

Four 2010 meetings consider Edinburgh 1910

By Todd Johnson and Ralph Winter

In June 1910, over 1,000 mission leaders met in Edinburgh, Scotland for a World Missionary Conference. Four international conferences, each in its own way looking back to the Edinburgh 1910 meeting, have been convened for 2010. Organizers of the four meetings met recently in Boston to compare notes and to pledge cooperation. Here's a brief description of each meeting in chronological order in 2010.

May 11-15, 2010 in Tokyo, Japan

The **Global Mission Consultation & Celebration** will feature evening sessions of local "celebrations" open to local churches in Japan. But during the day it will be a very serious "consultation" of mission executives and mission leaders—because, as in 1910, all participants will be *delegates chosen and sent by mission agencies, no one will be invited as a person*. Tokyo churches are hosting the meeting. This meeting is thus far officially sponsored by various *regional* and *global* associations of mission agencies: the Asia Missions Association (AMA), the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association of North America (IFMA—Canada, USA, Mexico, and some Caribbean nations), the Global Network of Mission Structures (GNMS, founded in 2004 at Amsterdam), and the Third World Mission Association (TWMA). The intention is to gain the sponsorship of as many *national* level associations as possible who can encourage their mission-agency members to send delegates. See www.tokyo2010.org for more information.

June 2-6, 2010 in Edinburgh, Scotland

Edinburgh 2010 has come into being to seek new direction for mission in the twenty-first century by bringing together representatives of different strands of mission and church life for a very focussed and highly organised process of study and reflection. It is expected to culminate in the centenary celebration of the 1910 World Missionary Conference which will take place in Edinburgh again from 2-6 June 2010 when 1,200 Christian leaders will gather. The study process revolves around nine specific themes and guidelines are to be developed to help mission leaders evaluate their models of mission within the broad theme of 'Witnessing to Christ Today'. Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, Evangelical, Pentecostal and Independent Churches from around the world are currently involved in preparing for the centenary celebrations in partnership with New College at the University of Edinburgh. For more information visit the website www.edinburgh2010.org.

October 16-25, 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa

At the urging of evangelical leaders worldwide, the Lausanne Movement, with the participation of the World Evangelical Alliance, will host the **Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization** in Cape Town, South Africa, 16-25 October 2010. Cape Town 2010 will provide a global forum – before, during and after the Congress – in

which leaders from around the world will explore issues facing the Church and God's world. Then together, leaders will prayerfully seek God's guidance in responding so that God's name may be honored and many more men, women and young people will be able to hear and respond to the message of Christ presented in a relevant and culturally appropriate manner. It is anticipated that over 4,000 leaders from 200 countries will attend Cape Town 2010. The Participant Selection Team, made up of leaders worldwide, has established specific criteria to ensure that the Congress will include men and women from a broad spectrum of nationalities, ethnicities, ages, occupations and denominational affiliations. More details are found at www.lausanne.org.

November 4-7, 2010 in Boston

Seminary students and faculty from all over the world, but particularly as based in the schools of theology, seminaries and university divinity schools of the Greater Boston (USA) area, will hold a conference sponsored by the Boston Theological Institute (BTI), the consortium of such schools. (A similar meeting was held in 1910 in Boston shortly after the one in Edinburgh.) The BTI envisions a conference that will come toward the end of 2010, offering a summation and analysis of the previous "Edinburgh Conferences." The conference in Boston, with the theme "**The Changing Contours of World Mission and Christianity**," will reflect the student and academic character of its setting. This conference will be an opportunity not only to interact with key mission leaders but will also include workshops welcoming student participation at a variety of points, particularly around the leading themes of the Edinburgh mission process. The goal of the conference is to discern a vision for what might constitute mission in the twenty-first century, a mission that stands in the trajectory of Christian witness from the earliest days of the church and is inclusive of matters relating to human flourishing, reconciliation, faith in the future and conducive of religious liberty. See www.2010boston.org for more information.

All four meetings are part of a process of reflection and activism that will likely continue beyond 2010. Though constituencies and agendas of the four differ markedly, the organizers have expressed a commitment to work together and will send representatives to each other's meetings.