Shaping Our Third Century

The bicentennial of important events in the history of our movement, such as the ‘Cane Ridge Revival’ (1801), the ‘Dissolution of the Springfield Presbytery’ (1804) and the Declaration and Address (1809), provide an obvious opportunity for examining our history and looking at the shape of our future.

To be faithful to our calling, this is something we should always be doing. However this bicentennial timing provides an opportunity for a special focus. It is the main reason why our pivotal convention in Brighton next year, for example, has a ‘past and future’ theme: Founded in Christ - Building for Tomorrow.

The ministry of World Convention exists to lift up the ‘together’ vision of our churches - to build up fellowship, understanding and common purpose within our global family. The quadrennial convention itself is only one way of doing this.

Another is the Exploring Our Destiny series.

In this issue of World Christian we include a further eight page liftout section in this series of personal reflections designed to help each of us consider our life together.

It needs to be stated clearly that this is not an attempt to describe what the church will be like in the future. There are many other resources for that.

The Exploring Our Destiny series has the specific aim of helping us to see the unique role of our global family in the dynamic, worldwide church of Jesus Christ of today.

Our churches have always claimed to be a movement, and a movement must have a clear and specific purpose.

Are We There Yet? identifies seven trends and five challenges to examine as we seek to shape who we will be tomorrow.

If you can use extra copies of this insert for group discussion we’ll be glad to send them to you. It will also be on our website: www.worldconvention.org

Confidence in the Future

Since then it is by faith that we are justified, let us grasp the fact that we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have confidently entered into this new relationship of grace, and here we take our stand, in happy certainty of the glorious things he has for us in the future.

Romans 5: 1-2 (J.B. Phillips translation.)
The World Convention of Churches of Christ

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Estimating the Size of our Global Family

We are often asked how many members there are in our churches worldwide. The simple answer is, ‘We don’t know’. In fact nobody knows. However, perhaps an ‘early estimate’ would be useful.

When we arrived in Nashville in 1993 we believed, as most people did, that there were Christian - Churches of Christ - Disciples of Christ congregations in at least seventy, and maybe ninety, countries.

Before too long we were amazed to be able to publish a chart showing that our movement had established congregations in no less than 165 countries.

Because of the divisions in some countries (considering the USA, for example, as having three major streams) it became clear that there are no less than 300 national manifestations of our movement.

- Members

No more than thirty of these national manifestations have any kind of national organisation so it is very difficult to find out how many members we have.

Current figures for membership in the USA can be given as approximately 1,277,000 for the a cappella Churches of Christ, and 800,000 for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). These total approximately 2,077,000.

Figures for most overseas countries are much harder to find. An a cappella Churches of Christ conference in Texas in 2002, relating to Africa, found that this group had just over 1,000,000 members in sub-Saharan Africa. It is easy to accept a total of 1.5 million a cappella members altogether outside the United States of America. (One claim is more than 650,000 in India alone.)

Figures for work related to Christian Churches/Churches of Christ in the USA are much harder to find but as these churches have a similar number of missionaries (around 1000) it is likely that similar numbers apply.

- ‘It would seem entirely safe to say that the present day Christian World Communion that has grown out of the 19th Century Restoration Movement, is now a fellowship of no less than twelve million people, with at least six million of those people being members.’

Adding these three totals, and including a further 100,000 for churches not related to the USA we arrive at a total membership outside the USA of no less than 3,700,000.

Including the USA, this gives a global membership of almost 7.2 million.

The Wider Family

Membership is not the whole story. Unlike many Christian World Communions, we include only baptised believers as members. Most children are therefore not included in the membership count. Neither are others who are ‘within the family’ but usually described in statistics as ‘adherents’.

Mac Lynn of Nashville, Tennessee, USA, who has done a tremendous amount of very valuable statistical work within a cappella Churches of Christ globally, gives a basis for a ratio of members and others. In 2000 Churches of Christ in the USA had 1,265,000 members and 1,645,000 adherents.

If we apply this ratio (1.3) to the USA total of 3,470,000 we have a total of approximately 4,500,000 children and other ‘adherents’.

If we assume that the overseas, children and other adherents are only half the ratio (0.65 instead of 1.3) of that in the USA we arrive at a figure (rounded down) of 2.5 million.

This gives a global figure for children and adherents of 6.75 million.

Using these figures, the total ‘family’ is therefore 7.2 million, almost 7.2 million ‘adherents’ and some 1.1 million people.

On this basis it would seem entirely safe at this stage, to say that the present day Christian World Communion that has grown out of the 19th Century Restoration Movement, is now a fellowship of no less than twelve million people, with at least six million of those people being members.

Our constant challenge is to build up our family-ness and our global relationships, as well as our understanding that we are a people within the whole church of Jesus Christ.

- Lorraine and Lyndsay Jacobs

1 Churches of Christ in The United States (2000 edition) Mac Lynn
2 New York Times, September 2002
3 Year Book & Directory, Christian Church Disciples of Christ in the USA & Canada (2003)
News for all Women from the World Christian Women’s Fellowship

The latest information from World CWF President, Muriel Garrow (England) and Secretary-Treasurer, Adonna Bowman (USA)

World CWF Retreat and World CWF Executive Committee Meeting

Are you registered for the World Convention yet? The dates are July 28 - August 1, 2004 in Brighton, England. You can obtain a registration form at www.worldconvention.org or email World Convention at worldconv@aol.com for more information.

Equally important, make sure you arrive in time for the Women’s Retreat. In order to facilitate travel and keep costs as low as possible, it has been decided to partially integrate the World CWF Executive Meeting and the World CWF Retreat.

The World CWF event will therefore commence mid afternoon on Sunday, 25 July and end mid morning Wednesday, 28 July* in time to register at the World Convention Desk and join in the afternoon pre-convention tour of Brighton if desired. Monday morning will be a free time for non-Executive Committee members. Alternatively, you may arrive in time for the start of the main Retreat program at 3.30 pm on Monday, 26 July.

The Retreat will pick up on the World Convention theme, Founded in Christ - Building for Tomorrow, and focus on equipping women and sharing the gospel with children. The Retreat is open to all women although some places will be reserved until the end of January to allow for as full a representation of different countries as possible.

The Retreat will be held at the Grand Ocean Hotel, Saltdean, which has a special policy for hosting groups like ours. It is just four miles from the Brighton Centre where the World Convention is being held.

The cost will be finalised very soon but will be no more than US$180 (UK£110) for the full time (three nights) or US$125 (UK£75) from Monday 26th July. (Those arriving Monday can pre-order a sandwich lunch for a small additional cost. Further details will be available from January 1 from Adonna Bowman, PO Box 1986, Indianapolis IN 46206-1986, USA or Muriel Garrow, 40 Fairstone Hill, Oadby, Leicester LE2 5RH, England, UK. Attendees may register for the World CWF Retreat at www.homelandministries.org/women or email Muriel at mgarrow@fish.co.uk

*Note, this is a change from the detail given in the second quarter 2003 issue of World Christian - the coloured World Convention brochure.

Something to Note

World CWF is not just for women in groups using the CWF name. In 1996 the World CWF changed its constitution to make it clear that it was for all women in the Churches of Christ - Christian Church (new Zealand cheques to Dr David Coulter, 264 Highgate, Dunedin.)

Thank you for your gift!

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Fourth Quarter 2003 - Page 3

Friends of World Convention

The global day to day ministry of World Convention depends on gifts from Friends of World Convention (churches and individuals) for all that it does.

• Thank you for all gifts received so far this year.
• Your current label (pg 8) gives the date of your latest gift.
• Australian/Canadian/USA/UK currency checks/cheques please.
• Or use your credit card.
• (New Zealand cheques to Dr David Coulter, 264 Highgate, Dunedin.)

Khayelihle Childrens Village Update

This home in Zimbabwe - the current World CWF Project - is now caring for 32 children - most without family care because of the AIDS pandemic.

Further support is needed - most urgently for a school bus. Without this bus to take children to school, it is virtually impossible to increase numbers. Gifts to Adonna Bowman - see address above.

World CWF Luncheon

The World CWF Luncheon will be held as usual on the Saturday of World Convention - July 31st.

As well as the meal, there will be an interesting and stimulating global program as well a time of fellowship and a brief business meeting.

Meal ticket details will be available through the World Convention office and will mailed to all those who register for World Convention. This mailing will occur towards the end of February.
In House:  
Up-to-date News of the Ministry of World Convention

www.worldconvention.org - National Profiles  
Profiles are available for 33 of the 165 countries where our movement is known to have churches. These countries are:  
Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Antigua & Barbuda, Aruba, Australia, Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Canada, Cuba, Denmark, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Iceland, Latvia, Liberia, The Netherlands, Netherlands Antilles, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, The United Kingdom, The United States of America (interim), Vanuatu.

The aim of the national profiles is to describe the work of our movement in each country and provide links to other web sites which will allow people to research further. National profiles allow you to find out not only what is happening in other countries, but also what is happening in your own.

As we state at the beginning of each profile, we are telling you what we know. We urge you to correct or add to our knowledge. We also urge you to send us information - books, brochures, web sites - that will help with the writing of the profiles.

World Convention has financial support for Clint Holloway to research this work just one day per week and we would love to double that to two. Could you help?

11:11 - Get Connected
Response from around the world shows that this prayer network for our global family is very appealing.

Set YOUR watch for 11:11 am daily  
• Thank God for what you have; pray for what you need.  
• Include any person around you in your prayer.  
• Be truthful if anybody asks you what you are doing.  
• Remember your global church family and that you are a loved and commissioned member of the whole church of Jesus Christ.

World Convention Citations
Citations to recognise those within our churches who are providing outstanding leadership within the church or their communities will be made at ‘Brighton’. Nominations (give details) are welcomed. Please consider suitable younger people also. Forward to the World Convention office by December 31. (Contact details page 2.)

World Convention Recognition
At the Restoration Forum in Johnson City, Tennessee in October, Lorraine & Lyndsay Jacobs (General Secretaries of the World Convention) were added to the Honor Roll of Unity. Others added were Robert O Fife (who died early in November), Monroe E Hawley, Henry E Webb and Dennis Randall.

Revised Constitution
The proposed revision of the constitution of the World Convention of Churches of Christ - to reflect its present ministry - will be voted on at the World Convention in Brighton. Comments are invited (to the World Convention office) by December 31.

World Youth Convention
Three national United Reformed Church Youth and Children’s Work Training Officers based in the south of England will be leading the World Youth Convention.

We are very thrilled to be able to announce this tremendous leadership by Stephen Collins, Andrew Micklefield and Howard Nurden along with a team of qualified helpers.

The World Youth Convention will run parallel to World Convention and will include several World Convention sessions. This will ensure that young people have their separate time together but feel also that they have been at World Convention. All sessions will be held in the Convention Centre.

Registration will close on April 30. We will appreciate earlier registration and information about groups that are coming. Numbers will be limited so groups need to check with us as soon as possible to reserve space. The World Youth Convention age range is 11 to 18 (at July 28, 2004).

Young people up to the end of high school register free for World Convention. However a fee is charged to cover the direct costs of the youth program. This fee is £90 or US$150. Included in the fee are two lunches in Brighton and the full cost of the Arundel/Chichester trip on Friday, including lunch.

To register for the youth convention:  
1. If you are already listed on your family registration, send the form on page 5 marked ‘already registered - fee enclosed for youth convention,’ and enclose payment.  
2. If your family is currently registered, simply add your fee to their registration with a note that the additional amount is for the youth convention.  
3. Groups - Leaders/sponsors, please send completed registration forms for each person together with one payment.

The World Youth Convention is not ‘residential’. Accommodation should be arranged with families where families are attending. Groups should contact the World Convention office about possible options. Young people are not allowed to attend unless their parent/s or youth sponsor is at convention. Consent forms will be issued prior to convention and completion is a condition of attendance.

Program outline for the World Youth Convention:
(Items with an * are combined with the World Convention program.)

Wednesday, July 28, 2004
7.00 - 9.00 pm Opening Session: Martin Robinson (UK) speaking.*  
9.00 - 9.50 pm Youth Convention coffee hour & orientation.

Thursday, July 29, 2004
9.30 - 11.00 am Session 1
11.30 - 12.45 Session 2
Lunch provided 2.00 - 3.30 pm Session 3
4.00 - 5.00 pm Session 4
Dinner with families or the group you are attending with.

7.00 - 9.00 pm Evening session.
Verna Cassells (Jamaica) speaking*

Friday, July 30, 2004
9.30 - 11.00 am Bible Study & discussion.
Musa Dube (Africa, leading)*  
11.00 am - 5.00 pm Coach trip to Arundel Castle and Chichester Cathedral.* Lunch provided.*
Dinner with families or the group you are attending with.

7.00 - 9.00 pm Evening session.
Joel Edwards (Jamaica/UK) speaking*

Saturday, July 31, 2004
9.30 - 11.00 am Session 1
11.30 - 12.45 Session 2
Lunch provided 2.00 - 3.30 pm Session 3
4.00 - 5.00 pm Session 4
Dinner with families or the group you are attending with.

7.00 - 9.00 pm Evening session.
Joel Edwards (Jamaica/UK) speaking*

Sunday, August 1, 2004
9.30 - 11.30 am Closing session, worship and communion*
All Tours still have places
All tours being organised by the World Convention office in Nashville still have places but it will help you and us if you send in your deposits by the end of the year. Initial tour deposits must continue be sent to the World Convention office. These deposits are transferred to our tour company. They will be in touch with you so relax until you hear from them. From that point onwards you will be given a means of contacting them directly. We know that tour coordinators in Australia, New Zealand, Jamaica and Poland are keen to know that you’re planning to be at convention too. Please let them know now if you’re not on their contact list.

‘Modular’ Pricing
Because people put their travel together in different ways, we have priced tours, air travel and Brighton accommodation separately. As you look at the coloured issue of World Christian (number 41 - second quarter this year) you can estimate your costs by adding these items. Registration is separate also.

Registration price increase
Your registration needs to be post marked no later December 31 to register at ’2003’ rates. (See chart on this page.) A good reason for registering now if you haven’t already

Meal/Coach Functions
As ‘regulars’ know, the World Convention fee entitles you to attend all sessions of the convention. However we do have some meal functions where we charge for the meal itself. At Brighton these will be:
• Leaders’ Forum Luncheon Wednesday.
• Half day Brighton tours on Wednesday.
• Optional coach trip to Arundel Castle and Chichester Cathedral Friday.
• Men’s, Women’s and Ministers’ Luncheons Saturday. Details on these events will be mailed to all those registered by February 28 and will be sold on a first come, first served basis after that. Another reason for registering now!

Choice of Tools for the Task Groups
Conventioners will be asked to make their selection/s for these twelve amazing groups, operating on Thursday & repeated on Friday, before convention. Selection forms will go out with the function information mentioned above. You will be guaranteed your first choice/s if you respond by April 30th. Yes, yet another reason for registering now!

Exhibits and Program Book advertisements
Information about these is now available for interested groups and ministries. Contact the World Convention office for information. (Contact details page 2.)

Full Program - Next World Christian
As you can see from page 1, our exciting Brighton program is almost complete. Watch for the first quarter World Christian next year which will carry a program chart.

Children’s Program
This will be led by Larry Kinneman and a hand picked mission team. There will be children’s sessions during all main sessions. Details will be sent to all families with registered children in the late February mailing.

Payment
- Fees are per person. (Refundable after convention if requested by May 31, 2004.)
- No registration fee for children/youth (up to including high school) attending with parents. For those who share in children’s and youth programs there is a fee to cover costs. *Youth US$140 or NZ$180; Children US$60 or £30. Details page 3.
- Youth/Young adults beyond high school need to pay the registration fee. Those who choose to be involved in the youth event will receive credit for their registration towards the youth event program costs.

Please calculate fees from this chart and enter total below.

**Full Program - Next World Christian**

As you can see from page 1, our exciting Brighton program is almost complete. Watch for the first quarter World Christian next year which will carry a program chart.

Children’s Program
This will be led by Larry Kinneman and a hand picked mission team. There will be children’s sessions during all main sessions. Details will be sent to all families with registered children in the late February mailing.
Thank you Friends of World Convention!

There is no doubt that 2003 has been a ‘best ever’ year for the ministry of World Convention. It has included the launching of ChristiaNet and 11:11 - Get Connected, as well as the researching and writing of the first twenty-five national profiles for the global reference centre on our web site. Despite very careful spending, this extra achievement has cost more - in a year when two of our main support sources (endowment income and Disciples Mission Fund support) are down.

Recognising the challenge, many Friends of World Convention made special gifts in September and October and along with regular Friends gifts we received a total of almost US$20,000. All these gifts are acknowledged in the lists below. Never before have we received so much in a two month period. Thank you!!! That’s the good news. The ‘other’ news is that World Convention needs a further US$20,000 to complete its work for 2003. Many make their annual gift in December. Prayerfully, with everybody’s help, we believe it can be done!

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ChristiaNet
Are you receiving ChristiaNet - a monthly email of news of your local church family?

Keep up to date-yourself and include paragraphs in church newsletters.

Send your name and email address to worldconv@aol.com
The 2004 USA Restoration Forum has been scheduled for the Detroit, Michigan area with Rochester College and Great Lakes Christian College co-hosting. Information from Dr Melvin Storm at mstorm@rc.edu The 2003 Forum hosted by Emmanuel School of Religion & Milligan College in Johnson City, Tennessee was attended by 200 people - 300 at the opening Sunday night service. Speakers from all three streams of the movement led a very valuable program.

Ghana Christian University on new campus
On August 9, 1500 people gathered to celebrate the move of the 37 year old college to its new site.

NACC to meet in Phoenix - July 5-8, 2004 President Dick Alexander will lead the 2004 North American Christian Convention with the theme, One Outrageous Opportunity; Opportunity in a Time Like No Other. 11,804 registered for the 2003 convention in Indianapolis (president Bob Russell) with a peak evening attendance of 8,492.

Disciples will meet in Portland, Oregon in ‘05 The biennial Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the USA & Canada will move from one side of the USA to the other. In October the Assembly gathered in Charlotte, NC; from July 23-27, 2005 it will meet in Portland, Oregon. 5664 registered for the Charlotte assembly. Chris Hobgood is Interim General Minister and President until ‘Portland’.

Women’s Event Will Combine.
The large and very well known Quadrennial gathering of USA/Canada Disciples women will join with the United Church of Christ National Women’s meeting in 2006. It will meet in Indianapolis, Indiana, June 21-25.

Aguaray, Argentina
is located about twenty minutes from the Bolivian border. Envoy Christian Mission (Greg & Dawn Waddell) responded to a local request for help to organise a church there. Walter Chavez is group leader in Aguaray. Walter has also started a group in Tartagal, thirty minutes south of Aguaray. ECM work is based in Buenos Aires.

Mission To Russia
Mission to Russia (Ron & Ginny Cook) was established in 1992. Eleven years later the Church in Kostroma (NE of Moscow) has 400 members, a top rated Christian School, a Bible College, a medical mission and an orphan ministry. Four Americans now work with fifty indigenous staff.

Missionary Web: India to Bangladesh, Brazil to Mozambique
Central India Mission is sending its first missionary family to another country. Sagar and Shalini Rai and their four year old son have gone to a poor area in Dhakka, the capital of Bangladesh. Jeff & Monica Fife (in Brazil) are involved in supporting (with Brazil churches providing half the funds) Kleber and Juracema Ribeiro in Mozambique. Both countries are Portuguese speaking. Zimbabwe Christian College is also training two Mozambique pastors. These are examples of the web of international ministry (mentioned in Are We There Yet?) that is replacing the old ‘spokes’ from a few sending countries.

Inclusive Web Sites
Recently we met with Lee Wilson of Woodmont Hills Church of Christ. Lee has a web site called Grace Centered Magazine (http://www.gracecentered.com) which invites discussion amongst all members of our movement. We’d like to list inclusive web sites. If you have one or know of one, please let us know.

World Convention needs your friendship
- If you are receiving World Christian and have never become a Friend of World Convention we invite you to do so now. Friends support World Convention with a gift at least once each year.
- If you are already a Friend, and haven’t already sent us your 2003 gift, please do so as soon as possible. Your label (on page 8) gives the date of your last gift.

Please mail a 2003 gift now!

More Women in Ministry
Dr Eleanor Daniel in an article in the Christian Standard outlines a major increase in the number of women in ministry in Christian Churches/Churches of Christ in the USA. Data she takes from the 2001 Directory of the Ministry, shows an increase from 403 to 875 in the 1997 - 2001 period. www.christianstandard.com

Record Enrolments
Johnson Bible College (Knoxville, Tennessee, USA) reports 850 students this year (2002: 824; 2001: 678). Transylvania University (Lexington, Kentucky, USA) reports 1,134. Both report steady growth through a nine year period. Alberta Bible College, Calgary, Canada - 72 (2002: 62). 147 youth leaders attended a training event at Central India Bible Academy.

Have you found your way to remember 11:11 each day?

Disciples Assembly
Paddington Bear Winner
Ruth Taylor, Eden NC
Thanks to all who entered the drawing.

What Next?
Some Significant national and global events we are aware of.
Please send us your dates!
# World Day of Prayer - March 5.
# United Reformed Church Assembly. July 4-6, Glamorgan, Wales, UK.
# North American Christian Convention. July 5-8, Phoenix, AZ.
# World Convention, Brighton, UK. July 28-Aug 1.
# Pan European Lectureship (a cappella Churches of Christ.) Edinburgh, Scotland, UK. August 1-5.
# National Missionary Convention. September 30 - October 3. Pensacola, FL, USA.
# Restoration Forum XXII. October 15-17. Detroit area. mstorm@rc.edu
# Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the USA & Canada. Portland OR, July 23-27.

Do you live in Europe?
Are you in touch with members of our churches in Europe?
Our goal: Every country in Europe represented at Brighton!
- Register yourself now.
- Contact those you know.
- Send us names and addresses in Europe so that we can send World Christian to them.

Have you included the everyday global ministry of World Convention in your will?
No other gift goes as far!
What's that you said?
Key points from this issue of World Christian


- World Youth Convention
  Program and cost details. Let us know you are coming as soon as possible. Page 4.

- How Many In Your Global Church Family?

- Are We There Yet?
  Eight page liftout section looks at where your global church family is up to & where it is going in the 21st Century.

- Register for Brighton Now
  If you don’t have the coloured brochure (World Christian 41) use the form on page 5. Every reader can register! As an attender, a supporter or to receive daily electronic reports.

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