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Pentecostalism

Pentecostalism and related charismatic movements represent one of the fastest-growing segments of global Christianity. At least a quarter of the world's 2 billion Christians are thought to be members of these lively, highly personal faiths, which emphasize such spiritually renewing "gifts of the Holy Spirit" as speaking in tongues, divine healing and prophesying. Even more than other Christians, pentecostals and other renewalists believe that God, acting through the Holy Spirit, continues to play a direct, active role in everyday life.

Pentecostalism, and its related "renewalist" or "spirit-filled" movements, was one of the most influential developments in global Christianity in the 20th century, and it is poised to have an even greater influence in the 21st century. Nowhere is this more evident than in the "global South," where pentecostalism is reshaping the social, political and economic landscape of many countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life has assembled a variety of resources on pentecostalism, including reports, event transcripts and recent news clips.

Pew Forum and Pew Research Center Resources | Major Pentecostal Groups in the U.S. | Other Resources | Recent News

Pew Forum and Pew Research Center Resources

Poll Report: "Spirit and Power: A 10-Nation Survey of Pentecostals"

Despite the rapid growth of the renewalist movement in the last few decades, relatively little is known about the religious, political and civic views of individuals involved in these groups. To address this shortcoming, the Pew Forum recently conducted surveys in 10 countries with sizeable renewalist populations: the United States; Brazil, Chile and Guatemala in Latin America; Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa in Africa; and India, the Philippines and South Korea in Asia.

Event Transcript: "Moved by the Spirit: Pentecostal Power & Politics after 100 Years"

The Pew Forum held an event in April 2006 to examine pentecostalism's impact on global politics and its relevance to U.S. foreign policy concerns. The event, which was co-sponsored by the USC Annenberg Knight Program in Media and Religion and the USC Center for Religion and Civic Culture, featured speakers Anthea Butler of the University of Rochester, Paul Freston of Calvin College, and Donald Miller of the University of Southern California.

Q&A: "The New Face of Global Christianity: The Emergence of Progressive Pentecostalism"

In an April 2006 Pew Forum interview, Donald Miller, Firestone Professor of Religion at the University of Southern California, explained the definition of pentecostalism and the social, economic and political implications of the movement's growth.

Event Transcript: "Christianity and Conflict in Latin America"

In an April 2006 panel discussion sponsored by the Pew Forum, Paul Freston of Calvin College and Virginia Garrard-Burnett of University of Texas - Austin, discussed the political mobilization of Christian movements in Latin America, including recent social and political conflicts between evangelical Protestants and traditional Catholics and implications for U.S. security policy in the region. The panelists also examined case studies in Brazil, Mexico and Guatemala.

Event Transcript: "Faith and Conflict: The Global Rise of Christianity"

The Pew Forum and the Council on Foreign Relations co-hosted a roundtable on changes in global Christianity, including the growth of pentecostalism and evangelical Christianity in Asia and Africa.

Major Pentecostal Groups in the U.S.

(Source: *Yearbook of American & Canadian Churches 2006*, Nashville: Abingdon Press)

Apostolic Faith Church
Assemblies of God
Assemblies of God International Fellowship
The Bible Church of Christ, Inc.
Bible Way Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ World Wide, Inc.
Christian Church of North America, General Council
Church of God (Cleveland, TN)
The Church of God in Christ
Church of God Mountain Assembly, Inc.
Church of God of Prophecy
Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.
Congregational Holiness Church
Elim Fellowship
The Foursquare Church
Full Gospel Fellowship of Churches and Ministers International
International Pentecostal Church of Christ
International Pentecostal Holiness Church
Open Bible Churches
Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Inc.
Pentecostal Church of God
United Holy Church of America, Inc.
United Pentecostal Church International

Other Resources

Azusa Street Centennial Website
Azusa Street Centennial (ReligionLink, 1/30/06)
Asian Journal for Pentecostal Studies
European Pentecostal Charismatic Research Association (EPCRA)
European Research Network on Global Pentecostalism (GloPent)
Hartford Institute for Religion Research
Pentecostal-Charismatic Theological Inquiry International (PCTII)
Religious Movements Homepage Project at the University of Virginia
Into All the World: Black Pentecostalism in Global Contexts, Conference at Harvard Divinity School, March 2005

Recent News

Rapid Growth Can Be a Double-Edge Sword (Salt Lake Tribune, 9/9/06)

Hallelujah! Kenya (Economist, 7/22/06)
Latino Catholics Increasingly Drawn to Pentecostalism (Wash Post, 4/30/06)
Overcome With The Spirit (Toronto Star, 4/29/06)
Not All Charismatics Are Pentecostals (Toronto Star, 4/29/06)
More than 20,000 Celebrate Pentecostalism (RNS, 4/26/06)
Second Chance (Wall St Journal, 4/25/06)
Pentecostalism at 100: A Major Religious Force (CS Monitor, 4/24/06)
The Pentecostal Promise (NY Times, 4/23/06)
Pentecostals Praise God in Many Tongues (LA Times, 4/23/06)
Church Battles to Break Gang Cycle, With a Flock for All (NY Times, 4/16/06)
Weeklong Affair Celebrates 100 Years of Pentecostal Revival (AP, 4/20/06)
Faith Shapes Views at a Church of Immigrants (LA Times, 4/19/06)
Pentecostal Movement Celebrates Humble Roots (Wash Post, 4/15/06)
San Francisco's Quake Still Felt, 100 Years Later (Phil Inquirer, 4/15/06)
Rite of Baptism Trickles Away (USA Today, 4/13/06)
100 Years After Azusa Street, Revival Continues at a Michigan Church (RNS, 4/13/06)
Many Faiths Join Unity Organization (Chicago Tribune, 4/7/06)
Assemblies of God Fastest Growing Faith (Chicago Tribune, 4/7/06)
Proposed Ban on "Tongues" Prayer Divides Baptists (USA Today, 4/5/06)
Pentecostals: The Sequel (Christianity Today, April 2006)
Grading the Movement (Christianity Today, April 2006)
"Latino Giant" Awakens: Demonstrations Gaining Strength (NY Daily News, 3/28/06)
Boom in African Christianity Spills Over to America (AP, 3/27/06)
A Look at the Beliefs and Worship Styles of African Christians (AP, 3/27/06)
African Christians a Growing Dynamic Force (AP, 3/25/06)
Not if, It's When: Waiting for the End, With Trepidation and Joy (NY Times, 3/26/06)
The New Missionaries (AP, 3/23/06)
Hispanic Catholics Celebrate Faith in Harmony (Wash Post, 3/19/06)
Rules Raise Churches' Fears (Miami Herald, 3/11/06)
Puritans or Pornographers? (Economist, 2/25/06)
Christians Mull Ways to Reach Out, Touch More (Chicago Tribune, 2/24/06)
Mainline Christianity Facing New Challenges (Miami Herald, 2/13/06)
Religious, Civic Leaders Push Pentecostal Memorial (AP, 2/6/06)
Pentecostal Memorial Is Poised for a Revival (LA Times, 2/6/06)
The House of the Spirit (LA Times, 1/8/06)
Praise the Lord and Raise the Curtain (NY Times, 12/25/05)
One Faith Fits All -- or Else (LA Times)
Stern Words from the Preacher at the President's Side (NY Times, 9/19/05)
Pentecostals: A Passionate Voice and a Moral Vision (Newsweek, 8/29/05)
In Search of the Spiritual (Newsweek, 8/29/05)
Four Women Become Pentecostal Bishops (Chicago Tribune, 6/30/05)
Where Faith Thrives (NY Times, 3/26/05)
How A Humble Preacher Ignited the Pentecostal Fire (Austin-American Statesman, 2/18/05)
The Fight for God: Traditional Churches Are in Trouble. But Christianity Is Doing Rather Well (Economist, 12/19/02)