

CMWA World Conference 2006 Afterglow

By Steve Burger

The World came to Kansas City, and many of us will never be the same. More than 150 delegates from 20 countries were present as the conference began at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center Hotel in Kansas City, Missouri. The conference opened with the singing of "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands", specially edited for the occasion by Phil Rydman, Communications Director of the Association of Gospel Rescue Missions.

He's Got The Whole World In His Hands

*He's got the whole world in His hands
He's got the whole world in His hands
He's got the whole world in His hands
He's got the whole world in His hands*

*He's got Africa and Asia in His hands
Pacific Rim and Australia in His hands
Europe and the Americas in His hands
He's got the whole world in His hands*

*He's got the poor and addicted in His hands
He's got the hungry and the hurting in His hands
The mentally ill and the aged in His hands
He's got the whole world in His hands*

*He's got the whole world in His hands
He's got the whole world in His hands
He's got the whole world in His hands
He's got the whole world in His hands*

As the singing ended the flag processional began, as each country's flag was carried to the front of the room by smiling and waving delegates. It was a wonderful beginning of a meaningful and productive four days.

"They understood the times, and knew what to do," I Chronicles 12:32 was the theme verse, and throughout the convention the theme was carried forth. Each region of the world was highlighted, with participants sharing what they are doing to touch lives with a speaker laying a challenge for the future.

I was particularly touched by Levente Horvath, who spent years in a Romania prison before the fall of the Communist regime. He spoke on being blessed, and being a blessing in difficult circumstances, which really bothered his guards. He ended by sharing the theme this way: "He's got the whole world in HIS NAIL PIERCED HANDS."

The messages flowed together, and so did the participants. Sitting at my breakfast table one morning were people from India, Germany, Switzerland, Canada, Australia, and Pakistan. This was not caused by planning. God brought us together, without regard to race, color, or nation. It was a joy to watch the Indians and Pakistanis hugging each other, which is not a norm in that part of the world.

Each region met together and planned for further involvement and relationships. Asia and Africa are forming their own associations. In our meeting we talked about how we could better share both expertise and materials, especially with South and Central America. A delegation representing the government of Jamaica was there seeking expertise in dealing with their homeless problems.

Retiring from the Executive Committee were Rick Grellman (Australia), Don Robertson (Australia), John Nicholls (United Kingdom) and Ralph Plumb (United States). Their service has been appreciated over the past three years

At the business meeting Hans-Georg Filker (Germany), Steve Burger (United States), Victor Paul (India), and Del Maxfield (United States) were elected to the Executive Committee for the next four years. The committee met and elected Hans chairman and elected me (Steve Burger) vice chairman. We also appointed MacMillan Kiiru from Kenya to the committee.

The next World Conference will be in Wittenburg, Germany in 2010, the home of Martin Luther. The meeting ended with the retiring of the flags, as each country came forward, and waved their flag as the members cheered. Many hugs followed.