

World Mission

News from The Turks: Madagascar in Crisis

Dan and Elizabeth Turk of our missionary family in Madagascar, Africa, sent the following news on September 5th:

5 September 2009

Dear Family and Friends,

Madagascar is once again at a juncture. For the past five and a half months since the coup d'etat of 17 March the international community has been working to get a consensual transitional government put in place. This resulted in the Maputo accords of 9 August in Maputo Mozambique (Maputo I) signed by the 3 former presidents (Ratsiraka, Zafy, and Ravalomanana) and the current head of the coup d'etat government (Andry Rajoelina).

Maputo I was followed by another meeting in Maputo in late August (Maputo II) at which the 4 leaders were supposed to spell out the people who would occupy the different positions within the transitional government. They were not able to agree on the president, vice-president and prime minister of the transitional government because Andry Rajoelina insisted that he be the president and the current prime minister of the coup d'etat government (Monja Roindefo) be the prime minister. The 3 presidents did not agree to this, Ravalomanana saying that to name Andry Rajoelina as president of a government sanctioned by the international community would be to condone the coup d'etat. Nothing was signed at Maputo II. The mediators led by former Mozambique president Chissano gave the 4 leaders until September 4th to resolve the dispute.

On 4 September, Andry Rajoelina announced that he would continue as president, Monja Roindefo would continue as prime minister, and that Monja would name a new government within 72 hours.

Since then the 3 other groups have announced that they will not participate in a government led by those who did the coup d'etat. The legalists of Ravalomanana are talking about a general strike, apparently preparing their followers to go back to the streets. The leader of a major workers union is also threatening to strike. Several ambassadors, including the US Ambassador, met with the representative of the African Union today and there is an effort to get representatives of the 4 leaders to meet on Monday in a last ditch effort to avoid conflict.

As it is now, it is quite likely that there will be a major anti-Rajoelina rally at the Magro store on Monday, with street protests put off until Tuesday to give negotiation one last chance. It is likely that there will be a massive street protest on Tuesday, likely involving supporters of Ratsiraka, Zafy, and Ravalomanana. If that happens, Andry Rajoelina will not last long in power. Whether or not the coup d'etat armed forces try to repress the protest remains to be seen.

Please pray for a peaceful resolution of the current crisis. Please pray for the FJKM church as most branches of the church are holding major meetings in coming weeks.

In Christ,
Dan & Elizabeth

September 21 update:

Things are very much still in limbo here, with truckloads of armed soldiers in downtown Antananarivo every day for over a week to guard against demonstrations. Meanwhile the UN invites Coup leader Andry Rajoelina to the UN general assembly to give a speech on Thursday. It's a crazy world.

- Dan

Please remember to keep Madagascar's FJKM church and the Turks - Dan, Elizabeth, Robert and Frances - and the Dimmocks, our missionary family in Lesotho, Africa, in your thoughts and prayers.

2009 Memorial Lecture Series

Sunday, October 25, 2009

In Honor of Belin and Thelma Bodie

Government Street Presbyterian Church will present its annual fall Memorial Lecture Series on Sunday, October 25, 2009. The guest lecturer this year is Professor Miroslav Volf, and his theme is “*Exploring Muslim-Christian Relations.*”

The fall 2009 Memorial Lecture Series honors the lives and memory of **Belin and Thelma Bodie**. Both were integral and much loved members of Government Street Presbyterian Church for many years.



Schedule of Events

Sunday, October 25, 2009

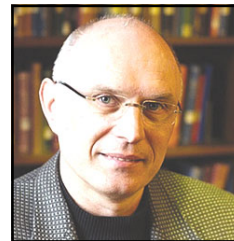
- 9:30 a.m. First lecture
- 11:00 a.m. Dr. Volf preaches the sermon: “*Dancing for God*”
- 5:30 p.m. Dinner in Fellowship Hall
- 6:15 p.m. Tribute to Belin and Thelma Bodie
- 6:30 p.m. Second lecture

Meals are \$5 each for adults
Childcare is provided
Free Parking



Professor Miroslav Volf

As the Director of the Yale Center for Faith and Culture and Henry B. Wright Professor of Theology at Yale Divinity School, Dr. Miroslav Volf, a native of war-ravaged Croatia, works to promote a theology of forgiveness, non-violence and unity. A member of the Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Church in Croatia where his father was pastor, Dr. Volf spent more than a decade involved in international ecumenical dialogues, including the Archbishop of Canterbury's Building Bridges Seminar on Muslim Christian Relations and the Vatican Council for Promotion of Christian Unity.



Educated in Croatia, the United States and Germany, Dr. Volf earned doctoral and post-doctoral degrees with highest honors from the University of Tübingen in Germany. He has frequently taught and lectured in Central and Eastern Europe. His book *Exclusion and Embrace* was selected as among the 100 best religious books of the 20th Century by Christianity Today.

Dr. Volf and his wife, Judy, have two sons, Nathanael and Aaron. When not writing, Dr. Volf can often be seen cycling, playing soccer, or skiing with his boys.

Selected Works by Miroslav Volf

Work in the Spirit. Toward a Theology of Work New York: Oxford University Press, 1991

The Future of Theology. Essays in Honor of Jürgen Moltmann (ed. with T. Kucharz and C. Krieg) Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996

A Spacious Heart. Essays on Identity and Belonging (with Judith M. Gundry-Volf) Harrisburg: Trinity Press, 1997

After Our Likeness. The Church as the Image of the Trinity Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998

A Passion for God's Reign. Theology, Christian Learning, and the Christian Self (ed.) Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998

Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2002