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# WITNESS6.7

Acts 6.7a - The word of God continued to spread  
**The Evangelism & Church Growth Initiative Newsletter**

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## WITNESS6.7

*"So the Word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly — Acts 6:7)*

One of the most encouraging Biblical verses for the Evangelism and Church Growth Initiative is Acts 6:7 – "So the Word of God spread..." This is most appropriate because the purpose of the ECGI is to encourage the networking of evangelism and church planting models and share stories round the Anglican Communion.

The Word of God is powerful and sharp. It can spread extensively like wild fire. It can also burn like a laser only at a focal point. The Jerusalem 'fire' burned rapidly in the first century; resulting in true repentance and obedience to the faith in Jesus Christ. The testimonies and ministries of the disciples have certainly acted as catalysts to the spreading of the 'wild fire'. Such phenomenon repeated itself many times in the first century Roman world.

Lives were transformed; community was also challenged. It was like an earthquake and became the talk of the town. People were saying things to this effect: "Look, something strange has happened, even the religious leaders have abandoned their former faith and embraced the new found faith"

What was so special that could even invite the transformation of communities? The key word is WITNESSING. We are still seeing a similar phenomenon repeating itself, even today. The transformation of communities among the

### Six editions per year

As from June 2011, WITNESS6.7 will appear six times each year. Generally, each edition will be smaller but, hopefully, with links to longer articles on the ECGI website. The June and December issues each year will be bigger issues and thematic whilst the February, April, August, and October issue will continue to be general.

The theme for June 2011 will be *'How Anglicans share their faith'* and December 2011 will be on *'Discipleship'*. The themes for 2012 will be *'Hospitality and evangelism'* and *'Children and young people'*.

**Do remember these themes when you send in material for the thematic issues in June and December to [stuart.buchanan@anglicancommunion.org](mailto:stuart.buchanan@anglicancommunion.org)**



native people in the Malaysian jungle; the deep repentance of drug addicts; the sacrifices of professionals for priesthood are results of the Witnessing power of Christians with the Word of God through the Holy Spirit.

The ECGI members, hence, decided to use the new name WITNESS6.7 to usher in an image which speaks the mind of ECGI.

*Bishop Moon Hing Ng, Diocesan Bishop of West Malaysia is deputy convener of the ECGI core group and hosted the recent core group meeting.*

## Facebook Forum

Many ECGI members are keen to find a way of engaging with each other to share stories, resources, prayer needs and good practice and also to discuss issues. As our current website does not allow this, we will be launching an ECGI Facebook group, see the next issue, in June, for more details

## Diocese of Bethlehem: Kajo Keji, Sudan

Excerpts from Outreach and Communications Department.

By: *Rev Joseph Duduka Nicanor*

Outreach and Communications Coordinator

Convention for the chiefs, civil leaders, and religious leaders.



The Diocese of Kajo Keji in partnership with all sister churches organized a convention that brought all chiefs, civil leaders, organized forces, and political leaders for prayer and fasting. Bishop Anthony Poggo of the Diocese of Kajo Keji opened the convention and did the exposition of the theme. Many denominations were represented. The convention was conducted from 10th-11th September, 2010, at the Revival Conference hall that attracted at least 1,820 people. The convention was under the theme "if my people who are called by my name, humble themselves, pray, seek my face and turn from their wicked ways then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and heal their land" (2 chronicles 7 7:14). During the confession session, people went on their knees, crying out to God for mercy and forgiveness. All people confessed their sins to God. Leaders confessed the sins of their forefathers, and sins committed during the war. Leaders present were the Commissioner, Chief Cornelius Kudot, land lords and many others. Immediately after the confessions, there was a spell of rainfall.

### The Week of witness

The passion and love for lost souls and commitment to fulfil the great commission (Matthew 28:18-20) is the driving force of the Diocese of Kajo Keji. On 10th- 17th October 2010 we were able to send out 130 enthusiastic evangelists to all our 58 parishes under the theme, "It is for the freedom that Christ has set us free, stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves being burden again by the yoke of slavery" and preachers jealously were able to reach every village, streets, social centres (bars and markets) and institutions with the gospel of Jesus Christ. We used the FM radios, open air crusades, person to person evangelism, healing and deliverance, visitation, discussion and questions, home to home and Zone crusades. And the impact was huge, beyond our expectations. We surely felt the presences of the Lord.

### Church planting

The Anglican Church and in particular the Diocese of Kajo Keji is very much blessed with the revival movement which started in 8 Rwanda and spread through Uganda to Kajo Keji in 1940s. It is the strongest arm of evangelism and spiritual revival in the church. The revival movement in partnership with the Bible League of Canada, Christian Horizons and Go Ye Africa launched a project of training 150 church planters in five regions which fall under five dioceses of Kajo Keji, Yei, Lainya, Juba and Mundri. The project has so far trained 160 church planters and graduated them. The training covered five modules and these include evangelism, discipleship, leadership, worship and holistic ministry. The first group was graduated by the Archbishop and primate of the Episcopal church of the Sudan, His grace, The Most Rev, Canon, Dr Daniel Deng Bul and others by diocesan bishops. Over 200 new churches have been planted from a targeted number of 212. There are 6,240 new converts and the total number of attendance in the new churches has gone to 11,695. The next plan is to extend the programme to all 10 states of southern Sudan. This can be done when 60 trainers are trained.

**Growing The Church**— a five session, 32 page, study course produced by USPG



Anglicans in World Mission

The sessions include: Growth in numbers; Growth in depth; Growth in community, Growth in generosity; Growth in learning

[http://www.uspg.org.uk/article.php?article\\_id=927&resource=53](http://www.uspg.org.uk/article.php?article_id=927&resource=53)

## Evangelism and Church Growth Initiative (ECGI)

The ECGI core group met in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 14 – 17 February 2011. The group was chaired by Bishop Patrick Yu from Canada, and hosted by Bishop Moon Hing Ng of the Diocese of West Malaysia. It included members from Melanesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, South Africa, Kenya, England and the USA, with staff from the Anglican Communion Office.

Reflecting on different stories of the growth of the early church in the Acts of the Apostles, the group shared stories of evangelism and church growth from around the Communion and affirmed that all were working in a variety of different contexts and had much to learn from each other's experiences, and received a report on work amongst least evangelised peoples.

They were able to review the progress made since the core group first met in January 2010 and sharpened its goals for the coming year. Time was spent compiling a collection of over sixty different resources for evangelism that will be available on the ECGI resource pages on the Anglican Communion website by mid March; these will be arranged according to the type of context they are most appropriate for, as well as a section of general reference.

They agreed to establish a Facebook group for practitioners to increase interaction among those involved in evangelism and church growth: to share stories; best practice; resources; prayer; encouragement. The frequency of the ECGI newsletter, renamed **Witness 6.7** (*Acts 6.7a - The word of God continued to spread*), will increase from four to six issues each year.

## Resources for Evangelism

The core group reflected on the words of the Great Commission, the growth of the church in the Acts of the Apostles and their own mission contexts seeing parallels between: Jerusalem and the **early modernity** context. Judea and Samaria and the **late modernity** context and the ends of the earth and the **post-modern** context. On this basis a wide range of resources were collated and are now available on the ECGI web pages <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/mission/ecgi/resources/index.cfm> (*far more than the sixty predicted in the press release given above!*) They appear under four different headings: **Please send your resources, so we can regularly update and expand these.**

### Early Modernity

*People who share with you a similar cultural, historical, religious background, people who are familiar with the Christian faith but have not embraced Christ (44 resources available)*

### Late Modernity

*People with a church background but moved away from church, people without a church background, people with a spirituality that is not Christ-centered (33 resources available)*

### Post-modern

*People whose culture, religious, and historical background is completely different from yours who have no past or present connection to Christ (34 resources available)*

### General

*Foundational documents on evangelism and resources that apply to all contexts (37 resources available)*

## Reflection on ECGI core group meeting 14–17 February 2011 in Kuala Lumpur by co-adjutor Bishop of Lahore, Rt Revd Irfan Jamil

I come from Pakistan where I have recently been consecrated as co-adjutor Bishop of Lahore but I am still the vicar of St Thomas Church Islamabad where I have served for the past 8 years. Before that I was serving at St Andrews Church Lahore. I am Adviser to the Bishop of Lahore Dr Alexander John Malak on evangelism and this is why I am on the ECGI Group. Last year I was not able to come because I could not get a visa but I am grateful to God that this year I am able to attend the ECGI meeting in Malaysia.

It was very interesting to meet people from different countries with different ideas on evangelism. I was surprised by the fact that it is an ongoing thing from the Lambeth Conference as I did not know that there are such decisions taken at the Lambeth Conference. I have been receiving the newsletters which was keeping me informed of the various activities happening around the world. We had an international conference on mission and evangelism in Jehlum Pakistan last

In the sessions of this meeting the bible reading and talks have been helpful in helping me to see things from a different perspective which helps to broaden your thinking and in another way to interpret the scripture. I think this idea of newsletters and various people writing articles on issues will be helpful also a variety of resource material is helpful where we have access now. I would suggest if we could have regional or national conferences where we could have more local people where they could participate in sharing this whole area so that we get help from each other and core group members of ECGI can join these conferences. The hospitality of the Diocese of West Malaysia was very good and I want to thank all their members who helped in various ways.

I would say that this decision of Lambeth to reinforce evangelism is very much needed and appreciated in the midst of so many negative things within the Anglican Communion.

## Evangelism & Church Growth and 'Migration'

When Jesus told the disciples about the impending coming of the Holy Spirit and their role to **"be witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth"** they most likely had no clue how this would work out. It was in fact through persecution of believers that Christ's vision was fulfilled. Many disciples who had run away from persecution in Jerusalem and turned refugees became witnesses "in all Judea and Samaria, and the ends of the earth!"

Throughout Christian history the Gospel has spread or/ and the Church enriched through the witness of migrants and refugees. Today the phenomenon of migration has continued and become more widespread; and through globalisation the world has often been described as a global village! In the last 100 years, 'people movement' has become so easy, fast and wide spread that it has heavily changed the shape and colour of our world. The economic and trade industry have seized the opportunities that migration brings and yet there seem to be less and less realisation by the Church of the great potential for evangelism and church growth that lies in this 'people movement' phenomenon!

The coming of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples on Pentecost and the 'dramatic events' that followed leading to the martyrdom of Stephen were key defining moments in the life of the early Church. When Stephen was killed for being a follower of Jesus, many believers ran away from persecution in Jerusalem and went into hiding in Judea and Samaria. Luke makes it very clear that it was the refugees who fled Jerusalem and sought safety and security in Samaria and Judea, who became the agents of evangelism and church growth in these areas. Philip was especially instrumental in taking the Gospel to Samaria and through his ministry many became disciples of Jesus Christ (Acts 8: 3-40).

One of the great phenomenon of our time is the people movement, which happens due to insecurity in home cities and countries and also for economic reasons. The world is often referred to as a global village due to this great movement! The phenomenon of 'people movement' today (from everywhere to everywhere) provides opportunities for the Gospel to be preached by migrants among their own people but also among those whom they encounter on the daily basis outside of their ethnicity. It also provides a great opportunity for a local Church to witness to Christ and share his love with migrants or/and refugees/foreign students.

There is virtually no country within the Anglican Communion that has not experienced the 'people movement' phenomenon! The question is, how aware and open are we in welcoming and providing hospitality to those who come in or midst? Are our churches tapping into the great evangelism and church growth resource right in our midst? Or are we simply dismissing immigrants in our midst as 'parasites' taking up our jobs? What about those 'foreign' faces in our congregations, do we simply regard them as passers-by, or do we make effort to integrate and encourage their full participation in the life of the Church as full members who have much to contribute to the life and mission of the Church? How can we make our congregations and churches more welcoming to those refugees, migrants and foreign students in our midst in a way that goes beyond our perception of them as objects/subjects of our sympathy? *(continued in next column)*

## Get Involved

- ◆ **Register**, if you have not already done so, <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/mission/ecgi> — we will let the core group person responsible for your region know about you;
- ◆ **Tell others** involved in evangelism and church growth about the Initiative and the newsletter;
- ◆ **Send us** your stories, of how God is working through your church or organisation to grow his church, to include in future issues, (300—800 words) by 1 May for the June 2011 edition. We are exploring how we can include more sensitive material on secure web pages;
- ◆ **Tell us** about resources: books; websites; courses, good practice; prayers etc that we can include in future newsletters or on the website
- ◆ **Read the website** to explore the various helpful resources that are already included;
- ◆ **Translate** this newsletter, and other material, into the languages of those who cannot read in English; at this stage we do not have the resources to do this ourselves;
- ◆ We call on you to **pray** for the ECGI and the work mentioned in this issue.



**The Mission Department  
Anglican Communion  
Office  
St Andrew's House  
16 Tavistock Crescent  
Westbourne Park  
London W11 1AP  
UK**

[john.kafwanka@anglicancommunion.org](mailto:john.kafwanka@anglicancommunion.org)

or

[stuart.buchanan@anglicancommunion.org](mailto:stuart.buchanan@anglicancommunion.org)

Website

[www.aco.org/ministry/mission/ecgi](http://www.aco.org/ministry/mission/ecgi)

*(continued from previous column)*

What about those migrant churches operating in our midst, are we simply dismissing them as mere ethnic churches that have little or no understanding of the cultures in which they are serving? Or are we engaging them and open to learn from their experience and spirituality?

How much are we open to the fact that these migrants have something important to offer and may hold the key to some of the challenges we face in matters of evangelism and church growth?

**The full article, by John K Kafwanka (Revd), Director for Mission – Anglican Communion Office appears at <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/mission/ecgi/resources/index.cfm>**