

From Port Elizabeth to the Nations

At the end of June 2007 Bless the Nations Eastern Cape celebrated its 20th annual World Missions Conference. This must make it one of the longest running city-wide conferences in the country.

History

Bless the Nations has its roots in the faithful ministry of David Bliss during the 1980s. From the Andrew Murray Centre in Wellington, David (inspired by the life and works of Dr Andrew Murray), actively promoted the vision of Prayer, Revival and Missions at a time in South Africa's history when most Christians were occupied with many other issues. He would often be confronted with the view that South African churches could not be involved in world missions at that stage.

Some Christian leaders from Port Elizabeth attended a Bless the Nations conference in Wellington and came back with the vision to start a similar movement back home. The first Port Elizabeth based Bless the Nations conference took place in June 1988, with the veteran missionary from Afghanistan, Dr Christy Wilson, as the main speaker. Leading figures in those early years included people like Danie van Huysteen, Tobie de

Wet (now full-time missionary in Japan), Frits van der Merwe (now full-time missionary in Mozambique) Alastair Jolley (local full-time missionary) and Ds Giep Louw who is currently still actively involved in various missions related ministries.

Annual World Missions Conference

Over the two decades the conference has developed as the region's major missions event with Christians of more than 100 different churches attending from various communities, denominations and backgrounds. Speakers in the past have been from countries such as Afghanistan, Kenya, Nigeria, UK, Sudan and Palestine. In 2008 there will be a focus on the Arab World with the main speaker Dr Raouff Ghattas who is from that region. Furthermore the Director Media for Arab World Ministries, will also be presenting workshops.

A previous speaker labelled the conference as the annual celebration for the missions community in the region. In addition to numerous foreign missionaries (Japan, Thailand, Peru, Madagascar, Egypt, Doulos etc) who experienced a calling at previous conferences, many local Christians are also now actively

involved in missions mobilisation and support because of hearing the Lord's voice at a conference.

Other activities

Although the conference is the flagship project of the movement, its monthly Concerts of Prayer and part time School of World Missions play a major role throughout the year. Both these activities have also been running for the past 20 years. At the Concerts of Prayer "prayer faithfuls" intercede for the local church and for various foreign missionaries.

The students at the mission school attend monthly workshops. Many of these students are from churches where they get very little exposure to world missions. Therefore the focus is basic missions awareness with topics such as "The Biblical perspectives on Missions", "What does the world look like", "Unreached People Groups" and "Prayer and Missions". Visiting missionaries are always invited to share with the students.

Jean Greyling

Coordinator

Bless The Nations

21st annual
Bless the Nations
World Missions Conference

27 - 29 June 2008
Algoa Community Church
Port Elizabeth

Statistics from 2007 Conference

- More than **400 delegates** throughout the weekend
- from more than **120 churches**
- representing **various denominations and communities.**

Organisations that exhibited in 2007
OM, YWAM, MAF, MET, Arab World Ministries, Global Careers, FCE, CEF (South Africa & Mozambique), Marsh Arabs, SIM, Bible Society, Open Doors, Feba Radio, Trans World Radio

Bless the Nations DVD
A free DVD which gives an introduction to Bless the Nations can be ordered.

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WORLD MISSION CENTER "LIVE SCHOOL"

- **World Mission Centre (WMC)** has developed unique cutting edge curriculum called "Live School" which is used to train and mobilize church planters. The Vision is to train thousands of people, through 10 world languages, to be missionaries in the 'backstreets' where there is no access to formal mission training.
- The Live School consists of **240 hours of training** presented by some of the best mission trainers in the world and developed over a six year period. The curriculum includes character development, biblical basis for missions, cross-cultural communication, community development and more.
- By using the Live School curriculum, the pastor of a church can provide his/her people with **meaningful training**. Churches may also partner together to run a school. Every school will have a full-time facilitator, someone who will give special attention to all the details of running the school and also take sincere interest in the development and progress of each student.
- To operate the Live School, one needs a classroom, lounge or church building, a TV set, and a DVD player. Ideally a school will have **10 - 20 students enrolled** at a time. The size of the school is limited only by the number and quality of the leaders available to operate the school.

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