

# WEA Theological News



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## ***New Executive Director for Theological Commission***

TC Chairman announces the appointment of C. Rosalee Velleso Ewell

*The Chairman of the WEA Theological Commission, Dr Thomas Schirmacher has released the following announcement about the appointment of an Executive Director of the WEA Theological Commission.*

The Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance has a new Executive Director, C. Rosalee Velleso Ewell (BA, MA, PhD), from Brazil. After the consent of the Commission and a positive vote by the International Board, the highest authority of the WEA, the CEO of WEA, Dr Geoff Tunnicliffe, installed her in her new office. We are glad to have the funds to pay a director for the TC again, even though we would be pleased to receive further donations. I will remain as Executive Chair, so that we run the day to day business together.

Rosalee was born into a pastor's family in São Paulo in 1971. From 2003 to 2008 she was Professor of Ethics and Biblical Theology at the South American Theological Seminary, Londrina, Paraná, Brazil. Since 2008 she has served as New Testament editor of the Latin American Bible Commentary, working for the Comité Latinoamericano de Literatura Bíblica (San José, Costa Rica).

Lately she has been involved with Lausanne's Theology Working Group and was on the Cape Town Commitment drafting team. She has published books and articles on Christian ethics and biblical theology. She is currently working on a book with a Brazilian publisher: *Ethics and Brazilian Theology*.

Dr Ewell is married to Samuel Ewell, who is doing doctoral work at the University of Birmingham, UK. Rosalee is the mother of three children.

I have already had the chance to work together with Rosalee on WEA projects as well as in discussions with the Vatican in Rome, the World Council of Churches in Geneva and other international conferences. I am convinced that we have made a good choice. Rosalee is deeply convinced of Evangelical values, but open to learn from others. She has a clear stand point where needed, but is open to work together with the wide range of the Evangelical family.

Rosalee's first task will be to connect to as many as possible of the theological commissions of national and regional alliances, or to the alliances themselves, where there is no network of theologians as of yet.

Please pray for Rosalee and her ministry, that it would help us to work more closely together and together become more Christlike and true to Scripture.



**Dr Rosalee Ewell,  
Executive Director  
WEA Theological Commission,  
2011-**

**Promoting Biblical Truth by Networking Theologians**

## **The Bangkok Consultation on the 'Code of Conduct'**



During the last week of January 2011 approximately 45 people from around the world gathered in Bangkok, Thailand for the final consultation on 'Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Recommendations for a Code of Conduct'.

The Consultation, which is the result of joint efforts between the Vatican, the World Council of Churches, and the World Evangelical Alliance, finalized the document that is to serve as a basis for reflection and practice about what constitutes faithful Christian mission. It is hoped that churches, mission agencies, Christian non-profits and individuals will use the document and adapt it to the particularities of their own contexts, seeing in its contents a call both to repentance from past mistakes and a guideline for how to live out the good news of the gospel in ways that reflect the life and teachings of Jesus.

The participants in the Bangkok Consultation studied the document very carefully, going over each line, each sentence, debating better ways of expressing in words the ways in which God has called us to be his witnesses in the world and the need for thoughtful reflection concerning our practices of mission.

One of the major concerns that shaped the background of the document is the increasing violence and tension in the world, especially those related to religious differences. It was acknowledged that sometimes, in some places, Christians are the ones who inflict pain upon others, and in other situations Christians are the victims of violence and oppression. Moreover, the document also states clearly that Christians are called to stand up against oppression of any type, be it economic,

political or religious and that Christian mission must be carried out according to the example set out by Jesus himself and the early church.

A big part of such faithful witnessing includes dialogue and the building of friendships. The *Recommendations* urge Christians to engage in honest and truthful conversations with their neighbours and to learn about the faiths of others without stereotyping or bearing false witness against those who hold different beliefs. At the same time, Christians must learn more deeply about and strengthen their own faith in such a way as to reflect in word and deed the life of discipleship to which we are called.

The *Recommendations* has 4 main sections: a Preamble that gives a short background to how the document came about, its purpose and objectives; a Basis, which states some of the biblical and theological background to the call to mission and evangelism; a set of Principles that grow out of the biblical foundation for witness; and finally the Recommendations themselves, which include practical notes such as a call to study the issues carefully, to build relationships of trust and respect, and the need for constant prayer as this is integral to who we are and what we do as Christians.

It is hoped that the final version of the document will be approved and celebrated in an official launch that will take place no later than Easter of 2011.

*Report by C. Rosalee Velloso Ewell*

## **Contributor to TC Contextualisation Book Dies**



Rev. Dr. Paul Yu-Chen Siu who contributed a chapter on "Theologizing Locally" to the recently published TC book on contextualisation died on 7 Nov 2011.

Dr Siu was born in Po-On, Canton, China, on March 9, 1951. In his teenage years, Christ got a hold of him and his life was transformed by God.

Upon graduating from high school, he dedicated his life to full-time ministry and attended Alliance Bible Seminary in Cheung-Chau, Hong Kong.

He studied for his M Div at Canadian Theological Seminary in Regina, Saskatchewan. During this time, he married Flora Chiu-Yee Wongom whom he had met at ABS. After completing his Master of Theology at Bethel Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, Pastor and Mrs Siu, served at Winnipeg Chinese Alliance Church in Winnipeg, Canada.

After six years the Sius, with their two children responded to God's calling and became full-time missionaries serving at Tai-

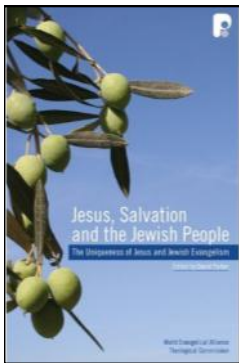
wan Alliance Theological College in Taipei, Taiwan. Following his first four-year term, Rev. Dr. Siu pursued a Ph.D. in Systematic Theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois. Rev. Dr. Siu returned to Taiwan and became President of TATC for two years, and then taught at his alma mater, Canadian Theological Seminary. After two years Dr. Siu became Director of the Chinese Bi-cultural Pastoral Ministries Program at Alliance Theological Seminary in Nyack, NY, and later Professor of Theology.

During his time in New York, Rev. Dr. Siu was also an advisory pastor for a number of churches. He was also a guest lecturer at several seminaries in North America and abroad. He travelled extensively in the course of his ministry. Rev. Dr. Siu was published in over twenty academic journals in both English and Chinese.

The TC expresses condolences to the family and records its sincere appreciation for Dr Siu's significant contribution to the Task Force on Contextualisation.

## **Jesus, Salvation and the Jewish People**

Statement and Papers from Consultation on Jewish Evangelism now Available in Book Form



Papers and the statement from the consultation on Jewish evangelism sponsored by the WEA Theological Commission on August 2008 have been published by Paternoster. The 312 page book, *Jesus, Salvation and the Jewish People* (ISBN 978-1-84227-669-3 ) is edited by Rev Dr David Parker who was Executive Director of the TC at the time of the conference. The book contains the 'Berlin Declaration' issued by the conference, an preface and introductory chapter by the editor and thirteen papers delivered at or prepared for the conference. (<http://www.authenticmedia.co.uk/promo/authentic-cat-2011.pdf>)

Commending the book, Dr Ashley Crane, President of Harvest West Bible College, Western Australia said, 'Occasionally a 'must read' eventuates; *Jesus, Salvation and the Jewish People* is such for anyone interested in Jewish outreach. The authors present solid researched outcomes, tackling the awkwardness of outreach to Jewish people from the shadow of Church persecution, culminating with the horror of the Holocaust. They answer the charge of Jewish outreach being tantamount to 'spiritual genocide', and challenge 'two covenant' theologies, showing these are in fact anti-Semitic. The authors expound how

believers in Jesus should continue reaching out in love to our Jewish people, despite past horrific human actions, as God's Word remains true with Jesus established as Messiah for both Jews and Gentiles.'

Some of the chapter titles are The Uniqueness of Christ for Salvation, Salvation in Early Christianity and Early Judaism, John's Gospel and Jewish Monotheism, Martin Luther and the Jewish people, The Early Pietistic Movement and Jewish Evangelism. Contributors include Darrell Bock, Michael L Brown, Richard Harvey, Andreas J Kostenberger and Eckhard Schnabel. Former TC chair, Dr Rolf Hille is another contributor as is Dr Tuvla Zaretsky of Jews for Jesus.

The 1200 word conference statement, known as 'The Berlin Declaration' published originally at the conclusion of the conference calls for 'Renewed commitment to the task of Jewish evangelism' and 'Recognition of the uniqueness of Christ as the crucified, resurrected and divine Messiah who alone can save from death and bring eternal life.' It may be read at [http://www.worldevangelicals.org/news/Berlin\\_2008\\_Statement\\_\(1\).pdf](http://www.worldevangelicals.org/news/Berlin_2008_Statement_(1).pdf)

The consultation, which was five years in planning, was called to address current concerns about the necessity and theological basis for Jewish evangelism especially in the setting of Germany and Europe as a whole. It involved scholars from the Theological Commission, key seminaries and other organisations. It also included practitioners engaged in ministry amongst Jewish people, and Christians from Germany and Messianic Jews. A total of 13 papers were presented covering biblical, theological and practical matters which provided the background for the Declaration.

The Berlin Declaration followed in the wake of earlier documents produced by the WEA on Jewish evangelism. The first was the [Willowbank Declaration of 1989](#) (click) which was hailed at the time as a decisive statement and continues to be referred to as a landmark document. The second was a [brief statement published and endorsed](#) (click) by the WEA reinforcing the validity and importance of Jewish evangelism which appeared in the *New York Times* in 2008, with 54 signatures (and more added later). Dr David Parker, said, "With the background of Willowbank and the NYT statement, it is our prayer that this book of papers and the 'Berlin Declaration 2008' will prove to be useful in supporting the work of taking the gospel 'to the Jew first' and also the rest of the world. We believe the European (and specifically German) setting of our statement is particularly significant. We hope that this declaration will encourage many Christians to see the importance and biblical warrant for this important ministry."

### **Seminar on Reconciliation**

Musalaha Ministry of Reconciliation, based in Jerusalem, is hosting a seminar aimed at 'breaking down the walls of separation.' It will be held at Coventry Cathedral, UK on May 20-21, 2011. Musalaha will partner with other organisations for this event, including Church Mission Society, Near East Ministry, Youth With A Mission and the Baptist Mission Society. A statement from the organisers explains, 'The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has had detrimental effects on the members of the body of the Messiah. Believers worldwide have felt the need to choose sides, resulting in an ever widening rift. However, reconciliation among Israelis and Palestinians is taking place. We would like to share with you about the exciting process of this reconciliation, and encourage you through stories of unity and love in the Middle East. The conference will feature lectures from Israeli and Palestinian believers, as well as workshops on reconciliation.'

For more details and registration, please email the organisers at [musalaha@netvision.net.il](mailto:musalaha@netvision.net.il)

### **Death of Famous Theologian**

The evangelical world has recorded the death of an influential Reformed theologian, Dr Roger R Nicole. He died 11 Dec 2011 just a day after his 95th birthday.

Dr Nicole, who was born in Switzerland in 1915, studied at the Sorbonne and gained his ThD from Gordon Divinity School. He also obtained a PhD degree from Harvard University. He served for 41 years as Professor of Theology at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary and then as the Andrew Mutch Chair of Theology. In the 1980s he taught at Reformed Theological Seminary.

Dr Nicole was a founding member of the Evangelical Theological Society and a one-time president. A prolific writer, with more than 1000 articles to his name and contributions to many other works, he was also involved in the translation of the NIV and an associate editor of the *New Geneva Study Bible*. As a bibliophile Dr Nicole had a large collection of books, including many rare volumes. He was also had an extensive stamp collection. His biography is *Speaking the Truth in Love* by David W Bailey.



## **The Cape Town Commitment**

By Rosemary Dowsett

*Rosemary Dowsett, a missiologist who has served for 40 years with OMF International, Vice Chair of the Mission Commission of the WEA and a member of the Lausanne Theology Working Group, reflects on the statement from the Cape Town 2010 Lausanne Congress which she helped compose.*

(document available at [http://www.worldevangelicals.org/pdf/2011\\_THE\\_CAPE\\_TOWN\\_COMMITMENT.pdf](http://www.worldevangelicals.org/pdf/2011_THE_CAPE_TOWN_COMMITMENT.pdf))

Statements from conferences and congresses appear with overwhelming frequency, and most of them are soon forgotten. The Lausanne Covenant of 1974 was different. It has remained a defining document for evangelicals, and an evangelical apologia to other parts of the world church, and deservedly so. The Manila Manifesto has been less influential, and is less well known. How will the Cape Town Commitment fare?

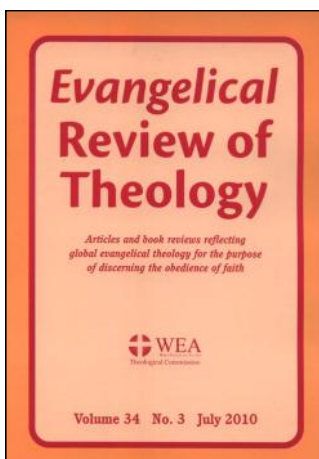
It is a very different kind of document, long at nearly 22,000 words, and in two complementary parts. After a brief foreword, and a preamble that sets out some of the changes in our world and context, along with some unchanging realities, Part 1 is entitled 'For the Lord we love: the Cape Town Confession of Faith', and Part 2 'For the world we serve: the Cape Town call to action'. The former provides a theological framework, the latter focuses on responsive action. The two parts need to be held together: Part 1 on its own could leave us with theory but no action, and Part 2 on its own could lead us to unrooted and pragmatic action increasingly divergent from biblical accountability. The evangelical community has not been immune from divorcing theology and praxis in relation to mission, and it is crucial that we ensure the faithful marriage of the two, both locally and globally.

The Lausanne Theology Working Group, together with members of the WEA Theological Commission and the WEA Mission Commission, and under the gifted leadership of Chris Wright of The Langham Partnership, met annually for four years working on preparatory materials for the Congress. Previous issues of ERT have published some of the fruits of those consultations, under the rubric of 'One Gospel', 'One Church', and 'One World'. Against the background of that extensive work, and with other consultation, Chris was asked to begin drafting a doctrinal summary that would serve as a theological foundation for the church's mission today. Soon, an international team of seven joined Chris in that work, producing Part 1 in advance of the Cape Town Congress.

Many brothers and sisters from the global south rightly and understandably said that they did not wish to be burdened with the accumulated arguments of northern church history, and with some of the current arguments dividing evangelicals in the north, while still acknowledging the sovereign hand of God down through the centuries. Further, today's evangelical and Pentecostal communities together are diverse, and we wished to create something around which we could unite. Hence the decision to express Part 1 in a fresh way, unlike traditional doctrinal statements. It is constructed around ten statements about love: We love because God first loved us; We love the living God; We love God the Father; We love God the Son; We love God the Holy Spirit; We love God's Word; We love God's world; We love the gospel of God; We love the people of God; We love the mission of God.

Part 2 is constructed around the topics for the six plenary days of the Congress: Bearing witness to the truth of Christ in a pluralistic, globalised world; Building the peace of Christ in our divided and broken world; Living the love of Christ among people of other faiths; Discerning the will of Christ for world evangelisation; Calling the church of Christ back to humility, integrity and simplicity; Partnering in the body of Christ for unity in mission. Each topic is introduced and set in context, and then a number of specific and concrete applications are made as calls to action. Inevitably, different concerns will be especially acute in different parts of the world, but many of the calls to action are universal in their urgency.

How will we use the Commitment? I hope that local churches, mission agencies, theological colleges, and more, will study the Commitment carefully and prayerfully, and consider how it may challenge, rebuke, comfort, in what we do and how we do it. I hope it will stimulate us to pray for brothers and sisters around the world, in many contexts but all facing challenges to radical, transformative discipleship. I hope it will reinforce God's call to all of us to engage unitedly in world mission with truth, grace and integrity, to his glory.



### **Contribute to TC Journal**

We invite articles, reviews and books for review for our quarterly TC journal.

Initial contact with ideas and proposals to

[tc@worldevangelicals.org](mailto:tc@worldevangelicals.org)

This journal reflects global evangelical theology for the purpose of discerning the obedience of faith.

Detailed style guide available.

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