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New book!
Published by Baker Academic and co-authored by Todd M. Johnson and Cindy M. Wu

Our Global Families: Christians Embracing Common Identity in a Changing World

Born into the global human race and baptized into the global Church. What does it mean for Christians not just to be part of, but also to embrace, two global families at once?

Johnson and Wu set out the case (biblical, theological, and historical) for a common Christian identity and explore practical ways in which it impacts the global human and global Christian families. In doing so they use four lenses: how the world’s social and religious dimensions are changing; how those changes are affecting Christian identity globally; how Christians can apply these new realities to interpersonal relationships; and how a global Christian identity impacts the Christian’s role in human flourishing. As a result, the authors offer—and embrace—a vision of a united global Christian family that both finds solidarity with the global human family in working for good and sees the world transformed by obedience to the Gospel.
The Center for the Study of Global Christianity provides people group data from its World Christian Database to Finishing the Task, and a Center staff member attends the annual meeting of the FTT Task Force. Senior Research Associate Bert Hickman is the Center’s current FTT liaison.

In addition to the general Task Force sessions, recent FTT gatherings have included a smaller consultation with data providers and analysts. Researchers—including representatives from the Southern Baptist International Mission Board and the Joshua Project, the other two major sources of global people group data—meet to discuss the latest information and to help FTT leaders determine future actions the network should take.

Collaboration among the participants is enhanced by a monthly (non-FTT) conference call, in which several of the researchers join with colleagues from other agencies to discuss global data and issues of significance.

Teaching global Christianity

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
Boston University School of Theology
Local churches in New England

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Johnson and Gina Zurlo taught a masters-level class on Trends in Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell during the Fall 2014 semester. The Spring 2015 semester finds them at Boston University, teaching a course entitled The Rise of Global Christianity that has attracted students from several Boston Theological Institute member schools.

Spring has brought teaching farther afield as well, as Johnson journeyed to Connecticut and Bert Hickman traveled to Haverhill, MA, to teach lessons in the Perspectives on the World Christian Movement course.

World Christian Encyclopedia


The meeting saw the reunion—for perhaps the first time since its publication—of WCE-2 team member Michael Jaffarian (Oregon) with Chris Guirdy (Virginia), Data Analyst Peter Crossing (Australia), and Todd Johnson—all of whom worked on both WCE-2 and the Atlas. They were joined by Atlas team members Brad Coon (Massachusetts), Gina Zurlo, and Bert Hickman.

Each of the world’s countries will have a chapter highlighting the history of Christianity and the state of religious freedom there, as well as statistics on the religions and the major Christian denominations present. To be published by Edinburgh University Press, WCE-3 is scheduled to appear in 2020.

Citations

March 2015: Christian Post on $50 billion stolen from churches every year
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February 2015: CNN.com on the decline of Christians in the Middle East
February 2015: Global Times on the number of missionaries in the world
January 2015: The Washington Times on the number of Christian martyrs every year
January 2015: The Tennessean on ecclesiastical crime

Publications

Todd M. Johnson, Gina A. Zurlo, Albert W. Hickman, and Peter F. Crossing. “Christianity and churches, promotes awareness of and outreach to Unengaged Unreached People Groups—people among whom there is no known church planting work.”

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Doctor of Ministry faculty Todd Johnson (l) and Doug Birdsall (r) congratulate Benjamin Thomas (c) on the approval of his thesis-project at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

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