



Edinburgh 2010 Newsletter - December 2009

Dear Reader,

We are blessed with a huge variety of Christian traditions to mark the beginning of Advent: some of us open an advent calendar every morning or light a candle on Sunday, while others hold the tradition of fasting 40 days before Christmas. Particular colours, hymns and readings help us to wait and prepare for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus.

All those who are getting ready for 2010 might also want to use this time for contemplation, to breathe deeply one last time, before the centenary year finally arrives.

Happy Christmas from all of us!

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Interview with Kirsteen Kim

Dr. Kirsteen Kim is Associate Senior Lecturer in Theology at Leeds Trinity and All Saints and works half-time for Edinburgh 2010, coordinating the study process. British by birth, Kirsteen has worked for the Presbyterian Church of Korea, Union Biblical Seminary in India, the Cambridge Theological Federation and Selly Oak College in the UK. She specialises in World Christianity and its implications for theology and mission.



Kirsteen, which aspects do you consider special about the Edinburgh 2010 study process?

The Edinburgh 2010 study process is unique - it is a polycentric, multinational project of churches worldwide. It is sponsored by all the major Christian world bodies; there are study events taking place in every continent; hundreds of Christians in different parts of the world are taking part; at least ten volumes and many articles are expected from it. The project is focused on nine study themes. The conveners of these themes are 8 women and 9 men from Protestant, Orthodox, Evangelical and Pentecostal backgrounds; 3 Africans, 4 Asians, 2 North Americans and 10 Europeans. In addition, Edinburgh 2010 study processes have been organised in all continents by regional and confessional groups, including six Roman Catholic institutions, and there are seven transversal topics which cut across the main themes. The breadth and inclusivity of the Edinburgh 2010 project mark it out as a very special - and almost certainly unparalleled - event in Christian history.

In which way is the work of the 2010 study groups different from the work of the 1910 commissions?

The most noticeable difference is that Commissioners in 1910 were all of European descent, of Protestant denominations and overwhelmingly male. A second difference is that the main work done by the Commissions was gathering information on mission activities in different parts of the world and discussing strategy. Discussion of theology was curtailed because it would make ecumenical cooperation too difficult. Today the facts are largely known, and most of the Edinburgh 2010 discussions relate mission theory and practice to theological issues at the heart of mission. Third, the means of research have changed. The postal systems of today probably do not match up to those of the imperial period but in the era of globalisation, email does an even quicker job of linking researchers around the world. In 2010, like 1910, many hard-bound volumes will be produced, but in 2010 the internet makes it possible to expand the research material almost infinitely. Under the "study process", "events" and "resources" links on the website www.edinburgh2010.org you can find programmes, papers, reports, statements and photos of the many different study activities worldwide. It is the website - a multi-faceted, hyper-linked, open-ended worldwide web - which will most faithfully represent the content and ethos of Edinburgh 2010.

Is it still possible to engage in the study process?

Yes. We are still receiving information about study activities happening now and being planned for next year, which we are happy to post on the website. Relevant papers can also be submitted for posting on the site - and for 18-30 year-olds, the essay and multimedia competitions are open until 15 January 2010. In the New Year, we will encourage an electronic discussion around the papers for the pre-conference publication, which will be posted on the site. Although the list of delegates for next year's conference is now closed, its proceedings will be made available, and you are encouraged to respond. After the activities of 2010, the website will continue to provide material for missiological reflection for years to come.

What's New?

Mission Project WARC/LWF

In November pastors and lay leaders from three continents met in Buenos Aires, Argentina, to share stories of how they interpret mission in their context today. The meeting was part of a two-year study on "Mission Today" developed jointly by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). Results of the study are to be presented at the Edinburgh conference next year in June. A video with impressions of the meeting was produced and is available on www.youtube.com.

Hyderabad Colloquium - Report online



As reported in the last edition of our newsletter, the Colloquium "Mission at and from the Margins: Patterns, Protagonists and Perspectives" was held at the Henry Martyn Institute, Hyderabad, from the 22nd to the 27th of September. The focus of the Colloquium was on the History of Christianity in the South Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, and particularly on how mission happened and happens at and from the "margins" – the margins connoting the marginalised, yet resilient, Dalit communities. A full report of the meeting, together with photographs, is now available as a PDF download from our website www.edinburgh2010.org.



Conference Update

The Study Process Monitoring Group and most of the 20 stakeholders of Edinburgh 2010 have now nominated their delegates for the Edinburgh conference. The 250 participants come from a wide range of organisations and Christian traditions. Delegates will travel from places all over the world to meet in Edinburgh next year, including Russia, India, Chile, Namibia and New Zealand, to name just a few.

Study Process Update

Theme 2: Christian Mission among other Faiths

The title of the study theme, "Christian Mission among other Faiths", may sound redundant as Christian mission is popularly understood to be Christian activities to and with other religious faiths. Understanding Christian mission broadly as "the act of crossing a faith boundary in its multiple dimensions," the group undertook a corporate study on the theme.

It has been recognised that during the past three decades, there have been serious debates as to how Christians should relate with people of other faiths. While some Christians have come to understand Christian mission to be the formation of mutual relations with people of other religious faiths, others seek to offer the Christian message of "good news" to other religious adherents and look for "effective" means of persuading them to accept the Gospel. Respecting the different theological positions and traditions, the study group sets out to incorporate the various thoughts into a body of understanding mission among other faiths.

The core group met twice (in January and August of 2009), and designed the study, invited contributors, and wrote the summary paper. From the beginning, the group felt that the scenario of the study and the hermeneutical approach have to be worked out by the group within which contributions by thinkers and practitioners of mission among other faiths will be situated. These features are spelled out in the core group's summary paper. Two groups of contributions were then collected. The first group is on the various theological and ecclesial "positions". These "position papers" are drawn from Catholic, Evangelical-Protestant, Conciliar-Protestant, Orthodox, and Pentecostal. In addition, a position paper each on "apologetics" and "theologies of religions" are also included. The second group of papers is on case studies of missional works and thoughts among or with various other (non-Christian) religious traditions. Such case studies are invited from thinkers and practitioners of different theological persuasions and traditions.

The core group was pleased to have completed the entire project by October 2009. We thank the cooperation and hard work of all the contributors.

Lalsangkima Pachuau, Co-Convener

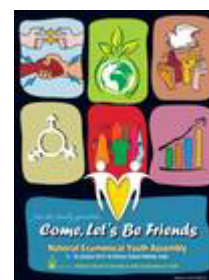
Events & Opportunities

6-10 January 2010

Come, Let's be Friends - Youth Assembly of the NCC India

Venue: **St. Thomas School, Kolkata (India)**

In order to strengthen and promote ecumenical youth participation and leadership, the Commission on Youth of the National Council of Churches in India invites 700 youth activists, students, theologians and church leaders to come to Kolkata in January 2010. Based on the theme "Come, Let's be Friends" the Assembly wants to explore opportunities and challenges faced by the youth in their respective Church and society today. In the year of the Centenary of the World Missionary Conference, the Assembly 2010 will also be reflecting on the theme of youth and mission, and try to identify new and creative perspectives on ecumenical mission in the 21st century. For more information, please visit the event organiser's website at <https://sites.google.com/site/neya2010/>.





7-10 January 2010

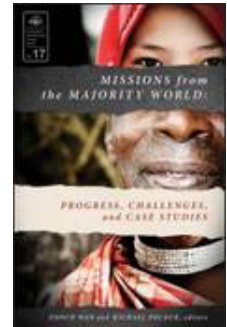
American Society of Church History Conference

Venue: San Diego Marriott Hotel & Marina, San Diego (USA)

The annual Winter 2010 meeting of the American Society of Church History (ASCH) will be held from Thursday to Sunday, January 7-10, 2010, in San Diego, California, in conjunction with the American Historical Association's annual meeting. One of the panels will discuss and review The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910. The session will be chaired by Keith A. Francis (Baylor University). Speakers include Peter Phan (Georgetown University), Heather J. Sharkey (University of Pennsylvania), Jessica Ann Sheetz-Nguzen (University of Central Oklahoma). For more information visit the website of the ASCH at www.churchhistory.org/.

New Mission Resource

Missions from the Majority World
Edited by Enoch Wan and Michael Pocock
(2009), ISBN 9780878080199



Churches from the whole world are joined in the effort to reach the whole world. Although it has been documented that Western missionaries serving outside their countries still comprise the majority of world missions workers, the growth rate of majority-world missionaries far outpaces that of the West. In recent years, while Western missionary forces are shrinking in numbers and possibly in influence, missions from the majority world have proliferated, bringing amazing progress and some challenges. *Missions from the Majority World* represents the thinking of 14 majority-world mission scholars and 10 Westerners with lengthy experience in the missionary enterprise. The book shows the progress and challenges of missions from the majority world and illustrates this by case studies from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. For further information, please visit the publisher's website at www.missionbooks.org.

Pray with us

You are invited to join in prayer with all those who look with faith and hope towards the events of Edinburgh 2010.

Take time to listen to the Word of God

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. *Luke 2:15-19*



Take time to ponder that Word and to pray

Father of Mercies, draw us once more this December to contemplate the Child in the manger – your Son, born of Mary, God become man, God here for us. Teach us how to tell this story, as the shepherds did, now, to the men and women of our time. Fill our hearts with love and concern for the children of this world, the small ones who remind us of your coming. Let your love reach out through your people, especially to children in need or oppressed. And remind us always that unless we become as children, we will never find your kingdom.

Amen