



2012 Year in Review

As a missionary returning “home” to visit your supporters, friends, and family, have you ever felt a bit out of touch? Each year, EFCA EQUIP provides this “Year in Review” to help orient you with what happened on the street and in the churches in the U.S. this past year. If you are not a missionary, we invite you to share this with your friends who are. Download this resource (and previous years’ reviews) at www.efca.org/equip/YearReview.

News in the U.S. Church

- Contraceptives, guns, and chicken: *Christianity Today* compiles **end-of-the-year lists**. ⓘ
- **Top ten news stories** from *Christianity Today*. ⓘ The first: “Christian colleges and for-profit businesses sue over the Obama administration’s narrow religious exemption to its insurance requirements for birth control, including emergency contraceptives.”
- Colin Hansen’s biggest theology story was the **rising favorable tide for same-sex marriage**. See his top 10. ⓘ
- **Chuck Colson passed away**. See various obituaries. ⓘ
- **James MacDonald resigns** from the Gospel Coalition. ⓘ
- **John Piper to retire** from Bethlehem Baptist Church and be succeeded by Jason Meyer. ⓘ
- **Olympic gold medalist Gabby Douglas** attended an EFCA church while training. ⓘ

Issues and Trends in the U.S. Church

- The year 2012 in numbers. ⓘ For example, **26% of Americans identify themselves as Evangelical**.
- Six reasons young people are leaving the church. ⓘ One reason is **shallowness on the part of the church**.
- How **Christians voted** for president. ⓘ
- **Mormonism becomes more acceptable**, though almost 1 in 3 Americans don’t know Mitt Romney is one. ⓘ Franklin Graham believes calling Mormonism a cult hinders connecting with Mormons. ⓘ
- The changing shape of **temptation**. ⓘ Millennials are tempted by procrastination, Busters by worry, and Boomers by overeating.

Items related to missions

- **Persecution of Christians** has increased in Africa and decreased in China. ⓘ
- **Missions-related news** is the new focus of a site launched by Fuller School of Intercultural Studies. ⓘ
- The **blog by Dr. Robert Priest** has thought-provoking posts on missiology topics. ⓘ
- **Giving increased** by 5.4% to international missions, 3.2% to domestic missions, and 21% to short-term missions. ⓘ
- A study of the **cost of living** in 2012 compared 72 cities and 58 countries. ⓘ Oslo, Zurich and Tokyo are the most expensive.
- **Wycliffe was challenged** regarding the non-use of familial terms for Jesus. ⓘ ⓘ

Items related to missions (continued)

- **Missio Nexus**, a merger of The Mission Exchange and CrossGlobal, was launched in February, making it the largest Evangelical network in North America. ⓘ
- **The Freedom From Religion Foundation filed a federal lawsuit** challenging the tax-exempt status of churches and “certain other religious organizations.” ⓘ
- Missionary statesman **David Mays passed away.** ⓘ ⓘ
- **Dr. Edwin L. Frizen**, who worked with various missionary organizations, **passed away.** ⓘ

Media

- **Free lectures** on iTunes from three seminaries. ⓘ
- The **top ads** of 2012. ⓘ The most popular was a video calling for the arrest of warlord Joseph Kony of Uganda.
- The **Twitter year in review**, ⓘ including “Four more years,” from Barack Obama, the most re-tweeted tweet of all time.

The U.S. Society in General

- *Time* gives 55 “top 10” lists for 2012. ⓘ
- *USA Today's* review of 2012, including top photos and top words. ⓘ
- **Google's** review of the year, ⓘ including top searches: Whitney Houston, Gangnam Style, and Hurricane Sandy.
- *Good Morning America* (ABC news) summary of the year, including Trayvon Martin's death as the top news story. ⓘ
- **YouTube's** 2012 year in review on what its 800 million viewers are watching. ⓘ
- *The Christian Post's* top 10 political moments, including Obama's re-election as the number one story. ⓘ
- *One News Now's* review of the year, including the Sandy Hook shooting. ⓘ
- The official federal site explaining the new **Affordable Care Act (ACA).** ⓘ Other sites explaining the ACA. ⓘ ⓘ ⓘ ⓘ
- Background on the **mandate for providing contraception and abortion.** ⓘ

Issues and Trends in U.S. Society

- The mindset of **new college freshmen**, including never having used a plane “ticket” and always having lived in cyberspace. ⓘ
- The **top baby names** for 2012 were Sophia and Aiden. See all 100. ⓘ
- The **top automotive trends** included pickup trucks as the two top selling models. ⓘ Alternate fuel cars took 3.3% of the market share. ⓘ
- Twelve **new buzzwords**, including “advertainment,” “phablet,” and “growth hacker.” ⓘ
- The shift to Internet usage caused *The Encyclopedia Britannica* to **discontinue its print version.** ⓘ
- A growing trend is **asset-light living**, using mobile devices to buy goods, order in services, buy groceries, listen to music, watch TV, read books, travel, etc. ⓘ
- **Chick-fil-A** restaurant became a focal point of the definition of marriage debate. ⓘ

- **Consumerism trends** included themed hotels and minimalism. ⓘ
- **Consumerism trends** differed for different age groups. ⓘ
- 2012's **predicted business trends** for 2013 included a growing middle class. ⓘ
- *USA Today* said that "2012 may well have been the **Year of the Cheater.**" ⓘ
- **Restaurant trends** included more locally-produced food, more healthy meals, more kids' meals, and more sustainability. ⓘ
- 10 **health trends** we don't want to see in 2013, including the supplement Raspberry Ketones. ⓘ
- **Fitness trends** included body weight training ⓘ and parkour. ⓘ
- **Fashion trends** included peplum silhouettes. ⓘ
- **Yahoo.com's interest trends**, including Whitney Houston and the 2012 U.S. election. ⓘ
- **Google.com's interest trends**, including top political gaffes (Big Bird) and top stocks (Facebook). ⓘ

Technology

- The **top technology stories** of the year from *The Washington Post*, including Windows 8. ⓘ
- CES 2013 displayed the **best in new consumer electronics**, including Microsoft's gaming tablet "Razer Edge", and the "YotaPhone," a half e-reader and half smartphone device. ⓘ
- **Tablet computers** gained ground in the classroom. ⓘ
- **3D printing** was affordable to individuals. ⓘ
- *USA Today's* **top apps for smartphones and tablets**, including *Songza* (music-streaming service with custom playlists) and *Pocket* (which allows users to easily save content they like). ⓘ
- Engadget.com picked the **iPhone 5 as the best**, top-of-the-line phone. ⓘ

Home Assignment

Cool websites

- **50 best websites** according to *Time*, including LastPass.com and imo.im. ⓘ
- *The Christian Post's* **10 social networking sites** every Christian should know about, including MyPraise.com and MyFaith.com. ⓘ
- AppAdvice.com lists its **favorite apps for Christians**, from Bibles, to devotional apps. ⓘ
- **Top 10 Christian parenting sites** from Ministry-to-Children.com. ⓘ

Travel

- New ITA Software, by Google, provides new **travel technology**, ⓘ including an option for multi-city itineraries. ⓘ
- Best Travel Store is an online travel agency that uses **advanced airfare search technology** to provide the lowest airfare not available through other mainstream reservation systems. ⓘ
- The **top five airfare search engines** among the most well-established and respected, including Kayak.com. ⓘ

Education

- Find out what **text/chat acronyms** stand for. ⓘ
- View a collection of **homeschool tips**. ⓘ
- View links to **homeschool resources, reviews, and curriculum**. ⓘ

Pop Culture

- *Wired's* **sample of pop culture** in 2012. ⓘ
- The Internet Movie Data Base's 2012 review lists, including **top grossing movies** (*The Avengers*). ⓘ
- *Christianity Today's* **review of the top three grossing movies**: *The Avengers*, ⓘ *The Dark Knight Rises*, ⓘ and *The Hunger Games*. ⓘ
- *Avengers* and *Hunger Games* were the **top DVD rentals**. ⓘ
- **Top music lists**, including top album (*21*, by Adele) and top song (*Somebody that I used to Know*, by Gotye feat. Kimra). ⓘ
- *Billboard's* selection of **music celebrity pictures**. ⓘ
- Amazon.com's **best sellers in books**, including controversial *Fifty Shades of Gray*, by E. L. James. ⓘ
- The *Huffington Post's* **year in review**, including top crime stories and top moments for women. ⓘ
- YouTube.com's year in review, including the **most-viewed video of the year and of all time**, *Gangnam Style*, by PSY. ⓘ

Your Review

What would *your* review of 2012 look like? What stories were memorable to you? What trends did you follow? What would you have included that we missed? Contact us at equip@efca.org and tell us!

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