



Membership Update



December 2008

Mission America Coalition Update

News and Trends

Christian Marketplace Influencers
Executive Marketplace Intelligence for Ministry Decision Makers!

Unchurched Beliefs 63% of young adults say they would attend a church if it "presented truth to me in an understandable way that relates to my life now." 15% of the younger unchurched attended church weekly as a child and have no current animosity toward the church, yet 37% are hostile toward the church and Christians. 4 of 5 unchurched adults in the U.S. aged 20 to 29 believe a supreme being exists. Though they are not attending church, 3 of 4 claim the existence of God does or would impact their lives, but this does not seem to translate into involvement in a church. Most of the younger unchurched actually do believe in God and that He is the God described in the Bible. A significant number believe in God but are not sure the God of the Bible is the only God. 98% of young unchurched African-Americans and 84% of Hispanics agree God exists vs. 76% of unchurched Anglos. Nearly three-quarters express some level of agreement that the Christian church is generally helpful to society. Young unchurched African-Americans agree more than others (25% to 7%) that the church is the only place to learn what it means to be Christian. (*Lost and Found*, Stetzer, Stanley and Hayes, B&H Publishing Group 2009)

Talking to the Dead A LifeWay Research study found only 27% of Americans agree with the statement, "I believe it is possible to communicate with someone after they are dead." Among those who agree, only 8% strongly agree. 55% disagree with the statement, including 39% who strongly disagree. 18% don't know. (LifeWay Research Insights 10/31/08)

Spiritual Youth The majority of youths in the world say they are spiritual and think religion and spirituality are both positive, according to an extensive, first-of-its-kind survey. Being spiritual, for this young generation, most often is associated with believing in God. (christianpost.com)

Children Today The David C. Cook Landmark Study asked children's leaders what the top challenges are for children in grades 3, 4 and 5. Peer pressure (56%) topped the list, followed by their need to develop

Dear MAC Partner,

I love Christmas time! It is a wonderful time of the year as we celebrate the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to be the Savior of the world. In a real sense, that is what the Mission America Coalition is all about. The basic mission of the MA Coalition is to be used of God to encourage and enable His people to take the "good news" of Jesus to the whole nation - and the world.



We are deeply grateful for your partnership in this vital collaborative ministry of sharing the Gospel in deed and word. We pray that you are cultivating the prayer-care-share lifestyle. This is a great time of the year to be praying for those around us that have never come to God through personal faith in Christ - and then to love them with His love and to share the Gospel message.

We thank God for you and pray that you and your loved ones will enjoy a most blessed Christmas!

Joyfully and gratefully - in Christ,

Paul Cedar
Chairman

Mission America Coalition News

Young Evangelists Reach Schools

In Cedar Rapids, Iowa, one of the Loving Our Communities to Christ (LC2C) cities, a new initiative has been developed called Serve Our Schools. SOS encourages kids regularly to see their school as a mission field and live a prayer-care-share lifestyle.



Twenty-two youth groups are involved. A monthly "SOS Day" among the youth groups will encourage kids to wear their SOS t-shirts, do a service project, and strike up spiritual

friends (45%) and surprisingly dealing with self-image, how others see them (35%). Children fear failure, even as young as 6. They worry about not achieving what their parents and teachers expect. They are also biblically illiterate. Teachers gave only 7% of their upper elementary children the grade of "A" in Bible knowledge; "B" (47%); "C" (38%); "D" (7%); "F" (1%). Many do not live in what was once considered a traditional household. Some have no active male role model in their homes, and VBS week may be the only time they get to interact with men who are father- and grandfather-ages. Some live in skipped-generation households, homes headed by grandparents raising their children's children. (Christian Retailing 11/10/08)

VBS Alive In '07, 3 in 4 U.S. churches held a VBS, according to the David C. Cook Landmark Study. Fewer than 8% of churches are experiencing any decline in their VBS. 42% of all VBS programs saw growth. Estimating 60 kids at an average-sized VBS, 13.3 million enjoyed 3.3 million hours a week—or 380 years of Bible training—at VBS this past summer. As in the past, children who come to VBS are energetic, demanding, loving, self-centered and open. But modern society has also made them different. Now they are bred to need constant noise, activity and movement. Their social milestones are being pushed younger and younger. Children may bring their appointment books to VBS. They may dress more like teens or talk about their personal trainers at the gym. They are getting "older" at a younger age. Some have diminished creativity or willingness to take the creative initiative, because they are used to always having an adult "coach" around to tell them what to do. They are used to being entertained. They are visually adept from hours of playing video games and watching TV, but many are less developed verbally and interpersonally. (Christian Retailing 11/10/08)

Dissatisfied People who are dissatisfied with how their church is helping them develop spiritually (about 17% overall) are most concerned about 3 elements of the weekend worship service. 68% say the service does not incorporate Bible teaching that helps them with everyday life. 70% do not feel the service is challenging or thought-provoking enough. 81% say it does not provide enough in-depth study of the Bible. Those generally satisfied with their churches also list these 3 elements, but with a much higher rate of satisfaction. (Your Church 11-12/08)

Prayer Support How often do you pray for fellow Christians you know? Among Protestants, 27% pray every day, 25% a few times a week, 14% weekly, 17% monthly, 8% a few times a month and 9% rarely or never. How often do you pray for your church and church leaders? 20% of Protestants pray every day, 18% a few times a week, 16%

conversations in the context of friendships. The initiative launched during See You at the Pole on September 24.

Cityreaching Conference Call

Thursday, Dec. 18, 8 a.m. Pacific Time

On the third Thursday of each month, Mission America Coalition's City and Communities Ministries hosts a conference call with a seasoned city-reacher. Watch the cityreaching.com website for more information about this month's topic and guest. Contact info@cityreaching.com to receive the phone number and access code to join the call. Information on upcoming calls and transcripts of previous calls are available. [More Info](#).

City Community Ministries Launches New Website

The MAC City/Community Ministries division is launching a new website this month at cityreaching.com. The new site will offer opportunity for cityreachers to send in video clips of what's working in their city for the site's "vlog". Cityreachers can connect with movements in their area through the site, or start a new movement, as well as access training videos and volumes of other content from City Impact Roundtables and other events. Watch later in the month for the new site.

Evangelism News

Great Harvest in Ohio

This fall YWAM campaigns conducted a series of more than 60 evangelistic events in the Dayton, Ohio region with 24 cities involved. Nearly 4,700 individuals publicly responded to the gospel by the fifth of six weeks, including whole families coming to Christ at the altar calls. [More info](#).

See You at the Pole Report

A downloadable, full-color report on See You at the Pole with stories and pictures from around the U.S. and the world is available to download online to encourage pastors, youthworkers and others. [More info](#).



Thousands of Youth Workers Trained, Challenged for Ministry

Some 5,000 diverse youth ministry workers, recently gathered in Nashville to be trained, empowered and challenged at the National Youth

weekly. (LifeWay Research Insights 10/15/08) *The Shape of Faith to Come: Spiritual Formation and the Future of Discipleship*, Dr. Brad Waggoner, B&H Publishing Group, 2008)

Specialy Blessed 61% of Americans believe America is a nation specially blessed by God, and 59% believe the U.S. should be a model Christian nation to the world, according to a PBS poll. 80% of people who attend religious services weekly hold this view, as do 86% of evangelicals. Just 48% of those who attend religious services less regularly agree. (Christian Post 10/23/08)

Giving Of the \$300 billion given annually in the U.S., 32% is given to religious organizations, 14% to education, 10% to human services, 8% to health oriented causes, 7% to public charities, 4% to arts/culture and 2% to environmental causes. (Giving USA, Kluth.org 10/08)

Study: Americans to Spend Less This Holiday, but Donate More Seven in ten adults (71 percent) said they will spend less money on holiday presents this year, according to the findings of a World Vision survey, conducted by Harris Interactive. But nearly half (49 percent) of U.S. adults responded that they are now more likely to give a charitable gift as a holiday present. (Christianpost.com)

Generosity Religious people are more generous than non-religious people. 91% of religious people give money to any cause, versus 66% of non-religious. In giving to non-religious causes, 71% of religious people give versus 61% of non-religious. (NonProfit Times, kluth.org)

Recession Giving Based on past recessions, church members will keep giving to their congregations, at least for now, said Sylvia Ronsvalle, EVP of Empty Tomb Inc. Decreasing giving is not the first thing church people do in tough economic times. In an extended downturn, you might begin to see a retraction in church-member giving the second year. Research shows church giving as a percentage of income was higher during the early years of the Great Depression (3.5%) than at any point since. Data from the last 6 recessions shows reduced giving in 3 and increased giving in 3, but only in 1970 did it go down in the first year. Traditionally people view the church second only to family in terms of accountability. General giving outside the church is spottier, although people tend to give to an immediate need. (Christianity Today 10/16/08)

Christian Women A recent Knowledge Industry/CTI study of Christian women finds they do the following to grow spiritually: 79% pray to God, 75% spend time with friends, 71% spend time with family, 52% spend time alone, 51% attend worship services, 51% donate money to church or charity,

Workers Convention. [Youth Specialties](#), which serves more than 100,000 youth workers worldwide each year, hosted the event offering 80 seminar tracks. [More info.](#)

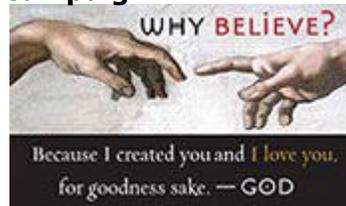
National Youth Ministry Conference 2009

Group and Simply Youth Ministry will hold The National Youth Ministry Conference Feb. 27 – Mar. 2 in Columbus, Ohio, for junior and senior high youth workers. The conference will include 100 track sessions and workshops with top speakers. [More info.](#)

Conference Teaches Parenting through Deuteronomy 6

A new conference is planned to challenge Christian leaders, ministers and leading parents to look at the way the Church ministers to parents and families through the lenses of Deuteronomy 6:5-7, the foundational passage in the Bible for biblical parenting. Speakers for the "D6 Conference" will include Jim Daly, president of Focus on the Family; John Trent, president and founder of Strong Families; George Barna, founder of The Barna Group research organization, and others. The conference will be Sept. 23-25, 2009, near Dallas, Texas. [More info.](#)

Pro-God Christmas Ads Take On Atheist Bus Campaign



Two Christian-based groups have purchased advertisements with Washington D.C. metro buses to counter the atheist "Why Believe in a God?" bus campaign.

The pro-God Christmas ads will include 10 buses with side posters, 10 buses with tail posters and 200 interior bus posters. The pro-God ads read: "Why Believe? Because I created you and I love you, for goodness' sake - GOD." [More info.](#)

Gay Mayor Welcomes Palau to Transform Portland

Luis Palau held Portland City Fest in August in an open-air downtown park in Oregon's most populous city, drawing 180,000 people. Many were surprised by the support of openly gay Mayor-elect Sam Adams who offered greetings from the platform to those attending. The event also had corporate sponsors like Wells Fargo. Mayor-elect Adams noted the "odd combination" of a liberal city with evangelist Luis Palau and the faith community and said, "Here's to odd combinations. May they continue perennially." He said that the physical and social problems of Greater Portland were beyond the resources of

47% read the Bible, 31% donate time to church or charity and 22% serve in the community. (Your Church 11-12/08)

Evangelicals in Spain Madrid's El País newspaper reports on the growth of evangelicalism in Spain, up from 4,000 a century ago to 400,000 today, not including one million immigrants, citing figures from the Federation of Evangelical Entities in Spain. With Spanish evangelicals, it is customary for each member of the family to have his or her own copy of the Bible and young evangelicals show their passion for the Bible with "sword drills." (Cook Partners 10/15/08)

Harvest Crusades with Greg Laurie have attracted around 167,000 people with more than 16,000 having committed or recommitted their lives to Christ this year. (Christian Post 10/21/08)

Oldest Hebrew Text Archaeologists Prof. Yossi Garfinkel and Sa'ar Ganor of Hebrew University have discovered what they say is the oldest Hebrew text ever found. It is being hailed as one of the most important finds in Israel since the Dead Sea Scrolls. The text, written in ink on a pottery shard, dates (according to carbon-14 dating as well as chemical analysis of the pottery) from between 1,000 and 975 B.C., the time of King David's reign. The writing, therefore, predates the Dead Sea Scrolls by about 1,000 years. (israelnationalnews.com)

People & Transitions:

- Sherwood Wirt, 97, founding editor of *Decision* magazine and author of 42 books, died in his sleep 11/8/08.
- Rev. Dr. R. Lamar Vest, the executive vice president of the American Bible Society, will serve as the organization's next president beginning Jan. 1, 2009, the organization announced.

Waiting Longer USA Today reports the median age for marriage is the oldest since the U.S. Census Bureau started keeping track in the 1890s: almost 26 for women and 28 for men. (Citizen Link 11/18/08)

Single Boomers Nearly one-third of all Boomers (some 25 million) are spouseless. 12% never married; twice the rate of the previous generation; 16% are divorced or separated and 4% are widowed. (Boomer Consumer: The blog 10/6/08)

New Drug Crisis The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration reports prescription drug overdoses have passed drunk-driving as the leading cause of accidental deaths in the U.S. (LifeWay Research Insights 10/15/08)

Jobless 240,000 more American jobs disappeared in October, the 10th consecutive month of declines. It

city government alone. Palau events include a "season of service" prior to the festival. In Portland, needs addressed were homelessness, the medically uninsured, public schools, hunger, and the environment. Civic leaders selected the projects and 25,000 volunteers carried them out. The two-pronged approach to witness—service matched with proclamation—united churches all over the area and prompted unprecedented support from community leaders. [More info.](#)

Palau Trains Evangelists

Extend the Impact Conference at Luis Palau's Portland City Fest in August attracted more than 70 evangelists, ministry team members, pastors, and businessmen from around the world. The four-day conference included sessions about a new model of festival evangelism, having a sustained festival year after year, and the impact of a festival on a city. [More info.](#)

Island Churches Collaborate

Sixteen of the 17 churches on Grand Manan Island, located off the Coast of the Province of New Brunswick in Canada, have pledged their support to collaborate on the "Festival on the Island." The Steve Wingfield Evangelistic Association will hold the festival to reach the 2,700 people on the island – most of whom are involved in the fishing industry. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police shared with the ministry its concern about drugs and alcohol use among youth. Churches are working together to bring the Festival to pass. [More info.](#)

Southern Baptists Gear Up for Ambitious Mission Plan

Southern Baptist churches are being recruited to join a massive 12-year-long, grassroots evangelism plan to share the gospel with every person in North America by 2020. Pilot editions of "God's Plan for Sharing" will be launched in five states - California, Georgia, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, and Texas - in early 2009. [More info.](#)

Christian Ministry Seeks to Raise 'Culture Warriors' through Contest

"Our media is dominated by people immersed in the secular humanist mindset," notes Anthony Horvath of Athanatos Christian Ministries. To encourage writers to represent their Christian beliefs through arts – in particular through fiction – Horvath's ministry is hosting a contest to identify writers who can write quality fiction representing a Christian worldview. [More info.](#)

Readings for Advent

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus:



brought the toll of lost jobs to 1.2 million for the year - more than half in the last 3 months alone - while the unemployment rate climbed to 6.5%, the highest in 14 years. Experts predict it will hit 8% before rebounding. (NY Times 11/8/08)

Mosaics, Americans born between '84 and '02, possess the following distinctive generational traits: Eclectic lifestyles, nonlinear thinking styles, fluid relationships, cut-and-paste values and personalized spirituality, open-minded attitudes, technology-fueled expectations The Internet in particular represents an ever-changing and broad-ranging collage of input that fuels much of their nonlinear expectations. (enrichmentjournal.ag.org)

Text Boom The typical U.S. mobile subscriber now sends and receives more text messages than mobile phone calls. As of Q2 '08, a mobile subscriber sends or receives 357 text messages a month vs. placing or receiving 204 phone calls. Though the number of calls has remained steady, the number of text messages is up 450% in the past 2 years. (neilsonmobile.com 10/28/08)

Fast Facts:

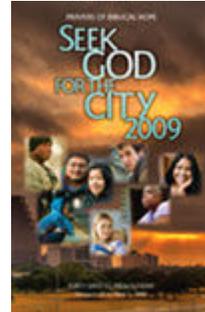
- In churches with under 100 people, 52% have VBS vs. 78% of churches more than 1,000-strong.
- Typically \$65 billion is donated in the U.S. between Thanksgiving and New Years. (Nonprofit Times, kluth.org)
- 10% of giving will include dollar donations to churches and charities. (PhilanthroCorp., kluth.org)
- 67% of all U.S. households donate to churches and charities. (Giving USA, kluth.org)
- The average U.S. adult donates \$1,872 to churches and charities annually. (Giving USA, kluth.org)
- Just 10% American's wealth is in cash; 90% is in assets (possessions, property, investments and insurance). (PhilanthroCorp., kluth.org)
- 84% of all donations to churches and charity in the U.S. are made by women; 16% by men. (Nonprofit Times, kluth.org)
- The U.S. worker-to-retiree ratio is currently at a dangerous 3-to-1. By 2050, it will be 2-to-1.
- 1 in 4 U.S. kids drops out of high school. (AP 10/23/08)
- The U.S. is now the only industrialized country where young people are less likely than their parents to earn a diploma. (AP 10/23/08)
- Faith-based travel currently accounts for about 2-3% of the overall travel industry.
- 66% of small churches rarely change the person in charge of

Experiencing the Peace and Promise of Christmas is a new collection of Advent readings edited by Nancy Guthrie. The 22 readings include works from classic theologians (e.g. George Whitefield, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Charles Spurgeon, Jonathan Edwards) and contemporary pastors (e.g. John Piper, Tim Keller, J.I. Packer, Randy Alcorn). The collection challenges and encourages readers to remember Jesus' arrival and long for his return. [More info.](#)



Prayer toward Easter

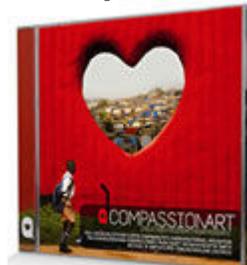
Seek God for the City opens a great way to pray toward Easter. Lead your people to step into a forty-day experience of praying the desires of God with vivid, relevant prayers from the promises of scripture. Many say *Seek God for the City* brings them to a greater maturity in their praying. It is designed to guide prayer through the forty days leading to Palm Sunday - February 25 through April 5, 2009. The 64-page booklet unites and guides whole churches in persistent prayer for spiritual awakening throughout their communities. [More info.](#)



"Fireproof" on DVD for Church Showings

Provident Films has partnered with Outreach Inc. to provide the official site license DVD for the Fireproof Movie for events at churches. With a site license, a church can host the movie as early as New Year's Eve. The DVD will be available for sale to the public Jan. 27. Christian retail stores and websites are offering a version that includes regular DVD bonus features and 30 extra minutes of exclusive bonus features. [More info.](#)

Artists Collaborate with Album to End Poverty



Nineteen of the most well-known artists in the genre of Christian and Gospel music released their joint charity album to the world on Monday with the hope of engaging people everywhere to help end world poverty.

"CompassionArt: Creating Freedom From Poverty" will be available in the United States Jan. 27, 2009. In addition to the album, the songwriters who gathered for the retreat earlier this year have united to produce a book, *The Art of Compassion*, to be published in

- certain work or responsibilities.
- Less than 60% of churches regularly review methods and results of events and programs.
- Christian publishing and music each account for about 5% of their respective overall industries.
- 71% of Americans describe their religious faith as personally very important. (Barna Group 10/27/08)
- 64% of Americans think of themselves as "deeply spiritual." (Barna Group 10/27/08)
- 82% of Americans describe themselves as "spiritually mature." (Barna Group 10/27/08)
- 78% of Americans say they are "making a positive difference in the world." (Barna Group 10/27/08)
- 86% of U.S. adults describe themselves as "caring deeply about social injustice." (Barna Group 10/27/08)
- 86% of U.S. adults are "concerned about the moral condition of the country." (Barna Group 10/27/08)
- 71% of U.S. adults believe they are "fulfilling their calling in life." (Barna Group 10/27/08)

Information compiled and edited by Gary Foster, President of Gary D Foster Consulting, a firm that assists Christian ministries and product companies in solving management, marketing, donor/customer service and product development problems. Contact Gary at: 419.238.4082, GFosterCns@rmi.net or go to www.GaryDFoster.com.

January 2009. The twelve-chapter book unravels the trail of worship, hope and justice found in each of the writers' lives. [More info.](#)

Thomas Nelson Launches The Voice Bible

A new Bible project of Thomas Nelson, Inc., seeks to develop scripture products that foster spiritual growth and theological exploration out of a heart for worship and mission, according to the website for [The Voice New Testament](#). The Voice uniquely represents collaboration among scholars, pastors, writers, musicians, poets, and other artists, Thomas Nelson says. A free sample of the Gospel of John is available to download online. [More info.](#)



Anonymous Donor Gives \$50M to Translate Bible

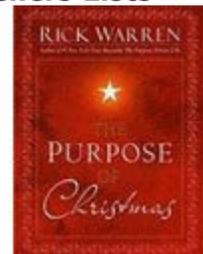
An anonymous donor gave \$50 million to Wycliffe Bible Translators in November. The gift, the largest in the ministry's 75-year history, will be used towards Wycliffe's Last Languages Campaign. The campaign seeks to bring language development and first-time literacy alongside the Bible translation program to more than 200 million people by 2025. [More info.](#)

"Operation Freedom Bell" Ministers to Soldiers

LifeWay Christian Resources has joined an effort to bring hope, encouragement and Bibles to U.S. soldiers who are serving overseas – Operation Freedom Bell. The purchase of a solid-brass [Freedom Bell](#) for \$10 provides an American soldier with a "Thank you to our American Heroes" New Testament with Psalms and Proverbs. Both the consumer and the soldier receive video downloads from Lt. Col. Oliver North, author of the novel *American Heroes: In the Fight Against Radical Islam*, and popular speaker Beth Moore, along with an MP3 single from Indelible recording artist Travis Cottrell's latest Christmas CD release "Ring The Bells." [More info.](#)

Warren's New Book Hits Bestsellers Lists

Rick Warren's first released book since his highly popular *Purpose Driven Life* is another best seller - after two weeks, *The Purpose of Christmas* has been listed among the New York Times' top 5 bestselling Hardcover Advice books. [More info.](#)



Rick Warren, Reader's Digest Create "Purpose Driven Network"



Rick Warren has teamed up with publishing powerhouse Reader's Digest Association Inc. to develop a multi-platform network to train and connect millions of people worldwide who have found his best-selling book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, helpful and want

more biblically-based advice on life. Warren's new network, the [Purpose Driven Connection](#), will be published in a variety of high-tech and high-touch formats worldwide by Reader's Digest. [More info.](#)

Collaborative Evangelism Calendar

Children's Pastors' Conference

Jan. 5-8, 2009, San Diego, Calif. [More info.](#)

Conservative Baptist Pastors Prayer Summit

Jan. 11-14, 2009, Arizona. [More info.](#)

Live Above Webcast

Feb. 7, 2009 [More info.](#)

Children's Pastors' Conference

Feb. 4-7, 2009, Nashville, Tenn. [More info.](#)

Grays Harbor Pastors Prayer Summit

Feb. 9-11, 2009, Grays Harbor, Wash. [More info.](#)

Lewis County Pastors Prayer Summit

Feb. 9-12, 2009, Lewis County, Wash. [More info.](#)

Wisconsin Women in Ministry Prayer Summit

Feb. 26-Mar. 1, 2009. [More info.](#)

National Youth Ministry Conference 2009

Feb. 27-Mar. 2, 2009, Columbus, Ohio. [More info.](#)

Branson Pastors Prayer Summit

Mar. 9-11, 2009. [More info.](#)

Wisconsin Pastors Prayer Summit

April 20-23, 2009. [More info.](#)

National Pastors Prayer Summit

April 27-30, 2009. [More info.](#)

Transform World

April 21-24, 2009, Houston, Texas. [More info.](#)

Stockton Pastors Prayer Summit

May 11-13, 2009. [More info.](#)

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