

God is on the move
Grace Mathews, Deputy Chair, LCWE

It is a great pleasure to be with you, brothers and sisters in Christ, today. It brings me joy to fellowship with Lausanne people all over the world and particularly those who share the love for world evangelization.

It was my pleasure to serve as Program Director for Cape Town 2010. I was surrounded by theologians, scholars and mission leaders and my role was to work with these great leaders, and use my project management skills to coordinate the various program elements. I am so thrilled about the various opportunities God has opened for me since my involvement with Lausanne. One such is the privilege of being with you all today. As a lay leader, my work has been largely with Missions, the slums in Pune, India where we lived for a while and in Prison ministry. I have never had the exposure to Jewish evangelism and therefore I am eager and happy to be with you all and to hear what God is doing among Jewish Christians.

The Lausanne Committee for Jewish Evangelism has been a model for the Lausanne Movement and I have heard your example being mentioned in many leadership meetings. I hope to learn from you in the few days I spend with you.

I am also happy to bring to you greetings from Doug Birdsall, Executive Chairman for CT 2010 and Lindsay Brown, the International Deputy Director. Doug was supposed to give this address; however, due to health reasons he is on an extended sabbatical.

The topic I am to address today is: God is on the move: An assessment of Cape Town 2010 and a Missiological report on some of the events or initiatives in the aftermath of Cape Town within the LCWE family.

In October 2010, 4200 leaders from 198 countries gathered in Cape Town, South Africa. It has been called the most representative gathering of Christian leaders in the 2000 year history of the Christian movement” by the editors of Christianity Today. The leadership and the delegates were carefully chosen to reflect the demographic realities of World evangelicalism. For the first time, the laity was present in large numbers. The proportion of women and younger leaders were significantly higher too. Many Catholic, Orthodox, and other mainline protestant leaders were welcomed as official observers.

The theme – Reconciliation “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself”, was selected to reflect a spirit of “hope and humility”.

The six Congress Themes were articulated during the various sessions of the Congress. They affirmed the Truth of Jesus Christ”; Christian witness among people of other faiths – particularly those of Islamic faith. There was an emphasis on holistic missions with a re-focus on both evangelism and mission. Believers were challenged to live a life of humility, integrity and simplicity and also to unite and form new initiatives and partnerships to address the important issues facing the church and God’s world.

I would like to highlight some of the outstanding features of the Congress from feedback received from the regions.

- The joy to be part of global evangelical church gathering and address the major concerns facing the church.
- Table group settings of 6 or less proved to be one of the most meaningful aspects of the Congress. The issues/challenges were contextualized to their region of the world and prayed for. There was a feeling of hope and strength in being part of the larger community of believers.
- The Bible expositions were excellent and the inductive method of study of the book of Ephesians throughout the week was very meaningful.
- There were powerful testimonies and excellent presentations in the multiplex and dialogue sessions.
- We experienced the joy and beauty of Worship everyday starting from the Opening night to the Closing Night as we were led by an international team of vocalists and instrumentalists.
- GlobalLink – The Congress was experienced by a wider group of participants via internet simulcast at 643 sites in 95 countries. The IT platform was designed by a team from Hyderabad, India.

Since Cape Town 2010

We have just finished a week of leadership meetings in Boston. We discussed ways to build on the momentum and excitement of Cape Town 2010, for progress in world evangelization in the next 5-10 years.

- At the leadership meetings the new Global leadership team was suggested and it will be in place within a few months.
- Several post-congress national and regional consultations have already been held. Regional gatherings have been held in Eurasia, North America and Asia. Meetings are scheduled for Nigeria, Egypt, the Caribbean and Russia.
- National consultations have already taken place – in Latin America, India
- There has been a strong response to the CT commitment. It is being translated into several languages. It is being used in bible colleges, mission agencies and churches.
- Mission Africa has expanded its vision from Africa alone to other parts of the world. There is already much interest in Russia, Middle East, India and elsewhere.

Future of the Lausanne Movement

Cape Town Commitment: The document issued out of Cape Town 2010 is a two-part document, framed in the language of love. The two parts are “Theological affirmations: For the God we love and A Call to Action: For the God we serve”, respectively. The document is as a result of consultations held around the world by Christian leaders for over 3 years. The Cape Town Commitment will serve as the road map for the Lausanne movement for the coming decade.

International Consultations: The 6 Congress themes have produced a series of issues (33) for the global church to address in the coming years. Each of these issues will be addressed and its progress tracked by a team of Lausanne leadership comprising of a Senior Associate, implementing partner organization and an international advisor. David Bennett will provide leadership and coordination for these issue groups.

Lausanne Forum: Starting in 2013 and every two years thereafter, 350- 500 leaders will gather to track the progress of the church with respect to its commitments. This will be patterned after the Davos World Economic Forum.

Lausanne Global Briefing: Patterned after the work of Oxford Analytica, Lausanne is working with David Young, Todd Johnson and others to develop the Lausanne Global Briefing. The briefing is intended to be published periodically to inform Christian leaders on important mission and evangelization topics, using traditional and new media.

Lausanne 40th year Anniversary: Leaders will meet in Lausanne in 2014 to celebrate God’s faithfulness.

Younger Leaders’ Gathering: Development and investment in younger leaders in all the regions, followed by a Global gathering in 2015.

Conclusion:

The Great Jewish feast of Passover begins with the simple question to a child: “ Why is this night different from every other night? The answer to that question commences the celebration that “God is on the move”. So commenced the fulfillment, not only of the promise of immediate deliverance for His people, but also the fulfillment of a larger promise to Abraham, that through his seed all nations of the earth would be blessed. And just as on that fateful night deliverance was mediated through the hands of God’s deliverer, Moses, so too the larger promise of blessing to the nations would have to be mediated some thousand years later through another deliverer, the Messiah. Paul could boldly proclaim to the Galatians that this singular promise to Abraham, that all nations would be blessed through Jesus, was the very core of the Gospel – the essence of Good News!

At Lausanne, we do not hesitate to acknowledge with Paul, that it is through the redemptive history of God's people Israel that Messiah emerged to fulfill the great promise to the nations. We too are now heirs of promise, along with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Because we are heirs of this promise, we cannot but take seriously, our call to proclaim to all nations, the Good News of Immanuel – God with Us. He, who promised to be with His people through their desert wanderings in answer to Moses plea that God would not remove his presence from their midst, now fulfills His promise to be with us through His Son, even to the end of the Age as we remain faithful to go in to all the world to proclaim the Good News and make disciples.

It is in fulfillment and furtherance of this Promise that we gathered together in Cape Town, South Africa in October 2010 to dedicate ourselves anew to His call.

The work of Messiah continues, not because of our faithfulness, but only because He remains faithful in covenant keeping love! We are encouraged by what His Spirit is doing throughout the world and look forward to that glorious day when Messiah shall return to receive his own and establish His Kingdom on earth, when the promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will have been fulfilled and all Israel will be there to worship Him who was crucified for all. We have caught a glimpse of the millions from all nations, tongues and people, in festal procession, worshiping the Lamb upon the throne. And so, we say with steadfast hope: See you next year in Jerusalem!

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