

July 2012

Report from Rosemarie Stresemann

Ortwin and I would each like to share our impressions from what was particularly important for us at the prayer conference in Jakarta. Videos of the general assembly and other sessions can be seen at: www.wpa2012.org/videos.

At the annual Call of the Watchmen regional coordinators' meeting in Friedrichroda in April, Markus Egli said prophetically that a new day had dawned in Germany in which the Holy Spirit will work in power. Already so encouraged, I was then amazed to discover in Jakarta that the body of Jesus worldwide firmly believes that **now** is the time when the Holy Spirit will work with a power that we have not yet seen. Hence the theme of the prayer conference was "A new wave is coming".

What will we find in this new wave? The expectations can be found in Habakkuk 2 v.14:

"For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

Since the first international global prayer conference in 1984 in Korea, 28 years have gone by. The main themes of the first conference were world mission and prayer. Korea influenced the global prayer movement by shifting prayer out of the church to the prayer mountain. Since then it has spread into all areas of society. Looking back on the conference it was clear how God has increasingly been linking prayer and mission. Impressive and verifiable statistics confirm the link between prayer and successful mission work.

The Internet is being used for evangelism and the ministry of "Global Media Outreach" has seen enormous interest and many conversions. You can follow online at www.globalmediaoutreach.com how many people are coming to Christ daily and exactly where this is happening.

Global missions such as "Every home for Christ" include 24 hour prayer as part of their ministry and are having much increased success. The connection between prayer and transformation in many different areas of society is noticeable. In the meanwhile there are global prayer movements that focus on specific areas of society such as prayer for schools, prayer for business, etc. The Call of the Watchmen belongs to this kind of new prayer movement and these prayer movements are growing worldwide.

In this way the church of Jesus Christ is recognising its mission towards society and is breaking through the gap between church and society. This also concerns the area of alienation of church from politics in particular.

Rob Parker talked about the "National House of Prayer" in Canada where the focus is on prayer for the government. Before they began praying, Christians represented only 3% of those in politics; today they are 30-40% and many young Christians are preparing to enter a career in politics!

In Africa it is not uncommon for the president of a country to call upon Christians to advise him on political matters.

In Brazil, prayer for the government has had such an effect that there are already more than 500 city mayors who, as a result of the initiative of Christians, have given the key to their cities to Jesus in prayer – even when they are not Christians themselves! Many of the social conditions have then improved in spectacular ways.

Prayer is covering the world more and more like a flood. In Africa in Lagos, Nigeria, in a huge hall, a prayer night takes place every month with 500,000 Christians. (To see what is happening, watch the video of one prayer night at www.youtube.com/watch?v=5t39wgvPpPg&feature=related.)

And in China a "Great Wall of Prayer" is being built up.

The foundation is unity

In order for prayer to be heard and answered, Christians must be united. Indonesia is a wonderful example of how the church can be one. For some time all the Christian denominations and the larger church organisations, together with the Catholic Church, have put aside their differences. At a prayer assembly in Jakarta's stadium with about 100,000 participants, a giant flame of unity was lit. Before this happened, a torch was passed from one leader of one denomination or organisation to all the others. We could positively feel that God was lighting a new fire of love, of unity and of prayer.

We could also feel that the unity between the generations was growing. All over the world, God is turning the hearts of the fathers to the children.

We came back from the conference with new hope for our land and also for Europe in our hearts. We could recognise that everything that the Holy Spirit is doing worldwide has already begun in Germany if only in a small way. We came home with the assurance that a new wave of the Holy Spirit will also flow over and cover our continent.

Report from Ortwin Schweitzer

The past

We were amazed as Brian Mills, one of the fathers of the international prayer movement, made us aware of all the great new prayer movements that have arisen following the first World Prayer Assembly (WPA) in 1984 in Korea: the "Jesus March" in the 90's, "Prayer for the 10/40 Window" and numerous prayer tours in this area, the "Global Day of Prayer" when millions stand together each year to pray, many ministries of reconciliation, "Prayer for the Muslim World" (in Ramadan), "40 Days of Prayer and Fasting" (in Lent), and of course "Intercession for Germany (FFD)" and "Call of the Watchmen" as well as the European prayer initiatives "European Union of Prayer" and "European Prayer Network".

The hope of the second WPA in Jakarta was and is that, following the assembly, God would release great new prayer movements in a similar way.

The present

"... that they all may be one ... so that the world may believe ..." With these words of Jesus from John's Gospel Chapter 17 the organisers ventured to bring unity to this conference at four levels:

Unity of the people

About 9,000 participants came from 86 nations. How often have we felt that immediate sense of unity in the Spirit when, following a chat with the person sitting next to you purely by chance, he says: "I would like to pray for you". In one case the young man next to us actually prophesied things about Rosemarie and me that he could never have known about beforehand. The name of the young man was "Yesaya".

Unity of the various ministries

Leaders of prayer movements, evangelistic ministries and "market place" oriented organisations were invited to attend. The range of seminars that were offered was correspondingly broad in scope and with world renowned speakers like Cindy Jacobs, George Otis Jr. and others.

Unity between the generations

Children were not an optional extra, youth were in leadership, adults were mindful of the talents of the other two generations. 20,000 children from the Indonesian children's prayer movement stood on the grass field in the stadium with colourful balloons. Symbols of their hope that they released into the air for the whole world to see. Young people were actively involved in the planning of the evening and were given the exhortation: "You were not born to go to church but to transform the world." Here the words from Malachi 4 v.6 were real to us: *"He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers."*

Unity of the various churches

Recognition of the need for spiritual leaders in Indonesia to work together grew in the early years of the 90's under severe persecution from the Muslims. They founded the National Prayer Movement in 1993 and it grew rapidly although pressure from outside was increasing. Now in Jakarta the leaders were standing together at the front of the stage and were welcoming and blessing the assembled gathering: a Catholic bishop, the President of the Indonesian Pentecostal movement, the Chairman of the Evangelical Alliance, and others. We experienced real unity in the Spirit. A five meter high torch was lit in the stadium symbolically representing the flame of unity.

The future

What plans and purposes did God reveal to us with a clear significance for the church worldwide?

The fiery flame of prayer or "A new wave is coming." (Habakkuk 2 v.14)

The people of Asia know what a tsunami really is. But they do not hesitate to speak of a tsunami of the Holy Spirit as the expected "new wave". On the second day, in a cry of faith, one of the leaders called for the release of a tsunami that would roll around the entire world. In this cry of faith, which I shared with all my strength, I sensed that something broke open in the invisible world and freedom for a new work of the Spirit was unleashed worldwide.

Generations working together to extend God's kingdom. A young man expressed it for the younger generation like this: "In the fight against Goliath, David realised that he could not use the armour of Saul. He achieved his success with a pebble. Please, adults, trust in our pebbles today."

Prayer and mission working together

Matthew's Gospel Chapter 9 ends with a call to prayer: *"Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."* Chapter 10 begins with Jesus sending out the same ones that he had called to pray. The separation of prayer and mission does not exist in the third world. This is why the church is growing there – and not here.

Prayer in and for the "market place"

An observation: in countries where Christianity is growing the fastest, poverty is noticeably decreasing: in Indonesia, China, India.

As well as the less obvious blessings of the Lord that come through prayer, this important fact has certainly something to do with the concept of the intercessor in the place of work, in society – in the "market place".

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