



# FEB

## Bringing Communicators Together

**A Reminder ... to book the Dates NOW**  
**for the 2018 FEB Conference in the**  
**Emmaus Centre - DUBLIN**  
**NOVEMBER 29th - DECEMBER 2nd 2018**

## SNIPPETS - JANUARY 2018

**In this edition: Asia; Africa; Europe; North America; Global; Middle East**

### ASIA

#### Thailand

EMDC is a multi-agency consultation that meets alternately in Asia and Europe. Minority language workers in the Eurasia region meet with media specialists from Radio, TV, Internet, Mobile and Social Media. EMDC 2018 will be in Thailand in March and expects 600+ people from 160+ organisations. Prior to the meeting, there are 4 optional days of training covering 19 Tracks.

Contact: [info@emdcon.org](mailto:info@emdcon.org) for access to the password-protected website

### AFRICA

#### Mauritania

The government of Mauritania has strengthened '*blasphemy*' laws, so that anyone found guilty will face the death penalty, even if they 'repent'. The Mauritanian Justice Minister said: "*Every Muslim, man or woman, who mocks or insults Muhammed ... is liable to face the death penalty, without being asked to repent. They will incur the death penalty even if they repent.*" No one has been executed for 'blasphemy' in Mauritania since 1987 and the man most recently convicted - a Muslim blogger had his death sentence downgraded to two years in prison.

Source: *Barnabas Fund*

## **Central African Republic (CAR)**

The national army of CAR was disbanded in 2013 and the majority of the CAR is now controlled by armed groups. The power vacuum has opened the way to human rights violations, including rape and extortion. One militiaman said he would not lay down his weapon until a new army is able to ensure security in his town. CAR is 76% nominally Christian, 14% nominally Muslim. The head of the UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Joseph Inganji, said CAR has become "*a forgotten emergency*". More than half of the population (2.4 out of 4.6 million) are in need of humanitarian assistance. The violence is affecting 14 out of 16 regions. Civilians, including children and women, are paying the highest price and 20% of the population is displaced, either internally or externally.

*Source: World Watch Monitor*

## **Zimbabwe**

ZANE (Zimbabwe a National Emergency) is funding "*pop-up classrooms*" in a high-density township in Zimbabwe. There are currently three classrooms with plans for another two in the coming months. Twelve children attend each class where they are taught basic numeracy and literacy, health and nutrition. Each child is also taught basic farming skills, looking after a small plot to grow food for their families. The children are from poor families and would otherwise be on the streets. Their parents cannot afford to send them to school and most arrive for classes with empty tummies. ZANE is working alongside these children, building their confidence and helping them to feel loved. The children receive fresh water, fruit and a nutritional supplement each day.

*Contact: [info@zane.uk.com](mailto:info@zane.uk.com)*

## **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**

Radio programme producer, Henri-Pierre Koubaka provokes Christian listeners to ask questions using the new audio training resource Feba has developed as part of the *Voice of a Child* project in DRC. Throughout DRC many children are being accused of witchcraft, abandoned and left to survive on the streets. It is an issue that is fed by the popularity of Nollywood films which have the supernatural as a common theme. They are endorsed by some Pastors who can make money by 'delivering' a child. Henri-Pierre said, "*The church has a big role in it. A lot of so-called pastors are the people who validate the accusations and they are also the people the children are taken to for some kind of deliverance.*"

*Contact: [lifegivingmedia@feb.org.uk](mailto:lifegivingmedia@feb.org.uk)*

# **EUROPE**

## **UK**

Members of Parliament are supporting more than 5,000 people who have signed a petition saying

that Franklin Graham should not be allowed into the UK in September when he is due to speak at Blackpool's Festival of Hope at the city's Winter Gardens. They claim that Graham has homophobic and islamophobic views and is "*likely to promote prejudice and hatred*". After what have been seen as inflammatory statements about Islam, many are unhappy about the visit. Labour MP Gordon Marsden is calling on the Home Secretary to refuse him entry into the UK. However, his visit is being supported by many local church leaders. Franklin Graham is president of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and has reached millions of people through his aid work with the charity Samaritans Purse.

*Source: Premier Radio*

## **Poland**

CCM Poland reports that over 159,000 people are now part of their discipleship programmes - many are Jesus.net partners. Over 23,500 courses have been completed - and 322 courses in 23 languages are being offered. Hundreds of written testimonials have been received and testimonies of transformed lives are being filmed. On TV, the audience has reached 5.4 million with Superbook - a series of Bible stories for children, developed by CBN and translated into Polish. A major follow-up is planned in co-operation with Catholic friends to take this into schools, as part of the religion training.

*Contact: [hkrol@ccm.pl](mailto:hkrol@ccm.pl)*

## **UK**

A major study by UK Children's Commissioner Anne Longfield has warned that children as young as ten are becoming dependent on Social Media for their sense of self-worth. It found many youngsters now measure their status by how much public approval they get online, often through 'likes'. Some change their behaviour in real life to boost their image on the web. The report was on youngsters aged from eight to 12. The Commissioner said social media firms were exposing children to major emotional risks, with some youngsters starting secondary school ill-equipped to cope with the pressure they faced online. *Snapchat*, *WhatsApp* and *Instagram* were the most popular social networks for the children, even though in theory all three require users to be at least 13.

*Source: Daily Mail*

## **UK**

HOPE's plans to make Jesus known in 2018 are taking shape throughout the UK. HOPE is working with Tearfund to mark their jubilee with a united mission focus in Merseyside, Coventry and Bristol. Roy Crowne and his team have visited hundreds of church leaders' gatherings, helping regions to shape their HOPE 2018 vision, and preparing resources that will help churches make Jesus known.

*Contact: [news@hopetogether.org.uk](mailto:news@hopetogether.org.uk)*

## **Croatia**

Churches in Zagreb have given thanks for Billy Graham's first ministry in a communist country. In 1967, Billy Graham was given unprecedented permission to preach the Gospel for the first time in a communist country. Time Magazine described a rally of about 3,000 people, standing in the pouring rain, in a small Catholic seminary's soccer field. They were not permitted to rent any public facility. Time Magazine quotes Billy Graham, referring to the soccer field gathering as *"the greatest meeting of my entire ministry"*. In 1959, Graham undertook a 5-day visit to Moscow but as he tells it, *"I was not allowed to preach because they said I didn't have a preaching visa"*. Poland and other communist countries denied him entry only a year before he was allowed to preach in Zagreb, Yugoslavia. One of the young evangelists involved in those meetings was Peter Kuzmic, today the President of the Evangelical Theological Seminary (ETS) in Croatia. The ETS is now contemplating establishing a Billy Graham Chair of World Evangelism.

Contact: [peter.kuzmic@evtos.hr](mailto:peter.kuzmic@evtos.hr)

## **UK**

Madeleine Davies, the deputy news editor of Britain's Church Times newspaper, has received an award from the Awareness Foundation for her reporting work. The award was presented by the Countess of Wessex. The Awareness Foundation was founded by the Reverend Nadim Nassar, a Syrian priest working in the Church of England, to *"empower Christians everywhere to be a counter force of love and peace to the intolerance and mistrust that now prevail in so many of our communities, and to build understanding between the faiths."*

Source: *Anglican Communion News Service*

## **Greece**

Greece has passed a law to limit the powers of Islamic courts implementing sharia law in the country. This comes as the European Court of Human Rights will rule on a case regarding the application of sharia law in Greece. Christian Concern intervened in the case, and Tim Dieppe attended the hearing last month. Christian Concern's intervention in the case focused on the impact of sharia courts in Britain today.

Contact: [info@christianconcern.com](mailto:info@christianconcern.com)

## **UK**

Supported by CARE, Lord McColl has introduced a new Bill to protect victims of human trafficking in England and Wales. It was unanimously passed at its first major debate, and Frank Field MP will sponsor the Bill in the Commons. CARE is launching a campaign website on this issue ([freeforgood.org.uk](http://freeforgood.org.uk)) and has long campaigned for victims of trafficking to receive better care, so CARE welcomes Scottish Government's move to double basic support for victims from 45 to 90

days.

Contact: [mail@care.org.uk](mailto:mail@care.org.uk)

## **UK**

The Christian Institute has taken legal advice after parents sought help over inappropriate questioning of their children at school. Ofsted inspectors had engaged in intrusive questioning supposedly to assess a school's compliance with '*British Values*'. Inspectors wanted to know children's beliefs on same-sex marriage and gender. The legal opinion of leading human rights lawyer Aidan O'Neill QC is that such questioning could breach human rights legislation. The Christian Institute has passed this legal advice to Ofsted to inform its approach to future school inspections.

Contact: [info@christian.org.uk](mailto:info@christian.org.uk)

## **NORTH AMERICA**

### **USA**

A fire broke out at TWR's international headquarters in Cary, North Carolina in December. No one was in the building at the time. It is not yet known how the fire started and a criminal investigation is under way. The building sustained significant smoke damage and the loading dock, workshop areas, mail distribution, and related work areas were destroyed. There has been no interruption to the ministry but around 600 square feet needs rebuilding.

Contact: [twr@twr.org.uk](mailto:twr@twr.org.uk)

### **Mexico**

Churches in Mexico have met members of the United Nations Development Programme to discuss the implementation of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 17 goals were agreed by the UN in September 2015 and welcomed by Church leaders around the world. They are a follow-on to the Millennium Development Goals which were introduced in 1999. This week, members of La Iglesia Anglicana de Mexico (IAM) - the Anglican Church of Mexico - together with Christians from other denominations and ecumenical groups, met to discuss their role in implementing the SDGs.

Source: *Anglican Communion News Service*

### **USA**

David Robbins has succeeded the ministry's co-founder Dennis Rainey as President and CEO at FamilyLife. As a 17-year veteran of Cru, Robbins has served in a variety of capacities, including overseas team leader in Pisa, Italy, and national director of Campus Field Ministries. Most recently, Robbins served as a national facilitator for Cru's Millennials Ministry, which he and his wife launched

in 2012. The initiative targeting 20-somethings quickly grew to reach a network of 1,000 millennials in New York and spread nationwide, establishing teams in 15 other cities across the US.

Source: NRB

## USA

National Religious Broadcasters (NRB) is drawing attention to the censorship of Christian and conservative speech online by tech companies such as Facebook, Twitter, Google and Apple by launching a new initiative, *"Internet Freedom Watch"*. A new website - *"InternetFreedomWatch.org"* - will document cases of internet censorship. NRB has published a chart with more than 30 instances of internet censorship to illustrate the problem and they are calling on Congress to hold hearings on the *"severe problem of viewpoint censorship on the internet"*. Dr Jerry A Johnson, NRB's president & CEO, said they are not yet calling for new laws but that: *"It is unacceptable for these titans to discriminate against users just because their viewpoints are not congruent with ideas popular in Silicon Valley."*

Contact: James A Smith Sr [press@nrb.org](mailto:press@nrb.org)

## Canada

*"Micah's Super Vlog"*, a cartoon for children produced by Square One World Media in Winnipeg, has released the new *"Armor of God"* series. Through seven integrated episodes, based on Ephesians 6:10-17, Micah and his friends teach children why and how to put on the Armor of God. The new episodes are available on JellyTelly ([jellytelly.com](http://jellytelly.com)) along with devotional blogs. DVDs are scheduled for a spring release.

Contact: Girish Manuel at [info@s1wm.com](mailto:info@s1wm.com)

## USA

The Hallmark Channel ratings are booming. Last year the channel saw substantial viewership growth - the only non-news cable channel in the top 15 to do so. Heather Long at *The Washington Post* (8/17) writes, *"During the week of the election last year, the Hallmark Channel was the fourth-most-watched channel on TV during prime time. It was just behind CNN and ESPN."*

Contact: [www.mastermediaintl.org](http://www.mastermediaintl.org)

## GLOBAL

### Tearfund

Tearfund, marking its 50th year, now works in more than 50 countries and is one of the UK's top aid agencies. Born out of the Evangelical Alliance in the 1960s, Tearfund started out simply as a fund - through gifts sent to the Alliance in response to the refugee crisis in the 1960s. As donations grew, the Alliance employed George Hoffman, a former curate, to develop the work of the fund. In 1968,

he and others met for the first time as The Evangelical Alliance Relief Fund: TEARFUND and in 1973, Tearfund became a registered charity. Says CEO Nigel Harris: *"Tearfund came into existence because evangelical Christians wanted to do something about suffering in the world - and to do it in the name of Jesus."* In the last 10 years alone, Tearfund has helped more than 45 million people through its relief and development programmes across the world. Nigel says: *"The Church is at the very heart of the work that Tearfund carries out. Tearfund's mission is to see people freed from poverty, living transformed lives and reaching their God-given potential. We do this by partnering with local churches around the world."*

Source: IDEA Visit: [www.tearfund.org](http://www.tearfund.org)

## **Anglican**

The Anglican Communion News Service has launched a new feature on Social Media - giving Anglicans around the world the chance to share their experiences. The new Instagram feed carries images and videos from the global family of Anglicans. On Instagram - follow @anglicannews. You can send photos and videos showing how your church, parish or diocese is celebrating seasons and festivals.

Contact: [news@aco.org](mailto:news@aco.org) (with INSTAGRAM in the subject heading)

## **MIDDLE EAST**

### **Middle East and North Africa**

A Christian TV channel watched by 4.6 million Arab speaking children in the Middle East and North Africa has celebrated its tenth birthday. *"We would need the largest cake ever to invite all our precious viewers over for a party"*, said SAT-7 KIDS Channel Manager, Andrea el Mounayer. *"Borders, practicalities and wars mean that isn't possible. But watching us, they will share in the joy and fun in the safety of their homes."* Plans are in place to take a van converted to a mobile studio to visit a Palestinian refugee camp, a Syrian refugee settlement, and a children's cancer centre. In each location, one or two inspirational youngsters, who have overcome obstacles of poverty, war and ill-health, will be invited to tell their story. Andrea el Mounayer explained. *"These stories are examples of how we seek to give children living in the most dangerous places hope for a better future. These children will become the stars of the show."*

Contact: [respond@sat7uk.org](mailto:respond@sat7uk.org)

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**\*\*\* PLEASE NOTE \*\*\***

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Snippets is a free News Letter and every effort is made to authenticate the accuracy of "Snippet" items. You may send your news item for consideration to [feb@feb.org](mailto:feb@feb.org).

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