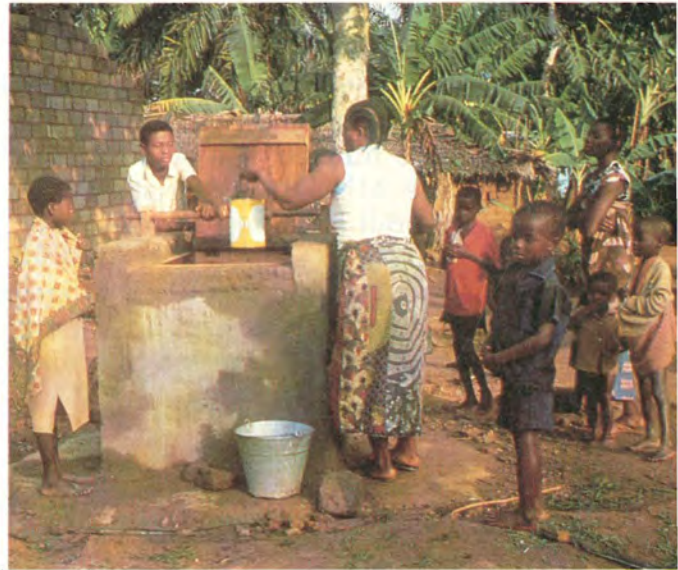
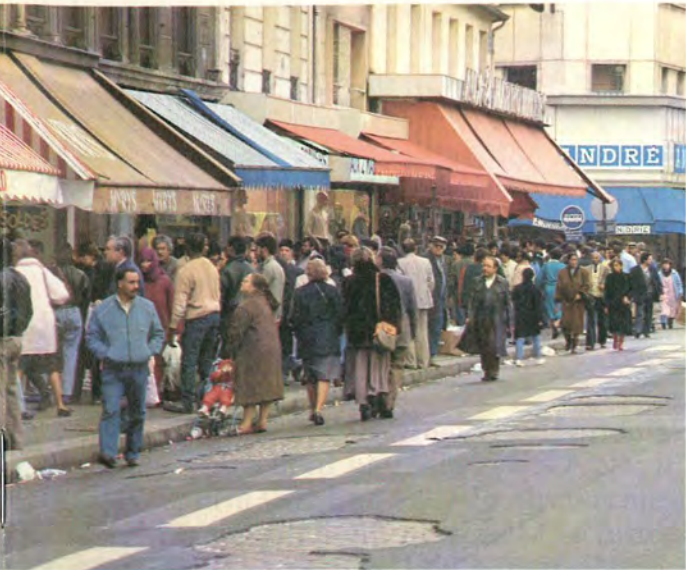


MISSION IN CHRIST'S WAY



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MISSIONARY



HERALD

Annual
Report
Edition
May 1989

MISSION IN CHRIST'S WAY

Mission begins with God. How else do we understand the record in the scriptures of his loving action within and for his world? Yet, 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself' – a claim substantiated by scripture and experience. Why then, the title 'Mission in Christ's Way', as if there is something different about this from the overall mission of God?

There is no intention at all of making such a claim. At this period of history it is more than ever appropriate to assert the ministry and mission of a God whose nature is seen as Father, Son and Spirit.

On the other hand, this year sees the bringing together of two highly significant conferences on mission within the contemporary world. One is planned by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelisation in the middle of 1989 and will bring together thousands of delegates from around the world to Manila, in the Philippines, in July. The other is being called by the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches to meet in San Antonio, Texas in May and to take as its theme 'Mission in Christ's Way'.

It seems appropriate to present our Annual Report, mindful of the questions being posed to the world church by these planned conferences. It is good to ask if, over the year, the Society and its overseas partners have truly been involved in mission that is 'In Christ's Way'.

More needs to be said, though. While recognising the oneness of our God, it is possible to identify aspects of His outreaching love that are seen uniquely in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ. The Incarnation itself asks specific questions of our attitude and activity in mission.

Scripture confirms, 'The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.' Our Lord had a real physical presence in the place of humankind's need and despair. Are we in such places? By the mission activity in which we share, do men and women at the point of greatest need feel that God, through his people, is standing alongside them, sharing in their suffering and pointing to a way of hope and of fresh beginning?

Jesus came to this world 'Proclaiming the good news of God.' This is seen from the beginning of His public ministry. He was both messenger and example of good news. Has the preaching of the Gospel and the living of the Gospel remained at the heart of the Society's activity in the last year? Can we still claim not to have lost the cutting edge of the Gospel?

It was said of our Lord that he was 'moved with compassion' when he saw the crowds. Not for him an ephemeral or shallow pity! Is it true for the Society's servants and partners that we are motivated by a strong heart-stirring, life-changing love that constantly moves us to ministry in the cause of our fellows?

When Jesus came preaching the good news he said, 'The Kingdom of God is near,' and claimed that, 'The Kingdom is among you.' Can we see the presence of the Kingdom of our great, loving God in the lives of the churches that we partner and the missionaries who go in our name? Are Kingdom values and priorities, love and obedience made manifest wherever we share in the tasks?

The questions posed this year are worthy of careful examination. We believe that you will find some of the answers in the pages that follow. We believe that our God is continuing to challenge us with these questions in the months and years that lie ahead.

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MAY 1989



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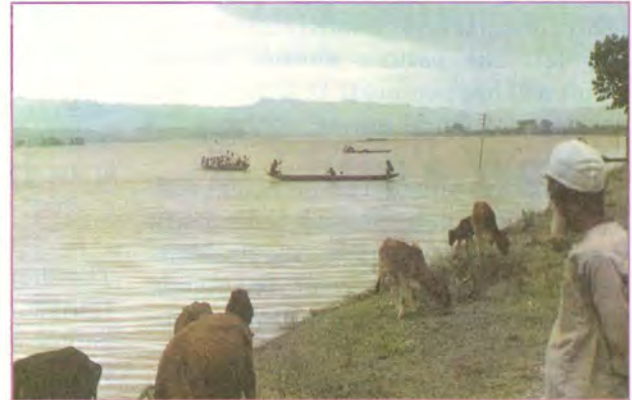
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MISSIONARY HERALD

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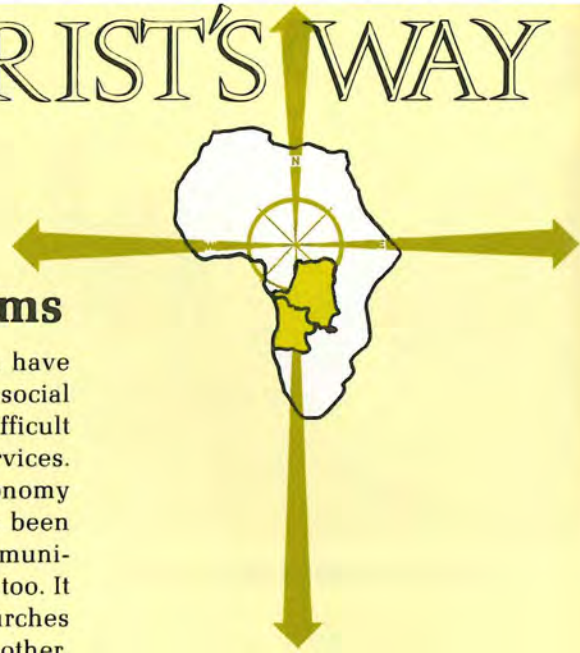
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MISSION IN CHRIST'S WAY

AFRICA



Droughts, starvation and civil wars; different groups and parties striving together; pressures being put on people, for various reasons and motives, by outside powers; these are major issues in Africa today.

Economic problems

The political problems of Angola have brought severe economic and social pressures. It has been extremely difficult to obtain goods and provide services. With 80% of the country's economy given to the war effort, there has been little left for other purposes. Communications have been badly affected too. It has been difficult for the IEBA churches to maintain contact with each other. People travel through dangerous areas putting their trust in God.

ANGOLA

In Angola we look forward to the withdrawal of both the South Africans and the Cubans, following the signing of a ceasefire, and wait to see how this is going to affect the country as a whole.

Recent news is that UNITA, a political force which opposes the Angolan government, is moving its base from the south to Quimbele, an area where the IEBA (Evangelical Baptist Church in Angola), our partner church, works. What will happen next? Will there be a sharing of political power?

The BMS has a limited involvement with IEBA in terms of personnel. Colin Pavitt is our only missionary in Angola. He is getting married this year to Marcia Chaves, a Brazilian Baptist who has been working in Angola.

At the very least, Colin's presence is a sign of encouragement and partnership between British Baptists and IEBA. This helps them in their stand with the government, as they show that they are a church with a history and also a church with worldwide links through the BMS and the Baptist World Alliance.

Nevertheless, IEBA is considering expanding its activities into three new areas, Cabinda, Benguela and Lunda Norte, as well as continuing with the development of a major church centre in Luanda the capital, and the construction of a new church building for the down town Combattentes parish.

Importance of Education

The church recognises the importance of Christian education. Children, young people and young adults are a majority within the church and they need a basis of faith which will relate to their own circumstances. The current situation has made it impossible to continue to run the IEBA Bible School at Kibokolo, but this continues with 19 students in Luanda.

Colin Pavitt and Marcia Chaves



Street market in Kinshasa

ZAIRE

Zaire has been facing harsh economic problems. The cost of living has been rising rapidly and causing real hardship in Kinshasa as well as in other centres. There have been some distinct rumblings of discontent among the people.

Because of the geographical extent of the CBFZ (Baptist Community of the River Zaire) and the economic problems of the country, communications are very difficult. The public transport service up and down the river by boat has not been too good, and the air services vary and are expensive. However, the radio network is good and working well.

Angela Hinchliffe using radio-phone at Yakusu





Weekly Leaders' meeting at Lisala

Consultation

The BMS and the CBFZ are preparing for a consultation which will discuss how, together, we can fulfil God's mission of love in Zaire. One of the items on the agenda will be a study of the place which missionaries have within the life and work of the church. Another will look at the pastoral care of missionaries. Some interesting thoughts are coming through about the African concept of pastoral care.

Ferment

On the religious scene in Zaire, there is a ferment of ideas and a mushrooming of a variety of groups. This includes those who lay great stress on healing or spiritual renewal or gifts of the Spirit.

The church is tempted to resist change. Yet some of the younger pastors and members are asking questions, 'Is God saying something to us in this? Do we need to adapt our practices?'

The work of the CBFZ is still expanding and there is a need for leaders and pastors. What were pioneer areas for evangelism are now becoming established and the church has been planted. Pastors are needed to feed the flock and to help the church develop its work and witness.

The institutional work of the church in schools and hospitals can be a point of tension. Ideally, the church recognises educational and medical work as part of its holistic ministry to everyone regardless of background or church affiliation. But sometimes there is a tendency to

think of, for example, medical work as for the church and for church members.

However, the government, by dividing the country into health zones, makes the point that the doctor in charge of the health zone is responsible for all the population without distinction. So the chief hospital in a zone, which is often a CBFZ hospital, is responsible for caring for *all* the people.

There is not the same problem with education. But it is very difficult to keep these institutions running. The government used to make a financial contribution, but this has diminished and is sometimes non-existent. This puts a greater burden on the church.

Zaire's economic problems are making the church think hard about the cost of doing things. They are tightening up their financial administration and trying to get things worked out efficiently and honestly. In one or two places they are embarking on self-financing projects.

Signs of hope

There are some encouraging signs. A Bible camp was held at Bolobo in December, led by the CBFZ evangelist, Pastor Mudi, and four others. Christian education is being pursued in many areas, like Kisangani and Mushie. The church continues in worship and witness. We do not always see it but, when the church faces times of crisis, the depth of faith and breadth of understanding of the leaders is realised.

BMS participation

The CBFZ is asking for help in particular



Margot Bapende and students at Mbanza Ngungu

ways. We contribute technical skills which are not yet fully available in Zaire. There are more Zairian teachers, but BMS is being asked to contribute special expertise in areas like science or financial administration.

In some cases, we ask, 'Are they really required? Isn't there someone else who can do that work? Are we keeping somebody out of a job by sending a missionary in?' So our contribution needs to be appropriate to help the growth of the church and to train African personnel.

In Christ's Way

The African church can teach us much. There is a spirit of sacrifice — their hospitality and their giving to people out of their own poverty is very humbling.

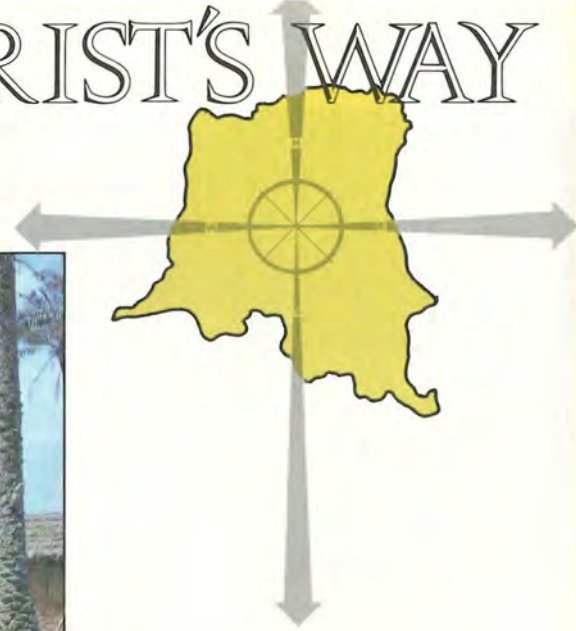
They are determined to be faithful to Christ in very difficult circumstances. The church leaders and most of the church members have a trust in God which is deeply embedded. It affects the whole of their life.

They also speak to us out of their African world view. The 'supernatural' is very close to them, sometimes in bad ways in the fear of the spirit world, but also in a deep trust in God.

Ian Thomas and Pastor Nzela at Bolobo



MISSION IN CHRIST'S WAY ZAIRE



Zairian village

Christians in Zaire face many pressures as they strive to be disciples against a background of increasing materialism, corruption and dishonesty. Another aspect of life in Africa lies in an awareness of the supernatural which can seem quite alien to British minds. Witchcraft and the fear of evil exercise a powerful hold on many hearts in the cities and villages. An unusual and dramatic event in a remote rural setting puts this into focus.

A sudden cry. No other noise in the still night. The air had cooled in the small, dark, mud hut in which we were staying.

What was it? An animal crying? It was true that we were in an area of primary forest and animals could still be found.

Even before light there was the bustle of women preparing for the day. The fire was lit; buckets of hot water were

prepared for washing; tea was brewed in a large cooking pot on the fire, especially prepared for us as visitors. We had been invited as missionaries to visit this new and active church set in a plantation across the river from Yakusu.

'What was the noise in the night?' we asked.

'Probably a wild animal,' came the reply. 'Perhaps a leopard.'

It was very unusual to think of leopards so near a village. Putting it out of our minds we started to prepare for the task in hand, a weekend of Bible and Sunday School teaching.

'Down to the beach!' The cry went round the village. Slowly everyone walked down to the river side.

'What's the matter?' we said.

Ritual dance

'We don't know,' replied the senior deacon, 'but we'll be back soon to start the meeting.'

Time went by and we became anxious. What was happening down by the beach?

We never did start the meeting that day but our eyes were opened in a new way to the pressures and temptations that Zairian Christians have to face. As Europeans, we will probably never fully understand.

The cry in the night was the witch doctor arriving with his team. He had been summoned by the village elders some weeks before to find out why so many people were dying 'mysteriously'.

At the beach, eleven men and one woman were pulled out from the 200 people present. Slowly, one by one, they were put into a hole in the ground, waist deep, and judged before the witch doctor. Three Christians were among those judged.





At the river's edge



Villagers

The drums played and the atmosphere was tense as the witch doctor danced around dressed in his leopard skins – quite a change from the 'western' suit he had worn on his arrival. Fear gripped those present.

'You are dirty,' said the witch doctor to one Christian, 'and I need to cleanse you.'

'Rubbish,' replied the Christian, 'I have been washed by the blood of Christ and I don't need you to cleanse me.'

'Drink this water and prove your innocence,' came the challenge as the witch doctor pulled out a bottle of liquid. The Christian drank it saying that he was not frightened of his medicine.

'Get out of the hole!' said the witch doctor, clearly annoyed that this Christian was not intimidated by his judgement and words. 'I will deal with you later.'

The Christian got out of the hole and came to the hut to tell us what had happened. We listened in amazement and prayed with him.

So the day progressed down at the beach for the Zairians. We spent the day in prayer in the mud hut, knowing that it was no accident that the witch doctor had arrived on this particular weekend.

The evening came and people drifted up from the beach, scared and bewildered. The Christians, however, remained firm.

Later, they took us down to the beach, the scene of the judgement.

We were shocked to see a dead man on the ground.

'How did he die?' we asked.

We were told that he was one of the twelve who had drunk the water. Was he cursed or poisoned or did he die of fright? We will never know.

As we gathered around the fire that evening in the open air we had a powerful prayer meeting.

The Church was packed the next day.



The way to the beach

With the senior Church leaders we were able to visit the dead man's family and offer support and help when others were frightened to go near. He was buried later on that day in the village.

This is by no means the whole story of 'Mission in Christ's Way' in Zaire. Yet

this background of long felt and deeply rooted fears is a part of everyday life. Thank God that there are men and women who are willing to stand up to the power of evil through the power of the Holy Spirit, and in the name of Jesus Christ.

BMS Personnel serving in Africa

May 1988 – May 1989

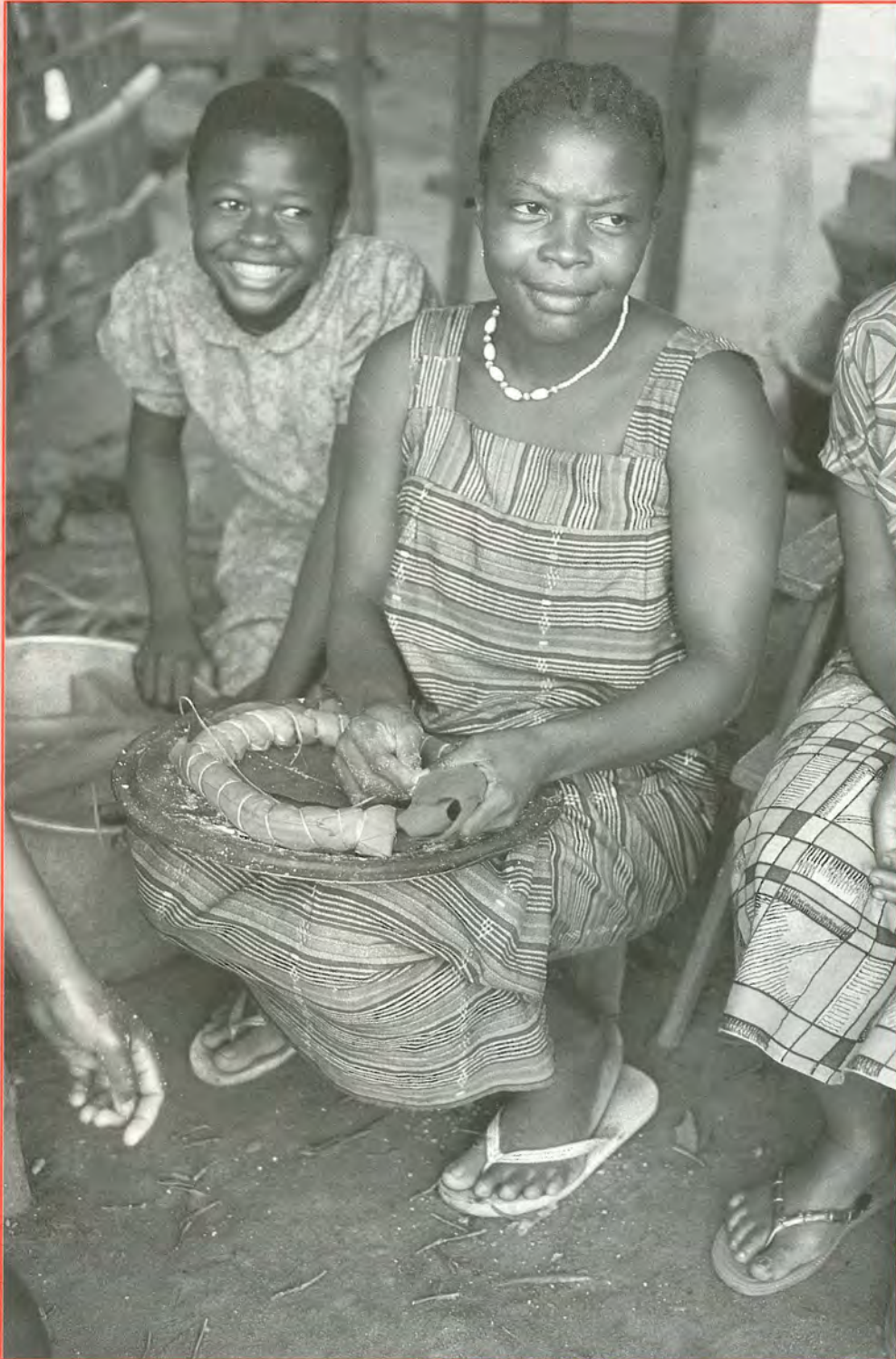
ANGOLA

Colin Pavitt, Luanda

ZAIRE

Wilma Aitchison, Ntongo (on furlough)
 Margot Bafende, Mbanza Ngungu
 Elizabeth Baker, Bolobo
 Alan and Janice Brown, Kinshasa
 Pam Bryan, Yakusu
 Barbara and Tim Bulkeley, Kinshasa
 Carol and Lyn Bulkeley, Yakusu (on furlough)
 Christopher and Mairi Burnett, Yakusu
 Dannie and Margaret Calder, Mbanza Ngungu
 Susan Chalmers, Yakusu
 David Champion, Kinshasa
 Deanna and Owen Clark, Kinshasa
 Jackie and Michael Cranefield, Kimpese (on furlough)
 John and Ruth Davis, Yakusu
 Alison Dutton, Upoto
 Brenda Earl, Pimu (on furlough)
 Rosemary Giboney, Bolobo (on furlough)
 Carolyn and Steve Green, Kimpese
 Maggie Hester, Pimu
 Angela and Timothy Hinchcliffe, Yakusu
 Adrian and Sylvia Hopkins, Pimu (leave of absence)
 Annie Horsfall, Kisangani
 Richard and Sue Hoskins, Bolobo
 Simon Houghton (leave of absence)
 Gwen Hunter, Kimpese (on furlough)
 Allison Isaacs, Upoto (leave of absence)
 Freda and Hugh Kennedy, Kimpese
 Carol and Michael King, Ngombe Lutete
 Isabel and Steve Mantle (leave of absence)
 David and Irene Masters, Bolobo (leave of absence)
 Ann and Gordon McBain, Kinshasa
 John and Rena Mellor, Mushie
 Ruth Montacute, Kinshasa
 Eunice Murray, Kinshasa
 Andrew and Anne North (leave of absence)
 Bernie Olding, Kinshasa (leave of absence)
 Christopher and Lynette Outram, Upoto
 Mary Philpott, Kisangani
 Pan and Steve Seymour, Ntongo
 Elisabeth and Richard Smith, Bolobo (on furlough)
 Christine and Christopher Spencer, Mbanza Ngungu
 Edna Staple, Kimpese (on furlough, special assignment)
 Ian and Pauline Thomas, Bolobo
 Roz Williams, Yakusu (on furlough)
 Alan and Ruth Wood, Kimpese
 Pat Woolhouse, Kimpese

PASTORAL CARE OF MISSIONARIES



Preparing kwanga (manioc); sharing a meal is a vital part of African hospitality

practical ways like reminders to use a hot iron on babies' nappies, even though they dry so quickly in the hot sun, so as to kill any mango worms. Missionaries are glad, too, to share feelings when post from home is delayed or lost, or when the four-hour Sunday services in a language they have not grasped seem interminable and incomprehensible.

Longer serving missionaries will value the opportunity to reflect with someone from their own culture on differing emphases in professional life or on differing priorities and values, as well as rejoicing in all that they receive from the people with whom they live.

These are not new ideas. Those who pray regularly for missionaries are well aware of them. What does seem to be new in Zaire is the relatively rapid turnover of missionaries, so that new missionaries arriving in the country do not necessarily find the guidance and experience of 'senior' colleagues available to them as used to be the case in the past. The causes of this turnover vary from having worked oneself out of a job and handed over to a trained Zairian, to family responsibilities for children or parents, to relationship problems or to differing expectations over the role a missionary is expected to fulfil. This whole area is currently under scrutiny by the BMS and the Baptist Community of the River Zaire (CBFZ).

What help then is being given to missionaries to enable them to feel supported as they fulfil their calling in partnership with the church in Zaire?

Owen Clark and Pastor Mondengo,
Regional President, Equateur du Nord



The pastoral care of missionaries is an important part of BMS life and work. This report looks particularly at pastoral care for those personnel who work in Zaire.

Missionaries leaving to work in another country experience a culture shock, however thorough the period of prepara-

tion has been. Some things, like climate, language and food are adjusted to relatively quickly but other things, like developing a true understanding of the customs, family patterns and thought forms, seem to take a life-time.

New missionaries are glad of help in



Chris Spencer in CBFZ Secretariat Office

The help is two-fold. There is help given by the CBFZ and also by the BMS. The Convention guiding our partnership in Zaire states that pastoral care of missionaries is the responsibility of the African church and, in times of crisis, this is seen to work exceptionally well. At other times, though, for on-going pastoral care, the system of local support groups (Comité des Sages), envisaged by the church, has not worked.

In on-going discussions on this whole subject, there is a growing awareness of the differing conception of pastoral care as understood by Africans and by Europeans. This cultural difference, basically between a community approach and an individual approach, may be one of the causes of the current tension as well as allowing for the fact that individual personalities and relationships, whether African or European, also affect the caring that can be sought or offered. Differences, however, can be overcome and missionaries are encouraged to look to the local church as well as to the BMS for care and support.

Alison Dutton teaching science at Upoto Secondary School



Pastor Koli, President, CBFZ

◀ Tim Hinchliffe with Zairian workmen, Yakusu

The role of the BMS in providing pastoral care covers several areas. There is support given to candidates in the UK before their departure overseas. Similarly, support is given to missionaries on furlough and at the end of service. This covers official and personal links by headquarters' staff, area representatives, link churches and organized retreats. For those overseas, there are annual retreats, a bi-annual visit of the Assistant Overseas Secretary who visits each missionary once a year or, for some, twice a year, as well as relating to church leaders and attending church annual assemblies. 1989 sees the first of a specifically pastoral visit at a separate time from the retreat by an experienced pastor from the UK. There is also provision of cassettes of the Baptist Assembly and of the BMS Retreat addresses sent to each missionary group.

The whole subject of pastoral care is under continual review both here in Britain and within Zaire and we continue to seek to learn from and share with one another.

MISSION IN CHRIST'S WAY BRAZIL, THE CARIBBEAN AND CENTRAL AMERICA



Our newly begun commitment in El Salvador is an important feature of BMS work in Latin America and the Caribbean over the past year.

Central America and the Caribbean have suffered greatly from natural disasters – hurricanes and floods – and we have been able to give help at this time of need.

In Brazil, there is a new commitment to rural development work in the north east.



Market scene in El Salvador

EL SALVADOR

The political situation has been very fraught as different groups tried to assert themselves in time for elections.

Some of the churches are involved in justice and peace movements and, as a result, there is government pressure on them. In fact, the government is often seen as encouraging fundamentalist religious groups because they see them as having a nullifying effect on the justice and social action ministries of other churches.

The Baptist Association is fairly conservative in its attitudes. The church as a whole has a tradition of being active in caring for the needs of people without losing the emphasis on evangelism.

It is very encouraging to hear about the churches that are being planted. David Mee has been asked to engage in a ministry with a strong emphasis on bringing the wholeness of Christ to the community.

JAMAICA AND TRINIDAD

The main pressures have obviously been economic, especially in Jamaica following the devastation of Hurricane Gilbert and in Trinidad as the 'boom-time' days of oil wealth pass into times of increasing national debt.



Grain for sale in Brazil

BRAZIL

Rampant inflation, up to 100%, is one of the main problems. It causes political unrest and puts pressure on the whole of society. It makes it difficult for the church to pay its pastors and, particularly, the work of overseas mission which has to be paid for in dollars.

Brazil has changed from being autocratic and right wing, to a democratic society with a lot of left wing influence.

In this general setting one of the most significant things that is happening is the way Brazilian Baptists are seeing the need to put the gospel into practice through social concern.

The churches do not wish to lose their church planting evangelistic thrust, but are seeing the need for a more holistic approach. What comes out of that could be quite exciting. As some of the younger men begin this kind of work, it will be interesting to see if they can hold the two emphases together.

BMS participation

In the Caribbean, this is primarily in training. The missionaries that we have in Jamaica, and the couple shortly going to Trinidad, are engaged in training.

In Brazil, if you look at any one area where BMS missionaries work, theological education is to the fore.

BMS missionaries also exercise a 'prophetic' ministry, not from the pulpit but through their lifestyle. They are prepared to go into areas where, sometimes, Brazilians themselves are reluctant to work.

In doing this, they are saying something about priorities. If missionaries always go to key positions, nationals will think, 'Ah, they're the important jobs. They're the jobs we want.' But, if a missionary comes along to do church planting in the interior, the younger people will think, 'He's come all this way and he's willing to do that. It must be important!'

In the north east of Brazil they said, 'Oh, we must have some of your missionaries here. We need them to go into the interior.' But it is not just a matter of where you live, it is the vision you have for the work that is influential.

David Mee is in this category of prophetic ministry. He has gone to El Salvador, into a tense and difficult situation, to share the life of the people as a Christian minister.

A few years ago, our missionaries in Brazil were putting more emphasis on 'holistic ministries' than the majority of Brazilians. Now our missionaries are being asked to expand that ministry as well as that of church planting and evangelism.



Roy Dellor and seminary students, Porto Alegre

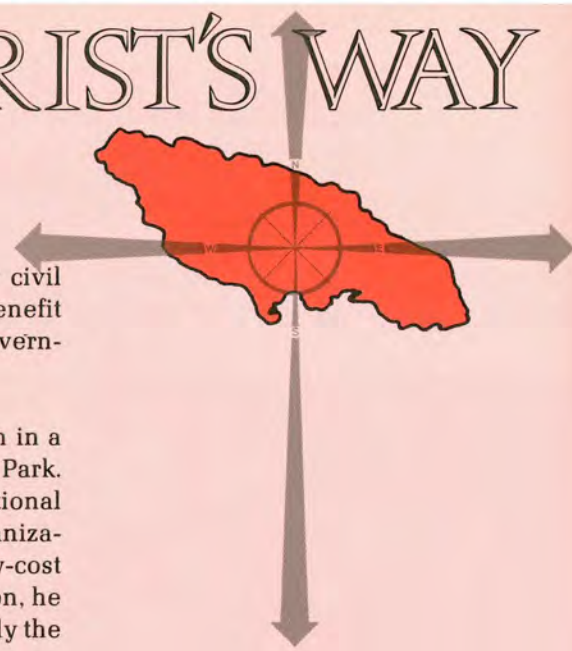
Margaret Swires and children, Campo Grande



In Christ's way

This is expressed in long-term commitment. Some of our missionaries have worked in Brazil for more than 20 years, and Avelino and Ana Ferreira have served in Angola and then Brazil for a total of 40 years. Others have adapted so fully into Brazilian life that they are planning to retire there. This identification and commitment is certainly Christ's way.

MISSION IN CHRIST'S WAY JAMAICA



Jamaica is an island 90 miles south of Cuba and 1,000 miles north of Trinidad and Tobago. Today, the peoples of modern Jamaica are a mixture of the social, cultural and political influences of five centuries.

The story of the church's fight against slavery in Jamaica is one of the bright pages in British missionary history. The names of William Knibb, Thomas Burchell and James Mussell Phillippo are still remembered with awe and gratitude. It is this involvement of church in the life of the society which has laid the foundation for the Baptist church in Jamaica today.



Senator Hazel Monteith preparing flowers for morning service

Senator Hazel Monteith is a member of the East Queen Street congregation and a member of the Upper House of Parliament. Her parents were devout Baptists in the church where Knibb first made his stand against slavery. She is a member of the choir and has dedicated her talent to the church.

She also hosts a radio talk-show three times a week and is the executive secretary of the Citizens Advice Bureau. Her mission is to ensure that individuals

are given information about their civil rights and also how they might benefit from the social services of the government.

Ronald Daley supervises a mission in a poor housing estate called Delacre Park. He is a security officer with the National Housing Trust – a government organization responsible for financing low-cost housing. A man of limited education, he has taught himself by reading widely the sermons of Spurgeon and the commentaries of William Barclay. At his work place he organizes lunch-hour services and hands out tracts. At Delacre Park he preaches most Sundays and leads the prayer meetings on Wednesdays. His pastor, Dr Horace Russell, has set up a reading project for him in order to help him to minister more effectively.

Anthony Allen is a psychiatrist who had a vision that God was calling him to find a way to express medicine and faith in a new way. A Baptist minister's son, he was a qualified doctor at the age of 22. He later studied theology at Yale Divinity School and subsequently psychiatry in

Edinburgh. As a member of the WCC Medical Commission, he has attempted to share on a worldwide basis the mission which the national Jamaican church has accepted. Beginning at Bethel Baptist Church, a new approach to healing has been initiated in which doctors and nurses not only dispense drugs but lay on hands and anoint the ill. This pattern has been accepted by all churches in Jamaica from Catholic to Pentecostal, and clinics have sprung up in many places. All the work is voluntary.

The basic aim is to make health care available to all as a human right. The church believes that this is the gospel, since the New Testament word for salvation is the same as that for health.

Keith Riglin, a BMS missionary, is part of the staff at the United Theological College and, with colleagues, is responsible for the training of the eight Baptist candidates and the 92 from other churches, including the Roman Catholics.

Education has always been the primary expression of Baptist witness in Jamaica. The popular education system laid down by missionaries of the 19th century forms the basis of the current model. Baptist ministers still manage primary and secondary schools and are influential in the planning of education. However, there is a dearth of science and business teachers.

The disciples of Jesus were drawn from a wide cross-section of society. So it is with the disciples in Jamaica. Space does not allow a description of the witness of



Ronald Daley preaching at East Queen Street Baptist Church



Calabar Village School ▲



East Queen Street Dental Clinic

attorneys who give free time to the poor, the ill-used and abused; nor the street vendors who pass out tracts of Bible verses with their wares; nor bus and taxi operators who play last Sunday's sermons and choir pieces in their cabs; nor the editor of the daily paper with the widest circulation who is a Baptist pastor; nor the script writers, talk-show hosts and radio counsellors who are committed to the faith and Baptists; nor the musicians who are using popular music to sing the gospel, and also the musicians who are determined to clean up the lyrics and to express the faith with the sounds of today.

While the church in Jamaica is still being listened to and its personnel respected, there is an undercurrent from those who are jealous of its popular appeal and political power. So these are times of great opportunity but also of grave danger. Please pray for Jamaica.

MISSION IN CHRIST'S WAY BRAZIL



Site for new Baptist church in Realeza, Paraná

On the day of the move, we suddenly learned that the back half of another wooden house had just become vacant. The family living there had had a fight during the night and all left instantly, departing in different directions. Brazilians can be impulsive people. The house was situated right next door to the plot of land where we were going to build our church. It was owned by an absentee landlord who was working in São Paulo, but his aged mother was living in the front half of the house. Everything was arranged that same day. Someone from the church would subsidise the rent and Cerineu and Lurdes would live there until they could obtain a council house.

Cerineu and Lurdes are in their early thirties. Cerineu 'stole' Lurdes from her family when she was under-age, and ran off with her. When we met them they had four children and Lurdes was expecting a fifth. The older children had started coming to our church services and, through them, we met the parents. The family was living, rent-free, in half of an old wooden house which belonged to the children's grandparents who lived in the other half of the house. They were all very poor and often hungry.

live in a basement under another wooden house. It had no windows, no water, no toilet, no electricity, no room for divisions, and only bare earth for a floor. The day before they were due to move, Lurdes, in a state of depression, spent several hours trying to clean out all the rubbish from the basement. The stench was terrible.

The church's social action committee also decided that we ought to help Lurdes in another way, by paying for her

Cerineu was unable to read or write. He was a bricklayer/labourer but could seldom find work. Whenever he had money he was inclined to gamble it away on lotteries and cock-fighting. He suffered from severe asthmatic attacks, possibly, in his case, of nervous origin brought on by the realisation that he couldn't cope with the life that he had made for himself.

One day without consulting anyone, the grandfather decided to sell his house. This was a disaster for Cerineu and Lurdes. With four children, problems of health, and no money to rent a house, what were they to do?

They decided that they would have to

Church noticeboard, Realeza





Hospital at Realeza

to have a sterilization operation. Her baby was born – a lovely boy – and the surgery was performed.

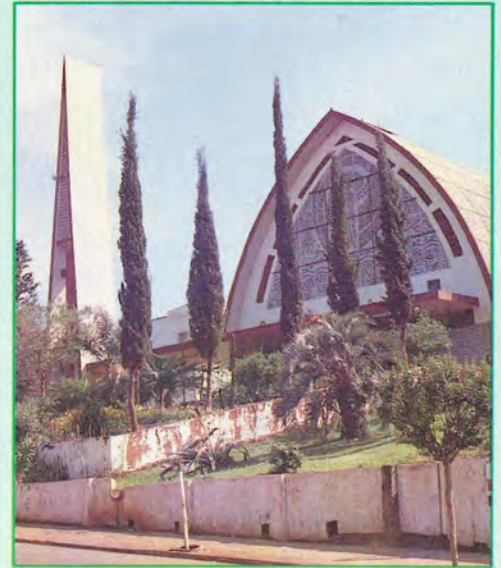
During a pastoral visit one day, Lurdes casually mentioned that the owner of the house was wanting to sell it but that no-one wanted it because his price was too high. Our ears immediately pricked up and we encouraged the church to think about buying it. The price did not seem particularly excessive. Now the church has two adjacent plots of land, plus a ready-made house which, after renovation, could well serve as a home for a future pastor.

Some weeks later, Lurdes professed conversion. She was baptized in November. In October, we had been able to start constructing our church building. It shouldn't be difficult to guess whom we are employing to build it – Cerineu. He, too, has now professed conversion and is anxious to build our open-air

baptistry so that he can be the first person to use it! The change in Lurdes and Cerineu has seemed quite striking – in their attitudes, in their behaviour, and even in their faces. Cerineu's asthma has diminished, and we pray that, as he grows into the love and security of God, it will disappear completely.

We'd like to make two reflections on this story. The first is obvious – that here we have an example of how God works all things together for good for those who love Him. The second is more problematical. How can we be sure that we are not creating 'rice Christians'? How can we know that Cerineu and Lurdes are genuine? Isn't it possible that they have simply realised that they are on to a good thing and so they are determined to take full advantage of it? For us, the answer is that we can't be sure and that we don't know, but that, ultimately, that doesn't matter because God knows. We cannot refuse to obey Him on the grounds that

Catholic church at Dois Vinhos



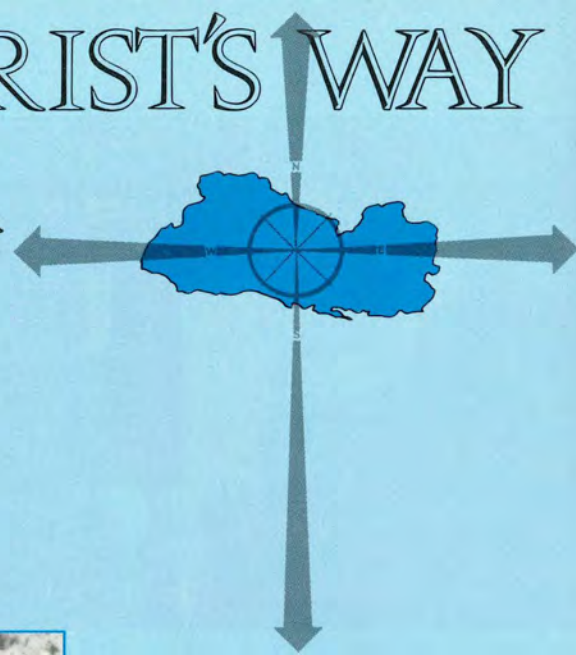
we might cause somebody to make a pretended response from the wrong motives. Since Jesus commanded us to put love into practice, we have to trust Him to sort out the results of our obedience.

Baptist church at Dois Vinhos

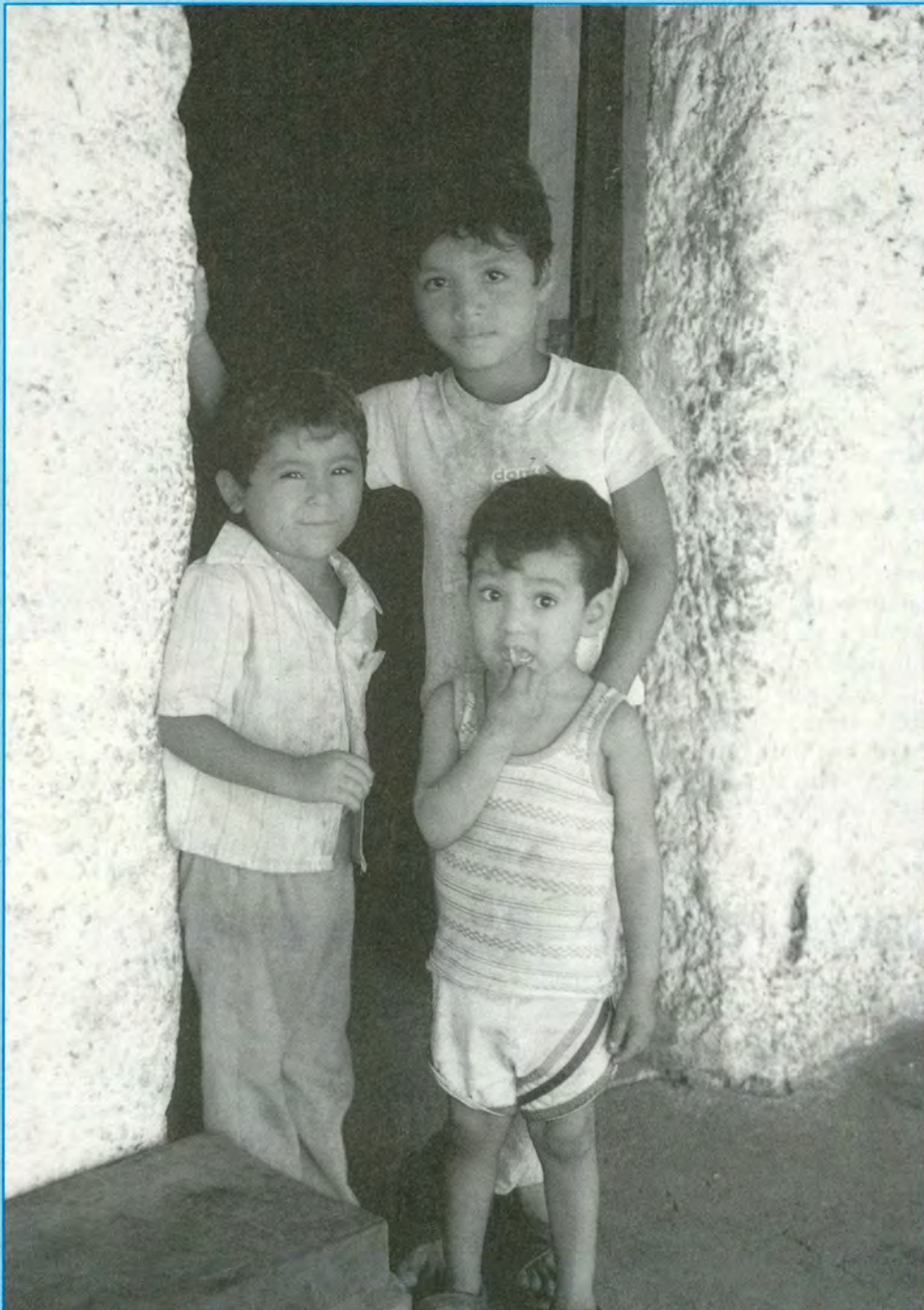


MISSION IN CHRIST'S WAY

EL SALVADOR



Christmas day, but the familiar signs seemed strangely out of place. Artificial snow almost melting in the heat, while Bing Crosby sang of his (impossible!) dreams for a white season. Busy streets and a noisy market-place were perhaps more true to the 'first Christmas' for now, as then, few of the poor can afford to stop work just to celebrate a birth, even this one.



Children of El Salvador

Back to the church, having left them only a couple of sleepy hours earlier, after an all-night vigil of prayers, hymns and sermons – a vigil all but drowned out by the constant thunder of fireworks, spattered with occasional drunken machine-gun fire. In the back of the small house where the church meets, women were washing clothes despite losing their night's sleep. A few Christmas cards on the table with messages of support from British churches was a small sign that concern for people in crisis in El Salvador did not end in sending a missionary to make a home with them but was one step in a continuing journey deeper into a solidarity which puts resources – spiritual, moral and material – at the disposal of people trying to give breathing space to signs of the Kingdom.

In the house, cleaned and freshened after the last blariness of the vigil, the expectancy of the congregation did its best to give a feel of newness to the day. About thirty people belonging to the same community, displaced a few years ago by the attacks of the US-backed Salvadoran Air Force, had gone back to their temporary homes, once day broke and took away their fear of the hour-long journey. Seven adults and two, sometimes three, children sat in the circle and greeted us with the news that three people had been killed in the streets nearby during the night – one by machete and two by gunshots.

During the vigil we had talked about Jesus' birth amongst the poor and how, later, He made the poor the base for His mission. Now the story moved to the 'wise men' and Herod's request for information on the baby's whereabouts so that he, too, could go and worship.



El Salvadoran family



Portrait of Archbishop Oscar Romero

'Any comments?' 'He lied!' Some of the group quickly recognised echoes of their experiences where the powerful look for information on the poor, not so that they can honour them, but kill. 'But why kill Jesus?' 'No room for any more kings! Herod sent his army to kill the babies just like the "big ones" here send theirs to kill the poor. They are afraid we might become organised or even join with others fighting them in the mountains, and no longer want to be poor.' 'So where

is Jesus born today?' 'With the poor, and in us, when we love and work together.'

There are all too few moments when poor people have the courage to interpret their own experiences so clearly, piecing together the blood-stained politic that 'sells the poor for the price of a pair of shoes.' The church, local and international, with all its resources, encourages and strengthens such moments of honesty and insight as

people awoken to the awareness that their suffering is not the will of God and therefore could be challenged. It follows the path of the Nazarene who, with that good news for the poor, found himself in the midst of conflict and stayed to its bitter end, and a new beginning.

Oscar Romero, who, in the three years in which he was Archbishop of San Salvador, publicly exemplified much of the mission of Jesus and so was executed (24 March 1980). He brought to international attention the narrow and costly path which many in and out of the Salvadoran churches have been trying to walk.

'The church of my archdiocese has striven to incarnate itself in this world that lacks a human face, which is presently the sacrament of the suffering servant of Yahweh,' (Romero, 2 February 1980).

'My position as pastor obliges me to stand in solidarity with everyone who suffers and to back every effort toward the dignity of human beings,' (Romero, 7 January 1979).

In faithfulness to Jesus, there is an invitation from El Salvador for any and all who are willing to share the journey.

BMS Personnel serving in Brazil, Central America and the Caribbean

May 1988 – May 1989

JAMAICA

Jackie and Keith Riglin, Kingston

BRAZIL

David and Sheila Brown, Rio de Janeiro

John and Norma Clark, São Paulo (BMS Overseas

Representative for Brazil, Central America and the Caribbean)

Chris and Marion Collicot, Dois Vizinhos

Peter and Susan Cousins, Cuiabá (on furlough)

Margaret and Roy Deller, Porto Alegre

Christine and Robert Draycott, Campo Grande

John and Maria Dyer, Antonina

Ana and Avelino Ferreira, São Paulo

John and Valerie Furmage, Palmas

Jean and Michael Gardiner, São Paulo

Frank and Peggy Gouthwaite, Campo Grande

Kathie and Martin Hewitt, Primavera do Leste

Barbara and Keith Hodges, Curitiba (on furlough)

David and Sue Jackson, Realeza

Sadie and Vincent MacDougall, Vilhena

Evelyn and Lee Messeder, Campinas (language study)

Gerry and Johan Myhill, Nova Londrina

Mary Parsons, Antonina

David and Jean Perry, Campinas (language study)

Derek and Joanna Punchard, Curitiba

David and Joyce Stockley, Antonina

Margaret Swires, Campo Grande

Anne and Iain Walker, Campinas (language study)

Daveen and Michael Wilson, Mossoro

EL SALVADOR

David Mee, Sensuntepeque

NEW HEAD OFFICES FOR THE B.M.S. AND B.U.G.B.



Rear of new Baptist house

18 October, 1988 —

a day when history was made. For the first time ever a joint meeting of the General Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society and the Council of the Baptist Union of Great Britain was held. A single item of business formed the agenda, whether or not the two Bodies should commit themselves to sharing under one roof in relocated offices in Didcot, south Oxfordshire.

It was not the first time that this issue had been raised. As early as 1938 there were plans to acquire a site in Russell Square, London, and build premises that were large enough for all. These came to nought.

After the Second World War, the intention to share premises was reaffirmed by the Union and the Society. In 1961 there was the clear decision, taken in the Baptist Union business session and separately in the Baptist Missionary Society Annual Members' Meeting, that 'This Assembly gives the Council (this General Meeting of Members gives the General Committee) full authority either jointly with the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland (or BMS) and/or others, to build or acquire premises

which, in the opinion of the General Committee (BU Council), will be suitable as denominational headquarters.'

Down through the years the dream has failed to become reality, the vision has not been fulfilled. On 18 October, 1988, the decision was taken to ensure that it would.

Take your pick — stairs or lift!



So begins the culmination of the hopes of many over the previous years. A 90% majority felt that it was God's leading to occupy together the premises that had been discovered in Didcot. Subsequently, they were purchased for a price of £4.25 million and the intention is that they shall be occupied jointly in August 1989.

The work necessary to prepare the offices for occupation is proceeding and just one tenant, the *Baptist Times*, will be sharing with the Union and the Society as they move from London. There has been agreement to retain the whole of the building and use spare space, at least initially, to house conferences and establish a denominational centre.

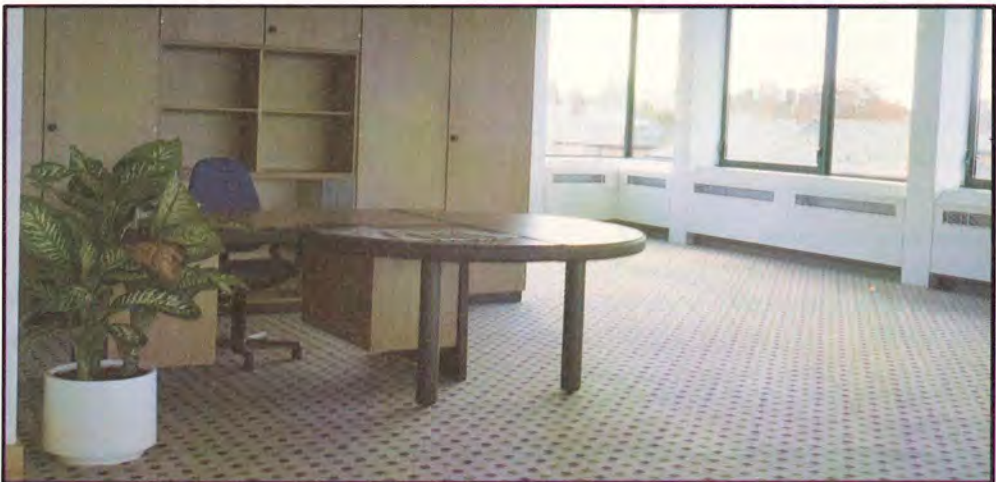
The building is three storeys high, purpose-built as office accommodation and extremely well fenestrated, so it is very light. The front, facing due north, looks across the Thames Valley. The uppermost floor has delightful views of the south Oxfordshire countryside. The plan is to use this floor for the benefit of the greatest number of people and it will house the chapel, restaurant, staff rest-room, conference facilities and other shared places. The lower floors will be divided between the Union and the Society at the centre of the building, the Society having sole use of the western wing of the ground and first floors. Much open-planing has been used so that the staff can literally be working 'in the light'.

The financing of the Society's share of the cost is made possible, it is hoped, both by a fund of £1.5 million that had been accumulated for the rebuilding of Mission House over previous years and from the disposal of the present premises in Gloucester Place. The Society remains committed, as does the Union, to the view that there should not be an appeal to the denomination.

The Committees and staff members have begun, and will continue, to pray that as God has clearly led to this decision so He will guide in the use of the new facilities



New occupants awaited



It's quiet now . . . but come the Autumn!

to enable a more effective service of the cause of mission.

The move will inevitably bring staff changes. The majority but not all of the senior staff are able to relocate to Didcot, but only a minority of the support staff will move with the offices. There is a

major task of recruiting and of re-establishing a spirit of fellowship in service. It is the spirit of God who will enable and prompt his people in this.

At last — a new Baptist Centre



MISSION IN CHRIST'S WAY

ASIA

What picture did the media print of Asia last year? In all too regular and dramatic fashion the news was of suffering because of floods, political tensions, earthquakes and communal conflicts. Whilst only part of the picture, these disasters did have an effect on the work of the BMS and our partner churches.

BANGLADESH

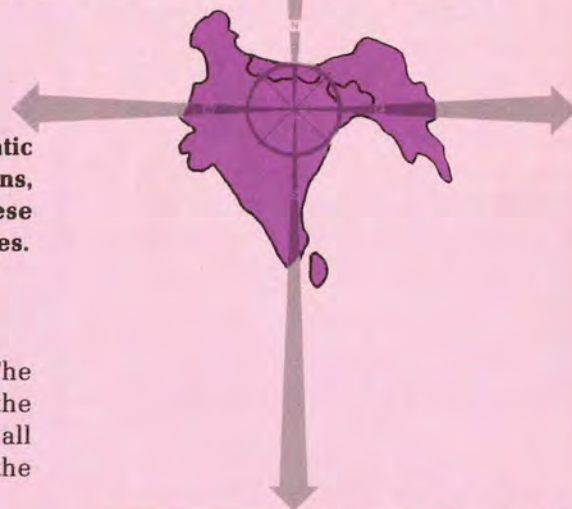
In Bangladesh there was very severe flooding and cyclone damage. The Bangladesh Baptist Sangha responded quickly and effectively at the time of the flood disaster and met many of the immediate needs of people. Although not all the long-term plans have been implemented the church has been aware of the need to meet the physical needs of people as part of its total ministry.

Church leaders in Bangladesh see prayer support as the most valuable contribution people in Britain can make. They also stress the value of support through friendship and fellowship.

They encourage our continued support through the presence of BMS personnel in Bangladesh, but they recognise that, for a variety of reasons, this involvement may be limited in the immediate future. It is proving increasingly difficult to obtain missionary visas.

Islam has now been recognised as the state religion of Bangladesh, even though the country remains a People's Republic. This is another difficulty facing the church which struggles for a sense of identity in a country where Christians are in a minority.

Dr Suzanne Roberts at Ruhea Clinic, Bangladesh



A Mullah

INDIA

The number of BMS missionaries in India has now been reduced to four – all women. The church appreciates continuing links, but recognises that they will have to be sustained in the future in terms of fellowship at a distance, rather than a preserving of on-the-spot involvement.

The church of North India is being challenged to examine its effectiveness as the Body of Christ in India. This has resulted in much heart searching as it strives to be seen as the witnessing body of Christian believers instead of the paragon of good works which many Indians attribute to its presence in the country.

While there are Christian individuals of spiritual integrity, ways need to be found for the church in India to provide a stronger trained leadership and more full-time pastors. The main problem seems to be lack of incentive, which perhaps reflects limited understanding or commitment.

Christians remain a small minority group in India as a whole, but in certain areas – Mizoram, the Kond Hills, and parts of South India – there are communities which are almost entirely Christian. There is a continuing need for the scattered local churches to find committed leadership, and for leaders of more consolidated Christian groups to work out their commitment in terms of evangelism and mission.

The church is feeling the pressure from militant anti-Christian groups, including extremists, claiming Hindu orthodoxy, whose activities are particularly fanatic.

The churches need continual encouragement to promote their work as an indigenous church and to foster the missionary vision already apparent in Mizoram but not so obvious in other areas of India.

NEPAL

The earthquake in September was limited to a small area of the country. Although property was damaged, including the hospital at Okhaldunga, and there was some

loss of life in the border area between India and Nepal, the main impact was emotional.

The church in Nepal has to face how to live within the constraints of a Hindu monarchy. The law forbids a change of religion. Those actively engaged in persuading people to embrace a faith other than that of the community into which they were born risk the possibility of a jail sentence.

Nevertheless, the church in Nepal is courageously effective and is growing in numerical strength. Its spiritual quality is impressive and reflects a vision which has evolved from its growth as an indigenous church.

The Nepali church is very alive and exhibits a courageous zeal in Christian ministry. Support through the fellowship of prayer is highly valued, but active participation in church life is discouraged by the government. Nevertheless, those who serve with the BMS through the UMN continue to have the opportunity to worship regularly and publicly with local church fellowships throughout the country.

Membership of the United Mission to Nepal, which now has 38 member bodies, means that BMS actively shares in various projects in rural development, medical care and community health. Through this work there is a quiet, consistent witness sustained in relationships with Nepali personnel with whom expertise and skills in many fields are shared.



A Baptism in Nepal

A Clinic at Okhaldunga



SRI LANKA

For a short while during the year there were no BMS personnel in Sri Lanka. Both Peter and Margaret Goodall and George and Betsy Lee have returned to the UK. However, Michael and Stella Hambleton arrived in the country later in 1988 and, in January 1989, Lynda and Paul Henstock joined them to continue the BMS sharing of a ministry with the Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya.

The wider world has been aware of the political strife within Sri Lanka caused by the inter-communal conflicts. Throughout, the church has sustained its witness in spite of the political tensions. Within the leadership of the Sangamaya there has been a concerted effort to encourage closer fellowship through understanding and supportive prayer. The church is encouraged by the number of young people who are becoming actively involved in the life of the church.

The church in Sri Lanka looks to the BMS for encouragement and sees our role as an enabler. By sending Lynda and Paul Henstock to work for a short time at the Cinnamon Gardens Baptist Church in Colombo, we are providing the resources whereby a pastor can be released for further theological study to equip him for a return to the full-time pastorate of the church. The longer term provision of Michael and Stella Hambleton will give an opportunity for many lay people to be given adequate Christian training in their own language.



Paul and Lynda Henstock ministers at Cinnamon Gardens Baptist Church

Some Karen people with whom Jacqui Wells will be working

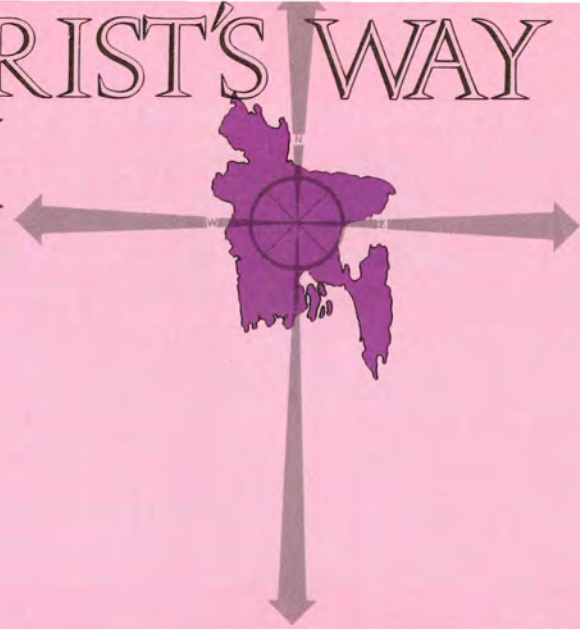


THAILAND

The excitement we felt about the opening of a new door of service for the BMS has been heightened by the sending of personnel to work with the church in Thailand. The arrival of Jacqui Wells, in November, to be joined by Geoff and Christine Bland later in 1989, is the practical working out of an agreement with Baptists from Sweden, America and Australia and, more particularly, a response to the specific call from part of the Thailand church to share in ministry.

In fact, the church in Thailand has a history which goes back over 300 years. In the current situation, the church is striving to establish its identity as a witnessing community which has a role to fulfil through mission – even though Christians remain a minority group within the country. It is struggling to realise its missionary vision by maintaining a live Christian community which has not yet become fully integrated into the country's life. Buddhism remains forcefully dominant.

MISSION IN CHRIST'S WAY BANGLADESH



It is hard to believe that there are still parts of the world which are inaccessible by road, where communities, whose lives have been untouched by the twentieth century, still live. But there are, and it was into just such an isolated tribe that Daya Kumar was born. His family farmed the land and life had changed little over the last 100 years.

Daya was the eldest son of a large family. During his childhood Daya contracted leprosy but the disease was unrecognised in the first stages and it was several years before his parents realized something was wrong. Unfortunately for Daya, his face became disfigured by the disease, with unsightly lumps and nodules appearing around his nose and mouth. The village 'doctor' had no cure. In fact, when he saw what was wrong with Daya he was afraid and reported it to the village leaders.

To the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts leprosy is an ancient and incurable disease, known to be infectious, and discovery has often meant the sufferer being completely cast out of the village. The leaders of the small community met to discuss what should be done about Daya. His father pleaded with the leaders to let his son stay and, at last, it was decided that the family could build a hut for him on the edge of the village. Daya could stay there providing he did not mix with his family or friends and did not go to the market or work in the fields. In fact, he was not to stray from the immediate area of the hut.

So began a sort of solitary confinement for Daya. His family brought him food every day and left it near the hut, calling to him. Then, when they were a safe distance away, Daya would come out and collect his meal. This was the only contact Daya had with his fellow human beings for four long years.

Was it by chance that a man who had been cured of leprosy visited that village one day and heard of Daya's plight? The visitor explained to Daya's parents that leprosy was not incurable, that there was something that could be done, and that



The devastating effects of leprosy, with proper treatment such disfigurement can be avoided





Chittagong Hill Tract people on their way to Hospital



Male Ward,
Chandraghona Leprosy Hospital

treatment was available free of charge at the Christian Hospital at Chandraghona. The family were overjoyed and set off on the journey to the hospital the very next day.

The Leprosy Centre is housed in a modern concrete building with running water, flush toilets and electric light. For Daya and his father it was like stepping onto another planet. The two men were amazed at the welcome they received. Daya was examined straight away and, as soon as the staff were sure that he had leprosy, the whole situation was explained to them both.

It was agreed that it would be best for Daya to stay at the hospital until his treatment was well established. The change from the isolation of his hut to a bed in a busy hospital was hard for Daya. To add to his problems, he did not speak Bengali very well – having used only his own tribal language for most of his life.

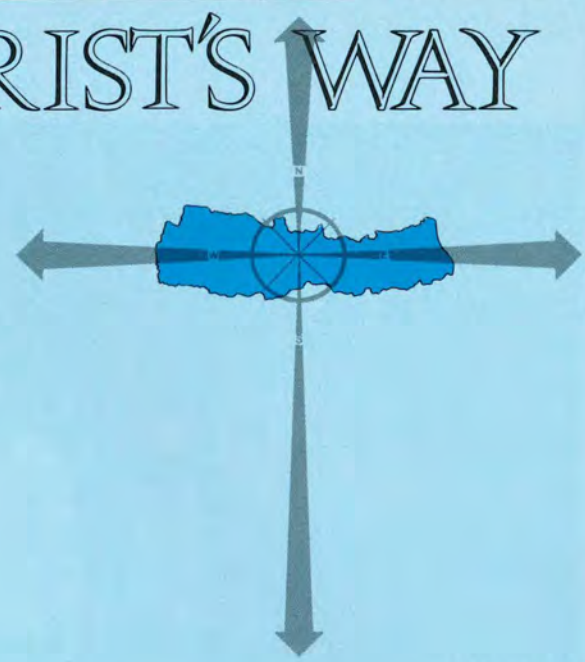
Was it by chance that a treated patient from the same tribe and now a member of the hospital staff was admitted the

same day into the next bed to Daya? The two became friends as Daya adjusted to life among people again. The staff member was a committed Christian and, as he read his Bible day by day, Daya asked him about his faith. Soon they were reading together. Daya became a regular attender at the church on Sundays and slowly settled into life at the hospital. Even the television set lost its mystery after a few weeks.

Daya did well on treatment but when the time came for him to go home he was very anxious. He wanted to know how the village leaders would believe he was no longer a threat when he still had the lumps and nodules on his face. He was afraid he would be exiled once more to his hut. Daya had a point and so, before he was discharged, he had an operation to improve the disfigurement of his face. After seven months at Chandraghona he returned to his village. Daya is no longer a threat to his community, he has a much improved appearance but, best of all, he has a new faith in his heart – a faith in the God he met for the first time in a hospital ward.



MISSION IN CHRIST'S WAY NEPAL



Bare feet, hard rocks, hot sun, straining bodies,
Flat roofed homes of wood, thatch and mud –
Or just a hard patch of ground.
Obedient to the way of life, not ambitious,
Just do or die
Perhaps next time round a better or a lesser lot.

In this land, look around,
See, sense and smell
All of God's creation,
But not all knowing God.

At a church service we sang a hymn:

'Take my life, teach me Lord.
Make my life useful to thee'

and this led us to make a decision to truly
ask this of our Lord.

So, late in years, young in heart, we
arrived in Nepal. We had left our family
at home, filled with misgivings. Many
people at home prayed for us. Gradually,
over the months, letters from home
began to speak of 'a sense of peace about
our welfare, a growing understanding of
a great God who loves the whole world,
and a growing need to pray to God for
us.' Slowly, love has taken the place of
bitterness.

God is working His purpose out.

Here in Nepal, despite poor ability in
language, love spans all barriers. We
have many Nepali friends. They go by
our home on their way to school or work.
All day they call out 'Hello Aunty,
Namaste Uncle. How are you? Are you
well?' From three years to very old we
share His love with them. Pray that in the
stories we tell, in the slide shows we put
on, and in the smiles and love, He will be
seen and they will come to know Him.

No shoes, no bed, running nose, coughs
and colds.

No hands, no feet, from leprosy.

God give them Your salvation through
Jesus Christ.

We had a letter from a friend telling of
her healing. It was a letter full of praise to
God for this miracle. On the day we
received it the letter lay open on the
table. A young Nepali friend, a Hindu,
called to see us because some children
had stolen fruit from the trees in the
garden and he was sad for us. He sat

from
Aunty Barbara
and
Uncle Harold

येशू ख्रीष्ट संसारको मुक्तिदाता
हुनुहुन्छ ।

The Blakes' Christmas Card

'We took our neighbours' photographs. . . .'



down, picked up and read the letter of our friend's testimony of healing and he was moved to share with us for the first time his deep longing to become a Christian.

Depok is twelve years old. He has become our language helper and general guardian. We feel the warmth of our Lord reaching out to him through us. We see a quality about him which cannot be expressed in words. Each day we grow closer. What can we do? His father is an



'No one owns a camera around here. . . .'

important Brahmin priest and he, too, enjoys to talk with us and improve his English. They are educated but very poor and live in a wretched house with no water, no toilet, no lighting except candles, no cooking facilities except an open wood fire. We are glad that we can lend them books, provide pens, pencils and exercise books for Depok and his brother for school and encourage them to continue their education.

Good food, warm clothing, security, clean water.

No rats, no malaria, no dysentery,

No love, no God, no future,

Only self and all mod cons.

Give me sweat, snakes and scorpions,

And a chance to share God's love

With a Nepali brother or sister.

We took our neighbours' photographs at Christmas. No one owns a camera around here and they have never had a photo of themselves. We stuck the photos on a card with a Christmas greeting and wrote in Nepali 'Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the World.' For two or three days we had a constant stream of neighbours calling in for their photo-card. What a joy to share in their excitement and their laughter as they saw themselves through the eye of the camera, many of them for the first time. Every home around us now has his promise 'Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the World.'

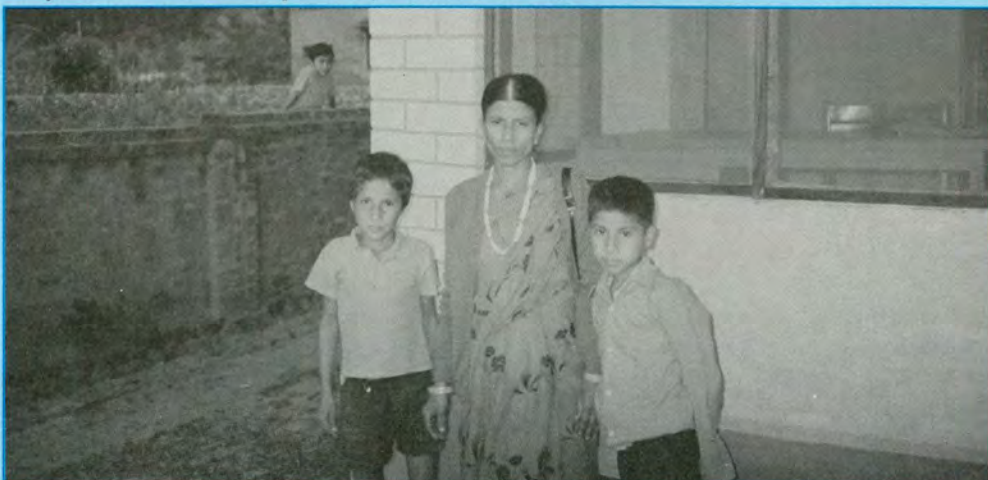
Our God sent His Son Jesus to save me and you and all who can be told. Truly 'Love one another' is the key to open the door to people from another creed.

He reached out, not to someone near to you but to you.

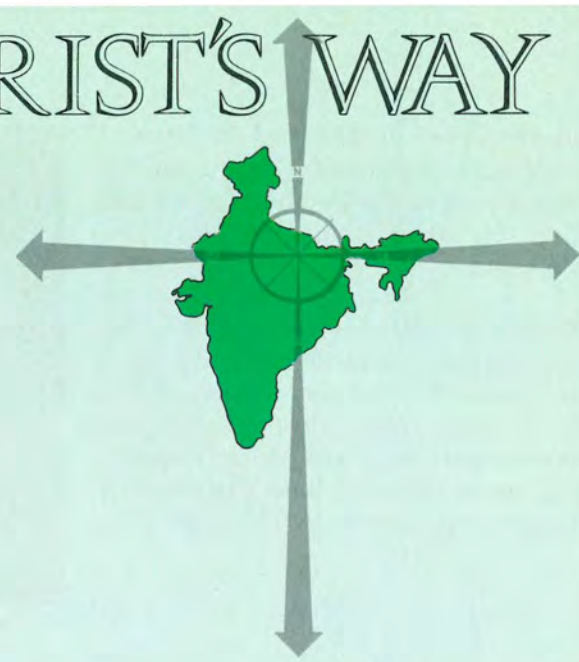
As He was prepared to go the whole way of love, even suffering and the cross. Can we settle for less?



'They have never had a photo of themselves. . . .'



MISSION IN CHRIST'S WAY INDIA



Through the eyes of one young Indian Christian, we learn something of 'Mission in Christ's Way' through a self-help project in a small village in Orissa, India.

The project was six years old when I joined but it had not been very successful. So we decided to try something different and I was asked to work with the

women.

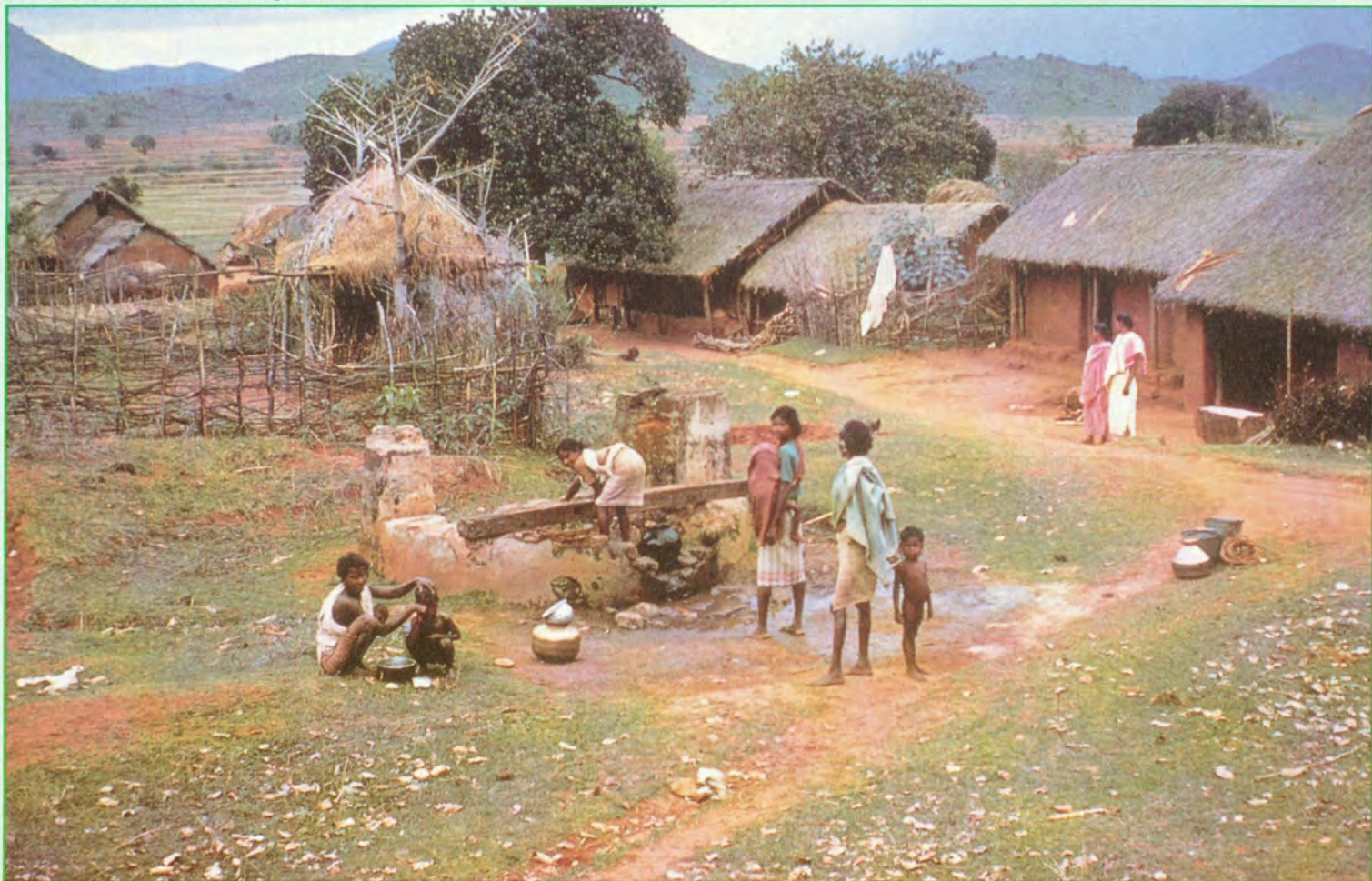
The village people are poor labourers. The women go out to work in the morning and come back very late.

'You help the men to build houses for someone else,' we told the women. 'If you can do that, you can build houses for yourselves.'

We decided to form a women's group. 'We shall need some funds,' I said. 'We are all poor, but we can collect money little by little and put it into the bank.'

It's a Hindu village and very suspicious of Christians. Some Hindus from outside tried to block my work by telling the villagers we were there to convert them.

Kond Hill women fetching water



'Did we force you to become Christians?' I asked. 'Have we done anything which is harmful?'

'No!'

'Would you like me to come again?'

'Yes!'

We held a village meeting. Everybody was there – the men, the women and children.

'What do you women want to do with the money you are saving?' we asked.

'We don't have a village pond in which we can bathe. We have to go to another village for that, and we only have one tube well for our drinking water. We once had land to dig a pond, and we had some money but it disappeared. So we dropped the idea.'

'You don't need money,' I said, 'You are labourers. You work the fields for others. Give your labour!'

So a 'we' feeling was created – it is *our* thing, it belongs to us. They got very excited.

'All right, we'll do it,' they said.

When the women started to work, the men stood by and watched, and then they began to help.

The whole village worked until it was finished. Plants were placed around the edge and a ditch was dug to drain the water from the land to the pond.

After the monsoon rains have filled the pond, the water should last the whole year. Now the young people of the village are stocking the pond with fish to provide a good source of protein.

The one tube well had a broken platform and water flowed freely through the village seeping back into the well. It wasn't very hygienic. Cattle also came there to drink.

'Each family can donate ten bricks and others can give their labour,' they said. So we provided the cement and paid a man to do the plastering.

They finished it in three days. It was



Girls pounding paddy in preparation for a meal

amazing. They worked at night to the light of oil lamps because they wanted to finish it quickly. They were gaining some pride in their own community.

They are a tribal people and some of their ways are different from other Hindu groups. Sometimes I asked them, 'Why do you do that? Do you really believe in that? I don't do what you do, and nothing nasty has happened to me!'

Once they put a special mark on their houses to protect them from the anger of a goddess.

'We're not doing anything wrong. Who is going to trouble us?' said one man.

I took the opportunity. 'God is there to look after us.'

'This is an evil thing,' he said.

'Good, you believe in God and you know that He will look after you and you are not going to mark your house.'

'I'm not.'

So I talked to him about the real God. The villagers now know they can improve their life.

They are not Christians but if we talk about God's love and do nothing then there is no point in saying that God loves. How do they know He loves unless we show love in action? Preaching the gospel is not talking. It is the way we live!

BMS Personnel serving in Asia May 1988 – May 1989

BANGLADESH

Alison Cottam, Dhaka
Valerie Hamilton, Dhaka
Bob and Mary Hart (leave of absence)
Sue Headlam, Chandraghona
Gwyn and Joyce Lewis (furlough, prior to retirement)
Sheila Loader, Dhaka
Marjorie and Neil McVicar (furlough, prior to retirement)
Christine Preston, Dhaka
Jean Pullin, Chandraghona (on furlough)
Suzanne Roberts, Ruhea

NEPAL

Debbie and Graham Atkinson, Kathmandu (language study)
Ruth Berry, Amp Pipal
Barbara and Harold Blake, Butwal
Heather and Richard Cameron, Kathmandu
Jeremy and Ruth Clewell, Pokhara
Lynne Davies, Kathmandu (on furlough)
Tim Lehane and Alison MacLean, Andhi Khola
Pirjo and Stuart Little, Tansen
Kin and Sue Liu, Kathmandu (on furlough)
Andrew and Linda Mason, Kathmandu (language study)
Ann Matthias (leave of absence)
Dermot and Joy Morris, Kathmandu
Katie Norris, Amp Pipal
Mike and Val Roake, Butwal
Ian and Sally Smith, Amp Pipal
Isobel Strang (leave of absence)
Fred Swindell, Kathmandu

INDIA

Ann Bothamley, Vellore
Elsie and Geoffrey Grose (furlough, prior to retirement)
Pansy James, Cullack (on furlough)
Betty Marsh, Berhampur
Sheila Samuels, Delhi
Carole Whitmee, Balangir

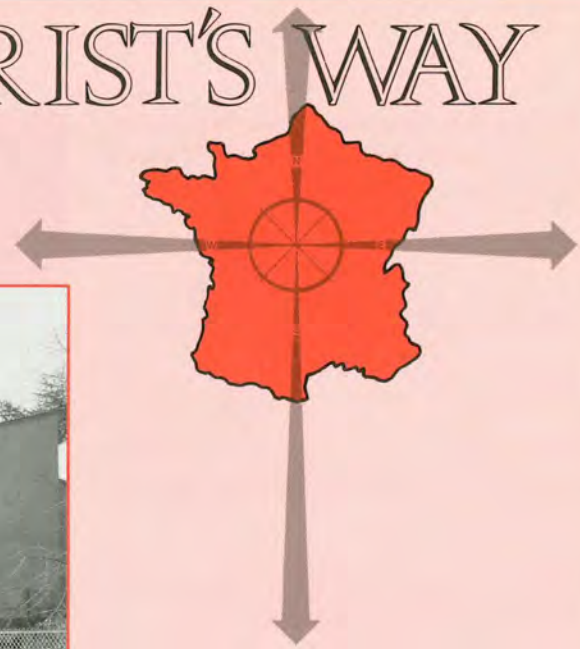
SRI LANKA

Michael and Stella Hambleton, Colombo
Lynda and Paul Henstock, Colombo
Joy Knapman (BMS Overseas Representative for Asia)

THAILAND

Jacqui Wells, Bangkok (language study)

MISSION IN CHRIST'S WAY FRANCE



Above and below: The Language School and Church at Massy

The 83 churches of the French Baptist Federation are found especially in the north of France and the Paris area, but increasingly in the larger towns and cities of the south and the centre of the country. A glimpse at three churches and two other movements might help us to see some of the ways in which French Baptists reach out in mission.

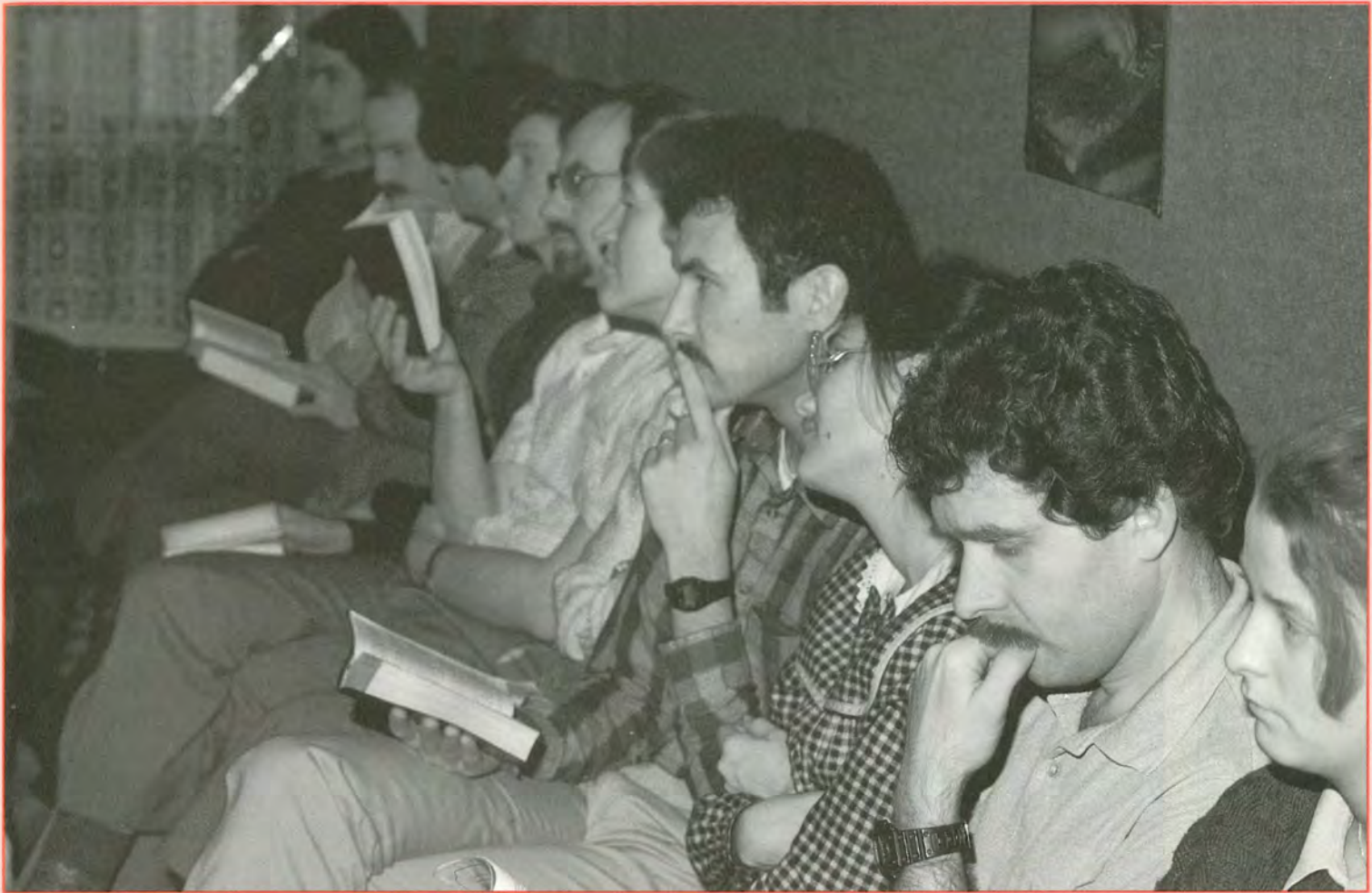
The church at Massy, set in a pleasant southern suburb of Paris, is unique in the sense that it meets in the Baptist Centre which houses the denominational printing press, recording studio and language school. The presence of about 60 overseas students, most of them missionary candidates and many of them from the English speaking world, adds a new dimension to the life of the local church. About one third of these students and their families look on the Massy Baptist Church as their local church during the time of their studies. The school and the church work together in organising monthly 'happenings' which seek to present the gospel through music or other activities. Students regularly visit residents of an old people's home adjacent to the church. None of the residents come from a protestant background, but several of them have attended the church on different occasions and bridges have been built.

The Lille church ministers to people in a very different environment. Both social work and evangelism are done in the streets in the centre of this large city in northern France, and the good work done by the church for all those in difficulty has been recognised by local town councillors. A double-decker London bus is used as a base for contacts in the city centre, where a cup of coffee and warm friendship is offered to all who pop in.

The situation at Plougrescant in Brittany is different again. This little chapel, north of the town of Treguier, has maintained a consistent witness over the past hundred years, in the face of stiff opposition both from traditional Roman Catholics and from anticlerical forces. The church at Plougrescant has never been large and, although many young people have been converted in the church, most have had to move away from the area for work. This small, largely elderly group, fully committed to the Lord, carries on the witness. Most outsiders, however, while admitting in private that 'the Protestants' gospel' seems to make sense, stop short of making any public commitment in this area where traditional Catholicism and veneration of the saints is very strong.

The little chapel at Plougrescant sees most of its activity in July and August





Morning Worship at Massy

when the summer visitors arrive on Brittany's beaches, and the local fellowship of five or six is swelled to a congregation of about 50. Tract distribution is carried on by visiting preachers, and the door of the church is always kept open in summer. Many visitors on walking tours of Brittany come into the chapel for a rest and are happy to take literature and often speak about spiritual matters before continuing on their journey.

The church at Plougrescant may well die in the years to come unless others move into the area, but all these seeds are planted in the ground and may blossom to life in many unexpected places in France and beyond its frontiers.

French Baptists are also active in various interdenominational agencies, and one of these which has come to the fore in the past few years is ACAT – the Associa-

tion of Christians for the Abolition of Torture. Baptists in various parts of France work together with Roman Catholics, Orthodox and other Protestant Christians in a work which is similar to that done by Amnesty International. Amnesty International in France is a secular organization and, while working closely with Amnesty, ACAT has the added dimension of corporate and individual prayer for those who are persecuted in various parts of the world to whom it ministers in Christ's name.

Home for the elderly at Pierrefonds



The Baptist community also seeks to live out the practical outworkings of the gospel in their youth work, especially in their hostel in Strasbourg and children's home in Pierrefonds. Care for the aged is emphasised in their old people's home, also in Pierrefonds. They count on the prayers of British Baptists as this tiny denomination seeks to 'minister in Christ's way' against overwhelming odds in the highly sophisticated and secularized society of France today.

FRANCE

John and Sue Wilson, Massy (language study)

MISSION IN CHRIST'S WAY CANDIDATES REPORT



Recent candidates, Paul and Lynda Henstock, now in Sri Lanka

'Oh no!' – often the first reaction of dismay on the part of a church when the pastor and his wife begin to share their feeling that God may be calling them overseas. This is particularly understandable when the church serves the inner city, with its own struggles and missionary opportunities. It could be said that such a setting is a great preparation for those going on to overseas work, particularly in needy cities, where life is harder and more deprived than here in Britain.

'Mission in Christ's Way' means being sensitive to what the Lord is saying to those already engaged in fruitful work, moving them on to new work that they would never have looked for or imagined for themselves. Among such pastoral couples accepted for work overseas in this year are Lynda and Paul Henstock who, with James and Mary, have left for Sri Lanka, and Paul and Debbie Holmes, with Kathryn and Joanna, who will be going to Brazil. Both have been working in inner London churches and will be

much missed there through this unexpected call to a very different ministry.

'I'm sorry, but we don't get asked for PE teachers!' That would have been the Candidate Secretary's natural reaction to the letter from Graham Atkinson, but it so happened that Graham's friend had been to Nepal and happened to hear that a PE teacher was needed at the Gandaki Boarding School. They also needed a Science teacher, and Graham's second subject happened to be Science. . . . So it is that Graham and his wife Debbie, a psychiatric nurse, left for Nepal in January.

Sometimes 'Christ's Way' takes us by surprise in another sense, when delays and uncertainties cut across the plans we have made. Janet Prentice and Phil Commons are all ready to go to Bangladesh. Both have completed missionary preparation. Janet, a doctor, has successfully completed her Tropical Medicine course in Liverpool and Phil, a physiotherapist, has both finished a

course with the Handicapped Education and Aids Research Unit, and spent a useful time in Ethiopia looking at leprosy work (thanks to the Leprosy Mission). They're ready for off. But no visas have come. Will they be long? Will they be granted at all? We've no answers and, meanwhile, Janet gets on with locum work and Phil shares in the ministry of her busy church in Leeds as they wait to see what 'Mission in Christ's way' will mean for them.

The 'come over and help us' cry from the French Baptist Federation has been answered by three couples. The first John and Sue Wilson, with young Jessica, are already in France at the Massy language school, struggling to become really fluent in French before they can begin work. Mission often involves not only the giving up of a settled life but, also, the slog of preparation, for which there are no short cuts. Rob and Catherine Atkins are finishing courses at Spurgeon's. Neil and Ruth Abbott, with small Hannah, are gaining pastoral

experience in South Ossett, before joining the Wilsons in France, following this trail to mission which has opened up for them.

Space is too short to tell of the pastors, builders, secretaries, doctors, nurses, teachers, pharmacy and laboratory technicians (to paraphrase Hebrews) who have been discovering and working out what 'Mission in Christ's Way' means for them, and who'll go on doing so as they go overseas and see it working out in practice – sometimes very differently from what they had imagined.

Are the rest listening? Those who are so much needed, and have not yet come forward. The water engineer, to re-organise the water supplies of the Zaire hospitals, and the short-term electrician to overhaul the electricity systems; the pastor for theological training in Angola, to replace Jim and Pam Henn who are not now able to go. 'Mission in Christ's Way' demands the response and dedication of people who will take the love and concern of our Lord into the world. Not the popular 'I did it my way', but 'I'll do it His way!'



The Chairman of Candidates' Board, Sheila Bull, addressing the General Committee

NOT STRANGERS BUT PILGRIMS

The process that began several years ago within the churches in Britain, looking to a new way in which they might relate ecumenically, has led to radical proposals presented to the British Churches this year. Each denomination or Church Body that has been involved in the process, and this is a much wider group than the present British Council of Churches, is being asked to make a decision as to whether or not it agrees to share in principle to an ongoing fellowship.

At the heart of the search was the intention to enable the Churches in Britain to discover a unity in the light of their shared mission. It remains to be seen how far the search has been successful and whether this will enable a greater effectiveness in the cause of Christ through what may emerge as the new shared Bodies. The BMS, and other Mission Bodies and Agencies, although not directly represented in the discussion, has made strong representation about the importance of an awareness of the World Church and of World Mission within any British fellowship.

In the plans that have emerged and now are to be decided there is the intention to have a 'Commission on Mission' that will open a window onto the world for the tasks of Mission and Evangelism. It will be a task of the Society's Officers and Committees to try to ensure that this window is not closed.

OUR STEWARDSHIP IN 1988 RESPONDING TO THE CALL OF GOD

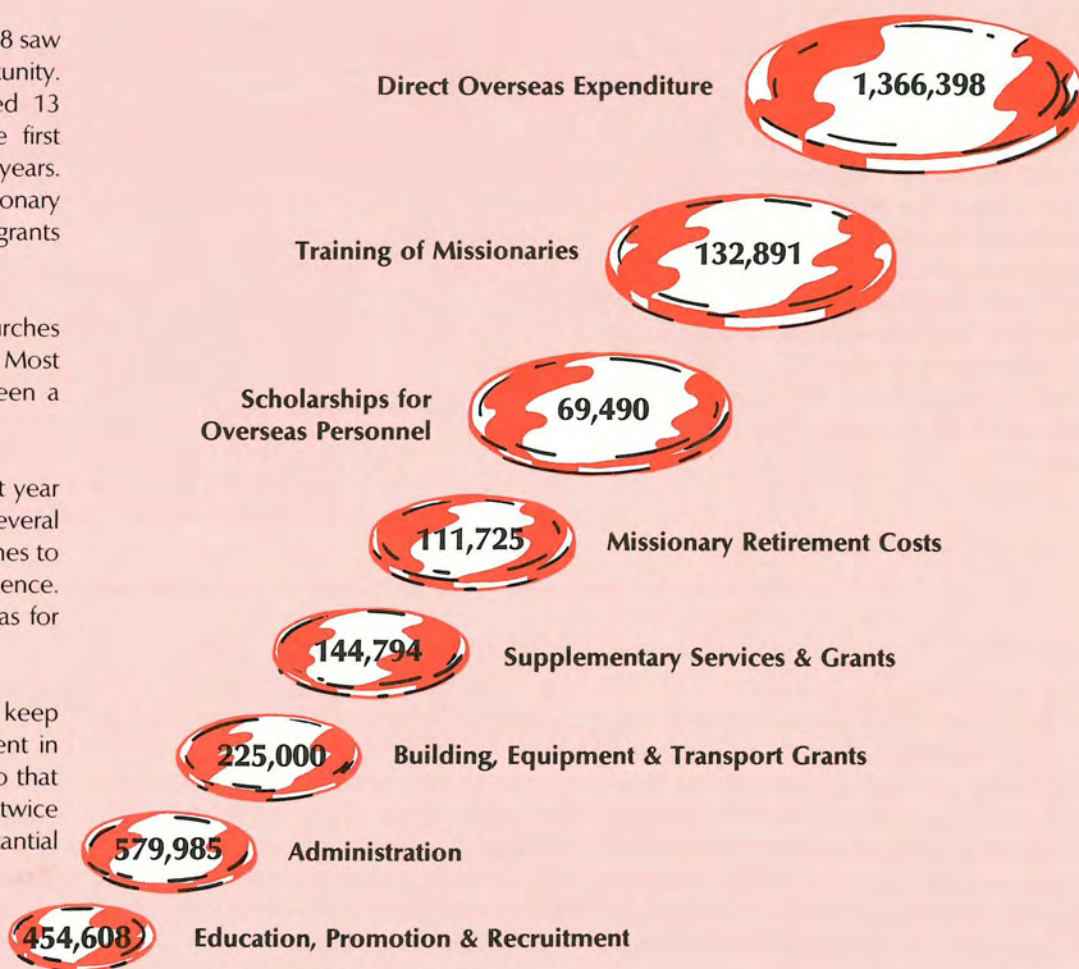
EXPENDITURE

The financial year ending October 1988 saw the opening of new doors of opportunity. Direct Overseas expenditure covered 13 countries, including Thailand for the first time, and France after a gap of many years. Most of the money was spent on missionary support but nearly £¼ million went as grants to overseas churches.

Many students from the overseas churches benefitted from BMS scholarships. Most studied in this country and it has been a privilege to have them among us.

An interesting item of expenditure last year was the £20,410 spent on bringing several young people from our partner churches to Scotland for the BWA Youth Conference. What an enriching experience that was for them!

It is very important to the BMS to keep families together, so £13,711 was spent in flying children to overseas locations so that they could be with their parents at least twice a year. This was in addition to substantial sums spent on their education.



1987		1988
£		£
1,309,547	Direct Overseas Expenditure	1,366,398
124,010	Training of Missionaries	132,891
75,083	Scholarships for Overseas Personnel	69,490
107,557	Missionary Retirement Costs	111,725
105,977	Supplementary Services & Grants	144,794
377,470	Building, Equipment & Transport Grants	225,000
536,798	Administration	579,985
427,904	Education, Promotion & Recruitment	454,608
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3,064,346		3,084,891

What will happen in 1989?

We need at least 10% more than in 1988

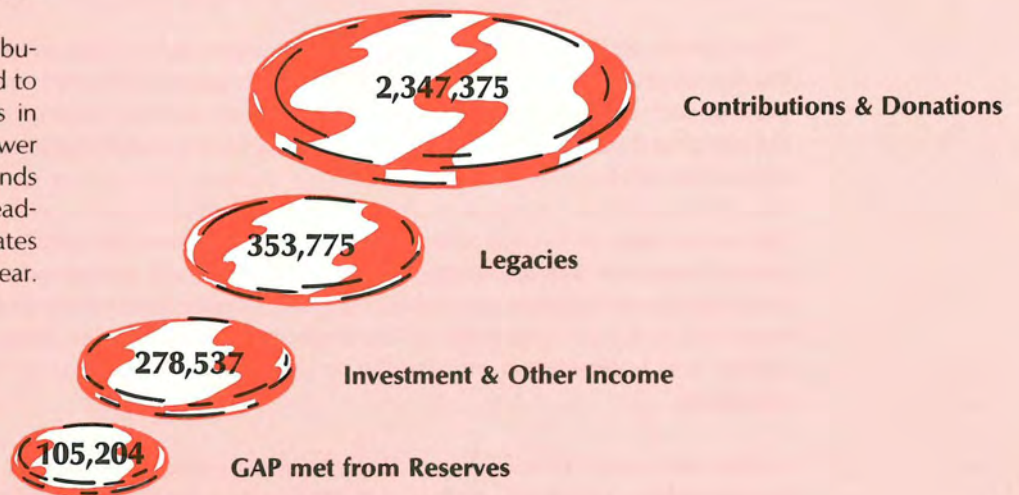
Together, let us respond to the call of God!

INCOME

In the same year, to October 1988, churches and individuals again increased their giving to the BMS. While grateful for this increase, the rise of 3.5% was below the 8% we really needed so that for the second year running our deficit was in excess of £100,000. It would be tragic if this pattern continued.

Projects were important during the year with the women raising £36,659 and the young people £18,948. As a separate project, the Junior Boys' Brigade contributed £7,623. Medical work benefitted to the tune of £140,630 from the Birthday Scheme. Many worked very hard to achieve these results.

Once again, legacies made a vital contribution to our income and we are indebted to the many friends who remembered us in their Wills. Interest and dividends were lower in 1988 because of the need to move funds in preparation for the move to new headquarters and partly because interest rates remained low throughout the financial year.



1987		1988
£		£
2,266,749	Contributions & Donations	2,347,375
306,609	Legacies	353,775
364,892	Investment & Other Income	278,537
<hr/>		<hr/>
2,938,250	TOTAL INCOME	2,979,687
126,096	GAP met from Reserves	105,204
<hr/>		<hr/>
3,064,346		3,084,891

MISSION IN CHRIST'S WAY BRITAIN



COUNTDOWN TO CELEBRATION BMS 1792 – 1992

'Countdown to Celebration' is the title of a presentation that will be made in the Baptist Assembly in Leicester in April 1989. It is a call to the churches of Britain to look ahead and plan for a worthy celebration of the Society's Bi-Centenary. Reinforcing that invitation will be the news of some of the exciting plans that are already in hand.

The anniversary of the day when William Carey preached his great sermon: 'Expect great things from God, attempt great things for God' will see a massive gathering of the Baptist and Christian family in Nottingham. On the actual birthday of the Society there will be a joyous Service of Thanksgiving in Westminster Abbey, enabling the British and international community to join in the celebration of what God has achieved.

On the same day there will be a different type of worship altogether, when a widely representative group will gather at Kettering and recall the founding of the BMS. Hopefully, this will be shared by thousands more by satellite television. Plans are developing for a Roadshow, a commissioned musical, international exchange visits, choirs and groups from partner Churches to tour Britain, and a whole host of activities that will deepen the sense of partnership with the World Church.

Dr Brian Stanley has been able to pursue his researches for the official history, visiting Asia and the site of Carey's work in Serampore. More recently, Mrs Gwenda Bond has been invited to be the author of the paperback history of the Society. The intention is not merely to have a time of celebration of the past but to be open to God's leading for a greater commitment to the World Church in the tasks of World Mission.

An adequate base?

Any strong building for the future may only be done on a firm base. Does the Society have this within British Baptist churches at the moment? In British society we are seeing increasing moves towards privatisation and a change of attitude that looks to personal gain as a prime motivation for the actions and attitudes of the majority of people. The way of caring service is totally different from this. The churches, as a whole, are engaged not only in cross-cultural Mission but even counter-cultural Mission.

There is encouraging evidence that, in this situation, the churches are able to hold their own and look outwards.

This last year we introduced a new pattern of deputation. More churches than before took up the option of having a deputation speaker. Most visits were to the Sunday Services of the church, giving the greatest contact with congregations.

The numbers of enquiries about service overseas continue at a high level. The take-up of the annual Prayer Guide is increasing. The Area Representatives are being involved in local church, auxiliary, district and association activities all indicating a recognition, not only of their worth, but also of the importance of the Society's task.

Financial support, though not attaining the target set, did increase. For all of this we thank God and we are encouraged by the commitment evident at the local level.

Slimmer and fitter

During this last year there has been a radical review of the Society's Committee structures. After the longest ever debate on a single topic in living memory, recommendations were brought concerning the Society's pattern of Committee operation. Eventually, it was overwhelmingly accepted that, in future, there should be only four Committees: the General Committee, a new General Purposes and Finance Committee, the Candidate Board, and a slightly enlarged Officers' Committee. In addition, Working Groups and Advisory Groups, have been appointed for specific tasks and with a life only until the task is completed. This has released more staff time and enabled a great flexibility in tackling the ongoing demands and opportunities for the Society.

Change and review

The Society has welcomed, as a new Representative in Wales, Miss Sue Evans. Trained as a nurse, Sue responded to God's call and served in Yakusu in Zaire. Coming home at the end of the most recent period of service she felt it right to remain in Britain, at least for a spell, and has already begun her new service of the Welsh churches in admirable fashion.

The first review for eight years has been initiated into the appointments of the General and Overseas Secretaries and into the Secretariat as a whole. The Audio-Visual-Communication Secretary, Andrew Smith, and the Personnel Secretary, Joan Maple, are nearing the conclusion of their five-year appointments and reviews were also instituted looking to what might be the future of those positions.

A right and caring support

The BMS endeavours to exercise pastoral care for all members of its staff, both overseas and at home. Provision has been made for missionaries, especially for expectant mothers, but not only these, for the prevention of the contraction of AIDS. Within Mission House, where all staff have had to face the question as to whether or not they could relocate to Didcot, counselling and training have been made available for all facing this time of decision and a new start.

Retired missionaries and staff members were able to benefit appreciably by pension increases made possible because of a surplus at the revaluation of the Pension Fund. Provision was also made for better benefits for those currently serving the Society and for future pensioners. In April, the residents, all retired missionaries, were able to share in a very joyous reopening of the South Lodge home in Worthing that had been severely damaged in the gales of the previous October.

Family relationships

Each of the Unions and Assemblies within mainland Britain is in close fellowship with the Society. This relationship has been deepened through the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee and through the contacts of the General Secretaries of the various Bodies.

Overseas Visits

Many denominational leaders were able to visit BMS partner churches last year. They included:

Rev Dr Colin Marchant, President of the BUGB – BRAZIL

Rev Victor Bundock, President of the Baptist Union of Scotland – NEPAL

Dr John Biggs, Vice-President of BUGB – ASIA

Rev Vivian Lewis, BMS Chairman – BRAZIL and ITALY

Rev Brian Tucker, BMS Vice-Chairman – ASIA

Rev Eric Watson, General Superintendent of Baptist Union of Scotland – ZAIRE

Mr Arthur Garman, BMS Treasurer – ZAIRE

Rev Dr Paul Beasley-Murray, Principal of Spurgeon's College – BRAZIL

Many leaders in our partner churches overseas were also able to visit the UK. These included:

Rev Joao Makondekwa – ANGOLA

Rev Alvaro Rodrigues – ANGOLA

Bishop Tandy – INDIA

Pastor Marta Benavides – EL SALVADOR

Rev Ian Brown – NEW ZEALAND

Dr Earl Martin – RUSCHLIKON SEMINARY

Rev David Saunders – SOUTHERN BAPTIST FOREIGN MISSION BOARD

Pastor Joil Dias de Freitas – BRAZIL

Mr Michael S Adhikari – BANGLADESH

Rev Dr Lal Hminga – MIZORAM, INDIA

When all of these visits are added to those other Sabbatical and fellowship visits arranged through the Society from Britain overseas and from our partner countries to our own churches, it is apparent that stronger family links are being forged.

With a view to the future

The appointment of the Rev John Passmore as Promotion and Young People's Secretary has added a new impetus to the work amongst young people generally. He has been able to co-operate with the Officers within the different Unions who are responsible for young people's work. He and others were able to have a significant presence at the 'Glasgow '88' Baptist Youth World Conference, and is sharing in the building on from that tremendous experience. Plans are now in hand for united work with young people from our Baptist churches in years ahead, including a special gathering in the Bi-Centenary year, 1992.

For the more immediate future, there is to be a promotional programme called '28 . . . 19 The Tour', led by Steve Chalke and Martyn Joseph. Hopefully, gatherings totalling 10,000 or more young people will come together to share in this multimedia event. We pray that they may be able to catch a vision of what God's plan is for the future of His world and His people – a plan in which each one of us in Christ has a part to play.



Conference delegates



Graham Kendrick with Baptist Youth Orchestra

GLASGOW '88 – WHAT AN EXPERIENCE!

The event of the year for young Baptists was the 11th Baptist Youth World Conference held in Glasgow in July.

'It was the week that heaven threw a party!' said one young delegate. Meeting with over 7,000 young people from all over the world gave a unique feeling of being part of the world church.

Young people from all backgrounds, cultures, languages, lifestyles, worshipped together and celebrated the theme 'Jesus Christ Rules!'

Already the fruits of the conference are being shown in the numbers of young people asking for baptism and committing themselves in the service of the Kingdom.

Angolan choir



Opening Ceremony




A FRESH START FOR THE BAPTIST WORLD ALLIANCE

With the tragic death of the Rev Dr Gerhard Claas in a road accident in the spring of 1988, the Baptist World Alliance faced a time of crisis. Very soon after Dr Claas's death, two other experienced members of staff left the service of the BWA and during the ensuing months there have been other changes of staff, some planned and others in the light of events.

Two other aspects of the Alliance's life add to the pressure of the moment. In the first place, there is a continuing financial need, income not matching up to necessary expenditure. Secondly, the Alliance had already committed itself to a review of its structure and the recommendations brought a suggested pattern that was radically different from before. The recommendations have been remitted back for further consideration, but the time of change is clearly upon the world fellowship of Baptist Churches.

Meanwhile, increasing numbers of the Unions and Conventions of Baptist Churches around the world either no longer have, or never have had links with the older sending Mission Bodies and Agencies. For such folk the world-wide fellowship with men and women of like faith is very significant and the Alliance is too important an outworking of the fellowship of God's people to be allowed to fall into decline. We pray for God's blessing on the BWA leaders, particularly the new General Secretary, Dr Denton Lotz, in this testing time.




Baptist World Alliance
6733 Curran Street
McLean, VA 22101-3804, U.S.A.

An
Imitation
to Meet Your Baptist Family

16th Baptist World Congress
Seoul, Korea
August 14-19, 1990

Theme:
"Together in Christ"



REFLECTION ON A THEME

This report tells stories. The few which it tells represent the thousands which it might have told. Look at them all, told and untold, and you will see a whole galaxy of human experience. Here are stories of achievement and of failure, of promise and of disappointment, of high excitement and of routine duty, of imaginative enterprise and of dull stagnation. Here are people evincing endurance, apathy, stagnation, love, faith, hope.

But what else do you see here? Our ancestors, looking up to the stars, found patterns there. Is there a pattern to be seen in this array of stories?

We believe that there is a pattern here for the eye of faith to discern. It is a face – a face like all men's faces, familiar from another collection of selected stories. It is the face of Christ.

Here are all the familiar features. There is his entire devotion to the Father's purpose, and his temptation to swerve from it. There is his eagerness to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom, and his readiness to linger with a single needy person. There is his compassion for the crowd, his attention to the few, his delight in the company of the despised. There is his anger for injustice, and his scorn for hypocrisy. There is his joyful affirmation of the Father's creation, and his swingeing judgement on time-servers and opportunists. There is his terrible struggle with the powers of darkness and destruction. There is the miracle of his resurrection and the continuing miracle of his resurgent Spirit. Look at these stories of his people, and recognise him.

Our ancestors, observing the stars, found that they moved to a pattern too.

Compare these stories with earlier ones, and you will find that there has been plenty of movement. Some of the changes are easy to spot, and quickly listed. There is confident missionary enterprise by Christian communities which not long ago seemed only to receive. In some areas there is rapid numerical growth. Some doors are closing; others are opening, or re-opening. There is declining interest in old-established denominational mission agencies. There is more fluidity of movement between missionary and other employment. There is some hardening against Christianity by other world faiths, and some softening towards it in the secular East and West. Perhaps there is also a shift in the balance of enthusiasm as between evangelism and service.

There is plenty of movement, but it isn't necessarily progress. Our ancestors observed that the movement of the stars was cyclic and recurring. The stars are moving, but they aren't going anywhere. There are plenty of recurring themes in these stories too.

For example, we are still struggling with organization! We are still up against global political and economic forces, and we still find it hard to identify and confront them. We are still trying to communicate with a home constituency which, it often seems, either wants continual thrills or prefers to be left alone. We still easily nurse bruised relationships; we still lose some of our best folk too soon; we still witness those astounding triumphs of faith that are only found among the meek of the earth.

From our earth-bound perspective, the pattern we would like to discern is progress. That isn't easy to see. If that is all we search for we will be disillusioned and cynical. But out there in the darkness there is another pattern waiting to be seen. Look faithfully, and you may recognise the pattern of Christ.

Its origin is the eternal fire of the divine love. Its beginning in time is His complete identification with His people. It is marked throughout by the strange victory of His cross. Its triumphs are rarely noticed by the multitude, yet they are always happening. And it does have an end, but that is not yet.

That is probably as far as we shall get, when it comes to pinning down the shape of what we can see. But one thing we do understand better than our ancestors did is that we are not outsiders looking on. Belonging to our own planet, tied to our own sun, we are part of the very system we're looking at – we're insiders. And that, above all, is what these stories are about: people everywhere who are called to be part of the pattern, part of the wounded, risen, missionary body of Christ.

