God may be calling them
- serve as a devotional

Visit us at [www.billygrahamcenter.org/emis](http://www.billygrahamcenter.org/emis)

To order call 630.752.7158  
or purchase it online at [www.emisdirect.com](http://www.emisdirect.com)

Published by Evangelism and Missions Information Service (EMIS) of the Billy Graham Center at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois



**LONNIE J. ALLISON** ■ Director  
**KENNETH D. GILL** ■ Associate Director  
**LAURIE FORTUNAK** ■ Editor  
**Ellen Rising Morris** ■ Designer

The Billy Graham Center stimulates 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, networking and strategic planning.

*CenterLine* is issued three times a year. Subscription is free. To subscribe, please contact us by phone or email. Send change of address to Billy Graham Center, Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL 60187-5593.

PHONE: 630.752.5157  
E-MAIL: [BGCADM@wheaton.edu](mailto:BGCADM@wheaton.edu)  
WEB: [www.billygrahamcenter.org](http://www.billygrahamcenter.org)



Wheaton College complies with federal and state requirements for nondiscrimination on the basis of handicap, sex, race, color or ethnic origin in admission and access to its programs and activities.

Winter 2007 • Vol. 30, No. 1