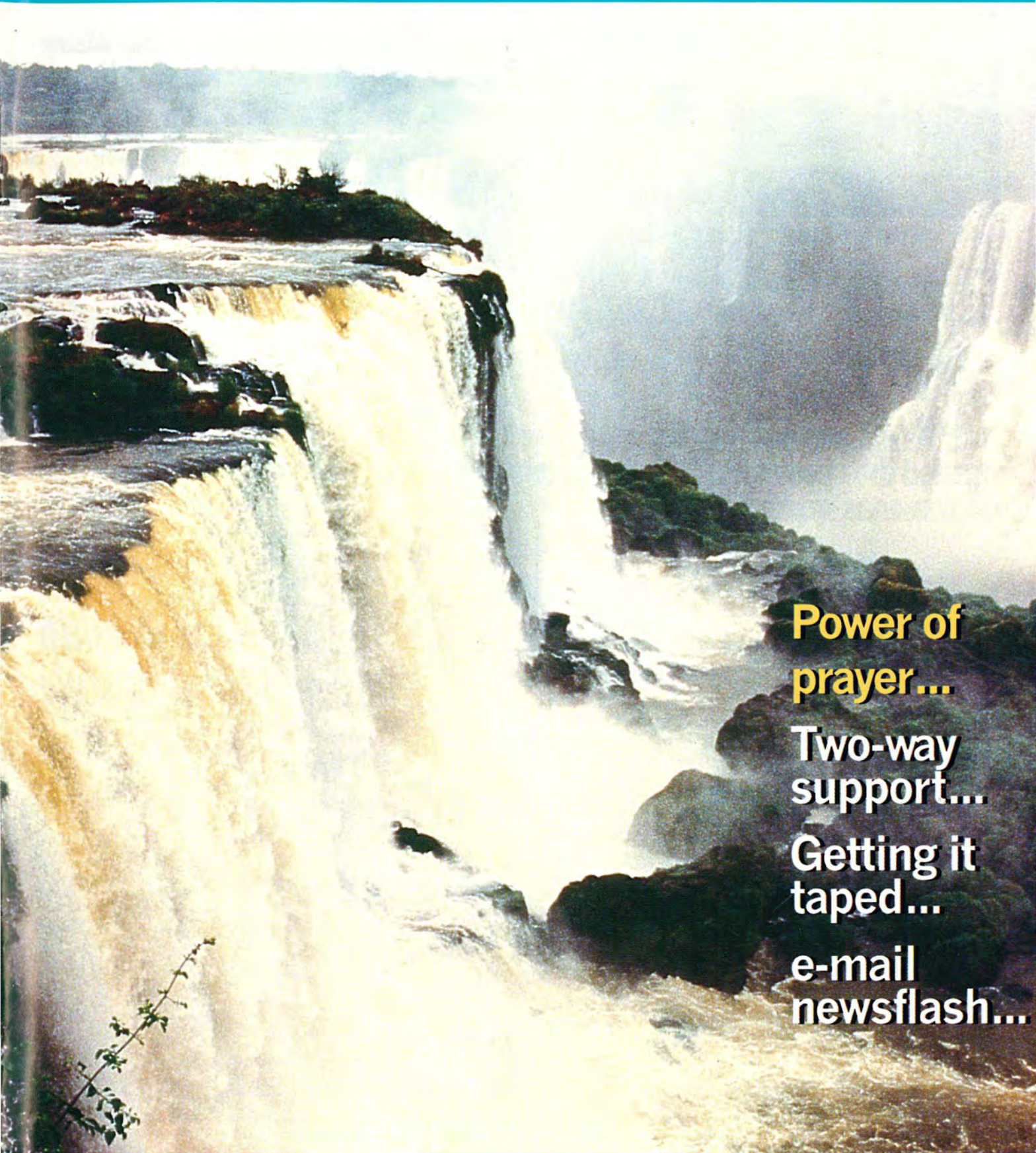


June 1995

MISSIONARY **HERALD**
mb.

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Seminary Library
Prague
Czech Republic



**Power of
prayer...**

**Two-way
support...**

**Getting it
taped...**

**e-mail
newsflash...**

The Missionary Herald is the magazine of the Baptist Missionary Society



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8 *Helping the visually handicapped to share in mission*

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mh. editorial

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COVER PHOTO
Iguacu Falls, Foz,
Paraná, Brazil

Prayer? Of course prayer: it's the oxygen of the church breathed by every Christian that ever was. Prayer is how we commune with God, how we listen to him, how we get to know him, how his thoughts become our thoughts and his ways become our ways. Prayer and mission are inseparable. Prayer comes before mission and mission sends us straight back on to our knees.

In February, the Southern Area Ministers' Conference was told of the situation in Bulgaria. They heard first-hand from Bulgarian Baptist, Theodor Oprenov, and from an electronic mail message from the European Baptist Press Service how the city authorities in Sofia were planning to appropriate land on which the Baptist community had already started to build a school and an orphanage. The chairman asked for questions, but the immediate reaction was, "We need to pray." And pray they did, for 20 minutes or so, one after the other.

Then after the praying came the doing, the promise to send faxes and letters and make telephone calls, to the Mayor of Sofia, to the Ambassador in London, to the Foreign Office and to persuade others to do the same.

This however was only a small part of an international response. "We had the feeling that the whole Baptist family was surrounding us in prayer all the time," said Theo Angelov, President of the Baptist Union of Bulgaria, when he reported his belief that this prayer and action had made the crucial difference in allowing the project to go ahead.

Prayer and action are here seen as two sides of the same coin. The impression we sometimes give is that mission is all about doing and going, that it is about an immense amount of activity. But it can't be done unless it is wrapped in prayer; unless we in the churches of the UK are praying; unless our missionaries are praying; unless our partners overseas are praying; unless you are praying. ●

Andy and Jenny Wilson, who have been working in Cameroon, have developed close connections with their World Mission Link-Up groups and have discovered how powerful

power is prayer

these links can be. The relationship is two-way. Not only have churches been praying for them, they have been praying for known concerns in their Link-Up fellowships too.

Imagine the scene. Missionaries are back in the UK, in an ordinary Baptist church, with ordinary Christians on an ordinary Sunday morning. The music group plays, most people sing and the dance group dances, brightly coloured scarves attached to their wrists. Others get up and join them at the front of the Church and in the aisles.

The missionaries have tears in their eyes, tears of joy. What is so special about this experience? The missionaries are living through an answer to prayer - prayer they have prayed over two years while abroad, prayer for freedom and unity

in worship in this English church, prayer for strength and encouragement in church life.

Before going to Cameroon we shared prayer requests with all the Link Churches that we could manage to meet. We felt like Moses in Exodus ch.4: inadequate to go out and do the task that God had set us.

Each group or individual church was asked to pray about this particular problem and so they did, for God responded. Never were we completely overcome with any task or situation,



though God stretched us to our utmost limits many times, showing us our strengths and weaknesses, our capabilities and our gifts, gently teaching us that we need constantly to rely on him.

Colossians 4:2 teaches us to devote ourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. To be devoted means to be utterly committed. Being watchful makes us sensitive to situations which need our prayer both as missionaries and as supporters. As we watch we will see details in situations to make our prayers more specific, and as we persevere we will see answers to prayer for which we can be thankful.

During our time in Cameroon we saw answers to prayer requests we had made through our World Mission Link letters to the seven groups of churches: good health, safety on the roads, and a committed couple to replace us. As we see answers to prayer it is an encouragement to continue praying.

But Link Work is not a one-way situation: you pray for us but we'll do nothing in return. As missionaries we have a responsibility towards our supporters.

Was it chance that BMS gave us seven link groups or had there been thought about seven as the perfect

number? For us it has been practical to pray for the churches in one group each day giving us a regular weekly prayer cycle. It has been a privilege to pray and to be involved in God's plans for His people in Britain while we have been abroad.

What incredible answers we've seen, both practical and spiritual.

We had met them but knew little of the tiny church whose members all travelled in to worship from outside the village. Of their commitment to their community there was no doubt but none lived in the village centre. We felt led to pray that God would move someone into the village who would belong to that small fellowship.

For two years we prayed, trusting God to act and trusting that we had heard God correctly.

It was only when we visited on home assignment earlier this year that the picture became clear.

Yes, God had placed it on the heart of someone who had moved into a home close to the church.

And yes, the vision of the church had paralleled our prayers. They were praying for not just one but three new village-centred members.

Now the little church with a vision for its community has appointed a lay pastor after 50 years without.

Opp page:
Spanner in the works:
Andy Wilson operates on a Land Rover.
Dr Jenny operates on her husband.

Below:
Cameroon:
caring for the community

There have been other examples: specific outreach in communities, appointments of pastors, gospel seeds sown in young people's hearts and consequent conversions, churches lost from BMS contact coming back, to cite just a few.

Romans 8:26-27 speaks of how the Holy Spirit intercedes on our behalf and we thank God for the way he has helped us to understand and use them during the past two years in praying for Link churches where because of communication problems we did not know their situation or knew the problem but were unable to fully express ourselves before God.

The key to the Link church to missionary relationship is communication - communication through letters, visits, prayer cards, prayer letters, the Missionary Herald, Look magazine - so that we can be devoted, watchful and thankful, using the powerful gift of prayer to the full.

And it was that first scene of freedom in worship among those ordinary Christians for who we had prayed that proved to us that prayer is power. ●

Andy and Jenny Wilson have spent the past two years in Cameroon, Jenny as a doctor in a medical centre and Andy as a mechanic. They are BMS missionaries.



BREAKING CHAINS

Once the Albanian people were in bondage to communism - not free to have democracy, not free to travel, not free to listen to the outside world, not free to speak their minds, not free to believe...

Today, following the collapse of the oppressive regime, they are breaking the chains.

Breaking Chains, the BMS project 95, aims to raise £35,000 to resource evangelism and church planting in a nation which is hungry for God's word and which is seeing a phenomenal growth in Christianity.

BMS missionaries are among those taking the good news of salvation through Jesus to the Albanians, seeing the church grow and discipling new Christians.

A Breaking Chains project resource pack is being prepared and an information leaflet with order form is available from Christine Neilson: Telephone BMS on 01235 512077

*Now we are free
We are free to love
and serve the Lord
Jesus who died for
us and is our Saviour*

God heard our prayer for you

When Steve Allford had to be flown out of Zaire last year, following a neck injury, he and Elizabeth "were very encouraged to receive letters from Zaire... We felt the strength and unity of God's world-wide church and the power of prayer at work," they said.

Zairian Christians naturally wanted to visit Steve and to pray with him. It is in their nature to stand with people in their need, sharing their suffering. However, in this instance it was impossible, so several took up the pen and wrote, some in French, others in English, assuring Steve and Elizabeth of their prayers. Here are some of their letters.

During your stay in Great Britain we have united with you in prayer for the recovery of Monsieur Steve. So we are very happy to learn that you will soon be returning.

All the students were affected by this incident and believed that God had abandoned us, but to the contrary.

We wish you a good 'comback' to Zaire for to follow your ministry here.

All students are greeting you. God bless you.

*Thomas Mombemba
Students' representative.*

I am happy to write this letter to you. I greet you in the name of the Lord Jesus, our Saviour. I was happy to hear that your health is good. I asked for your telephone number so that I could find out the situation. The husband of the American doctor indicated that you were in the other hospital. After several days you are home. May the good God protect you in the path along which you are travelling.

Here our situations, you have left behind and in the Kingasani church they prayed for Monsieur Allford. When we were at Kinshasa Medical Centre to see you with Papa Enguta, my heart was so sad and there on the bed you were suffering and Papa Enguta was crying, the courage to work was no more. And God heard our prayer for your story that has taken place. When friends came to ask about Monsier Allford, I always spoke about what had happened.

We are awaiting to hear of your return to Kinshasa. Don't forget to greet the Christians of your church, this greeting comes from myself and the staff of CBFZ in Kinshasa.

*May God lead you
Melela wa Malela*

I am profiting from the visit here of Revd Rumbol in order to write to you.

We praise God for the improvement in Steve's health. Our prayers have been answered for this problem which has affected us all. May God's name be praised amongst the people.

We are standing up to things very well here in Kinshasa in spite of the dollarisation of life in general. God continues to provide for all our needs. I have been suffering from malaria, which has confined me to the house for a week. Actually I am on my two feet.

I would like to end this letter by hoping to see you again soon.

Nzengi

I am so glad to write to you and I think that my letter will meet you in good health.

We were dismayed when we knew about Mr Steve's accident at the swimming-pool. Luzolo and I, tried to visit him at the hospital where he was taking his first-aid, but you were in a rest. We prayed God for his case. Fortunately that he recover his health; glory to our merciful God.

Peter Tongeman, third from left, and Steve Allford, fourth from left, with the Zaire retreat group



Living with uncertainty

It is with much joy in my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ that I pick up this pen in order to write this letter.

In effect, it was with consternation that I learnt of the blow that Steve had received at the swimming pool. But I thank the Lord, for your husband and I have never ceased to intercede for the case.

My joy was great when Papa (Owen) Clark informed us that the situation was improved. May the glory be given to Jesus.

That is why my hope is that you will always stay close to Jesus who is the source of all joy.

The days are bad, we need to redeem the time.

We dare to believe that in a short time, and by the grace of God, you will once again be amongst us.

May the name of the Eternal One be praised.

For the rest, myself, I have been ill for four weeks. God has already healed me and I started back on 5 December.

*Florence-Shako
Mary.*

Ruth and Peter Tongeman visited Zaire earlier this year to lead retreats for BMS missionaries. They have had time now to reflect on the experience.

"There's been a revival in Kimpese!"

"What happened?" we asked. "Some locals brought back good they had stolen; some publicly renounced their fetishes and burned them; others set about restoring broken relationship!"

Evidence of the Spirit at work! Gwen Hunter, BMS pharmacist at Kimpese, was sharing her situation with her fellow missionaries on retreat at Kisantu.

"Unfortunately, since then, some have gone back to their old ways. We are giving more prayer to getting things right."

As each of the eleven Zaire missionaries shared their personal experience and needs, in Kinshasa, Kimpese, Mbanza-Ngungu, Pimu, they prayed for one another. It was an oasis of spiritual refreshment renewing them for the demands that lay ahead. As visitors, leading them in a study of Philippians, we discovered how relevant Paul's letter is to life in Zaire.

Zaire is a beautiful country with the friendliest of people. We were welcomed like royalty and churches were full to overflowing. Worship was accompanied by hearty singing and wonderful choirs.

But Zaire is troubled with raging inflation and widespread corruption. Teachers, nurses, doctors, civil servants, soldiers and police have been unpaid for months. When it arrives it will be practically worthless, so they

struggle to make ends meet. Church buildings are sparsely furnished and in need of repair. Roads are not maintained. There is a shortage of Christian literature and resources to train pastors and leaders. Politically and economically the country is bankrupt. Unless there is a miracle, the future appears dark and threatening.

Wherever we went there were requests for help - money to build a church or buy a computer for printing; Christian literature in French, Lingala or Kikongo; resources for scholarships for promising students; money for a chainshaw for a school of carpentry; books for a school library and Bible school; cloth for a women's sewing class.

It was a learning experience. In spite of possessing so little and living with uncertainty, we found people cheerful, strong in faith and deeply committed to their local church. We discovered Kingdom values like courage, love, mutual help, persistence amid poverty and hardship.

We learned what influence BMS has exercised in Zaire for over 100 years and in what esteem it is held. Without the churches there would be few schools or hospitals to serve the community. We marvelled at the dedication of missionaries, living in trying conditions, frustrated by shortages, spending themselves in evangelistic, medical, educational and pastoral service alongside Zairian people. We returned home determined to do all we could to support our sisters and brothers in Zaire.

Peter Tongeman was inducted as President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain at the Baptist Assembly in Plymouth last month.

World Mission Link

We can't pray without up-to-date information.

Is mail getting through? We haven't had any replies to our letters?

We haven't heard from our Link-Up missionary for months.

Are they all right? We haven't heard for some time and were wondering if they were ill or there were other difficulties.

We've learnt a great deal about Asia through our Link-Up missionaries. We pray for them and the country regularly but the church feels that being twinned with a church overseas is the next step. Can you arrange this?

Is this what you are saying in your church? Prayer is helped by communication and by up-to-date news. Does World Mission Link provide any answers?

One way missionaries keep in contact with friends and churches is through Prayer and News Letters. There is no rule as to how often these letters are sent and some missionaries write more often than others.

In Link-Up missionaries are asked to be in contact with their groups three times a year. This could be through Prayer or News Letter or by a combination of these letters and special Link Letters.

Letters mean a lot to missionaries. They enjoy reading them, hearing news from home, sharing the concerns of their Link churches. But it is not always possible to reply personally to every letter. Remember your church is not the only one writing. Most missionaries do find ways of acknowledging the letter received. If you haven't had an acknowledgement it could mean your letter hasn't arrived. It certainly doesn't mean that you should stop writing.

As to twinning, more and more churches are getting involved in this and finding it both a learning and challenging experience. But, at the moment, BMS does not arrange such contact. If churches are interested in twinning they should contact their B.U. ●



Here is the news! Blind and partially sighted friends receive the latest news on tape thanks to volunteer production teams from Baptist churches in Abingdon, Oxfordshire, and Bromley, Kent



we've got it **taped**

Since 1986, 90-minute audio tapes containing digests of Baptist news have been mailed to blind and visually handicapped friends in many parts of the country.

The service is operated by the Baptist Men's Movement who despatch over 100 tapes, free of charge, each month.

Two teams alternate in the preparation of the tapes. One is in Abingdon, Oxfordshire, and the other is in Bromley, Kent. The team leader selects items of interest from the Baptist Times, Missionary Herald, World Outlook and occasional snippets from other publications. These have to be edited and arranged for recording.

An average tape includes about 35 items of varying length. Four or five different readers are each given ten or twelve "stories" which are then recorded in a pre-arranged sequence with occasional connecting comments by the editor. Every effort is made to achieve a balance between home and

overseas news and to include opinion as well as fact.

After recording and checking, the master tape is copied by the high-speed tape-copying facilities of the BMS. The individual cassettes are then despatched by Bill White on behalf of BMM. The user returns the tape after listening to it and it is then re-used for the next despatch.

Currently around 100 tapes (113 in February) are sent out each month. No charge is made for the service which, from its inception, has been generously supported by the London Regional Association of BMM. Tapes and mailing envelopes have to be renewed or increased from time to time but, even so, expenses are not very great.

If you know a visually handicapped person who would like to receive these tapes regularly please send the name and address to: Bill White, 12 Loddon Drive, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 7QA.

Gifts for the support of this scheme are also welcome.

We marvel at what the Lord is doing

The Tapes for the Blind service is keeping visually handicapped members of our Baptist churches in touch with what is happening in mission at home and abroad. A number of those receiving tapes live in sheltered accommodation and they share the tapes with other residents. This often leads to prayers for needs highlighted by items on the tapes.

Dear Mr White

Just a wee note to let you know how much your BMM tape is appreciated.

Every month when the tape comes in some of my friends, mostly in the 75 to 80 plus group, come in to listen. There is such a variety of news and information we could never, under normal circumstances, acquire and we marvel at what the Lord is doing at home and abroad. Everyone speaks so clearly and with great passion.

God bless you all in what you do for us. We appreciate and thank you.

Sincerely,
Willie Muir. (Ayr Scotland)



Listening to the Herald

June Glaister has been magazine secretary to the Headingley and Adel congregations of South Parade Baptist Church in Leeds for over two years. More than ten per cent of the congregations take the Missionary Herald so she is kept busy. "Retired" from a senior post in the Civil Service when her department was privatised, June has become more and more involved in the church administration and helps run the Guides.

June suffers from diabetes and from a degenerative eye condition. This condition has changed within the past 18 months causing her to give up driving and confront the heart-breaking diagnosis of "partially sighted". Never one to give up, June operates a computer system that enlarges the words on the screen so that she can check what she has typed. She does the pastor's secretarial work.

Six months ago Carolyn Green realised Jane was reading large print hymn books with increasing difficulty. "How do you read the Herald?"

"I don't! The main titles are legible. But I can't read the newsprint, let alone *mh* type!"

Carolyn asked editor David Pountain if the RNIB could do a large print *mh*. "That's not necessary because there is a tape version of the *mh* and the Baptist Times available free of charge," he said.

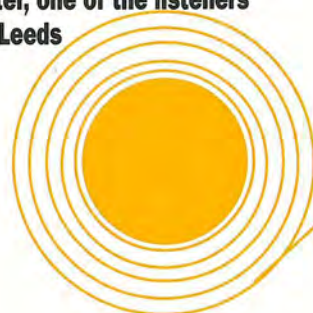
He put June on the list so fast, she had a copy before Carolyn next chatted to her! Since then June has "heard the Herald". Even though there is a slight delay in getting the news on to the tape, she can keep up with what she is encouraging others to read.

Carolyn Green checked with June that she could share her age. "At 42 she would like to encourage anyone else with vision problems to get into tapes. You don't have to wait until you are so elderly that people expect you to have difficulty.

June feels every magazine secretary should be aware of this service. No matter how clear the print, there may be those, both young and old, who need to know that tapes are available ●



Volunteer Bill White duplicating tapes. Tony Valente and Doug Bradshaw from Abingdon recording the news and June Glaister, one of the listeners from Leeds



living on a knife edge

Missionaries don't just feel physically tired after many months of work they can also experience spiritual exhaustion. From time to time, BMS arranges missionary retreats. This year retreats have been held in Brazil, in Italy - for the European workers, in Zaire, and India and Asia. Malcolm Goodspeed led one.

It had an impact on me just being with that group of Asia missionaries. They live in different situations from me and are often very lonely, even though there are a lot of people around them. They are almost shut in doing a task for God. Yet there's a sharpness about their life-focus, which I think we don't find in the same way in the UK. I found that challenging and inspiring. They made me wonder how committed I was, how dedicated I ought to be, and what I am prepared to do about it.

They are doing everyday jobs in an environment that is isolating. They are disciplined people and need to be in order to keep any kind of devotional life going. It is a matter of life or death in terms of their work for God.

But I discovered how hungry they are for teaching, for inspiration and for a ministry that was both thoughtful and devotional. They are hungry for something that is going to challenge them to think. They long for that more frequently than they were able to get it.

"We need something to take us deeper, to challenge us to think again about the faith," they said.

Nevertheless they keep on going

and the routine itself is important in order to sustain their walk with God in a busy-ness that some of us would complain about if we were caught up in it. They carry such heavy workloads, without much power to change anything, because they work in submission and alongside their colleagues in the partner churches.

Some are in situations that, unless we find retreat and recuperation space for them, push them to the edge of becoming casualties and they are aware of that. Living on a knife-edge experience is inevitable and we need very consciously to be those who relieve them of those situations from time to time.

A couple said: "I can read my Bible, I can say my prayers, but I long for that sense emotionally that God is with me." This is part of working in a different culture which can be isolating, where emotion is quickly lost in the struggle for communication.

Maybe it is one of the costs of being on these frontiers but perhaps we ought to struggle more to help. A lot of them listen to tapes from home and link churches, but these arrive only every so often. We could perhaps encourage more of this.

Many find worship music useful. Some have tapes of new songs which they appreciate. During the retreat they delighted in raising their voices with others in worship. Some of them sing songs as part of their devotions. So perhaps we could help them with worship material that is audible as well as readable.

Most of them would say that they long to have the pastoring of BMS partner churches, but realistically they realise that sometimes that there is a bridge which is difficult to cross.

Another thing that struck me is that in their business as practitioners of medicine, education, engineering, and so on, there is a hunger for wit-



ness opportunities which don't arise as readily as we sometimes imagine. That is part of their own spirituality. They've gone overseas with a vision of being evangelists using the tools of their craft in some way to create opportunities.

It is not easy always to be a servant of the servants of Christ and to recognise that the role is that of a backroom person. In the end, the best evangelists are always going to be national Christians.

However, the whole experience of leading this retreat has been an eye-opener. For all the grinding machinery of committees, that sometimes seem so tedious and pointless, some magnificent work is being supported. I now feel part of it in a way that I



have never been before.

I have been able to see and experience what we sometimes call the "third world" and it has made me acutely aware, in a new way, of the world to which we are called. Every sermon I've preached since returning to the UK has had some illustrative material from Thailand. Without twisting it, I just tell the story of the Church on the frontier encountering another culture, struggling to be, with integrity, in that context. ●

Malcolm Goodspeed is Head of BUGB's Ministry Department

Magazines

How can missionaries keep in touch with what is happening back home? "Through the Missionaries' Literature Association of course," explains John Chamberlain.

Imagine that you are a missionary in Pokhara, Tirana, Managua or perhaps Chiang Mai. Not only do you have to speak a new language you have to learn to read it too. All around are papers, magazines, billboards, timetables and official documents written in that other language and sometimes in a new script. You are in another culture.

You begin to wonder: What's happening back home? What are the latest fashions? How's Manchester United getting on? What are people eating these days? What about my profession? Am I still up-to-date? Where do you learn about key-hole surgery; that new computer program; that alternative physio technique?

What about the children? They're picking up the language better than we are, but will they cope during Home Assignment, not just with language but in their attitudes? Will they be acceptable to their school-mates, teachers and relatives?

What you need are newspapers, magazines and journals from the UK, so you can read about changes in attitudes, your profession, the street culture for the kids. Better still, some comics so they can keep abreast of things for themselves. You may not approve of all the changes, but at least you will be aware of them before you run straight into problems.

That, where the Missionaries Literature Association (MLA) comes in. We supply missionaries with newspapers - **Guardian Weekly**; general interest magazines - **Prima, Woman Alive, Woman's Weekly**; specialist journals - **Child Education, Nursing Times**; and for men - **Woodworker and Classic Cars**, just to name a few. The children are not forgotten, **Playdays, Beano, Nintendo, Quiz Kids** are all despatched; their choices not ours.

Sian Williams, BMS Director for Missionaries, says she is thrilled by the effects a magazine from home can have on the morale of individuals and families. All the people she has spoken to have been warm in their praise of the MLA service.

Dr Jenny Wilson finds the **BBC Good Food Guide** stimulating, while Andy Wilson,



who, amongst other things, maintains the mission's vehicles in the Cameroons, has been delighted with his **Classic Cars**. It brings back memories of the cars he once looked after and helps in his present job.

One missionary asked if we could send copies of **Prima, Sports Magazines or Thunderbirds**, which the children miss. The comment was: "People do not realise the value of ordinary magazines to folk out here, they seem reluctant to send them."

John Clark, in Fortaleza, Brazil, thanked us for the **Guardian Weekly**. He said that he, Norma and Daniel their son read it avidly. The men started at the rear with the sports pages, but every paragraph in the paper was devoured. It kept them in touch with events in the UK. Afterwards it was passed on to Mary Parsons. It was well used. "We don't know who the sponsor was, but we have been grateful to God for this ministry."

Action

Would you like to be part of this ministry?

You could:

- Pray that the Lord will continue to undertake for the work.
- Pray for the safe arrival of the papers.
- You or your church could become a sponsor, paying for a magazine and/or the postage. MLA will advise on the costs and do the ordering and posting for you.
- You could make a one-off, or regular contribution to the general funds.
- You could act independently if you take a suitable magazine. You could send it directly to a missionary, but we would urge you to send every copy by airmail and without cutting any parts out, no matter how much you want that pattern or recipe!

For more information please contact: John Chamberlain, 39 Charlesworth Drive, Waterlooville, Hants PO7 6AZ. Tel: 01705 265516

The Prayer Call was the “spring-head” of missionary excitement leading to the birth of the BMS

Wrapped in prayer

BMS has its roots in the Call to Prayer issued by the Northamptonshire Baptist Association in 1784. It had five aims:

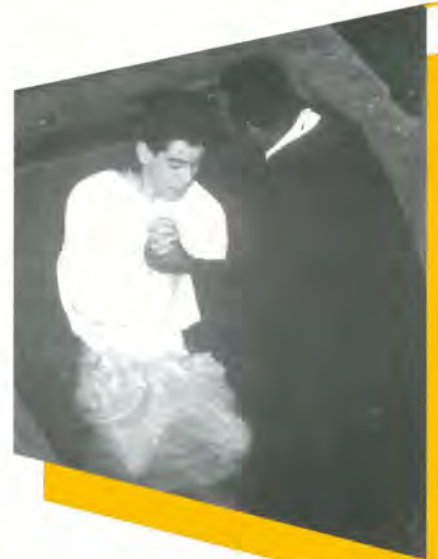
- the spiritual renewal of ministers and churches,
- the conversion of sinners,
- the edification of saints,
- the revival of religion,
- the glorifying of God’s name.

Baptists, 211 years ago, were encouraged to pray regularly on the first Monday of every month, and urged not to confine their requests to their own churches or denominations.

“Let the whole interest of the Redeemer be affectionately remembered and the spread of the gospel to the most distant parts of the habitable globe be the object of your most fervent requests.”

The response in some areas was immediate and eventually spread nationwide. The Prayer Call became “the spring-head”, the primary cause of the missionary excitement in Willaim Carey’s mind, leading to the birth of the BMS.

Ever since, the work of BMS has been wrapped in the prayers of British Baptists. Prayer calls have been issued regularly. *The Missionary Herald*, which has been telling the BMS story since 1819, has been a major means of calling people to prayer. Today, prayer and news-letters from our overseas workers are widely distributed and these, together with the BMS Prayer Guide, help



BMS supporters to continue the ministry of prayer today.

Previous generations used to talk about the Noon Tryst. The idea was that at midday BMS supporters in the UK and missionaries overseas would stop what they were doing to pray. At Baptist House, Didcot, BMS staff hear a bell which sounds at 11.55 am each day. This is a reminder to pick up the Prayer Guide and to pray for

the topic of the day.

For others, this may not be a practical time in a busy working day. But the principle is there to set aside some time each day to pray for BMS associated work.

There are many ways of coming together for prayer and one of the newest is the Prayer Concert which Leslie Gregory has pioneered for the BMS. ●

Some of the photos used by Leslie Gregory in Prayer Concerts



28:19 ACTION TEAMS

Back from their six-month tour of duty are the Belgian Action Team of four 18-year-olds: Shona MacDonald, from Dundee, Gill Smith, from Bangor, Chris Evans, from Blackwood, Gwent, and Mike Bansback, from Leighton Buzzard, Beds.

Prayer Concerts

These bring together people who are concerned for world mission, some musicians and worship songs, information from mission situations - pictorially as well as verbally, a congenial meeting place, and you have the ingredients for a Prayer Concert.

The essential thing is to create an atmosphere and share information in such a way that it is natural to respond to the needs and opportunities in mission with immediate prayer.

I have done this in over 30 churches from Canterbury to Saltash and Banbury to the Isle of Wight during the past three years. Sometimes it has been on a weeknight, sometimes instead of the Sunday evening service. In a few places a second Prayer Concert has been held.

As well as led prayers, three spells of prayer in small groups are featured.

Concerted prayer on a special theme originates in America. I adapted the concept for the BMS BiCentenary Year and it has proved to be a worthwhile idea. Prayer for world mission is a priority and in this way people are glad to be involved in it. Information for prayer has come from missionaries and from Youth Action Teams as well as from me.

I am able to provide notes and specimen programmes, or talk about Prayer Concerts, if any is interested in taking up the idea in their church or World Mission Link Group. ●

Leslie Gregory

Let's face it, things never go as smoothly as you thought they would.

What could be more straightforward than a short hop across to Belgium, seat of the European empire? People do it all the time.

All those Europhiles bouncing back and forth treat the journey like any Londoner catching a number 12 bus.

That's what I mean - the planes come in threes, and then there isn't another one for an hour.

We'll cope.

We're all Europeans now - you know, the great big Euro-family. This'll be as simple as walking through a door.

Porte-a-porte, you said?

I'm sorry, we don't have the same command of the lingo as the natives. Is that something you drink?

I know the continentals - well, Europeans now - are OK when it comes to discerning palates.

It's not a drink. Oh.

Door-to-door? You did say door-to-door? You mean knocking up people and talking to them face-to-face?

That sounds a bit like sharp end evangelism.

Yeah well, we like a challenge, but as I said, we're a bit rusty on the language.

French translators, you say?

What are we waiting for? Show us the door!

And they did!

But man, was it tough in Carnières!

The plan was simple enough: deliver letters introducing ourselves, then return later with questionnaires on a theme. We'd leave every home with a tract, a gospel and invite them to a seminar.

After two months we felt like anglers fishing off the side of a dry dock. And we'd still got another month to go.

There were high spots, though, like the man who became a Jehovah's Witness just so that he could marry his wife. After she died, he left but we found him open to talk about his search for the truth. And he asked for a pastoral visit to find out more about being a Christian.

I can tell you, we were looking forward to our six weeks in Liège: Gill and Shona working with one church and Chris and Mike with another.

We all got to do more porte-a-porte. This time the girls got involved in visitation to the sick, the elderly and other church contacts.

They're a friendly lot in Liège, feeding us, welcoming us into their homes and giving us presents.

Nice touch, that.

Oh, and then there was the Billy Graham campaign run by five protestant churches in Liège. Packed out every night, it was, with around 300 people - and eleven went forward to make a commitment.

The fellas teamed up with a group from Moorlands Bible College for an evangelistic mission week.

All that door-to-door work we did and all the language practice we got proved really useful. The mission was mainly open-air work, evening meetings and - you guessed - door to door work. Make no mistake, it was all worth it. Four new young people have joined the church youth group and the pastor is following up other contacts.

But it hasn't been evangelism, evangelism all the way. Oh no!

What with the girls up to their eyeballs in typing, cleaning floors, ironing, peeling potatoes and taking little old ladies around the supermarket; and the blokes perfecting their DIY skills with painting, tree-felling, digging and - wait for it - nappy changing...

They'll make a great bunch of husbands and wives.

Any offers?



Making the gospel liveable and relevant to all peoples everywhere.
John Wilson continues his series based on the Great Commission.

ethnic discipling!

I recently went back to Bron, one of the Lyon suburbs, where I had my first French pastorate. The service was late starting. It always had been but this once little irritation had now become a joy for me, as I watched old and young arriving on foot or relying on the irregular Sunday bus service.

The members of the congregation, with one exception, were not native to France, the majority coming from French-speaking Africa. The woman leading the service had only recently joined the church. She handed out some hand-written sheets of Lingala songs and we were away. Hand clapping, swaying, whooping and generally praising the Lord! This was a special moment for me to remember after three and a half years of trying to give identity to this refugee community.

When we were sent to the church I had been asked to try to make it an integrated community. With no other Protestant church in a town of 40,000 people it seemed a reasonable request.

It soon became obvious, through the comments of some of our sympathetic neighbours, that most white French people, like their British counterparts, are not at ease in a group where time-keeping is unimportant and other cultural norms are absent. Whilst the other Baptist church in Lyon also had an international congregation, the leadership and the ground rules were unmistakably French.

I had previously assessed the Church Growth "Homogeneity principle" as incompatible with Christian faith. The idea of dividing Christ's body into racial groups is in itself abhorrent. Living and working with people from distinct ethnic origins however clarified my understanding of this principle.

When French (or English), is not your mother tongue but is the official language of government and learning, the language of former colonial power, why should you worship in it? If you have been displaced because of economic or political reasons and you are treated by your host country as a temporary visitor (even if that's for ten or 20 years) why should you be made to express your faith 'their way'? Of course, well educated and financially secure foreigners as well as the 'second generation' will adapt and integrate into national church communities; but we need to remember that never in the history of the world have so many people been so far from home. The majority are not there by simple choice. They have the right and the need to worship Christ in their own way, just as much as any Englishman does abroad!

Ethnic discipling is the opposite of 'ethnic cleansing'. Instead of getting rid of the other person's distinctiveness, we are accepting it as a dignified and worthy way of worship and Christian service.

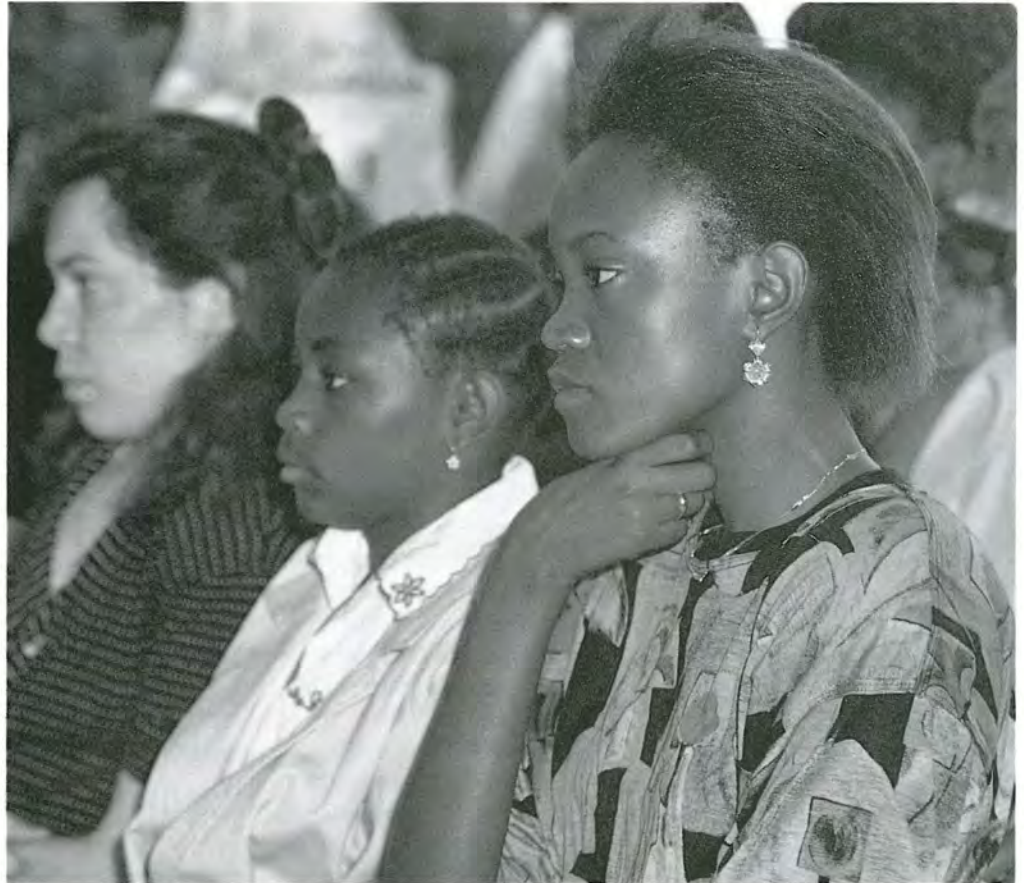
If we look at Jesus' commission of

his disciples in Matthew 28 we will see that the discipling of nations of which he speaks ('ethnies' in Greek) is an encouragement to adapt our faith and worship so that all ethnic groups can live and express the gospel in their own cultural terms. This may seem self-evident at a cursory glance, but it is perhaps the hardest part of the Great Commission to put into practice.

Missionaries have been accused of imposing too much of their culture on to the gospel and this is a reason given by some for believing that the missionary era is now past. A look however at Britain today will indicate how little the armchair critics have thought through the issue. How many Baptist churches have more than one language service a Sunday? Are your buildings loaned out to other ethnic groups so that they can have a place to meet? What regular contact does your church have with non-native churches in your area? Ethnic mission is central to the Great Commission and most British Baptist churches are within a few miles of its practical out-working.

My mother used to belong to a group in Leeds where half the members were from a white middle-class Baptist church and the other half from a black church in a down-town area that is notorious for its problems. The group didn't realise all its objectives but a good level of sharing and encouragement came out of it. That is

Ethnic mix in the church at Bron and in the market place.



where mission starts today.

One of the encouraging signs about "Churches Together in England" is the presence of different ethnic churches. If we are going to see world wide mission accomplished within our generation, or any other for that matter, it will be through the nurturing and worth that we give to ethnic discipling. People don't have to be like us to be like Jesus! Don't expect them to come and feel at home in your church and culture. Jesus tells us to make the gospel liveable and relevant to all peoples everywhere even if they only live down the street. Variety and multi-culture is the form of the church of the future, not because we can't get on together, but because God has made us all different and we celebrate his creativity. ●

Questions

- 1** Do you think that a plurality of church culture is something to be encouraged? Explain your answer!
- 2** Do you know a church that is meeting a section of society that your local church doesn't meet? How are you encouraging them?
- 3** In the context of mission what do we mean by unity?





Triennial Assembly Bangladesh

From 10-12 January 1995 the Bangladesh Baptist Sangha (BBS) held its 18th Triennial Assembly. Over 350 delegates representing 250 congregations shared in two days of fellowship and discussion.

There are 211 churches and 39 'daughter' congregations within BBS. They have a membership of 11,662 representing a community of 24,083 which is about 25 per cent of the Christian community in the country.

In each of the eight BBS regions there is a senior pastor with oversight for churches and ministers. Some pastors travel many miles by boat, bicycle or on foot each Sunday to minister to the congregations in their charge.

This year the BBS elected Mr Michael Sushil Adhikari as President for a further three-year term. Mr Adhikari has served the Sangha for 35 years as President and on Saturday 25 February 1995 over 1000 people gathered to pay their respects. Church and community leaders spoke of their friendship with Mr Adhikari over the years and how he had so often been an encouragement to them. Mr Adhikari was accompanied by his wife and two daughters.

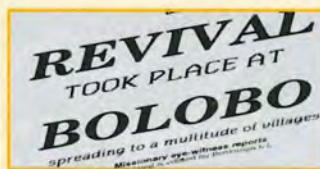
Friends of Grenfell

Jeremy Harding of the BBC, while researching for a programme in Zaire, has met up with a group of young people at Basoko who have dedicated themselves to the memory of BMS pioneer, George Grenfell.

"I was impressed by the young representatives of this club," he said. "I was taken to the cemetery where Grenfell is buried and shown the miserable state of the place, although Grenfell's tombstone is in good repair."

The club, which calls itself "Les Amis du Révérend Pasteur Georges Grenfell", has Protestants, Catholics and Muslims within its membership. Its aim, apart from caring for the tomb, is to "complete the so far unachieved work of Grenfell."

Jeremy Harding, on a return visit to Zaire, has taken copies of some documents relating to Grenfell's life.



Bolobo revival

John and Rena Mellor, working at the International Centre for Evangelism in Kinshasa, Zaire, report the printing of a booklet.

It gives "an account of a revival that took place at Bolobo and the surrounding region in 1935 as UK Baptists agreed to the request of missionaries who worked there and prayed.

"The booklet is an edition in Lingala of articles written for the Missionary Herald in 1935-36. It's like a taste of heaven to read these accounts of every section of

church life being transformed; many testimonies of God saving the most inveterate of sinners and even very old people who were totally committed to paganism till they felt the Spirit of God move through their communities."

They then go on to ask *mb* readers "to pray, to intercede with God for this booklet to be used by him to bring about another revival. There is a very great need for it - please may all readers believe this without going into details and pray much for it, please. God bless you."

They are hoping to distribute 1,000 to 2,000 copies.

Sponsored swim

Members of Golborne Baptist Junior Church near Warrington have been thinking about water and its importance in our lives. They were also concerned about people overseas who have unclean sources of water and felt they wanted to do something about it. So they held a sponsored swim and raised £83.50 for a water project.

The ages of the Junior Church members range from three to 14 years and even the little ones got involved. In all around 25 youngsters got wet!

The money will be used to support the work of Chris and Alison Rudall in Nepal. Chris is a water engineer in charge of water supplies and sanitation in and around the village of Takum near Pokhara. He is advising on the construction of school toilets in nine villages, providing the expertise while the local communities dig the pits and carry the stone, sand and cement.

We are always pleased to receive gifts from young people

who have undertaken special fund-raising events, like Golborne Junior Church's sponsored swim. It is an effective way of putting into practice God's love for people all over the world. Thank you, Golborne, for your support.

Centenary

The Centenary celebrations at Christian Medical College, Ludhiana, reached a grand climax with the Annual Convocation for nursing and medical graduates on 24 March, Founder's Day. The Chief Guest was His Excellency Lt Gen B K N Chhibber, Governor of the Punjab. His real interest and ready participation made this a fitting and memorable occasion.

The day started with a service which included thanksgiving and reflection on the past, seeking God's guidance for the future and an act of rededication.

The people taking part represented the many facets of the work of Ludhiana and included those who had served in the past, overseas links, the governing body as well as present staff and students.

The Bishop of Delhi, the Rt Rev Pritam Santram said that proclaiming the Kingdom of God and healing the sick are the inseparable two sides of the coin of Christ's commission. He quoted, "Freely you have received, freely give" and asked, "Are we really listening to what Christ says?" His challenge was to move into the next century listening to those words and being prepared to do something new in his service.

For the week before Founder's Day, there was a programme, mostly of an academic nature, when seminars and lectures were given by present and past staff members and visitors. The

College of Nursing hosted a student nurses' programme attended by 20 schools of nursing in the Punjab.

The students presented a production of "Joseph and his Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" and the play "Love from a Stranger."

Many visitors, overseas staff who had served in the past and CMC alumni who are now scattered throughout India and elsewhere, joined the celebrations. They expressed their debt of gratitude for the high quality of training they received in Ludhiana.

608 million Bibles

The United Bible Societies (UBS) report that 608,664,925 Bibles and parts of the Bible were distributed around the world in 1994. Yet this is nowhere near meeting the demand.

John Erikson, UBS General Secretary warned of a "growing gap" between those who were receiving copies and those who were not. The world's growing population means that the impressive publishing figures are not a reason to feel complacent.

"In a world of five billion people, it is our mandate to reach every person with the Word of God," Mr Erikson said.

He recognised the need to reach people who could not read or did not wish to read. "We must not be limited to ink-print scriptures," he said, pointing out a new interest in audio scriptures.

The UBS report speaks of increasing numbers of Bibles being printed at the Amity Printing Press in Nanjing, China. Amity will soon be able to print two and a quarter million Bibles each year.

A growing church

"How many of you would like to deal with the problems of a growing church?" ask David and Yvonne Wheeler, in Albania.

"We are in a time of tremendous growth and the challenge is to keep up with it. Children are coming to the Lord and adults too. Their rate of personal growth is astounding."

They tell the story of Elton, a young man in the Bible Class who "found the Lord a few weeks ago."

"He told his Muslim parents and his mother and sister came to the Billy Graham relay meetings. Elton helped another five enquirers find the Lord Jesus and he is living on top of the world."

The Bible Class, run by David Wheeler for the 20 to 35 year age group, aims to complete an overview of the Bible in nine months as part of a three year training programme in the church.



"How would you guide new believers through the Bible, bearing in mind that they have never even held a Bible before?" David asks. "The programme means doing Joshua in one week!"

Elton is a law student and when David suggested they miss out Leviticus he was so disappointed he decided to study it on his own.



With the Leprosy Mission Land Rover at Didcot

Leprosy

A campaign by The Leprosy Mission to bring the disease under control worldwide by the year 2000 has received encouragement from British Baptists.

At the start of the mission's 12-week Countdown Challenge one of two Land Rovers, commissioned to travel throughout England to promote the campaign, visited Baptist House at Didcot.

Reg Harvey, BMS General Director, and David Coffey, BUGB Secretary, spoke with the campaign's travelling co-ordinators, Ray Burnish and David Middlebrook.

The Leprosy Mission has strong links with the BMS. BMS doctors Mark and Andrea Hotchkin are seconded to the mission in Conakry, Guinea, and the BMS supports Chandraghona Christian Hospital and Leprosy Centre in Bangladesh.

The Countdown Challenge, launched in Westminster Abbey in March, aims to encourage supporters to spend 12 hours during its 12-week run to raise funds.

It is part of the mission's five-year Countdown to Cure campaign, which seeks to widen support and increase its income by £10 million over the five years to enable every sufferer to receive treatment by the turn of the century.

CHECK OUT

JUNE 1995

ARRIVALS

Valerie Hamilton from Bangladesh
Carole Whitmee from India
Isobel Strang from Nepal
Glyn and Gill Jones from Albania
Prema Tennekoon from Albania
Stuart and Joyce Filby from Belgium
Stan and Maureen Porter from Brazil
Owen and Deanna Clark from Zaire
Steve and Pam Seymour from Zimbabwe

DEPARTURES

Derek and Joanna PUNCHARD to Brazil
Chris and Mairi BURNETT to Albania
Betsy and Saverio GUARNA to Albania
Stuart and Joyce Filby to Belgium
Gerry MYHIL to Brazil
Margaret SWIRES to Brazil

VISITS

Derek RUMBOL to Central African Republic and Zaire
David Martin to Belgium

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS LEGACIES

	£
Brooking, Mrs	250.00
Hide, M K	500.00
Johnson, Mrs Nellie	115.42
Munson, Mrs Daphne Ann	25.55
Rundle, Miss Alice Maud	5,500.00
Soper, Revd Eric F	150.00
Thomson, Mrs Kathleen E	400.00
Turnbull, Miss Mary	50.59
TOTAL	6,991.56

ANONYMOUS GIFTS

	£
Brixham	60.00
CAF Vouchers (4)	220.00
Cardiff/Newport	10.00
Charities Trust	21.85
Cheshire	5.00
Dartford	25.00
London	5.00
Northampton	10.00
Norwich	5.00
Portsmouth	5.00
Retired Pastor	10.00
Southampton	15.00
Westbury on Trym	20.00
TOTAL	411.85

order form

World mission in the 1990s is exciting, invigorating, and challenging. And you are part of this every time you pick up the *mb.* magazine, read it, use it as a stimulus for prayer, and stay up to date. From a recent survey here's what other readers have said about the *mb.*:

"I feel the magazine presents a superb image, very professional yet caring and Christian."

"I enjoy reading the *mb.* I learn far more about the needs of people in other parts of the world and then am more able to appreciate the various ministries being carried out by our missionaries. Names become more familiar and prayer becomes more meaningful."

"The more one learns of those persons prepared to give up all for the Gospel's sake, the more one feels the necessity to become a more effective local witness for Jesus."

how to order

1 Place your annual order through your church magazine secretary and receive your copy post-free at £5.00 for 10 issues.

2 If you are not part of a church with a magazine secretary order direct from us at BMS. A year's subscription to *mb.* costs £9.40, post-paid. Simply complete and return this form with a cheque for £9.40 to the address below.

Please send me copies of the *mb.* starting with (month)

Name

Address

Post Code

Home Church

Are you the church magazine secretary? YES /NO

MAGAZINE SECRETARIES AND FOR BULK ORDERS PLEASE NOTE: MINIMUM ORDER £15.00

Please return this form to Janet Keys, BMS PO Box 49 Baptist House 129 Broadway Didcot Oxon OX11 8XA Cheques should be made payable to the Baptist Missionary Society. BMS is a registered charity



Action Cards are sponsored by the BMS, BUGB, Christians Aware, Church of Scotland, Methodist Church DSR and the United Reformed. Church. To obtain a set of cards please contact: The Methodist Church, Division of Social Responsibility, 1 Central Buildings, London SW1H 9NH

World environment day

Three years ago this month, world leaders met in Rio de Janeiro for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) - otherwise known as The Earth Summit. It sought to influence popular thinking and public policies to combat pollution and waste, to arrest the loss of resources, to improve the quality of life, and to promote sustainable development.

Many of our concerns about the environment are not global but local - about the air we breathe, the transport we use, the waste we recycle, the parks we enjoy. This was realised when UNCED adopted Agenda 21, to continue work on the environment by the UN, national governments, community organisations and local authorities.

By 1996 local authorities should have undertaken a consultative process with local residents, businesses and local

organisations to formulate Agenda 21.

To mark World Environment Day (5 June) send this month's card to the leader of your local authority at the County or Town Hall (address in the local telephone directory or library) enquiring what arrangements are being made to follow up the Earth Summit by developing local Agenda 21.

Ask if they have undertaken an environmental audit to establish what measures would be appropriate to promote sustainability, and how the Council ensures that environmental concerns are properly taken into account in decision making.

Environmental strategies could cover energy conservation, recycling, reducing pollution, environmental education, transport, planning, open spaces, waste reduction, environmental and consumer protection, purchasing and resource use. ●

call to prayer

Supplementing the BMS 1995 Prayer Guide. Week numbers correspond to those in the Prayer Guide copies of which can be obtained from BMS price 60p (inc p&p).

Week 23

June 4-10

Bangladesh: Church work

Give thanks that the long overdue consultation between the Bangladesh Baptist Sangha, BMS and the Liebenzeller Mission (German partners) eventually took place at the end of April. This was an important meeting to plan for the extension and strengthening of the Christian church in Bangladesh. Pray for wisdom as plans and decisions are implemented, and relationships consolidated. ●●●●

Listening God
thank you
for making us ask
for making us put our prayers
into words
so that we can understand
what you want from us
especially in a place
like Bangladesh
where the church is so small
and another religion so
strong;
may our prayerful words
for Bangladesh
match your will
for the millions
in that country.

Week 24

June 11-17

Brazil: Paraná

Paraná state is in the southern part of Brazil, where, generally life is not so hard and underdeveloped as it is in other regions. Curitiba, the capital, is an ever expanding city, and

recently suffered much damage in heavy rain storms.

Keith and Barbara Hodges work in the Seminary where Keith is Dean and Head of the Old Testament Dept. Recently he wrote: "Life at the Seminary continues in good shape. Thanks to some special financial input by BMS, we have been able to employ a qualified pedagogist to help technically in raising the teaching standard of the Seminary, which is an answer to prayer, and we are very grateful to the Society for making this essential service a reality. This means I am able to concentrate on my own special input, and spend more time with the students and in the classroom... We have just received an intake of 54 new students for the theology course." ●●●●

Week 25

June 18-24

El Salvador

Although the situation is still strained with the two separate bodies ABES (El Salvador Baptist Association) and FEBES (El Salvador Baptist Federation) holding separate assemblies and showing little sign of reconciliation there are glimmers of hope.

SEBLA is a new Baptist Seminary set up after the forced closure of the existing Seminary by ABES. It rents a new building but is using the same staff. It is now in the process of training 50 pastors and lay pastors, and David Quinney-Mee runs one of the courses.

Women's work is also continuing, as the women's organisation has its own autonomy. Rachel Quinney-Mee is helping in this work. ●●●●

Week 26

June 25-July 1

Thailand

At the Bangkok Institute of Theology, where Geoff and Chris Bland are working, students will have just come to the end of their long summer break and another term will have begun. The students will have used this long break to visit their families (something they can only do once or twice a year if they come from the north of the country) and all the students will have had a "church placement" to gain work experience. This may have been in Bangkok or in a village.

Give thanks also that Angus and Carol MacNeill have completed Modules 3 and 4 at the Language School. This means that now they should know all there is to know about reading and writing the Thai script. They write: "We did take heart the other day when reading from the book of Daniel, to note that Daniel and his friends had a three year course in Babylonian language and literature to complete before beginning work in the King's palace." ●●●●

Week 27

July 2-8

Zaire: Development

Owen and Deanna Clark tell of a trip they made from Kinshasa to Lokela to encourage a new CBFZ group at Nkasi Mwela. "It meant a lot of spadework remaking the eroded sandy road, and took ten hours to cover 50 miles. There remained two canoe journeys, separated by a mile or two on foot, and a steep hill to climb. We arrived at one in the morning! Once there, however, we met up with groups coming in from Lokela, Manzonzi, Yongo and elsewhere on foot or by canoe,

including their choirs and a festive spirit prevailed."

Praise God that in spite of all these difficulties Zairian Christians are still eager to meet together for worship and teaching. But so much more could be done if the roads were passable. Goods and services could reach the people who so desperately need them. ●●●●

Week 28

July 9 - 15

India: CBCNI

All the states of the Indian Union except for the four states of South India are within the boundaries of the Church of North India, which means it covers 80 per cent of the area and 75 per cent of the population of India. As well as Hindi and English, nine regional languages and six major tribal languages are in use here. All the cultural differences of India's people are to be found within the CNI with congregations dispersed throughout the cities, villages and towns.

The CNI has brought together six major denominations, amongst them, the Baptists. Sambalpur diocese and Cuttack diocese both have bishops of Baptist origin: pray especially for these two men, Revd D K Mohanty and Revd L Tandy.

Pray that within this union each uniting church will see its own identity as being not the whole but a part of the common identity.

As well as its strengths the union has had its own problems, and it has been a great challenge to reconcile these different convictions, castes, regions and language groups in a unified Church.

Pray for these Christians in India as they search for an Indian Christian identity. ●●●●



SELECT a sunny place, prepare the soil, sow the seeds from the packet, water regularly, weed occasionally and within a few months you'll have a colourful display or a bumper crop.

And if things don't go as planned, it's only a minor irritation. If the harvest is poor, you can pop out to the shops and buy something instead.

But for many people in Albania, Zaire, Brazil or Nepal it's not that easy. No crop often means nothing to eat. And there are so many possible reasons for a failed harvest.

That's where Operation Agri and BMS are making the difference. Working with partner churches in developing countries, they're helping local people to reap good rewards for their labours.

Good crops.

Sustainable harvests.

Year after year.

This year's joint Harvest Appeal will help them to sow good seed in a richer soil to give them a brighter future.

The joint Operation Agri BMS

Harvest Appeal



Plan your part in the appeal with a special resources pack available next month. Phone Christine Neilson on 01235 512077 for an order form

Prayer Concert

- Want to pray for world mission?
- Want to do something a bit different? But not gimmicky?
- Want to pray in large groups and small?
- With young and old?
- Want the prayer situations to come alive somehow?

If that is how you feel, why not try a Prayer Concert?

What is a Prayer Concert?

At its simplest it's a cross between a concert and a prayer meeting, but much more and much less. Take out the spectator bits, the 'us' and 'them' feeling. Take out any boredom factor which might creep in, and any one person monopolising the meeting. Inject into it instead a sense of participation, of living mission, of colour, light and sound, of music, voices, heartfelt cries and a joining together of hopes, requests, and an insight into the heart of God.

So the meeting has a programme of worship, meditation, learning and prayer - the prayer usually interspersed in three or four sections around a theme. The information for prayer can come from a whole variety of sources: missionaries themselves, prayer letters, BMS Co-Ordinators, Youth Action Teams and, of course, the Missionary Herald!

Leslie Gregory BMS Co-Ordinator for the South and West of England has been arranging and participating in Prayer Concerts since 1992.

His recipe is simple: Bring together people who are concerned for world mission, some musicians and worship songs, information from mission situations (pictorially as well as verbally), a congenial meeting place, and you have the ingredients for a Prayer Concert.

Leslie goes on to say, "I have done this in over 30 churches from Canterbury to Saltash, and Banbury to the Isle of Wight during the past three years. Sometimes it has been on a week night, sometimes instead of the usual Sunday evening service. In a few places a second Prayer Concert has been held."



Resources for prayer

Resources for prayer available from BMS

BMS Prayer Guide covers every geographical area and aspect of work that BMS is involved in. Every church should automatically receive a copy in time for January 1. But if you have mislaid yours, or would like an individual copy, contact us here at BMS. Cost 60p to cover postage and packing.

Praying with Missionaries a wall chart containing photographs of all serving BMS missionaries. This is a good companion for the Prayer Guide.

Prayer Letters Available on request for an individual missionary or missionary couple or for a continent when you will receive all the prayer letters for missionaries working there. Supplied free, but a donation to cover printing costs and postage is appreciated.

Prayer Cards available for most BMS missionaries. A simple colour photo of the missionary or missionaries and family set on a card with a map of their location and a Scripture text chosen by the missionaries themselves. This can be placed on shelves or notice boards at home or at church as a constant reminder to pray for those known personally to you or those for whom you feel a special prayer burden.

Praying with God's People by David Pountain.

A book of prayers and meditations, most of which were written especially for BMS. Excellent for both public and private use, to help Christians feel part of the world church. £4.99.

Worldwide This is the BMS monthly prayer tape. It is a 15 minute programme provided free but designed to keep you informed with up-to-date news, features of different aspects of mission and stimulating interviews with missionaries. It also comes complete with prayer notes. A 29p stamp is appreciated to cover postage.

Other resources

Operation World by Patrick Johnstone, published by OM Publishing. It is an attempt to survey the world and portray its spiritual needs. It is a prayer manual and a lot, lot more. Written as a yearbook, each day gives a topic (usually a country) for prayer, with information on area, population, people groups, religion and specific needs. Accompanied by graphs, maps and statistical data.

Also a version for children You can change the world by Jill Johnstone.

Learning the language of prayer by Joyce Huggett is a book for those new to praying or those who would like to have a refresher course. It draws on Joyce Huggett's own experience in learning Greek as a new arrival to living in Cyprus. And so the book looks at 'Learning the alphabet', 'Basic vocabulary' and 'Finding a tutor'. Learning the language of prayer is designed in 'bite-sized pieces as material to be prayed' and is by no means a theological text book. Price £9.99, published by the Bible Reading Fellowship.

African market



Crowded stalls together,
 Dirty dusty street,
 Hot and humid weather,
 Black sandalled feet.
 Tired women carrying burdens
 on their head,
 Live chickens clucking,
 soon they will be dead.
 Wares spread out sparsely,
 Peanuts, charcoal, beans,
 Fly-covered fish, for sale by every means.
 Brightly coloured dresses,
 Gaudy, floppy sandals,
 Dry wood for kindling,
 Grubby, stubby candles.
 Talking, shouting, arguing,
 Bargaining the price,
 Manioc and kwanga,
 Little piles of rice.
 Goat's meat, pig meat, caterpillars dried,
 Chicken meat chopped up, fresh or fried.
 Avocado, lychees, paw, passion fruit,
 Pineapples, tomatoes -
 size and weight to suit.
 Crowded people bustling,
 Tired people lounging,
 Hungry people buying,
 Poor people scrounging.
 Pungent smells pervading,
 Noisy, busy sounds,
 In a Zairean market
 Where all life abounds.

Peter Tongeman from 'Glimpses of Zaire' written whilst in Zaire to lead missionary retreats. Peter Tongeman is this year's President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain.

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NO ANSWER REQUIRED

Have you heard the story about a missionary who received a letter from a little girl whose Sunday School class had been asked to write to missionaries? Evidently this class has been told how busy missionaries were. So her letter simply said:

Dear Revd Harris,
 We are praying for you. We are not expecting an answer.

TAKE TWO

not entirely quiet

Owen Clarke continues his series of articles on every day life in Zaire

It's not been entirely quiet on the CBFZ compound. For a start there are the background noises. These begin with a cock crowing loudly apparently announcing, like the Psalmist (57:8). "I will awake the dawn." And the rest of us too! Only his timing is a bit optimistic.

A little later the gentleman newly moved in downstairs begins to chant his prayers. This awakens his wife, who joins in. I sleepwalk to the sitting-room and lie down on the sofa. Soon the rufous scrip robins begin to warble loudly on the verandah. Day finally breaks and our parrot, James, belatedly joins the dawn chorus. With great gusto he runs through his repertoire of greetings, sayings, bits of nursery rhymes, snatches of songs, whistling, cawing, coughing and sneezing. I give up the unequal struggle and put the kettle on.

Exercise, mug of tea, QT, shower and shave, during which time vehicles are beginning to move. Pastor Mengi's elder son revs up his father's double-cabin Toyota truck and drives it round to the front. Providing he can get it to start, that is. If not, all the kids turn out, very chic in their white tops and navy blue, and push-start it. They all pile in, father appears, brief-case in hand, and drives them to school in his way to ECZ (Church of Christ in Zaire). Likewise the gentleman downstairs takes his five children to school in his car. They are amongst the lucky ones. A recent headline claimed that 75 per cent of Zairian children are not in school.

Other vehicles are on the move, mainly Land Rovers - Dr Motingea's red one, the general run-around blue one, Steve's short base, Malela's old white one and Mama Ditina's gleaming new white one. That's what's known as brand loyalty! Not the quietest of vehicles, they come and go all day. When Toko, the gardener, starts his petrol-powered lawn-mower all conversation in the vicinity comes to halt.

Malela, incidentally, our protocol chap, has had one or two ups and downs recently. His guardian angel seems to have been off duty. Set down near where he lives at Kingasani late one night, after an airport trip, he was immediately surrounded by armed men. They relieved him of his jacket, belt, shoes, money and documents. They let him go home in shirt and trousers.

Then, the other day, whilst downtown, he called for help on his Motorola and Steve went to his aid. There was confusion at first as to whether he had run over a cat, known locally as a pouss, or hit a two-wheeled handcart, known as a pousse-pousse. It proved to be the latter. It had spun round and knocked over the

fellow pushing it. A crowd had gathered and were berating Malela in an unfriendly manner.

Some gendarmes came to the rescue by letting him drive them, with the cart pusher, to the gendarmerie. The injured party claimed that every bone in his body had been broken and that, in any case, he hadn't eaten yet that day. Some food was procured, but the gendarmes advised opening a dossier and having him X-rayed. Several hours later, X-rays taken from various angles had failed to detect any broken bones. It remained to settle the bills for the X-rays, the gendarmerie dossier and, of course, the personal expenses of the kindly gendarmes. All of which came to a tidy sum - at least the cat lovers can rest assured that no cat was involved.

By late afternoon the background noises are reduced to the domestic variety. The family downstairs begin to chant their evening prayers. They're apparently into spiritual combat, though at times it sounds litkeit's getting a bit physical. There was spiritual combat on Mount Carmel but there it was the opposition that made the noise. Elijah chivvied them no end about the racket they were making. When it was his turn he first doused everything with water so that no one could say a match had been struck. Then he said simply, "This is your affair, Lord, not mine. Let 'em have it!" And he did - the heavy artillery! Elijah won hands down. That, of course, was real faith. There are a lot of substitutes about, but the genuine article is not so easy to come by. ●



Dear *m/h*.

"We want someone exciting. We are definitely not interested in anyone over 50."

Reading the piece in the March Mh on "Choosing a Link-Up missionary" reminds us that as a Baptist family we are a very disparate bunch of folk.

I wonder what experiences of missionaries this church had that made them decide that once you get to 50 you aren't exciting?

By the same post as the March Mh we receive some information on the "International Journal of Frontier Missions," published by the International Student Leaders Coalition for Frontier Missions.

"The Journal seeks to promote intergenerational dialogue between senior and junior mission leaders, cultivating an international fraternity of thought in the development of frontier missiology and advocating completion of world evangelisation by AD 2000.

May we all cultivate a fraternity of thought on the completion of The Great Commission. Perhaps, lovingly, one could ask churches to believe that there are many people in Christian work who are still exciting, right up to the end of their days. It all depends on keeping one's spirit young by living and burning for a vision. May all Link Churches pray for their link missionaries to stay exciting as they themselves live for a vision of a world won for Christ.

Yours in his love and service
John Mellor
Kinshasa, Zaire

waves

A personal and independent look at prayer by **Alan Hubbard**



Several times a year, I find myself driving around the one-way system of Bedford. Sooner or later I get stopped at a set of traffic lights, beside which stands a larger than life statue of John Bunyan, who wrote 'Pilgrim's Progress'. The statue stands on the actual site of the prison where Bunyan was kept many years and where he wrote the book.

These days as I pass the statue, I often think of the lady in Bedford who very kindly sent a card to Terry Waite of a stained glass window, illustrating a scene taken from Pilgrim's Progress, whilst he was held prisoner in Lebanon.

During the time that Terry Waite was held captive, I, like many people, said a quick prayer whenever he came to mind. The warehouse where I worked had a large quantity of newspaper photographs of him stuck to a cupboard door which everyone had to pass continually. These were put up as a prayer reminder. I know that every morning, all warehouse staff gathered for prayer, which included prayer for his release.

I must admit that in my prayers and thoughts on the subject, two ideas kept coming back: one, "Why bother? All these other Christians are praying, I do not need to, my prayers will not count anything with God." Two, "This is a major problem, he will be lucky if he is ever released. He's got as much chance as the Berlin wall being knocked down," ie: lack of trust in God. Now, I very much believe that such ideas are from Satan to put me/us off praying or to make us feel our prayers are ineffective. They are not ineffective!

An old man, walking along a beach at dawn, noticed a young man ahead of him picking up starfish and throwing them into the sea. Catching up with the young man, he asked what he was doing. "The starfish will die if they are still on the beach when the sun gets on them with its mid-morning heat" came the reply. "But the beach goes on for miles, and there are millions of starfish," countered the old man. "How can your efforts make any difference?" The young man looked at the starfish in his hand and then threw it to safety in the waves. "It makes a difference to this one," he said.

Alan Hubbard worships at Wokingham Baptist Church where he is the Prayer Encourager.

Deka

NEW!

Children's Project 1995 DEKA BANGLADESH

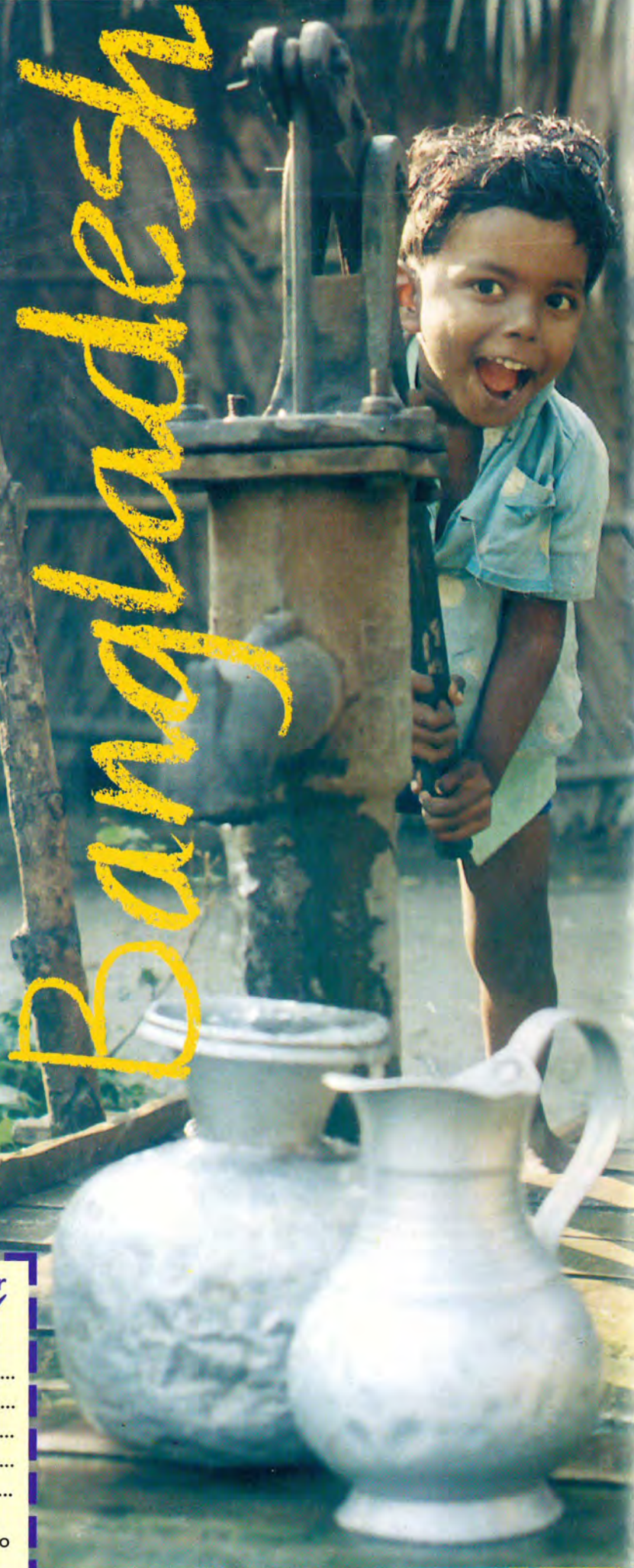


In response to many requests, we now have an annual project especially for children up to the age of 12!

'Deka Bangladesh', is the BMS Children's Project for 1995.

The Project is to help the children at the School for the Blind in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Through 'Deka Bangladesh', British children have the opportunity to help raise £4,000 towards the upkeep of the school.

Send for a free 24 page project booklet, with stories, games and Bible-based activities and a poster.



Please send me the project materials for
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