



**TRACKING GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY**

Women in Global Christianity: Highlights from WCE, 3rd edition



**AT THE CENTER**

Reports on Dr. Zurlo's academic circuit and Dr. Johnson's trip to Asia



**CONTACT US**

Consultations, media inquiries, upcoming events and speaking engagements



# THE INQUIRY

NEWS FROM THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY

## In Celebration of Women's History Month

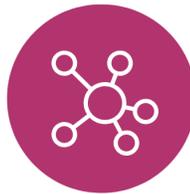
The CSGC supports women in leadership around the world. In honor of women's history month, here are some of the ways women are highlighted in the forthcoming *World Christian Encyclopedia*.

### Women in Global Christianity



**Church membership**

In many countries, women make up the majority of church members, such as in Angola, Eswatini, Kenya, Portugal, and Brazil.



**Organization**

The Young Women's Christian Association, Mother's Unions, and other women's fellowships are highly active around the world in providing education, combating HIV/AIDS, advocating for gender rights, and serving their congregations and local communities.



**Service**

Catholic sisters are highly active around the world. They outnumber male priests and professed religious men on every continent. Africa, for example, is home to 71,500 women religious vs. 44,000 priests and 8,700 male religious.



**Ordination**

Women are ordained to leadership positions across various Christian traditions. The Armenian Apostolic Church, for example, has ordained women as deaconesses since the 5th century, the only Orthodox tradition to do so. The Anglican Communion first ordained women priests in 1974, and over half of all pastors in the Evangelical Lutheran People's Church of Denmark are women.



**Violence**

Despite the prominence of women in church life and society, many women around the world face serious violence, especially sexual violence. In some places, like Papua New Guinea, violence against women is sometimes linked to accusations of witchcraft. Christian women in the Democratic Republic of Congo—the 'rape capital of the world'—have advocated for peace-building through events hosted by the World March of Women and the National Federation of Protestant Women in DR Congo.



**Empowerment**

Women around the world have been empowered by Christian teachings to break cultural barriers, become public figures, and participate in human flourishing. In Botswana, for example, women play prominent roles in ecumenical work such as the Christian Radio Council; many women in Botswana have also established popular Pentecostal churches in the country.



# LATEST FROM THE CENTER

## Dr. Zurlo receives a grant from the Louisville Institute

Scholars have stated for decades that women are “more religious” than men. However, there exists very little hard data on women in Christianity—the world’s largest religion. What percentage of Christianity is female? What activities do women undertake? What leadership roles do they have? How do women contribute to the revitalization of church life? To answer these questions, beginning in July 2019, the CSGC under the direction of Dr. Zurlo will undertake a new research project, “Women in World Christianity: A Mixed-Methods Study of Gender in the World’s Largest Religion.” This project seeks to provide the first-ever global quantitative analysis of women in world Christianity. Using a mixed-methods approach, it will take a wide-angle view and a localized snapshot of the status of women in Christianity in North America and worldwide. This project received funding from the Louisville Institute’s Project Grant for Researchers, which supports research, reflection, and writing by academics and pastors.



Dr. Zurlo presents at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion

American Academy of Religion, the largest professional association of religious studies scholars in the world. She presented new research on using social media data—in particular, Twitter—to analyze the activities and self-understanding of megachurches around the world.

## Four countries in three weeks: Dr. Johnson meets with Christian leaders and scholars in Asia

In November 2018, Dr. Johnson travelled to India, Mongolia, Hong Kong, and South Korea to meet with Christian leaders and scholars in Asia. The following is a summary of his trip.

### INDIA

First, Dr. Johnson visited SAIACS (South Asian Institute for the Advanced Christian Studies) in Bangalore, India. There, he received helpful input from local scholars and ministry leaders on the CSGC’s assessment of Christianity in India for the third edition of the *World Christian Encyclopedia*. He also spent time with the principal, Prabhu Singh. They discussed potential future collaboration and Dr. Singh shared his hopes that SAIACS can become a major hub for research on Christianity in India, particularly

### NOTABLE CITATIONS

New York Times: [American’s Death Revives Evangelical Debate Over Extreme Missionary Work](#)

BBC News: [John Allen Chau: Do Missionaries Help or Harm?](#)

Economist: [Missionaries From the Global South Try to Save the Godless West](#)

Guardian: [Gospel Glamour: How Nigeria’s Pastors Wield Political Power](#)

Christianity Today: [Making Missions Count: How a Major Database Tracked Thailand’s Church-Planting Revival](#)

## Academic conference circuit

In October-November 2018, Dr. Zurlo represented the CSGC and presented at three academic conferences. The annual meeting of the Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies (ASARB) was held at the headquarters of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in Louisville, KY. This unique group represents church-based quantitative researchers from numerous USA-based mainline denominations and includes Catholics, Adventists, Latter-day Saints, Lutherans, and others. Dr. Zurlo gave a presentation on the forthcoming third edition of the *World Christian Encyclopedia* and encouraged feedback on the USA data. She immediately flew to Las Vegas, NV for the annual meeting for the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion to presenting on quantitative studies in world Christianity, in particular, new issues related to counting Evangelical Christians. Finally, Dr. Zurlo’s travels brought her to Denver, CO for the annual meeting of the



Dr. Johnson with Dr. Prabhu Singh

### RECENT PUBLICATIONS FROM THE CENTER

Zurlo, Gina A. "More than Numbers: David B. Barrett and the Twentieth-Century Historiography of World Christianity." *Journal of World Christianity* 8, no. 2 (2018): 89–108.

Zurlo, Gina A., Todd M. Johnson, and Peter F. Crossing. "Christianity 2019: What's Missing? A Call for Further Research." *International Bulletin of Mission Research* 43, no. 1 (January 2019): 92–102.

new movements among Hindu communities. An unplanned benefit of Dr. Johnson's visit was that major Indian mission leaders were also meeting at the campus that week. He spent many lunches discussing the latest situation with them. In addition to meeting with scholars and ministry leaders, Dr. Johnson spoke in chapel on "Our Global Families" and gave a special lecture on Global Christianity for students and faculty. Several students (and faculty) told him that they seldom hear about what's happening in the rest of the world — a message he has heard repeatedly throughout his speaking engagements in the Global South.



Dr. Johnson with Mongolian ministry leaders

### MONGOLIA

Next, Dr. Johnson flew to Ulaan Baatar, Mongolia, where he spoke to about 150 Mongolian Christians about Global Christianity and received input from Mongolian leaders from several different ministries on the current status of Christianity in Mongolia. These leaders shared that they have come

to realize that Mongolian Christianity is too Western and too Korean (the main sources of missionaries). While they are grateful for gospel they received from faithful missionaries, they also see the need for a church that better represents their Mongolian language and culture. As such, they are translating the Bible from the original languages and are beginning to publish their own theological and biblical reflections, as well as writing their own music. The events were arranged by one of his former students, Bayar Garam. Garam, likely the first Protestant Mongolian with a Ph.D., has launched a new research initiative to study Mongolian Christianity.



Dr. Johnson with two former students whom he met serendipitously and who treated him to a sumptuous seafood feast at a well-known port in the New Territories

### HONG KONG

After Mongolia, Dr. Johnson travelled to Hong Kong where he was hosted by the Chung Chi College at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. There, he met with scholars of Christianity in China, and received their input on the CSGC's articles on China and Hong Kong in the *World Christian Encyclopedia*. Immediately after this, he spent time with practitioners who live and work in China. Between these two meetings, he was able to gather invaluable, ground-level information for the CSGC.

### SOUTH KOREA

Finally, Dr. Johnson arrived in Seoul, South Korea where he spoke at Torch Trinity Seminary for their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and had a special time with Korean mission leaders, researchers, faculty, students and others. His lecture on Global Christianity and Theological Education was well-received by students and faculty.



Dr. Johnson with Torch Trinity faculty and students after lecture on Global Christianity

# ABOUT US

The Center for the Study of Global Christianity is an academic research center that monitors worldwide demographic trends in Christianity, including outreach and mission. We provide a comprehensive collection of information on the past, present, and future of Christianity in every country of the world. Our data and publications help churches, mission agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to be more strategic, thoughtful, and sensitive to local contexts.

## LEADERSHIP TEAM



Todd M. Johnson  
Director  
[tjohnson@gordonconwell.edu](mailto:tjohnson@gordonconwell.edu)

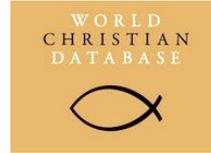


Gina A. Zurlo  
Associate Director  
[gzurlo@gordonconwell.edu](mailto:gzurlo@gordonconwell.edu)

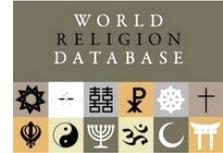


Peter F. Crossing  
Data Analyst  
[pcrossing@gordonconwell.edu](mailto:pcrossing@gordonconwell.edu)

## DATABASES



[worldchristiandatabase.org](http://worldchristiandatabase.org)



[worldreligiondatabase.org](http://worldreligiondatabase.org)

Our research is used worldwide by churches, mission agencies, NGOs, and international media outlets.

**Your support makes this research possible.**

Will you consider supporting quality research on global Christianity?



Providing data that  
**EDUCATES,  
EQUIPS, &  
EMPOWERS**

To give online,

please visit <http://worldchristianresearch.org/support/>

To give via check,

please make it payable to “World Christian Research” and send to

*Todd Johnson, Treasurer  
World Christian Research  
130 Essex Street, #228  
South Hamilton, MA 01982*

## CONTACT US

Email: [info@globalchristianity.org](mailto:info@globalchristianity.org)

Website: [www.globalchristianity.org](http://www.globalchristianity.org)

Phone: (978) 468-2750

Address: 130 Essex Street, Box 228, South Hamilton, MA 01982

## FOLLOW US

[/centerforglobalchristianity](https://www.facebook.com/centerforglobalchristianity)

[@csgc](https://twitter.com/csgc) | [@drtoddmjohnson](https://twitter.com/drtoddmjohnson)