



TOGETHER: The AICEMEA Newsletter

Association of International Churches in
Europe, the Middle East, and Africa

Fall 2002

A note from your editors: This edition of the AICEMEA is the association's first "all-electronic" edition. Starting this fall, the association will no longer publish a print version of the quarterly newsletters. For your convenience, all yearly AICEMEA directories will be published in booklet form and mailed to each member church.

If you have trouble opening or reading this entire attachment, or if you learn of others who did not receive this newsletter, please contact your editors at mpc@rol.ru. Thank you

- Noel and John Calhoun, Moscow

A Word from our New President!

Changes

Change is good. Change creates opportunities for wonderful new things to occur. Yet, who among us truly loves change? Because change is also hard. And who among us in international ministry isn't absorbed in change all the time? Even so, if we are truly honest with ourselves, our lives are full of changes that we not only enjoy, but welcome. How many of you are seeking to change an attitude or a habit? Who would like to change their weight? Perhaps there are some among us who are changing the way their home looks either by new furniture or a coat of paint. Yes, change can be hard, but it can also be thrilling and stimulating and a cause for great excitement and anticipation. And while change is a painful reality in international ministry, it is also a joyful adventure because the opportunities and possibilities are endless!

Granted there are fears that come along with change, but think about how God works in our lives through times of transition and change. As we pray for direction and courage to face changes in our lives and ministries, I am reminded that as we pray and present our hopes and our fears before God regarding change, God can actually use our prayers to change our lives. The promises that are embedded within this reality are limitless.

Evangelist Leighton Ford makes the wonderful comment that, "God loves us the way we are, but he loves us too much to leave us that way." God wants our lives to be dynamic, that is, in a state of movement, not stagnating. In order for that to happen, we have to be willing to change and allow God to use the changes in our lives for His greater glory. Yes, the changes are frightening at times, but the blessings that await us are yet unseen and we can anticipate that with great joy.

The executive committee met together in London in September and discussed a number of changes for the AICEMEA. Among them are commitments to keep the Kenya conference as affordable as possible by providing more resources from our surplus and putting together a series of guidelines for conference planners to both help keep costs reasonable and to provide support for the conference hosts as they seek to make difficult decisions regarding accommodations, meals, excursions, speakers and fees. We aren't seeking to make the executive committee micro-managers of the conference, but instead seeking to provide a level of support and direction that we think will enhance the conference experience, both for those planning it and for those attending. We think the changes that lie on the horizon for our organization will serve us well and we hope that you, our members will feel the same.

Change cannot be avoided. But, if we are proactive about being ready for change and even anticipate change with an open heart, what we can avoid is some of the surprising and painful aspects of change. I know that some in our organization are seeking direction regarding uncertain futures. The insecurity and uncertainty embedded within this kind of change touches our lives deeply. Others are experiencing the change in arriving at a new ministry and feeling the pangs of adjustment and wondering what lies ahead for you in this new place. And even for those of us who are firmly planted in our ministries, there are still many things to feel uncertain about. But in the midst of such uncertainty, one thing is for certain: Our God, who is unchanging and ever present, is indeed alive and well in our midst and we can count on that no matter what seems to be swirling around us. So no matter what kind of change you are currently facing, may the peace of Christ be that which provides a constant stream of certainty in your lives.

Looking forward to what I'm sure will be a life-changing adventure with you all in Kenya next February,

Jodi Fondell
President, AICEMEA
Stockholm

+ + +

AICEMEA Conference 2003: An Invitation from Bob and Denise Schmalzle

Where can you go where the climate is near-perfect, it's reported to be the "birthplace" of humanity, there is unsurpassed natural beauty and exotic animals, traditional culture is alive, and most remarkably, Christianity's fastest growing Church in history is unfolding? We are talking about Africa, of course!...the sight of this year's AICEMEA Conference (February 10th to the 16th) and the Post-Conference Safari (February 16th to the 22nd).

Nairobi and the Great Rift Valley

This year, for our first-ever conference in sub-Saharan Africa, we will begin and end our safari at the historic Norfolk Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya. Now one of the leading hotels of the world, the Norfolk's reputation for hospitality and excellence began in 1904 when it opened as East Africa's starting point for hunting safaris. The likes of big game hunter Teddy Roosevelt and a host of celebrities have stayed there over the years. Our first afternoon will include a short drive through the city to sample the sights and sounds and smells of Nairobi,

one of Africa's leading capital and commercial cities. While in the city of Nairobi, we will visit a unique orphanage for street children run by American expatriates living in Kenya. From the city center, we will travel to a lookout point at the rim of the Great Rift Valley. It's the greatest valley in the world, a continental fault system which stretches from the Dead Sea all the way to Mozambique. Its landscape is dotted with soda and freshwater lakes and inactive volcanoes. Apart from the Great Wall of China, the Great Rift Valley is said to be the only other feature of the Earth's surface recognizable to an orbiting astronaut. On that first night, dinner will be at the Schmalzle's home where we will enjoy a sampling of Kenyan Cuisine and learn a few African hymns.

Christianity in Africa...a Mountaintop Experience

The next morning, we'll head north to the Central Highlands to just a few miles north of the equator. Our two-hour drive will bring us to Mt. Kenya, among the world's largest free-standing volcanic mountains, and Africa's second highest mountain after Kilimanjaro. Our hotel for the next three nights is the famous Mount Kenya Safari Club. Built on a ridge facing Mt. Kenya, the site for our stay will be truly magnificent. This mountaintop setting will be a visual reminder of this year's conference theme - "Christianity in Africa Today...a Mountaintop Experience." Far beyond all the wonderful natural beauty and exotic animals which we will see, we want our time together to be time to celebrate the amazing growth of Christianity in Africa today. (You most likely already know that the Christian Church in sub-Saharan Africa is now experiencing over one hundred thousand converts each and every week.) At no time in the history of Christianity has the Church grown so rapidly. The unparalleled vitality and Spirit-born enthusiasm of Believers in Africa today truly makes African Christianity the heartbeat of the worldwide Church. To help us to get to know African Christians, we will be more than just tourists or spectators. At this year's conference, for the first time, we will have several Africans, from different walks of life, living with us for the entire conference so that we might have more than just a superficial meeting with our African brothers and sisters. Our guest speaker will be Dr. Agnes Abuom, the African president of the World Conference of Churches. If you have never had the opportunity to live in Africa, this will be a chance of a lifetime for you.

Elephants, Hippos, and the Ark

While in the Mt. Kenya area, we will have the option to take a day-safari to Samburu National Reserve in the semi-arid areas of Northern Kenya where there are dramatic rock formations, steep hills, and river forests. Besides elephant, hippos, crocs, and leopards, you might also spot the rare Grevy Zebra, the Gerenuk antelope, the blue-legged Somali ostrich, and the shy Oryx. On our last day in the Mt. Kenya region, we will enjoy the adventures of a photographic safari at the Sweetwater's game reserve and Chimpanzee Orphanage. Our last night in the Aberdare Forest will be at the famous Ark. The Ark, built to resemble Noah's Ark, is designed to provide for the game viewing of animals after dark at watering holes and salt licks just outside our windows. It is the closest most will ever come to the "Big Five."

Our African Hosts

As we journey back to Nairobi for our last night's stay at the Norfolk, we will stop at one of Kenya's largest outdoor markets where you will also have the opportunity to purchase African crafts. Once in Nairobi, we will visit the National Museum. Our closing banquet and evening program will take place at the Norfolk Ballroom. Sunday morning we will be attending the English International Worship Service of the Lutheran Church in Nairobi. After worship, you

will be invited to lunch and an afternoon visit with a host family from our International Congregation. Our congregation is home to members of over 30 different countries, most of those African countries, so we will most likely enjoy an afternoon with a national from an African country somewhere in sub-Saharan Africa. Our Sunday evening poolside dinner at the Norfolk will officially conclude our conference week. Flights to Europe will leave that evening at approximately 11:00 p.m. For those staying on for the post-conference safari experience, we will spend the night at the Norfolk.

The Post-Conference Tour: An African Bush Safari

Our sensational post-conference safari begins with a 45 minute flight over the Great Rift Valley to the famous northern reaches of the Serengeti Plain. We will be staying in the Maasai Mara Game Reserve which boasts of East Africa's greatest wildlife game viewing. In the middle of the African bush, our lodging will be in a luxury tented-camp. For two days, we will have numerous opportunities to travel in four-wheel drive safari vehicles across the African savanna to "hunt" for the "Big Five," and to see wildlife as you can only see in Africa. One evening, we will experience an African Bush dinner with roasted meat and traditional dancing.

The Exotic Island of Zanzibar

The second half of our post-conference itinerary will be a flying safari to the exotic island of Zanzibar. We will be staying at the beautiful Blue Bay Beach Resort which is rated as one of the world's top ten beaches. The beauty and tranquility of this Spice Island is something you have most likely never experienced...and for many of you, will certainly be a welcome break from Europe's cold, dark winter! Within Zanzibar's historic Stone Town, we will visit the home of Dr. Livingstone and the remains of an old slave market. While on this Tropical Island, we'll have the additional options of snorkeling, scuba diving, a spice farm tour, and a safari to the Jozani forest to see the red colobus monkey. Our post-conference safari will conclude with our return flight to Nairobi where we will check-in for our evening departure flights.

We'll All Be Together...it Will Be Fantastic!

Now, the one question we all want to know is how much will this all cost? At this point, the estimated cost of the conference week will be \$650. The post-conference safari will be approximately \$999. This may seem, at first, to be an enormous number of shekels, however, it is a tremendous value when you consider that these costs are a third to a fifth of what your local travel agent is able to offer. Also, as was mentioned at last year's conference, the Kenya Tourist Board is willing to offer the member's of AICEMEA a "missionary rate" airfare. You will be able to book your airfares with our travel agent here in Nairobi via email for a fare under \$750 return within the European region. The missionary fare is also available for those living outside of Europe at a slightly higher cost. Within the next few weeks, you will be receiving, via email, a registration form with all the details. We look forward to hosting our AICEMEA Conference this year in Kenya and trust you will make the necessary arrangements to be with us for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

In peace,
Bob and Denise Schmalzle (schmalzle@maf.or.ke)
Nairobi

+ + +

\$\$ From the Financial Front \$\$
(Two items we know you will want to know about!)

First, dues are due! The Church's dues (annual contribution) for the fiscal year 2002/03 are currently due. Unfortunately, our association had a rather poor performance for the 2001/02 due payment. I know that many of you will want to rectify that this year!! The dues this year will remain at US \$250, or whatever contribution that your church can make. If you are unsure of your Church's current financial situation, please email me at aipchurch@pandora.be. Dues may be mailed to – Troy Bowers, Veltwijcklaan 297, 2180 Ekeren, Belgium

Second, reporting on the Executive Committee's decision regarding financial grant to the Kenya conference... If you remember our Annual Meeting in Antalya, then you will remember two directives agreed upon by the Association: 1) All were very excited about the possibility of a Kenya conference, and yet we were concerned about the cost of travel, lodging, vaccinations, visas, etc., and thus urged to keep the costs down; 2) We all agreed that we would like to reduce the relatively large financial balance which our Association carries from year to year.

Thus, we are pleased to inform you that your Executive Committee is acting on both concerns! After consultation with Bob and Denise Schmalzle in Nairobi, and after reflecting upon an appropriate cost per participant for the 2003 Kenya conference, we have increased the amount of money available for grants from US \$2,000 to US \$5,400. This action will allow the 2003 conference to be approximately US \$650 per participant. Of course, travel, visas, vaccinations, etc., will be additional costs.

Respectfully (and waiting for those due payments!),
Troy Bowers, Treasurer
Antwerp

+ + +

Transitions

In recent months, several of our friends have either left our association or taken on new postings or ministries within the association. In addition, several new pastors have joined our ranks. Below are a few announcements about pastoral transitions and words of greeting.

+

Gruessen aus Bonn!

“For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord, “plans for good and not for harm to give you a future and a hope” (Jeremiah 29:11).

Jeremiah 29:11 and the verses following are favorites of our family. They have helped guide us, sustain us and encourage us through many searching times. About this time last year, Marian and I began to pray this verse as we began to seek whether God was calling us on

from our ministry at the American Church in London. Over the last year it has been so good to see God at work fulfilling His promises in our lives.

Just over two months ago, our family arrived here in Bonn, where we are continuing the ministry of Doug and Katherine at the American Protestant Church. The congregation is a wonderful mix of 30% German, 30% African, 30% American and the remainder from all parts of the world. As Marian and I grew up and met in Africa, we've experienced a wonderful sense of homecoming. A few Sundays ago, we celebrated African Sunday that was led by our African members complete with an African potluck. It was spiritually and physically a taste of home!

It is so good also to take over from leaders like Doug and Katherine. The love they poured into this congregation over five years is so evident everywhere throughout the church. The lay leadership is strong, and there's some ministry going on in the church every day of the week except Saturday. We share the church building with an international Catholic congregation, as well as congregations from Korea and Sri Lanka. The church is located directly across from the United Nations in Bonn so the possibility for worldwide ministry is literally on our doorstep.

We've had the normal transitional challenges familiar to so many in our congregations, e.g., translating documents and manuals, emergency dental, finding a home, car, etc., but God has been so good to us. The move to Bonn actually brings Marian closer to her client base in Switzerland, and more importantly to her sister who also lives in Germany. Her sister and family recently joined us on our all-church retreat. It's wonderful to have family so nearby. Our kids are loving the schools here. Our 11-year old son is on the traveling soccer squad at school, and our 7-year old daughter is full into jazz dance and Brownies. Our two-year old still continues to live up to her designation as "the Boss." I'm loving being so close to the Rhine, and having a ten-minute walk to work.

We miss all our friends in London, but feel such peace about our new ministry here in Bonn. We are so happy that in this ministry we can continue to be a part of a shared ministry with each of you. We're moving into our new home on October 26 which is plenty big for guests. So if you get a break, come and visit us in this "small town in Germany." Our e-mail here in Bonn is pastor@apcbonn.de. We're looking forward to seeing everyone in Africa in February!

Blessings on your ministries,
Steve Gaultney
Bonn

+

From London, Linda Rettenmayer reports that she has taken on the part-time position of small group ministry coordinator at the **American Church in London**. However, even more exciting is her new part-time position as associate pastor at Westminster, Methodist Central Hall. Linda writes, "I am excited about working within the mother denomination of Methodism and serving in this historic location. My job description covers a broad range of responsibilities and after two months I am finally beginning to feel at home."

We pray God's blessings on Linda in her new fields of Christian service and look forward to hearing more about her ministry in London.

+

The **Rev. Ben Coltvet** arrived earlier this month to begin serving as pastor of the **American Church in Berlin**. Pastor Coltvet and his wife Margit come from Cedar Falls, Iowa, and look forward to joining in the ministry and fellowship of the association. Welcome to the Coltvets!

+

The International Protestant Church of Brussels is pleased to announce the appointment of the **Rev. Jake Fisher** as the new pastor of the congregation. Pastor Fisher and his wife Teresa and daughter Katie will be coming to Brussels from Ft. Wayne, Indiana, in January 2003. May God bless the IPC Brussels congregation and the Fisher family in their new ministry together.

+

Greetings to our association from the **Rev. Gerald Weiss**, interim Pastor of the **American Protestant Church of the Hague**. Pastor Weiss arrived to the Hague in June following the departure of Rev. Michael Bailey after four years of service at APCH. Pastor Weiss is a retired United Methodist minister who served as pastor of APCH in 1968-72. Meanwhile, the congregation is in the process of selecting a new pastor for the congregation. It is hoped that the new Senior Pastor would be in place sometime between the end of March and the first of June 2003.

+ + +

2002 Youth Conference in London

Just a reminder to all association congregations that this fall's High School Youth Conference is taking place November 21-24 in London.

The theme for this year's youth conference is "The Wild Kingdom," and is being organized by Chris Wighamman, youth director of the International Community Church, Surrey.

Chris promises us that "this is going to be an amazing youth conference for high school students aged 14-18. The whole thing will be in downtown London: sleeping and eating at The Generator youth hostel and meeting at the Bloomsbury Baptist Church. We will be entertained by Isaac, a hilarious improv team (who just off tour with Five Iron Frenzy) and led in worship by Cheryl Glenn and band. Our special speaker is Greg Tucker, an amazing guy who knows how to communicate with youth (he is a pastor at a brand new church in Anaheim, California)."

The cost of the youth conference is \$150. Registrations will be accepted until November 4, though at this late date space may be limited. Scholarships may be available.

If you have any questions or still wish to register for the youth conference, contact Chris by phone at (44) 1372841720 or by e-mail at: thewildkingdomuk@aol.com.

+ + +

[Finally, in recent months your editors have been flooded with requests for reprints of the Eighth Letter to the Churches, as famously uncovered by our own Dr. Fondell last spring in the Turkish waters. With permission from and gratitude to the esteemed researcher, we reprint below this letter in its entirety.]

The Eighth Letter to the Churches

This letter was miraculously found by aqua-archeologist Douglas Fondell during a recent dive off the coast of Antalya. It was found at a depth of 15 meters in an ancient amphora guarded by seven deadly sharks. The manuscript was dried-out, brought to Dr. Mark Wilson, whereby it was thus confirmed that the penmanship is indeed that of John.

You who have ears to hear...hear now what the spirit says to the International Churches of Europe, The Middle East, Africa and anyone else I may have missed. For those who have feet to stand please rise if your church name is thus called forth:

To the less than angelic Churches of Vienna: I know your deeds! You have a reputation! Repent! Your coffee during the fellowship hour is far too strong, and you offer no free refills. Repent I say, or I shall come like a thief and steal from you, your filters. You will not know the time, but it will come faster than you can say "Cappuccino"!

To the less than angelic Church of Zurich: He who holds the keys of David can open that which no one can shut. I know your deeds. Some among you are causing division! Article 24 chapter 14 of Paul's letter to the Corinthians reminds you that "Yodeling in the Spirit" must be accompanied by interpretation as is covered in the "Propriety Laws of Worship." To the church of Zurich...stop your yodeling now, lest the King who holds the keys cometh and zippith your Zurichian mouths shut, tossing the keys thus into the lake of Interlachen.

To the less than angelic Church of Finland: Amen! My faithful and true witnesses. I know your deeds, yet this I have against you: Some among you willfully choose to sauna before the sauna is adequately heated. In addition, you are blaspheming the sauna by refusing to run out into the snow in the flesh. YOU ARE NEITHER HOT, NOR COLD! I wish you were either one, or the other, but because you are neither, I am prepared to spit on your flesh.

To the less than angelic Pastors of the Church of Paris: I know your deeds, your hard work, your pretty decent music ministry. Yet, this I hold against you: the Eucharist wine you serve to your congregation is boxed wine from Michigan, while you select only the finest bottled French wines for your own consumption at breakfast, lunch, and dinner. If you do not repent I will come and remove from you all seven cork screws the church doth owneth, leaving you to thirst. I know how you hate the wine-hoarding practices of the International Churches of London and Surrey. Do not follow in their waywardness. Shape Up! Share the good stuff with your congregation!

To the less than angelic Church of Nairobi-Uhuru Highway: Who names their Church after a highway? Whatever happened to Trinity Church, or Redeemer Church? What is the deal? Uhuru Highway? I know your deeds, and yes, I hold this against you: You follow the teachings of Bob, who knows all the flight schedules to Nairobi, yet cannot remember the books of the Bible. Because of this...Your church is full of DEMONS! By this, you will

know him...the sign of the beast shall be spelled B-O-B, which in the realm of evil, if spelled backwards reads B-O-B. I say to you, Repent, or I shall come and add an "O" to Bob, which spelled backwards...dare I say... a double curse!

To the less than angelic Churches of Cairo: I have seen from afar your wicked ways, and this I have against you: You finance your ministries using "Pyramid Schemes." I will thus, punish you with this curse...you shall be led by "goateed" men, who are small in stature. Their name shall be "Dave." Let it be a sign unto you...like B-O-B, DAVE spelled backwards with an "E" added to the end spells E-V-A-D-E! I say to you, EVADE them, lest your fruitful ministry recedeth, as does the hair on their head.

To the angelic Church of Antalya: These are the words of Him who is Holy and True! I know your deeds. I know that you have little support, yet you have kept my word, and have not denied my name. But this I have against you. (Momentary Pause) No, Wait, I have nothing against you...I thought I did...but now I remember...It was another thing against BOB and his Highway Church! You're in good standing with me. To reward you for your faithfulness your names have been written in my book, and these books I present to you are from your friends of AICEMEA, given in my name. In addition, I bestow upon you the "Bowl of Life," a gift of pottery from your AICEMEA friends, given in my name. May it, and may you...Jim and Renata, bear fruit for years and years to come in Antalya. We thank you for this marvelous conference and your wonderful hospitality.

-Prepared by Doug Fondell and Richard Davis for the closing banquet of the 2002 AICEMEA Conference held in Antalya, Turkey.

+ + +

Together: The AICEMEA Newsletter

Together is a quarterly publication of the
Association of International Churches in
Europe, the Middle East, and Africa

AICEMEA 2002-03 Executive Committee Members

President: Jodi Fondell, Stockholm jodi.fondell@immanuel.se
Vice President: Robert Hunt, Vienna robert.hunt@chello.at
Secretary/Treasurer: Troy Bowers, Antwerp aipchurch@pandora.be
Newsletter Editor: Noel Calhoun, Moscow mpc@rol.ru