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AN INTERACTIVE PUBLICATION



# Greetings From the World Assemblies of God Fellowship Office

By Chairman George O. Wood

Statistics have always intrigued me. Moses was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write the fourth book of the Bible, Numbers. Chapter one begins with the numbering of Israel at Sinai.

Looking over the past 50 years of statistics for the worldwide Assemblies of God, I see incredible growth that points to the powerful work of the Holy Spirit drawing men and women, boys and girls, to Himself. In 1967, we had 3,113,982 worldwide adherents. Fifty years later in 2017, we reported 69,189,381 worldwide adherents. This is a 2,122 percent increase from 1967!



The purpose of the World Assemblies of God Fellowship is to pursue the fulfillment of the Lord's command to evangelize the lost in the shortest possible time, providing them the opportunity to hear and respond to the gospel in all its fullness, by encouraging and assisting one another, promoting harmonious

relationships among ourselves and the broader body of Christ, and seeking the most effective means of its accomplishment under the dynamic leadership of the Holy Spirit.

What is your mission? Like John the Baptist, when we follow the Lord's will we prepare the way for others to hear and respond to the gospel.

To God be the glory for the worldwide statistic which reflects 69,189,381 people who are currently serving God in Assemblies of God churches and reaching out to those who have not heard or have not yet responded to the gospel.

In just one year, we will be gathering for the 9th Triennial WAGF World Congress in Madrid, Spain. Please visit the Congress website at [www.unlimited2020.com](http://www.unlimited2020.com).

The General Assembly Business Session for all general superintendents or national leaders (one per country) who are WAGF members will be held Wednesday, March 18, 2020, from 3:30-5:30 p.m. (15:30-17:30). I ask that prayerful consideration be given in your upcoming regional meetings regarding selection for your 2020-2023 WAGF Executive Council representatives.

I trust you enjoy this March issue of *WAGF Connection*.

## EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

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# Commission on Religious Liberties – Religious Freedom at Gunpoint

By R. Lehtonen

The Institute for Religious Freedom in Ukraine (IRF) reports that the situation in regard to religious freedom has radically changed in the territories of eastern Ukraine, which are occupied by Russian-backed militarized forces. In the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, 497 Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches have lost their registration. According to IRF, over 50 church buildings and prayer houses have been confiscated, and Christian communities are estimated to have declined by more than 30 percent as believers flee rebel-held areas.

Tragic events took place when the city of Sloviansk was occupied in the Donetsk region during summer 2014. After service on Sunday, June 8, a group of militants came to the parking lot of the church and kidnapped Albert and Ruvim Pavenko, sons of the pastor of Sloviansk's Pentecostal Church, along with two church deacons, Viktor Brodarskoho and Volodymyr Velychko. They were later shot and died as martyrs.

The war has led to a huge wave of emigration from Eastern Ukraine: the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights reports that 1.2 million internal refugees from the Donetsk and Luhansk regions are now living in other parts of Ukraine. Many churches are actively helping the victims of the war by providing clothing, shoes, medicine, and shelter.



*The graves of the martyrs in Sloviansk, Ukraine.*

Many churches have been actively reaching people with the gospel during the war as well. In 2017, the Pentecostal fellowship in Ukraine made a decision to plant 400 new churches by the end of 2020. In the first two years, the Pentecostal movement planted 180 new churches in Ukraine and 20 new churches in Western Europe — 12 in Spain and the rest in Poland, Germany, Belgium, Italy and other countries. Ukraine has sent over 350 missionaries to former Soviet bloc countries and the rest of Europe.



## Religious Freedom at Gunpoint *continued*

The focus for Christians in Ukraine remains reaching unreached people groups in the Caucasus mountains, Central Asia, Siberia, the Volga area and other parts of Russia, but one of the main challenges is to continue supporting the suffering Christians in Eastern Ukraine. It is critical to pray for the underground churches who gather in basements, garrets, forests and private houses. The believers in the East want to walk beside the those who suffer. It is important to discern which way the wind is blowing, especially when the way looks darker than ever before.



*Underground Pentecostal meeting in Eastern Ukraine.*



# Missions Commission — Ten to One

By Rev. Brad Walz, WAGF Missions Commission Chairman

In the world missions congress in Madrid we again challenged our worldwide fellowship to the potential of our movement with a “Ten to One” response.

It is understood that missions doesn’t come down to a simple statistic. For us to do “world missions,” we need vision, passion, commitment, and a dependence on the Holy Spirit. However the “Ten to One” challenge is to help us to realize our potential as well give us a reflection of where we are falling short.

The idea of “Ten to One” is that every 10 churches can send one missionary (for a married couple, that would equal 20 churches). In the countries that have a rich tradition of sending missionaries, that ratio is much lower (in this case lower is better). In Canada for example, every three churches send a missionary. In the United States the ratio is between four and five churches to send a missionary. In some European countries it is even lower, between one and two (in other words, one missionary sent for every two churches that exist).

It is understandable that a country with a weaker currency and economy will find it difficult to send out a missionary at those ratios, of five churches or less per missionary. However it is our conviction that any country, no matter what their situation, has the potential to see one missionary sent out for every 10 churches.

Among the new senders, there are three countries that we know of that have hit a 10-1 ratio. All are in Latin America. They are Argentina, Costa Rica, and Uruguay. In Argentina’s case they have a fluctuating economy and very high inflation

rate. In Costa Rica and Uruguay’s case their countries are quite small. Still, they have not let those circumstances prohibit their response to the Great Commission.

We understand in the WAGF Missions Commission that a 10-1 ratio is not something that will happen in 1-2 years. But it is a reachable goal to see happen in 10-15 years. In light of that challenge, conviction, and vision, let’s look at both the current reality and the potential reality with a 10-to-1 result. These statistics are up to date, taken from the 2018 census that we did last year among the WAGF General Councils.

## ***Average number of churches it takes to send one missionary:***

Region	Total # Churches	Total # Workers Sent	# Churches to send one
Africa	81,469	942	86.48
Asia Pacific	30,636	1,134	27.01
Asia, Southern	8,177	483	16.75
Europe	16,606	989	16.79
Latin America	205,969	2,472	83.32
North America	14,542	3,951	4.67
Sensitive Areas	7,493	0	N/A
World Totals (incl. home missionaries):	365,157	9,971	36.62
World Totals (only foreign sent):	365,157	6,868	53.16

***On a world level, average number of churches it takes to send one missionary: 37. If only foreign-sent workers are counted, the figure is 53.***



## Ten to One *continued*

On the other hand, consider the potential on regional levels if we could see a one missionary for every 10 churches ratio achieved.

### ***Potential number of missionaries if every 10 churches sent one:***

Region of the World	Total # Churches	Potential workers with a 10-1 ratio
Africa	81,469	8,147
Asia Pacific and Oceania	30,636	3,063
Asia Southern	8,177	818
Europe	16,606	1,660
Latin America	205,969	20,597
North America (actual)	14,807	3,116
Sensitive Areas	7,493	749
Total Churches WAGF	365,157	38,150

***If every 10 churches would send out one worker, there would be a total of 38,150 missionaries sent out by WAGF churches!***

Consider some individual country statistics. Tanzania could have 768 missionaries; Kenya, 400 (and another 500 with the PAG work); Nigeria, over 1,630; and Mozambique, 600! Brazil could have over 12,000; the Philippines, 250; Mexico, 500; Peru, 400; and Indonesia, over 200. Examples abound. ***The potential is incredible!***

These numbers reflect our potential, but it's not about numbers. However, if these potential numbers would be achieved, it would reflect a sign of a deep change and commitment within our hearts. They would reflect that

people have been called. Lives would have been changed. Churches would be praying for the world, operating with a Great Commission vision, and not just a local vision. Offerings would be given. These numbers would not be an end in themselves, but a reflection of obedience to a Godly commission and vision.

As part of your vision for the year 2020, most of you will not be able to reach a goal of one missionary sent for every 10 churches. But if part of your goal is to begin the process of change in paradigm, vision, and passion, surely by 2030 (or 2033, the 2,000 anniversary of the death of Jesus on the cross), we could achieve that ratio, in a worst-case scenario, within a generation, by 2039. We realize Jesus could come for His Church before then, but should He not, we want to be obeying Him and fulfilling His command for the Church. It was never a command intended for a handful of nations; it's a command meant for the worldwide Church.

When a country has hundreds, even thousands, of churches but sends out few or even no missionaries, we are not in obedience to the final words of Jesus before He returned to the Father: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations!"

As was declared in the closing of the 2018 report:

"We feel that there will be great growth in the coming years, and especially in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Michael Dissanayeke of Sri Lanka, borrows a term from Patrick Johnston to refer to these three blocs: "AfAsLa" (Africa, Asia, Latin America).

## Ten to One *continued*

It is not that we feel the traditional senders will not continue to bless and impact the world. But 7.5 percent of the church can't do the task by themselves. *The other 92.5 percent must fulfill their potential!*

What ratio of church-sent missionaries do you have today? How many workers would it take to have a 10-1 ratio? Challenge your leaders, your pastors, and your country with the vision to change that reality in the coming decade.







# Next Generation Commission Update

By Valson Varghese, WAGF Next Generation Commission, Co-Chairman

## Our Meeting in Madrid

Our team met once again in Madrid, Spain last September to plan for our Continental Meetings. We also had a tour of the stadium where our 2020 World Congress will be held. We are anticipating a large participation of Next-Gen leaders from around the world.

## Continental Meetings

We're making progress. Heath Adamson and I have just returned from our very first **Africa Continental Next-Gen Leaders Conference** in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso on January 31 and February 1, 2019. About 33 national youth and children's ministry directors representing 14 countries had participated. We appreciate pastor Jules Compaore's effort in organizing this summit in partnership with Convoy of Hope.

Our next conference with Next-Gen leaders from Latin America and Central America is scheduled in North Carolina from March 17-20, 2019.

We also have a conference scheduled for leaders in Europe, in Brussels, Belgium on March 20 and 21. We want to request all our general superintendents to send their national youth and children's ministry directors to these meetings.

## Listen to the Wake-up Call!

One of the leaders at our Africa conference made this



*Next-Gen commission committee and key leaders in Madrid, Spain*

observation from a survey she had taken that “85 percent of the kids who leave Sunday School do not participate in the youth ministry and many of them leave their faith.”

In his book, *The Battle for a Generation*, Ron Hutchcraft mentions, “Adolescence in America has become a deadly mine field. And increasing numbers of young people are not making it through. Some perish along the way, killing themselves, murdering one another or dying in accidents.



# Next Generation Commission Update *continued*

Others emerge wounded, bearing physical or emotional scars that they will carry for the rest of their lives... Even unbelievers in our society are alarmed. It is time for us to wake up. We have the answer. All the world can do is document the problem and cite the statistics. We who have the answer need to hear the wake-up call..."

## Register for the World Congress 2020

We have just about a year to go until our World AG Congress in Madrid, Spain from March 19-21, 2020. We at the Next-Gen Commission request the support of general superintendents and key leaders of every nation to encourage and financially support your Next-Gen leaders to participate at this World Congress. It promises to usher in a fresh wave of the Holy Spirit upon these leaders globally and witness a focus on missions and church planting — especially in Europe.

Visit [www.unlimited2020.com](http://www.unlimited2020.com) to avail the early bird discounts.

Because Next-Gen matters!  
*Valson Varghese*



*Africa Continental Next-Gen Leaders Conference in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso*