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FEB CONFERENCE - EMMAUS CENTRE, DUBLIN

"Towards Unity - Building Strategic Networks and Partnerships"

November 29th-December 2nd 2018

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SNIPPETS - SEPTEMBER 2018

In this edition: Europe, Africa, Asia, Middle East, North America

EUROPE

UK

The UK Home Office agreed to resettle 1,112 Syrian refugees in the UK in the first quarter of 2018, none of whom were Christians. The UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) recommended 1,358 Syrian refugees for resettlement in the UK, only four of whom were Christians. In 2017, the UNHCR recommended a total of 7,060 Syrian refugees, including 25 Christians, for resettlement. From these, the Home Office accepted 4,850 Muslims, 11 Christians, five Yazidis, five Druze and one non-specified. Christians constituted around 10% of Syria's pre-war population and were specifically targeted by jihadi rebels and continue to be at risk.

Contact: info@barnabasfund.org

Ukraine

The ongoing conflict that erupted in 2014 between Ukraine and Russian-backed separatists has resulted in over 10,000 lives lost and 1.6 million people internally displaced. The effects are still acutely felt, especially in the lives of the disabled, which include 2.6 million, or 6 percent, of Ukraine's population. One barrier disabled people face is mobility, especially when living on the upper floors of high-rise apartment buildings that do not have elevators. Perhaps the worst part of a disabled person's lack of mobility, however, is the social isolation and depression they face. To wounded soldiers and other disabled Ukrainians, the violence continues to haunt their bodies. Yet the disability is not just physical, but spiritual; and the great need is not only health, but a hope in Christ. TWR Ukraine's programme *You Are Mine* is an encouragement to disabled and homebound Ukrainians. Listeners can hear stories from more than 160 interviews in over 200 programmes. One listener, confined to his apartment, writes *"You fill my house with joy, comfort and encouragement. I am an invalid, yet I praise God that I can rejoice in him."*

Contact: twr@twr.org.uk

UK

The Evangelical Alliance's *One People Commission* played a key role at Movement Day, modelling unity in ethnic diversity, facilitating strategic conversations amongst leaders. The South Asian Forum Team led leadership training in London and the *Beyond the Doorstep* event in Birmingham on cross-cultural mission. Over 200 delegates attended the first *Above and Beyond* conference in London, with leading experts training church leaders on good governance, charity law, safeguarding, effective communications and more.

Contact: info@eauk.org

Vatican

Roman Catholic Archbishop Vigano has alleged corruption at the highest level in the Catholic Church and accuses Pope Francis of being involved in a cover-up. Archbishop Vigano calls for Pope Francis and several cardinals to resign for protecting a serial abuser. Archbishop Vigano was appointed Secretary-General of the Governorate of Vatican City State in 2009. Whilst in this position, he alleged corruption in the Vatican, including blackmailing of homosexual priests. He claims that former Archbishop Emeritus of Washington, McCarrick requested depraved acts of seminarians and priests, inviting five men at a time to spend the weekend with him at his beach house. Archbishop Vigano says that the Pope knew about McCarrick's abuses but continued to cover for him. In July of this year Pope Francis accepted McCarrick's resignation and ordered him to

observe "a life of prayer and penance." Pope Francis was asked about Archbishop Vigano's statement and told reporters "Read the statement carefully and make your own judgement. I will not say a single word on this." Matthew Schmitz of First Things says: "The Catholic Church has been plunged into all-out civil war. On one side the traditionalists insist that abuse can be prevented only by tighter adherence to church doctrine. On the other side the liberals demand that the church cease condemning homosexual acts and allow gay priests to step out of the closet."

Source: Life Site News

UK

The Government has decided the maximum stake on Fixed Odds Betting Terminals (FOBTs) will be reduced from £100 to £2 in England, Wales and Scotland. CARE has been fighting for this change for a number of years and will continue to make the case for a change in the law in Northern Ireland. In another project, CARE representatives drafted a Private Members Bill in 2012 to enhance Northern Ireland's anti trafficking legislation. The last piece of it came into force in April this year; allocating independent guardians to act as advocates for each vulnerable trafficked child.

Contact: mail@care.org.uk

Kosovo

The Transform Europe Network (TEN) works with Artur Krasniqi, pastor of Fellowship of the Lord's People in the capital, Pristina. The church is both preaching the Gospel and helping people through social action. They are based in a modern church building part funded by TEN. Church buildings are important in the Balkans. Churches that meet in homes or rented buildings are regarded as cults and not taken seriously. Much of their work is out in the community where they run two second-hand Mosaik clothes shops, a pre-school nursery for Roma children; as well as overseeing projects in other towns. The church has started a Training School where the next generation of leaders can be developed while still working and supporting themselves.

Contact: info@ten-uk.org

UK

The ONS has reported that Mohammed, with various spellings, is the most popular choice for boys' names in England and Wales. The top baby names for 2017 have seen a rise in names such as Luna, Aurora and Hallie, and botanical ones such as Daisy, Ivy and Willow. And according to official statistics, Hunter and Aurora have joined the top 100 names for baby boys and girls in England and

Wales.

Source: Office of National Statistics

Scotland

The Edinburgh University Students' Association has published a guide to *"sharing pronouns"* which claims that assuming what pronouns to use based on appearance *"can be frustrating and harmful"*. The Telegraph has reported that Edinburgh University student union officials will hand out pronoun badges to freshers so that they know whether to refer to each other as *"he"*, *"she"* or *"they"*. The university's Students' Association guide says: *"It's important to challenge the idea that pronouns are an indicator of gender, or vice versa."* The guide continues: *"If we choose to make assumptions about which pronouns are correct, we risk misgendering people and/or singling out trans people who want to clarify their pronouns."*

Contact: info@christianconcern.com

UK

Research shows that the proportion of girls who say they are *'very happy'* has almost halved in the past decade amid growing exam and social media pressures. The annual Girls' Attitude Survey from Girlguiding UK surveyed 1,903 girls and young women, aged seven to 21, and found that only 25 per cent were *'very happy'* - down from 41 per cent in 2009. Of those aged 11 to 21, 69 per cent said exams and tests were the main cause of stress, with 59 per cent citing pressure from social media. More than half - 53 per cent - say that bloggers and YouTubers *'create the idea of being perfect that is unrealistic and unachievable'*.

Source: Girlguiding UK

European Leadership Forum

The 2019 *European Leadership Forum* in Wisla, Poland, will take place from Saturday, 18th May through 23rd May 2019. The morning plenary Bible teacher will be Ramez Atallah, General Secretary of the Bible Society of Egypt. Evening speakers will include: Lindsay Brown (Director of Fellowship of Evangelists in the Universities of Europe); Pablo Martinez (Psychiatrist and former President of the Spanish Evangelical Alliance); Michael Reeves (President and Professor of Theology at Union School of Theology) and Jay Smith (Christian/Muslim Apologist; former International Director of Pfander Centre for Apologetics). Registration is now open.

Contact: ksaylor@euroleadership.org

UK

Theresa May wants to make it easier for people to change their legal sex. The Prime Minister says she wants to see a process *"that is more streamlined and de-medicalised"*. Currently, it is necessary to have been diagnosed with gender dysphoria by two doctors, and to have lived as a member of the opposite sex for two years. But Theresa May has now backed *'self-declaration'* - where a man can legally change sex simply by declaring he is a woman, and vice versa. But a recent YouGov survey shows that fewer than one in five think people should be able to change legal sex without a doctor's approval. In the UK fewer than 5,000 people have obtained a Gender Recognition Certificate to legally change sex.

Contact: info@christian.org.uk

Estonia

From October 8th to 13th the *"Hope for Europe Conference"* will meet in Tallinn. National Evangelical Alliances and Christian organisations will look for new opportunities for co-operation in ministry. Participants from more than 25 countries have registered. Rev Dr Frank Hinkelmann, EEA President, says: *"This Hope for Europe Conference will be a unique opportunity to learn how different networks and ministries can contribute to building God's kingdom in Europe."*

Contact: office@europeanea.org

Netherlands, Germany, France

In March 2018, an international crew of 80 people completed the three-month test phase of a pioneering ministry, OM Riverboats. *Andante*, a chartered vessel has been sailing down the Rhine, allowing crew to share the gospel and mobilise Christians to live a missional life. In total, over 8,000 visitors came onboard during this test phase. In ports across the Netherlands, Germany and France, the *Andante* also provided a venue for local churches to use. However, on the top of the vessel was *The Agency*, a variation of OM's Global Village. *The Agency* was a simulation where participants raced against time to break out of locked rooms by gathering clues and solving puzzles. *"This experience was the focus of the Riverboat,"* explained the artistic director of The Agency. *"It's telling a story about the gospel which then motivates and mobilises people to share it with the least reached. We have found it can be a powerful ministry tool that can empower youths and serve churches."*

Contact: info.uk@om.org

AFRICA

Uganda

The *Through the Roof (TTR) Wheels for the World* Team recently visited Butaleja, Uganda and distributed 130 wheelchairs, plus scores of crutches and mobility aids. 10 volunteers - some first-timers, some veterans - working with in-country partners, RILD, changed the lives of many people through the gift of a refurbished wheelchair. Some of the team were even fitting chairs in impromptu clinics to people in need, at their hotel on the final evening. TTF plans two more Wheels trips this year - to Kenya and Nigeria from 14th to 24th November.

Contact: info@throughtheroof.org

DRC

After 3 years of prayer and planning, African Enterprise in the DRC has led the Lubumbashi Mission. Leonard Kiswangi, AE DRC Team Leader, writes: *"We are grateful to God who allowed the breakthrough for this university mission. This university is in a strategic place with a history of strikes, mass student killings, hatred and violence in the Katanga province. But we thank God Almighty whose provisions have gone before us in accomplishing what 'has has come to pass'."* 34 churches participated; 165 evangelists were locally trained and over 6100 people reached in one-to-one Gospel outreach; 771 accepted Christ for the first time; 300 re-dedicated their lives; 11 committed for full-time ministry. African Enterprise UK contributed £13,000 towards the Mission.

Contact: info@africanenterprise.co.uk

Yemen

FEBA's *Yemen Project* is working to bring social and spiritual transformation to the people living with the ongoing conflict. An environment of violence, failing infrastructure and insecurity has caused many people to explore alternatives to their established thinking and beliefs. One man who had been listening to the live shows said, *"I had a big problem with a tribe - one of them killed my uncle. I hated everything. Then I heard about the love of God - that can change us. I noticed that there were people with more hate than me, but when they accepted Jesus they find freedom from hate. So I eventually accepted Jesus in my life."* FEBA's partners are encouraged, saying: *"Slowly, slowly, people are changing from being extremist to becoming more conservative Muslim."* For

some, these are the initial steps to becoming believers, and give us hope for further change.

Contact: lifegivingmedia@feba.org.uk

Nigeria

"The Koro Cluster" is a Wycliffe Bible Translators ministry which partners with people from four languages: Ashe, Duyta, Nyankpa and Waci. Their homeland lies about a two hour drive from the capital city of Abuja. These peoples are mainly subsistence farmers, growing rice, maize, beans, peanuts, okra and yams, but also cash crops such as sugar cane and ginger. There is a strong Christian church in the Koro area, but the only Bible available to them is in the official language of English or in another major language, Hausa. Using this Bible limits understanding and real engagement. Koro Christians have asked for the Bible in their own languages in order to ignite transformation at individual and community level. Project goals are: to translate the New Testament and see it being used in churches and communities; to establish literacy work, with adults and children learning to read and write in their own language; to see the languages thriving, with new materials being produced and people knowing that their language is valuable and useful.

Contact: info@wycliffe.org.uk

Tanzania

MAF runs regular flights to maintain churches, plant new ones, and deliver medical help to villages that would otherwise be inaccessible. Its ministry to Tanzania began 60 years ago and its earliest flights provided physical and spiritual help to remote and forgotten parts of Tanzania. In the last decade MAF has helped construct over two dozen remote airstrips, and regular flights continue to transport medical supplies, development specialists, mission workers and pastors to the hardest-to-reach places.

Contact: discovery@maf-uk.org

ASIA

PANI

TWR began broadcasting to Pakistan, Afghanistan and North India (PANI) in 2014. The reality of persecution is a common theme and thousands of Afghan listeners have responded. One man told of an enemy who found out he was a Christian and tried to kill him. "*When they could not find me, they killed my brother,*" he told TWR's phone counsellors. For many these broadcasts are the only source of spiritual light they have. Without the PANI broadcasts, seekers would have no one to

answer their questions. And in Afghanistan, a nation without a single church building, new Christians would be completely alone.

Contact: twr@twr.org.uk

Thailand

One listener writes, *"Because of my studies with FEBC's lessons, I have received Jesus Christ as my Saviour. The lessons tell me that God loves me and is the one to help me be freed from sin. God has much meaning for me in my life now. I live according to the lessons I am learning."* For many listeners in Thailand, FEBC radio broadcasts are the first time they hear the Gospel in their own language. FEBC broadcasts in minority languages across Southeast Asia - a total of 86 languages able to reach more than 230 million souls!

Contact: info@febc.org

MIDDLE EAST

Jordan

Since 2011, over one million Syrians have crossed into Jordan. Makeshift refugee camps are home to hundreds of thousands of displaced and traumatised refugees, creating pressures on Jordanian society. The Bible Society in Jordan invited the whole church to pray for unity and peace. They booked a huge auditorium at the University of Jordan for the event and chose the name WATAD, which means *'tent peg'* in Arabic, for the festival taking inspiration from Isaiah 22:23. More than 8,000 Christians of all ages and confessions poured through the doors and WATAD became one of the largest Christian gatherings in the whole of the Middle East. The festival opened with a concert followed by a prayer for Christian unity proclaimed by leaders from all the main denominations in Jordan. Tim Foggin, Bible Society's Middle East advisor, said, *'God is doing remarkable things in the Middle East. In the midst of significant turmoil and suffering, God is strengthening and unifying this church to respond to the overwhelming need. I believe that WATAD was a pivotal event in the life of the church and a tremendous sign of unity.'*

Contact: contactus@biblesociety.org.uk

Middle East

Women of Hope is a radio programme for women. In the Middle East, Arab women are often marginalised, have no voice, and are not given basic rights. *Women of Hope* speaks to the heart and mind of Arab women and deals with their emotional, spiritual, physical, and social

needs. It helps Arab women to feel that they are not forgotten, that there is a voice who speaks up for them and that there are women whom they can still trust with their issues and challenges.

Produced by TWR, *Women of Hope* was born after years of prayer and preparation to speak hope to these Arab women.

Contact: twr@twr.org.uk

NORTH AMERICA

Canada

"Cartoons and Cool Tunes: The Tour" is a 10-city tour of western Canada from October 11th to 24th. The Tour features the cartoons of *"Micah's Super Vlog" (MSV)* and the music of Jordan St.Cyr. With an entertaining cast of characters, witty comedy and adventure, MSV teaches Christian values as children watch Micah and his friends learn to follow Jesus in everyday situations. Jordan St.Cyr, a worship leader and international award-winning Christian recording artist.

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