



Edinburgh 2010 Newsletter - March 2010

Dear Reader,

Through our website, facebook, and personal contact we have received many encouraging statements in the past few months. Expectations are high not just in Scotland, but all over the world. The following message of Rev. Prof. Kyo Seong Ahn, Presbyterian College and Theological Seminary, South Korea, stands exemplary for many others:

"As for non-Western Christians, the 1910 World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh signalled the rise of national churches, although the number of their delegates was negligible and its significance was not fully appreciated at the time. The ecclesiastical change over the last 100 years can be epitomized as 'the shift of the gravity of Christianity' and 'the emergence of Southern Christianity'. It is hoped that reflecting faithfully this new reality, the centennial meeting grows into a genuine cross-reference meeting between West and non-West, not an unilateral reference meeting any more, which is what a conference is all about."

What are your expectations of Edinburgh 2010? Please join our Global Discussion (www.edinburgh2010.org) on mission today, and tell us your hopes and thoughts.

With best wishes from Edinburgh

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John R. Mott as an Ecumenical Leader. What was Mott's Vision?

By Risto Ahonen (The Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission)

The 1910 Edinburgh mission conference took place on the watershed of two eras: behind lay the 'golden' mission era of the nineteenth century with its successful results, while ahead opened up a future with unprecedented opportunities. The chairman of the conference, John R. Mott expressed the atmosphere of the conference by speaking about 'providential' preparations for mission in the following words:

"Why has God made the whole world known and accessible to our generation? Why has He provided us with such wonderful agencies? Not that the forces of evil might utilize them... Such vast preparations



must have been made to further some mighty and beneficent purpose. Everyone of these wonderful facilities has been intended primary to serve as a handmaid to the sublime enterprise of extending and building up the Kingdom of Jesus Christ in all the world. The hand of God in opening door after door among the nations of mankind, in unlocking the secrets of nature and in bringing to light invention after invention, is beckoning the Church of our day to larger achievements." (The Student Volunteer, 127-129)

For the first time in history the whole world was open for the Gospel. No wonder Edinburgh 1910 ended on a triumphalist note. Mott described the end of the conference as the beginning of the world conquest. With hindsight, it is easy to criticise the limitations and one-sidedness of Edinburgh, but the conference succeeded in leaving a valuable legacy, the vision of global mission and global church, where the Gospel has spread as far as the ends of the earth and each nation is able to bring its own contribution to a deeper understanding of faith. [\[Read the full article\]](#)

What's New?

An Orthodox Perspective

The centenary of the 1910 World Missionary Conference was an important point of reference for a consultation on 'Christian Mission in the 21st Century: An Orthodox Perspective' hosted by the St. Cyril and St. Methodius Theological Institute in Minsk, Belarus from 4 to 7 February 2010. The meeting brought together more than 50 Orthodox mission leaders and thinkers from Russia, Finland, Poland, Hungary, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Albania, Greece, Kenya and the USA as well as from host nation Belarus. In plenary sessions of the consultation Valentin Kozhukharov of Bulgaria addressed the question of the lessons learned for mission from the experience of totalitarianism and atheism during the 20th century while Kenneth Ross of Scotland considered the lessons learned from the experience of colonialism and secularism during the same period. [\[Read the full article\]](#)

Results Youth Writing Contest



In October 2009 the Edinburgh Youth team had invited young Christians to a Youth Writing Contest, in connection with the Edinburgh 2010 conference. Essays were supposed to engage in one of the nine study themes and represent the perspective of youth. The contest was a huge success with high-quality contributions from countries such as South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, Rwanda, Myanmar, Malaysia, the Philippines, Brazil, US, Germany, and the UK. The papers were judged by an expert panel of mission historians and theologians, which has selected an essay of Andrew R.H. Thompson (USA) as the best. Andrew will be invited to the Edinburgh conference in June 2010, and his paper will be published along with nine other outstanding essays in a publication *Edinburgh 2010 Youth: Youth Perspectives on Mission*. The winner of our Youth Multimedia Contest will be announced soon.

2010 Website now available in French

The Edinburgh 2010 website www.edinburgh2010.org is now available in French. If you experience any difficulties with the website, please let us know. A Spanish version of the Edinburgh 2010 website will be available by the end of April.

Set up an Event in the Edinburgh 2010 Spirit

Are you concerned about mission today? Do you want to be part of a global movement that unites Christians all over the world? Our project *2010.global* is an opportunity for you to gather with Christian friends in your locality, to thank God for a century of mission, and to wrestle with the challenges of all that lies ahead. The 1910 Conference took place in a classical Western city. 100 years later, we want our celebration to be truly global, truly local and as wide-ranging and inclusive as possible. We invite you to set up an ecumenical act of worship, a youth night, an outreach event or a home group celebration. It can be at any time of the year to suit your programme, or on 6 June 2010 to link with others around the world. It would be great if you could share information about your event with the Edinburgh 2010 community. Got to <http://www.edinburgh2010.org/en/participate.html> to learn more about *2010.global*. Information is available in eight different languages.



Study Process Update

Theme 3: Mission and Post-Modernity

Mission in a Changing World

What is meant by post-modernities, and how should Christian mission respond to the challenges? 'Post-modernity' is no marginal phenomenon on the fringe of society. Rather, it is a broad cultural trend, a reaction against modernity fuelled by the catastrophic political events of the twentieth century, influencing even those who reject its tenets. Still, it is basically a Western phenomenon, fuelled by modernity and secularisation.



Briefly, post-modernities are characterised by plurality, subjectivity and negotiation. Authority is fragmented, everybody has a voice that is not necessarily 'right' or 'wrong', as all depends on the point of view and everybody is free to pick what is preferred. The world is constantly changing and identity is liquid. All experiences and opinions are subjective, 'where you stand depends on where you sit', the answers to questions of correctness or falseness, rightness or wrongness depend on the perspective, the context, and therefore will always be partial and biased.

Some key challenges of mission in relation to post-modernities are connected to the scepticism in regard to truth claims or affirmation of the existence of absolute truth and the relativity of all human efforts to grasp and express it. The role of Scripture, the question of distinguishing between legitimate and illegitimate proclamation, the importance of rites and structures versus emotion and experience will continue to occupy the public and private arena of witness, evangelization and persuasion.

We hope that the challenges from post-modernities may enable the church to focus more on witness in deeds followed by words to work towards a theology of mission where mission is to be done with and to God. The post-modern contexts call for a greater role of the servant model for leadership, enhancement of the interaction between and practice in theological training; rediscovery of hope that endures; attention to the biblical message of stewardship for the earth and its resources; and emphasis on holistic reconciliation and healing.

**Rolv Olsen,
Norwegian School of Theology**

Events & Opportunities

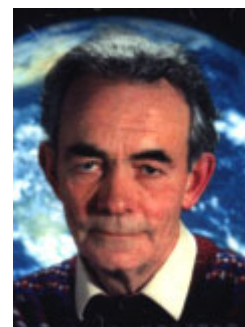
20 March 2010

A Day of Prayer with Fr. Gerard Hughes

Venue: Newmains Pastoral Centre, Wishaw (Scotland)

SCOT, the Scottish Co-ordinating Team invites all those who are praying towards Edinburgh 2010 to a national day of prayer at Newmains Pastoral Centre, on 20 March, 10am-4pm. This day is designed to encourage Christians across Scotland to discover ways of praying for unity in the Church.

Fr. Gerard, a Jesuit Priest, writer and broadcaster, will bring many suggestions for participants to experience and practice. For more information, contact us.



26-30 April 2010

Fifth Magna Conference of the World Mission of the Church - Crossing new frontiers... a great commission

Venue: SETECA, Guatemala (Central America)

The **Central American Theological Seminary (SETECA)** invites to a five day conference to inform, motivate and reflect on the worldwide mission of the church against the background of current challenges in Latin America. The programme includes papers given by Valdir Steuernagel, Joel van Dyke, and Guillermo Taylor. For more information, visit contact Professor Abel Morales at [amorales \(at\) seteca.edu](mailto:amorales@seteca.edu).

New Mission Resources

Dana Robert on Mission Today

An interview with Dana Robert on behalf of Edinburgh Youth now available on Youtube

Dana Robert, keynote speaker at the Edinburgh 2010 conference, is teaching at the Boston University School of Theology since 1984, and considered to be one of the leading historians of Christian mission. In this six-part interview, produced on behalf of the Edinburgh Youth, Robert talks about issues like women & mission, youth & mission, and the future of mission.



Special Offer

Edinburgh 2010: Mission Then and Now
Edited by David A. Kerr and Kenneth R. Ross
(2009), ISBN: 978-1-870345-73-6

Regnum Publishers is currently offering *Edinburgh 2010: Mission Then and Now* at a discounted rate with free shipping. The book is the first in a series of three publications dedicated to Edinburgh 2010. *Mission Then and Now* systematically examines the eight Commissions which reported to Edinburgh 1910 and gave the World Missionary Conference much of its substance and enduring value. The book will deepen and extend the reflection being stimulated by the upcoming centenary and will kindle the missionary imagination for 2010 and beyond. For more information visit the publisher's website at <http://www.ocms.ac.uk/regnum/>

Pray with us

As we enter into prayer this month, we are asked to take a minute of silence to picture to ourselves the enormous disaster in Chile, following on the massive earthquake there. Ask God to be merciful to those who died, to comfort the bereaved, the injured, the homeless and the frightened, and to move the hearts of many to help the people in their need.

Take time to listen to the Word of God

Jesus said to his disciples: "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life."

Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and all the holy angels."

Luke 9:22-26



Take time to ponder that Word, and to pray

We pray particularly in the name of all those who suffer and endure for the sake of the Gospel, in spite of persecution, ridicule, loss of position or support. We pray in the words of the Psalm, recalling that Jesus used these same prayers in his life on earth. We pray for courage, love and trust in God.

Psalm 69

O God, make haste to help me

O God, make haste to my rescue,
Lord, come to my aid!

Let there be shame and confusion on those who seek my life.

Let them turn back in confusion
Who delight in my harm,
Let them retreat, covered with shame, who jeer at my lot.

Let there be rejoicing and gladness
For all who seek you.
Let them say forever "God is great", who love your saving help.

As for me, wretched and poor,
Come to me, O God.
You are my rescuer, my help,
O Lord, do not delay.

O God, make haste to help me.