



# Reaching and Serving the Persecuted Church **IN TOUCH MONTHLY**

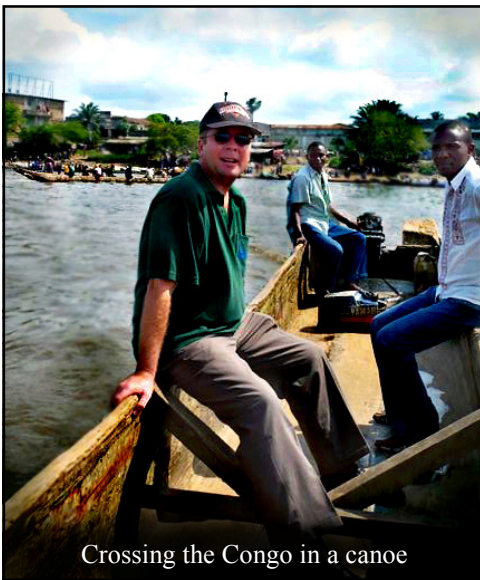
1 July 2008

**One day Jesus took Peter, James and John** mountain climbing. It was a strenuous endeavor for His inner-circle friends and on reaching the summit they were tired and slept while Jesus prayed. When they awakened the appearance of His face had changed and His robes were glistening. They were surprised to see the Lord in His radiant glory, talking with Moses and Elijah. What did they discuss? The shadow of the Cross had already fallen across the path of our Savior, and Luke notes that they “spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish in Jerusalem.” (Luke 9:31)

## Congo Concerns and Opportunities

### CONGO (DRC)

ITMI’s **Charl van Wyk** traveled extensively through the war-ravaged Democratic Republic of Congo last month, preaching the Gospel and distributing Bibles and bikes to pastors in the bush. While there he rode pillion on a motorbike, with his friend Pastor Oscar, into the jungle and crossed the mighty Congo River in a dugout canoe.



Crossing the Congo in a canoe

The most memorable moments however were on the Hewa Bora Airline – Congo’s largest. All HBA flights have been banned by European and American authorities due to poor

maintenance and safety concerns. Hewa Bora is *Swahili* for “Fresh Air.” (Perhaps that explains the large cracks in the fuselage – JUST KIDDING!)

Less than a month before Charl’s flight, an HBA DC-9, on an internal flight from Goma to Kisangani, crashed on take-off, plowing into a crowded market place killing 41 people and injuring 115. Stormy weather on Charl’s flight along the Equator made the approach to Kinshasa’s N’djili International Airport a real nail-biting experience. The Boeing was bouncing about like a yo-yo on steroids, while passenger reaction ranged from prayer and praise to panic. A lot of folks got right with the Lord during those last few terrifying moments before touching down safely on runway 24.

While in Kinshasa he met Rev. Deo Mwamba, Bishop of the Anglican Church Worldwide, a recent break-away from the original Church of England in a dispute over ordination of homosexuals. Before becoming a Christian, Mwamba earned a Masters degree in Islamic studies in Saudi Arabia. For many years he was a Muslim among Muslims, a sheikh of high standing. Born into an Islamic family in the Belgian Congo in 1954, he studied



Charl presents bikes to Pastor Physton

the Koran diligently to become an overachiever for the Islamic faith. As the first-born son, greatly loved by his father, Deo was given the best education opportunity by attending Madrasat, the Islamic school for young children. He recited the Koran and learned to speak Arabic fluently. His zeal to learn French prompted his father to send him to a Catholic school. It was there that he first heard

**“...he was a Muslim among Muslims, a sheikh of high standing.”**

(Continued on page 4)

# What's so bad about good news?

As we go to press for this July issue of *ITM*, I've just read an article in the current *TIME* magazine by a Peter Beinart, who argues that the presumptive nominees for President should *not* go on a fact-finding tour to Iraq because they might discover that the surge is working and the tide is turning in America's favor in the war on terror.

To most of us that would be good news, but apparently it's bad news to some who think we should cut and run. *TIME*'s liberal editorial *slant* is demeaning. The author of the piece implies that the men who aspire to lead our country lack the discernment to separate fact from fiction. Apparently *we the people* would be better served by denying prospective leaders access to firsthand, on-the-scene intelligence and substituting hard facts with the unprofessional surmises and opinions by Monday morning quarterbacks (like Beinart) who weren't even there, but watched the game on TV. In other words, "My mind's made up. We've lost already. Don't confuse me with the facts."

For such defeatists among us, here are some inconvenient facts regarding recent successes in the war on terror: according to *Investors Business Daily*, "on Memorial Day weekend Iraqi forces ran *al-Qaida* terrorists out of Mosul, the organization's final urban stronghold. That victory reduces the killers to fringe areas with little public support. Al-Qaida has 'never been closer to defeat than they are now,' said Ryan Crocker, U.S. ambassador to Iraq." Iraqi troops also cleaned out Basra and Sadr City, reducing any prospects for domestic insurgents to take power by force. Terrorist zeal is fading as the pressure mounts.

Columbia's Defense Minister announced that "Manuel 'Sureshot' Marulanda, founder of the Marxist FARC terror group died 'a hunted man' in the steaming jungle on March 26 as bombs rained down on him." This makes three of the top seven leaders killed since March 2008.

In Afghanistan, British forces drove the Taliban from a southern stronghold in a 96-hour battle this month. It was their first combat operation since new troops arrived in March. Even the *New York Times* reported a "palpable sense of relief among villagers, with the district chief and exiles returning to rebuild."

On July 4<sup>th</sup> 1776, America's leaders informed King George III that we'd no longer tolerate "taxation without representation." The dye was cast and many brave Americans died in our War of Independence. Since that time we've had to take a stand against an assortment of enemies who've threatened our freedom in one way or another. I remember when Hitler's goose-stepping troops marched into Poland in September 1939, launching World

War II. Then two years and three months later, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor bringing America into the conflict. We fought these enemies and won - and now they are our friends and we buy their cameras and cars.

It was easier in those days. Our enemies were clearly defined. They represented a political system that was contrary to ours. We could live with that, but when they attacked us we rallied and fought back.

Now we are engaged in a war against terrorism. Terrorism initiated, sponsored and financed by Islamofascists. It is this political aspect of Islam that makes it such a threat to our culture. We've already been invaded. There are growing enclaves of Muslims in the USA who have not assimilated and have no intention to do so. Traditionally, when people immigrate to America it is because they are searching for freedom and want to become a part of what this great nation is all about. They have helped to build a strong and vibrant America.

Not so with Muslims - they are determined to change us, to impose Sharia law, enforce *halaal* food into our market system and take us back to a 7<sup>th</sup> Century Arabian culture of dress, morality and marriage code. There are wishful thinkers among us who'd like to believe this could never happen here, but there is virtually no evidence (either geographical or historical) to support that notion anywhere across the fruited plain.

There was hardly any viable threat of a German or Japanese invasion of the continental USA. (They could never find a place to park!) If we'd cut and run at any time during WWII, they would have chased us out of the Pacific or European theater and we would have lost any meaningful role in world leadership; but our culture - even if compromised - would still be intact.

With Islam it's different. Muslims do not assimilate - they dominate. We're in a war now with the Islamofascists. They started it with the invasion in 1979 of the American embassy in Tehran, holding US diplomatic personnel hostage for 444 days. Since then, they've bombed our military bases, ships, various embassies and finally principal buildings in New York and Washington, killing over 3,000 innocent citizens in a single day. We have good reason to be at war on our nation's 232<sup>nd</sup> birthday - we were attacked. We must stand together and fight for the principles our fore-fathers gave their lives for. This is not the time to cut and run - nor is it in our American tradition to do so.

Muslims need to hear the Good News - and that's not bad.

Bill Bathman - Cape Town

**"We've  
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invaded."**

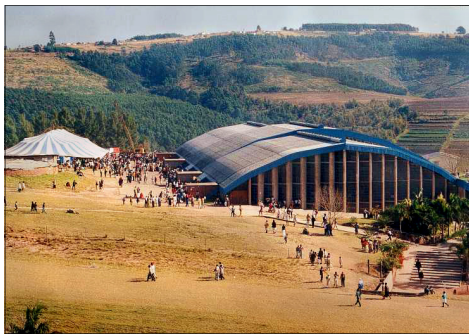
Dear Team,

Greetings from the southern-most tip of Africa, where “radio traffic reports” tell which roads are blocked due to xenophobic violence in the Cape Town area. The recent rage across South Africa against “foreigners,” primarily Zimbabweans, has embarrassed the communist government of President Thabo Mbeki. At first he denied there was a crisis in Zim following elections there earlier this year which decisively toppled the 28-year misrule by Dictator Robert Mugabe. This is the same Mbeki that denied the existence of HIV/AIDS and now denies there is a crisis concerning foreigners in South Africa.

When the Lord called us in 1961 to serve Him in communist countries, I was impressed by Him to tell the truth of what Marxism was really like. I promised the Lord then that I would not soft-pedal or compromise just to be able to ‘carry on with my ministry.’ If I was arrested, kicked-out and “banned” (as happened in Yugoslavia) or arrested and “black-listed” as in Czechoslovakia, that was the Lord’s problem – not mine. I must “tell-it-like-it-is.”

As our ministry continued the Lord showed us that the communist world was expanding and we must move our base from Austria to Arizona to meet that challenge. At the same time, He expanded that call to include all “restricted-access” countries. We didn’t fully understand the meaning of that, but we were ready to obey His call.

Now we’re focusing more on Islam and its powerful international threat. Our policy has not changed. We will still tell-it-as-it-is, while at the same time seek to win lost Muslims to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ – because He is *the Way, the Truth and the Life* – not Allah.



**BEFORE — KSB’s 10,000 - seat auditorium built with volunteers’ hands to reach the Zulu nation.**

As I was writing the final words of this July issue of ITM, my phone rang. It was a KSB staff worker with the sad news that the huge, 10,000 - seat auditorium at KwaSizabantu was burning. In just over 2 hours, many years of hard work and labor of love went up in smoke – the crown jewel in one of Africa’s

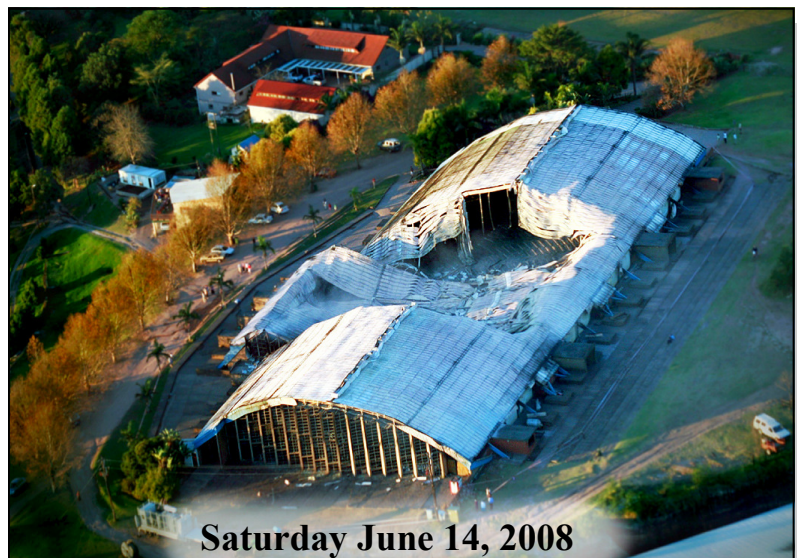


**Inside the auditorium: a Ministers Conference with 1,300 Pastors and Christian workers**

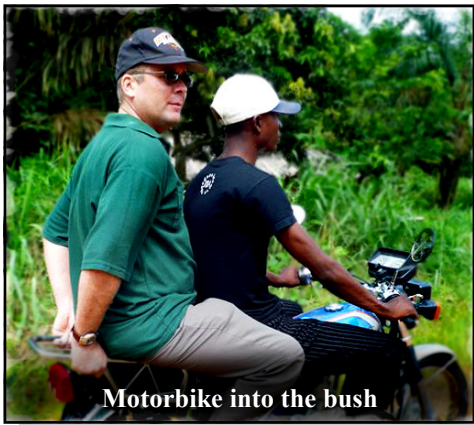
largest mission stations was reduced to ashes. My mind went back over the scores of times I’ve preached there – at Youth Conferences, Pastor Conferences and other special occasions. Please pray for Rev. Erlo Stegen and all the dedicated personnel who labor for the Lord there.

Yours in His grip,

Bill Bathman



**Saturday June 14, 2008**



Motorbike into the bush

of Jesus, studying Christianity as one would study math or geography. In 1998, Deo trusted Jesus as his Savior through the faithful witness by a born-again proprietor of a photo shop.

Our principal contact person in the DRC is Bishop Lamba Lamba, the spiritual leader of some 700 "Come and See" Churches. The denomination takes its name from Jesus' invitation to two of John the Baptist's disciples when they followed Him and asked, "Teacher, where are you staying?" and He responded, "Come and see." It was also Philip's response to Nathanael when he questioned whether or not anything good could come out of Nazareth. (John 1:39, 46)

In war-torn Kisangani, Charl preached

the Word and presented bikes for local bush evangelists. His host was Pastor Physton, who bears the wounds of war on his forehead after rebels attacked his home. He spent weeks in the hospital before being able to return by God's grace to continue his ministry.

The "Bible & Bike" program was first approved by ITMI's Board of Directors in 1996 and implemented initially in Malawi. Since then it has spread to Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Sudan, and now the DRC. Please pray earnestly for these dear brothers who face danger and hardships gladly (and daily) to preach the Gospel and win souls to Jesus Christ. Bible & Bikes is an inter-Mission project supported by several African-based missions.

Another very ambitious inter-Mission ministry is the Congo River Project initiated by Captain Johann Meintjes (pronounced 'my-keys'), an ex South African Naval officer with a burden to reach the millions of unreached people who live on or near this vital waterway. There are 116 schools along this 1,100 mile hydro-highway, just for starters. ITMI's Board of Directors is considering an invitation we've had to take part in



Charl in Kinshasa meetings

this historic endeavor. Steve Evers met Captain Meintjes when he was in Cape Town in April and Charl made some local arrangements for him while in the DRC.

### UGANDA

Last month we ran out of space reporting God's blessing on Steve Evers and Mark Gumm's African safari. In Kampala, they held a Seven Areas of Life Training (SALT) Seminar on discipleship at ITMI's International School of Missions. It was widely appreciated; most felt that it gave "insight to Christian conduct" and one student, Anne, described it as an "eye and brain opener." Everyone wants the men to come back for further teaching.

Bill Bathman – Cape Town, South Africa

### *How'd You Hurt Your Hand?* by Bill Bathman

101 Bible studies in Matthew's Gospel. This 205-page book by Bill celebrates ITMI's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. It is a current commentary considering the question, "What if Matthew took a look at us? Would he recognize 21<sup>st</sup> Century Christianity?" We are encouraged by the positive response to its launch. This is a great gift for someone you love.

**\$10 + S&H**

Discounts available for quantity purchases.



### For Praise . . .

1. Harriett Bathman's successful cataract surgeries!
2. No injuries in the KwaSizabantu auditorium fire!
3. Tomek Jezyk's US meetings - planting seeds & bearing fruit!

### For Prayer . . .

1. God's leading and provision as KwaSizabantu rebuilds.
2. Piotr Zaremba - speaking at Polish youth conference in Canada.
3. Wisdom and grace in ministering to Zimbabwean refugees.

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