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**Global Connections National Conference 4-6 November 2009**

## **Mission and Migration**

### **World Café Discussion Feedback**

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#### **1. *Historical Overview and contemporary context***

- Importance of a Biblical overview of movement of peoples – Treating the “alien” etc.
- Current thinking and events are touched by history.
- History teaches us that migration happens for positive and negative reasons and with positive and negative outcomes.
- Migration > Spread of faith > Conquistadors or passive carrying
- Deuteronomy : Widows/aliens/orphans
- Reasons for migration
  - Famine and other natural calamities
  - War
  - Persecution
  - Trade
  - Mission
  - True of Islam too
- Results of Migration
  - Assimilation
  - Conversion
  - Integration
  - Tension, conflict, rejection
  - ‘civilisation’ (??)
- More common than we think!
- More awareness of peoples’ history
- What is the Christian view of tolerance

#### **2. *Students and Migration***

Chinese becoming Christians

- Ask second generation Chinese Christians to pick them up
- Not many Chinese Churches which do this
- FRIENDSHIP + RELATIONSHIPS
- Networking (Connecting via UK agencies to help churches)

Diaspora converts not fitting in to national churches

- Preparation : Who is Lord? Teaching Discipleship
- Issues around family rejection on return, national churches not accepting them and issues with non-Christian expectations

Third wave churches – International churches – can they help?

- Preparing students for reverse culture shock
- Developing spirituality that connects with their home culture

- More understanding of other cultures – equip British Christians
  - Encouraging more spaces for interaction between international students and nationals
- If we have students with our church for a limited time, what strategic things should they be taught to maximize their future effectiveness?

How do we keep in contact with returned students?

Realising the richness of their culture to educate the church. Use in mission meetings, worship, meals, etc.

### **3. Asylum**

- Speed up the process!?
- Who is welcoming asylum seekers?
- It's a great ministry opportunity: Are we making the most of it?
- Equipping them to help each other
- Nationals (church) have an important role in language (and culture) facilitation!
- Informing people in church about culture and background of asylum seekers: Food, music, presentations > Help break down barriers!
- How sacrificial are we? To what extent does our service give the message that we value one another as equals. C.f. Christians harbouring Jews in WW2
- Looking at big picture: Addressing root causes!
  - Believers involved in politics (world trade etc.) for the cause of the poor and oppressed
  - Enabling local churches to engage with the issues
- How to help the authorities assess asylum seekers without prejudice?
- What are the criteria of assessing whether asylum seekers are telling the truth? How far do we go in defending them?
- God's law has primacy over government law – i.e. "love changes everything"! therefore obedience to our calling
- Awareness of cross-cultural marriage issues between asylum seekers and citizens

### **4. Hospitality and Pilgrimage**

- International students hospitality scheme
- EAUR "strangers in our midst" (?) programme
- The migrant is honoured by offering 'us' hospitality
- How do Europeans (re)discover the practice of hospitality?
- Be brave! The need to look beyond the culture and see the personality by doing true hospitality
- Sharing life's journey with those on the move and our own
- Learning from each other – the importance of listening for other people's experiences
  - Healing
  - Greater understanding and stretching our own vision of God at work
- Is Biblical 'hospitality' incompatible with 'cultural' hospitality? i.e. Do we in the UK talk a good game but fail to deliver because we are in a 'me/materialistic' culture?
- Our hospitality tends to be conditional ... how can it become/be unconditional?
- How do we model simple hospitality more in our lives/churches/agencies etc.? Need to work on the art of welcoming, making it genuine > it does not need to be elaborate or expensive.
- Realising assistance with practical issues like opening a bank account is also hospitality.

### **5. Mapping Migration**

- Can churches/organizations help to provide accurate facts and figures to balance the media information?



- How can churches/missions take advantage of the trend for migrants to move further away from their religious practices as they move from their heartland?
- How can we make Trinity real - diversity / unity - so that our churches become more welcoming?
- Crucial question is – when we have information, how do we respond and act on it? How do we manage the process of dealing with migrants better so that their experience and that of the host community is more positive?
- How can individual culture blend with collective culture? (these two cultures do not blend easily)

## **6. Global Christian Migration**

- How does the 'national' church tackle cultural ghetto-ism?
- How does the church learn to integrate/welcome MBBs into their congregations?
- What are the underlying values of cultures which handle mass migration better than others?
- How can mission agencies engage/serve with returnees who come back with a heart for a people group/country after 'going' for another reason?
- Is migration the best solution to the crisis which causes it?
- When Christians migrate what is the impact on the countries they leave?
- Are there good models of integration that others can learn from? (e.g. Leicester)
- Small house church model could be encouraged, supported and developed (by existing church)
- Why no Afro-Caribbeans at this conference?
- What hope is there of Christians of one culture understanding what is going on from other cultures?
- Communicating with one another in cross-cultural churches about how our background/worldviews effect our faith and the forms this takes in church

### **Other issues**

Influence of personalities ?!!  
Supporting the children of migrants

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