

## **CHARIS FACT SHEET**

### **October 2007**

#### **What is Charis?**

*Charis* is the Greek word for grace. In the early 1990's it was selected as the name for an international fraternity of Grace Brethren leaders and churches.

#### **What is a Charis Leadership Encounter?**

A periodic international gathering of key leaders who represent the Grace Brethren Churches of their respective countries, meeting together to discuss matters of common interest and to map out plans for cooperation and mutual support.

#### **Brief History**

Early in the 1990's, a number of Grace Brethren leaders recognized that the time had arrived to develop ways to encourage strong fraternal ties between Grace Brethren Churches and their leaders around the world.

During that same decade, three Charis International Leadership Encounters took place in the following locations: France (1994), Canada (1996) and Argentina (1999). These meetings served to broaden our understanding of our international movement and produced a number of regional projects.

In 2000, the past and future Coordinators of Charis (Varak, Núñez and Ehmann) met with the newly appointed Executive Director of GBIM (Guiles) to discuss the future of these international meetings. It was determined to encourage each region to host its own Charis Leadership Encounters as a way to involve many more leaders in this movement.

During the past seven years, Charis Regional Leadership Encounters have taken place several times on the continents of Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. These meetings have produced a greater sense of identity among the churches and leaders of the region, and resulted in a number of specific regional projects.

#### **The Charis Planning Committee**

In February 2007, a planning committee was formed to oversee the development of the Fourth Charis International Leadership Encounter. Members were selected from each of the five regions where Grace Brethren Churches are located:

Africa: Dr. Francois Ngoumape (Central African Republic)

Asia: Rev. Adan Panizales (Philippines)

Europe: Rev. Florent Varak (France)

Latin America: Rev. Jorge Núñez (Argentina)

North America: Dr. Keith Shearer (USA)

Conference Coordinator (Host): Rev. Rainer Ehmann (Germany)

Committee Coordinator: Rev. David Guiles (GBIM)

## Important Conference Details

The Planning Committee selected the following location, dates and theme for the next Charis International Leadership Encounter:

**Bad Homburg Youth Hostel**

**Village of Bad Homburg, Germany (near the Frankfurt Airport)**

**August 2-9, 2008**

***Faithful Stewards of God's Grace***

**I Peter 4:10**

## Selection of Delegates

The Planning Committee has established the following criteria for determining the number of delegates that can attend from each country where there are established Grace Brethren Churches:

Countries with 1 – 10 churches are eligible to send one (1) delegate.

Countries with 11 – 99 churches are eligible to send two (2) delegates.

Countries with 100 or more churches are eligible to send three (3) delegates.

## Criteria for Selection of Delegates

The Planning Committee has established the following criteria to be used as the churches and leaders select the delegate(s) that will represent their country:

1. **Good testimony:** A leader with a solid testimony with the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches of his country, and is clearly identified with its doctrines and practices.
2. **Understands Local Ministry:** A leader with a good grasp of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and needs of the church in his country.
3. **Understands Regional Ministries:** A leader who has participated in Regional Charis Encounters or who has traveled enough in his region so as to understand the needs of the Grace Brethren of his region.
4. **Committed to Preparation:** A leader who is committed to preparing himself for the Charis International Encounter by fulfilling assignments.
5. **Committed to Communication:** A leader who is committed to effectively communicating the results of the Charis Int'l Encounter to the churches and leaders he is representing.
6. **Committed to the ongoing work of Charis** – A leader who is willing and able to advance the goals and projects that arise from this encounter.
7. **Understands a Common Language:** A leader who is able to communicate in one of the principal languages of Charis – English, Spanish or French.

Please note that the seven members of the Planning Committee and the four GBIM Regional Directors will also participate in this event and should not be included in the number of delegates that your country is eligible to send.

## Submission of Delegates

We respectfully request that the names of the delegates be submitted to the Planning Committee no later than February 1, 2008. Please include the following information:

1. Name of Delegate
2. Contact Information (Mailing address, E-mail address and Telephone)
3. Current Ministry
4. Explain how the delegate was selected
5. Preferred language – Spanish, French, English or Other (specify)

## Financial Arrangements

The Planning Committee is praying and working so that many of the costs of this conference will be covered by the gifts of churches and individuals from around the world. This event provides us with the opportunity to put into practice one of the key verses we selected:

*At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. The goal is equality. 2 Corinthians 8:14*

At the same time, it is expected that the churches of each country will make a sincere effort to raise some funds so as to participate in the expenses of this event. We will be contacting each country directly so as to establish the appropriate amount of your contribution.

## Schedule

Many details concerning the schedule will be determined and announced during the coming months. Here are some important details for you to make note of:

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| August 2   | Arrival at Frankfurt Airport and travel to Bad Homburg  |
| August 3   | Participation in 300 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Brethren Movement with other Brethren groups (Schwartzeneau, Germany) |
| August 4   | Day with God  |
| August 5-8 | Conference Sessions   |
| August 9   | Depart from Frankfurt Airport   |

## Additional Information

We are currently working to establish a Charis website where you will be able to access the information you need.

We are also planning to send a Charis Newsletter that can be distributed to all of your churches with the purpose of celebrating the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Brethren Movement and to inform them about the Charis International Leadership Encounter.

Please feel free to contact the Committee Coordinator Dave Guiles [dguiles@gbim.org] or the Conference Host Rainer Ehmann [rtehmnn@t-online.de] if you need more details.