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Hong Kong

what future for the church?



China

the church in an atheist state

Mike Pilavachi Living sacrificially

cutting edge

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Audio tape



JAN KENDALL



I guess sacrifice is not something we think about a lot. My dictionary gives one definition for it: "the act of giving up something valued for

the sake of something else more important or worthy". Well, maybe, we can do it once in a while, but it's easy to slip into the mentality of the age which denies itself nothing.

This issue focuses on the church in China and Hong Kong, something that has been brought to the forefront of all our minds as the handover of Hong Kong to China draws ever nearer. Christians in China over the years have had to make sacrifices, that make our giving up of incidentals look incredibly petty and almost profane. Meanwhile Christians in Hong Kong, having enjoyed a life of comparative security, must now face the unknown, and the uncertainty that brings.

You will also find included with this edition of *mb* your second instalment of the BMS Prayer Guide. Thank you for all your positive comments about the first Prayer Guide; we've been amazed, as always, as to how God has led us to include certain items at specific times - just when they seemed to be needed most! So keep praying! Our God delights to answer our prayers - even if the answers aren't quite what we expected!

Jan

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COVER IMAGE
CHILDREN OF HONG KONG
PHOTO: HONG KONG TOURIST ASSOCIATION



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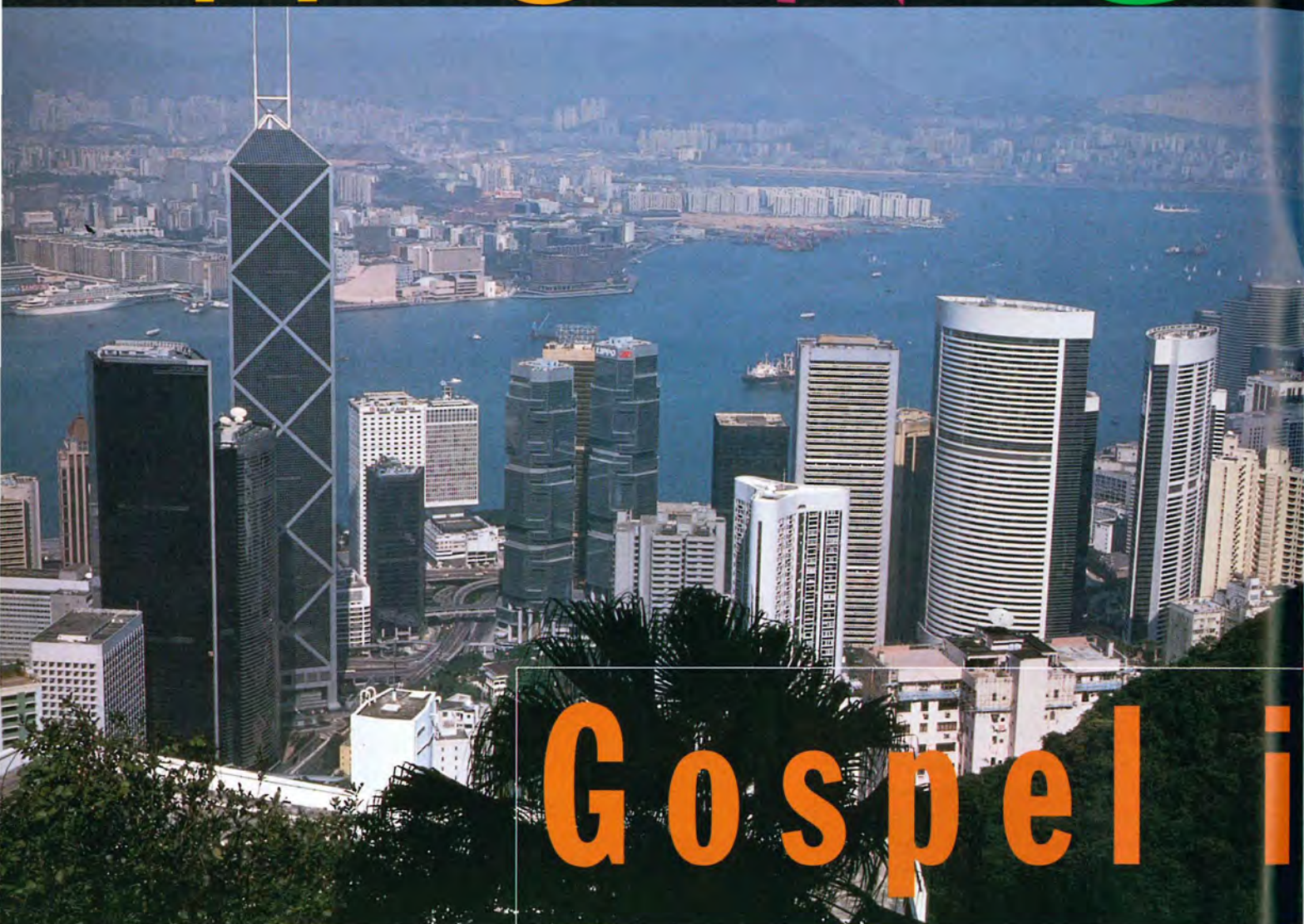
JOHN PASSMORE

The last word

NEXT ISSUE JULY-AUGUST***Transmitting the Word***

The place of broadcasting and multi-media in the work of sharing the gospel

HONG



BY CHRIS REVELEY

Hong Kong: The impressive skyline of a high-tech city but what future awaits its children?

It would appear that Christianity in Hong Kong has a good name. A Chinese colleague phoned me at work a few weeks ago and asked if I could introduce him to someone at Kowloon City Baptist Church. I was pleased to hear that he was suddenly interested in going to church.

He quickly explained that the church ran one of the best kindergartens in Hong Kong and so he was willing to do whatever it took to get his child in there! One University, many hospitals, schools as well as kindergartens, youth centres and elderly centres are run by churches and so Christianity is seen as a good and worthy influence.

And yet the Cantonese slang saying

for someone who is too pushy, talkative or salesy is that they are 'talking Jesus'. Christianity has done a good job meeting Hong Kong's social and material needs, yet seems to have by-passed the heart and so still only about five percent of Hong Kong's six million people are Christians..

New Town Church Planting

Over half the population of Hong Kong now live in the area called the New Territories which is characterised by modern 35-storey high-rise blocks with the average family having just 400 square feet in which to live. Organised into estates of 30,000 residents, one can find the population of a town such as Aldershot living on the ground area of

about 10 football pitches! The ground floor of each block is reserved by the Government for a social function such as a kindergarten. These services have been 'privatised' so that groups such as churches, who undertake to manage and fund them to regulated standards, then get use of the premises in the evenings and at weekends.

Tai Po Baptist Church has planted a daughter church on the new Fu Heng estate on the edge of town. This involved undertaking to finance and run a 550-children-a-day kindergarten at the bottom of a block. A young local pastor, an elderly Baptist missionary from the USA with a trainee couple from England and 20 committed church members, a

K O N G

FEATURE Challenges for Hong Kong

few of whom had flats on Fu Heng estate, started a Sunday service and an outreach in 1992. Over the next few years many came to commit themselves to Christ and the church grew to about 120.

Many new Christians were first contacted through the kindergarten. When the social and spiritual elements of the gospel are in unity then the love of God draws people to him. At the beginning of 1997, Pastor Wong, with his wife and daughter, were commissioned by the church to go to France to learn French prior to heading to northern Africa as ambassadors for the gospel.

What future the Hong Kong church?

In the aftermath of the death of Deng and as 1 July 1997 draws closer, the church in Hong Kong faces the

churches, has re-structured and trained up for a cell church model, equipping the Christians and reducing the dependence on pastor or place or Sunday service.

Perhaps God is needing to purify his people here as he has purified and strengthened his church in China. Perhaps, as many believe, this is God's time for Hong Kong and many will turn to him. Perhaps the mixture of the Spirit-filled and dynamic Chinese evangelists coupled with the well-taught and affluent Christians of Hong Kong is a force that is going to change the rest of the world.

What we do know is God is in control and he will work out his purposes. ●

Chris Reveley is married to Lucy and works for the International Bank. They have two children

FOR PRAYER:
Please stand with your brothers and sisters, and, every time you hear Hong Kong mentioned this year, pray for the pastors and the churches, God's people there, during this special time in history.



A social and spiritual n Hong Kong

challenges of a very different and uncertain future. Although most people do not expect immediate dramatic changes, the new administration may well review a policy that gives churches such a powerful relevance in the community. It may be harder for missionaries to go in or out of Hong Kong. There is some speculation that churches may be required to register as the first step to a greater level of regulation. Fu Heng, along with many other





MICHAEL MACKEY ASKS A HONG KONG BAPTIST PASTOR HOW THE CHURCH IS FACING THE CHALLENGES PRESENTED BY THE HANDOVER TO CHINA

Interesti H O N G

For Christians in Hong Kong these are, in the words of the traditional Chinese curse, “interesting times”. There are both inescapable challenges and opportunities in the period during which the British-run colony will be returned to mainland Chinese rule.

Questions and concerns about the handover have been playing on the mind of Revd Timothy Lam, Senior Pastor at Mongkok Baptist Church.

“As a pastor I have thought of this question for a long time” said Timothy. “I have prepared, like the government, for thirteen years.”

Thirteen years ago, the British and Chinese governments agreed in the Joint Declaration, that British-run Hong Kong would be returned to China, who would in turn guarantee Hong Kong a high degree of autonomy.

But many people in Hong Kong have

doubts about the Chinese side’s sincerity in keeping to their promises, especially after Beijing brutally suppressed the pro-democracy movement in June 1989.

Under British administration people have been left largely to their own devices, as have the churches too. China’s communist administrators, however, don’t have such a benign view. “We have heard stories about how the Chinese persecute Christians” said Timothy.

Seemingly this attitude has already spilled over into Hong Kong.

The example cited by Timothy concerns the Lutheran Congress planned for July this year which Beijing’s effective embassy in Hong Kong, the New China News Agency, attempted to get stopped.

“It’s not our understanding that government or government officials should interfere in this sort of thing” said Timothy diplomatically.

“Baptists do not want this sort of

thing to happen in Hong Kong. We want to be good citizens, but also want to take care of our own religious affairs on our own” he said firmly.

Not surprisingly when asked about the future, his reply began, “We have to take care of the Church and State relationship.”

Many people find what has already happened ominous, and the need to address their concern has added to the workload of the Church. The most obvious problem is emigration.

The figures are telling. In the past ten years Mongkok Baptist Church has lost a total of 100 members. That being said, attendance is plateauing at around 800 members with, on average, 300 attending the Sunday service. The real impact of emigration lies in the effect it has on church leadership.

“Many Christian leaders leave for other countries... Christian leaders see



Living in Hong Kong

this and choose not to live under another regime, especially since the events of 4 June 1989” said Timothy, who will himself be staying. “It’s God’s calling for me to stay. I have to stay; I think it’s important” he said.

The evidence he gives to support his statement is anecdotal. Of the theological class he teaches (a mixed bunch of Baptists and other free churches) only one in fifteen churches has not been affected by emigration. Likewise, three of his four predecessors have emigrated and one has gone onto further study.

Lost to emigration are the middle-aged men who have enough experience to be employed elsewhere and enough of their working life left to make it worthwhile. At only 39, Timothy has been the Senior pastor since 1990. “In a church this size I should not take this role but we cannot find a senior pastor” he said. “The young pastors have to take

the leadership role.”

This is not to say that those who choose to stay, or who cannot leave Hong Kong for whatever reason, are neglected. Much of the Church’s work is helping people in this category deal with their problems and overcome the stresses that inevitably arise.

“We equip people, we train them” said Timothy. The key thing here is not just encouraging people to accept these changes and get used to them but to educate them about what is happening. This is done on two levels.

Firstly there is teaching about secular matters such as the Chinese government, culture and communism. Second is Bible study to grow faith.

Timothy views the future realistically. As he pointed out the turbulence of Hong Kong in the past decade means the Christian community is already used to testing times. What he also said, which it

is important to remember, is the return to China could actually be beneficial.

“I think this is a time when we have some challenges in our faith ... we have plenty of opportunity. As part of China, I think it will be easier to preach the gospel because we are Chinese” he said.

This might sound far-fetched but there is an intriguing precedent.

In 1979 the Chinese mainland began an “open door policy.” This encouraged Hong Kong businesses to move to China, which in less than twenty years created an economic miracle, and started to move China from communism to capitalism. A second miracle could be the spreading of the gospel. ●

Michael Mackey has lived in Hong Kong for five years, and usually writes about the airline and satellite industries.

Hong Kong: A place where churches are left to their own devices but Timothy Lam (inset) says the Chinese authorities may not take such a benign view

C H I N A



China: Travel on two wheels is an essential form of transport

The prayer resource book *Operation World* records that at one time there were 8,500 Protestant missionaries in China. Not many of these were BMS personnel, but BMS did have a presence in China from the 1840s until 1952 when the last BMS missionary, Hubert Spillett, left.

Prior to 1949, when the Communists took over, there had been 150 denominations in existence in China. Official figures quote 1,812,000 Protestants and 3,300,000 Catholics in China in 1949. Missiologists at the time lamented the loss of “the China field – the largest single mission field to the godless Communists”. The very real fear was that without outside western help the Chinese church would no longer exist.

Maybe these fears had substance: by the late 1950s almost all mission and church properties had either been confiscated or nationalised. The institutional church was brought under

the control of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) based on the three self principles of being: self-supporting, self-administering and self-propagating. Dissenters were imprisoned.

The years of the Cultural Revolution (1966-76) saw all public religious activity banned and places of public worship closed. Red Guards stormed believers’ homes; bibles and hymn books were publicly burned. But the outside world had no idea what was happening to Christians in China.

In the late 1970s China adopted a more liberal policy and Christianity was once again allowed to exist. And the Christian church in China surprised the world: far from being annihilated or reduced, the suffering church had grown – many times over – in secret. The

TSPM was revived and stands today as the only officially recognised Protestant church. Gone are the days of denominations. The government wants to ensure that Christians remain patriotic and independent of foreign influences.

Alongside the TSPM are the house churches, a movement which is especially strong in the countryside. Many Evangelicals see the house churches as the most authentic form of Christianity in China. As many as 100,000 groups of Christians meet in homes for worship, study and fellowship. Some are wary of joining the TSPM because they see it as an extension of government; others belong to both the TSPM and their house church. From 1982 house churches have been asked to register with the TSPM or with local authorities. Those

past, present, future?

JAN KENDALL TAKES
AN OVERVIEW OF THE
CHURCH IN CHINA.



who refused became targets for closure, and their leaders were arrested or went into hiding.

There is also the Roman Catholic Church in China, recognised as a separate religion by the Chinese government. It has had its own special difficulties in that it has to be independent of the Vatican.

The figures for the number of Christians in China today vary enormously – from ten to 75 million believers. The fact remains however that the Church in China is growing daily, and mostly without funding, trained experts or strategic planning. However it is still only a tiny minority of the 1.2 billion population and faces enormous challenges. Most of its leaders are in their 70s and 80s; most of the lay leaders need

training, and most Christians lack even basic teaching. It is a real concern that without sound teaching, groups will go astray and become cults or sects.

Several organisations now exist to promote links between China and Britain and Ireland, the chief of which is the China Forum. There are also other church-related organisations who maintain an interest and seek to support work in China including Open Doors and the Amity Foundation.

And what of BMS? As China is in the 10/40 window, it is included as part of the BMS strategic objectives to focus on mission to the unevangelised and unreached. BMS continues to co-operate with the Amity Foundation, created on the initiative of Chinese Christians and, as such has provided grants for theological education and also seeks personnel who are willing to go to China to teach English as a foreign language. It's a different kind of ministry to that of 100 years ago, much more of a shared one, but since then all the parameters have changed; all, that is apart from the constancy of God. ●

- 1635** Nestorian monks introduced Christianity to China.
- 1557** Jesuit missionaries moved inland using Portuguese settlement of Macau
- 1721** Emperor Kang Xi issued an edict banning Christianity. Christians persecuted for over 100 years
- 1841** During the first Opium War Britain occupied Hong Kong
- 1842** China ceded Hong Kong to Britain. First Baptist church began
- 1949** Communist Party takeover. Catholic church forced to break its relationship with the Vatican. Situation impossible for foreign missionaries
- 1952** All Protestant missionaries now gone from China
- 1966-76** Cultural Revolution
- 1979** Churches begin to re-open.
- 1980s** Newly re-opened churches full. Official church and house churches co-exist, but since 1982 'three-designates' policy hampers house churches.

Lord of the Church in China?



LYNNE HUMPHREYS FROM OPEN DOORS REPORTS
ON THE COST OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN CHINA

CHINA

Modern China has been described as a great sleeping tiger in the process of awakening. With more than a billion people, this vast nation has seen great change over the last two decades. Despite its openness to world trade and western commercialism, the People's Republic of China is still one of the world's last strongholds of Communism and is tightly ruled by an essentially atheistic anti-Christian regime.

Today, religious policy seems more repressive than ever before. Yet Jiang Zemin and his fellow leaders confidently claim that the Chinese people have freedom of religion. There are millions of silent Christian voices throughout China who would cry out that this is a lie. They

don't hesitate to tell support agencies like Open Doors that, as Christians in China, their freedom of belief and worship all depends upon who they bow down to first, God or the Communist party. For them, religious freedom is a relative concept.

The house church movement is vast in numbers and its growth is phenomenal. Open Doors co-workers in China estimate an average of over one million new believers a year. In 1996, the government launched a special campaign to register and thus control all the house churches. When they refused, the punishments and harassments dealt out by police ranged from fines, church raids and Bible confiscation to the burning down of house church buildings.

Christians, both men and women, who refuse to stop preaching and evangelising are arrested, interrogated, beaten with electric batons, tortured, imprisoned and even killed. In May 1996, evangelist Zhang Xiuju from Henan province was beaten to death by police. She was just 36 years old.

One prominent house church pastor in Beijing voluntarily closed down his fellowship recently as a result of pressure and harassment from the Religious Affairs Bureau. Eighty two year old Pastor Allen Yuan has spent over 20 years in prison for his faith; if he did register he would have to provide a list of names and addresses of all his members. They would have to stop teaching children and young people as the Three-Self Patriotic

ABOVE
Eager hands on a
children's Chinese
Bible

RIGHT
Images of worship
Chinese-style

Movement follow the law which states it is illegal to teach under 18s about Christianity. They could not travel outside the cities and into the countryside to preach the Gospel. They could not train lay pastors and evangelists, nor could they receive children's Bibles in Chinese from outside sources.

The supply of Bibles is another challenge. There are huge numbers of new converts in the countryside and they don't have enough Scriptures. One believer said, "In our district we needed more than 200 Chinese Bibles but cannot buy them. The last time I went to Beijing I could only buy ten copies as the Three



Self controls their sale."

China watchers claim that through God's power and grace, it is the house church Christians who are largely responsible for the growth of the Church in China. Maybe that is because they won't compromise. Maybe it is because they are prepared to give up everything and lay down their lives for the Gospel. Perhaps they have a lot to teach us in the West about counting the cost as they decide 'who is Lord of the Church in China? Jesus Christ or the Communist Party?' ●

'Open Doors' is a Christian organisation working throughout the world to help believers who are persecuted and suffering for their faith.



Mike Pilavachi



Living Sacrificially

We live in an age of instant everything. This is the Big Mac society. Shopping centres where everything is laid out and comfortable and convenient. Megastores that have everything. Noodles that you only have to pour boiling water over and they are ready. Instantly. These are great advances and personally, I love them. I have just joined the technological revolution, bought myself a computer and regularly surf the internet!

The only trouble with all this is that many of us also demand instant Christianity and convenient pre-packed Church. We love the promises of scripture and "claim" them for all we are worth, but the demands of Scripture we carefully avoid.

We "want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection" but leave out the last part of Philippians 3:10 which goes on to say "and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death". I am realising more and more that we cannot in any meaningful way know Christ without sharing in the fellowship of his sufferings. What is more, Christ's sufferings are not only those burdens which life throws at us, they are something which we choose. We choose to share in his sufferings every time we decide to deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow him. To be meaningful this has to be specific. I deny myself when I choose to listen to someone who is hurting and give them my full attention when I would much rather go to bed. I take up my cross each time I decide to forgive and let go when I have been unjustly treated. I follow him as I strive to be obedient to the voice of my Father in heaven every day of my life. For many Christians in China and Hong Kong this is a way of life. Not simply the Jackie Pullingers and other well-known ones, but brothers and sisters who we will never hear about until we meet them in heaven.

We live like this in order to know Christ but we also live like this because we know Christ. We love because he first loved us. It is the goodness of God which leads us to repentance. When we catch a vision of him, when we see him as he is, then we love him and want to obey him. When he captivates our hearts then our response is to pour out our lives in worship. The sinful woman poured perfume worth a year's wages over Jesus. An extravagant love for an extravagant love.

Oswald Chambers wrote of our abandoning ourselves to his purposes by saying "The consequence of abandonment never enters into our outlook because our life is taken up with him." ●

Mike Pilavachi heads up the Soul Survivor team and pastors a congregation in Watford specially aimed at reaching young people.

New Project 97

The nature of BMS projects has changed over the years, and so, too have the groups that support them. Nowadays the BMS Project of the Year is supported by women's groups, men's groups, mums and toddlers' groups, and house groups.

'Project 97: A Piece of the Action' is raising money to support the work of 28:19 Action Teams, young people who are making Jesus known all over the world.

It costs £16,000 to send just one Action Team overseas, and the number of teams BMS sends is conditional upon how much money is received.

This year the Project material is vividly presented in a video and accompanying workbook.

Skills to survive

You'll be able to read all about this year's joint Operation Agri and BMS Harvest Project, 'Skills to Survive' in a special new full colour booklet that will be included free with every copy of the July/August *mb*.

At all sorts of different levels people can learn skills that help them survive, and this year's Project is raising money to help them learn these skills.

There will be lots of information and ideas presented in an enjoyable way to help you and your church prepare for this year's Harvest. Additional items will be available by mail order.

Barnabas Project

The Barnabas Project seeks to respond to the needs of partner churches by sending out skilled volunteers for a short period. At present 20 volunteers are involved in teaching, nursing, building, and church work in countries as far afield as Croatia, India, Nepal, Serbia, and Zaire. Some have just left college; others are retired. But for all of them meeting and working with people from partner churches is a life-changing experience.

As for practical details, volunteers need to cover the cost of training, flights, travel and medical insurance. BMS is responsible for board and lodgings overseas and any travel expenses incurred with UK church visiting.

If you are interested in knowing more about the Barnabas Project contact Andy Wilson, the Barnabas Project Co-ordinator at BMS Didcot 01235 512077.

News



What's another year? Carolyn Green reflects

"How's the year going?"

"You must be exhausted!"

"When's it all over?"

The conversation tends to revolve around the answers to these questions which could be summarised as 'Great!', 'Yes!' and 'Soon!' - in that order.

My year as BMS President will probably be over by the time you read this, but my commitment to what is going on in the world church feels as if it's only just starting.

It's been brilliant to see many of my hopes for this

year realised. I've spoken to over 500 church leaders and 1500 mission support workers. I've seen and heard the challenge to personal commitment to world mission shared with over 5000 people in Scotland, England and Wales. I've been thrilled by the practical preaching support of many leaders in Baptist life. I've been terrified at the thought of speaking to theological students, and then discovered they're pretty normal folk who do speak a language I understand after all! South Wales Baptist College, the Scottish Baptist College, Northern College, Spurgeon's College and London Bible College... to name a few! Women's conferences, and meetings

with missionaries' wives in London and the South West have filled me with dread before the event. Of addressing the Mainstream or BMM conference... you do not want to hear of the pre-talk nerves. Amongst all of that has been invitations to share in Sunday worship with refreshingly normal congregations, chair working groups at Didcot and in Calcutta, become involved with Candidate Board and with 28:19 selection. I've also had the strong support of my family and my home church which I appreciate even more than ever.

That's some of what has been done. What has been achieved?

Some of what's been achieved I do know already. Perceptions of world mission involvement as being the task of a strange and holy few have been challenged. Hundreds of people have had to ask themselves what they are doing to make Jesus known at home and abroad. Many also have had to look again at what they thought BMS was up to. Were they accurate? Were they maybe even wrong? Would they be prepared to find out if God was calling them to risk everything for him?

The long term results are not up to me... and not even up to BMS in a way. They will be between individuals and their God. People have been presented, and will keep on being presented, with the challenge of Jesus. 'Go and make disciples of all nations ...' and if you are called to this nation, make sure you release the resources and personnel for the task to be accomplished.

This has been a brilliant year... but I believe the best is yet to come!

PIPS Update

Project 7031 Support for Nepali Hospitals
Target £5000

Since 1954, the earliest days of Christian witness in Nepal, the United Mission to Nepal has been committed to providing medical care to the poor. There are just four main hospitals: one in Kathmandu (Patan), and three in outlying areas: Okhaldunga - several days walk from the nearest road; Tansen - on a hilltop in the rural west; and Amp Pipal - in the Gorkha region.

Every hospital charges



what it can from the patients who can afford to pay even a little. Patan hospital has recently opened some private rooms where the wealthier residents of Kathmandu pay for better rooms, subsidising the rest of the hospital. Thus it is hoped that within a couple of years Patan will be independent of the current grant from the UMN Hospital Assistance Fund. In the long term, the rural hospitals need to embark on a fund-raising programme, but in the meantime there is still a need for a central fund from which support can be given in order to cover the costs of the poorest who will never be able to pay for treatment.

It is to this fund that BMS is committed to making an annual contribution. Without it UMN hospitals would have to stop treating those whose very lives depend on 'care without charge.'



Globally minded

Our money box globes are very popular with you all, and we're delighted about that. You faithfully fill them with coins and notes, and some of you even have globe opening ceremonies at church, which all help with raising funds for BMS.

The only trouble is...we're running out of them at Didcot, and they are expensive to re-order. Each globe costs us the best part of £5 for the product itself plus packaging and posting. This means you need to collect £5 before we're even in a break even situation.

So before we spend valuable funds and order some more globes, we'd like to issue you with a challenge. Are you using your globes? If you are, great! Please carry on, fill them up and send the money in to us. (It would be helpful if you could put a note in with your remittance advice telling us the money came from a globe collection.)

If you no longer need your globe, and it's in good condition, please send it back to your co-ordinator or to BMS Didcot. We'll then be able to pass it on to someone else that wants one.

BMS WEB SITE

If you are interested in mission and you want to stay on-line and up-to-date - bookmark our Web Site. You will find the latest prayer needs, opportunities for service and much more. So if you are part of the on-line Baptist community check us out at:

www.rpc.ox.ac.uk/bms/index.htm

BMS On-line finding new ways of helping British Baptists to create links world wide.

Baptist House News

Goodbye

At the end of February Finance Manager Jim Neilson left BMS along with his wife Christine to start a new life in New Zealand. Jim has taken up pastoral responsibilities at Thames Baptist Church, North Island and Christine (formerly Literature Secretary in the Department for Constituency Support) has found work as the manager of a dental practice.

...and hello



To take on the responsibilities left by this gap, Marian Rudall was appointed as Finance Manager at the March General Committee.

Marian's first real contact with BMS came in 1976 when she and her husband Mark came to be interviewed for an administration job in Zaire. They were offered it, but decided it was not right to pursue and Mark went on to train for ministry at Regent's College.

Marian has worked in accounts offices for most of her working life and joined the (then) Finance Department at BMS in 1991 as an Accounts Clerk. Since then she has been promoted to Senior Accounts Clerk and has tackled just about all the different tasks that a busy accounts office can offer.

"It's all happened so fast!" she commented. "But I'm both surprised and delighted. The Finance and Administration Department is a good team, and I'm happy to be working together with them for the good of the Society."

Andy Smith

As we preparing this magazine Andy, BMS Audio-Visual Co-



ordinator, is still in hospital, waiting for his next chemotherapy

session. His treatment has been complicated by other medical difficulties encountered along the way, but he remains resilient in spirit and shows a remarkable cheerfulness in all that has happened. Please continue to remember Andy and his family in your prayers. ●

BMS
news

News

Cameroon

A new Baptist hospital near Nkoteng, Cameroon, will soon open serving a region of 20,000 to 30,000 inhabitants who currently have no nearby medical care. European Baptist Mission Doctor Antonio Barnady from Spain has arrived in the country with his family and is helping to prepare the hospital for its opening. The Union of Baptist Churches in Cameroon will also be providing ministry services for the patients and their families. (EBPS)

Macau

YWAM have launched a campaign in which they hope to deliver a Bible to every home in the former Portuguese colony before it reverts to Chinese rule in 1999. (YWAM News)

Italy

Baptist Pastor Adriana Cavina is one of three ministers who have been chosen to serve the Protestant Chapel now open at Rome Airport. A Lutheran Pastor and a Seventh Day Adventist were also chosen. The selections were co-ordinated through the Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy, to which the Italian Baptist Union belongs. (EBPS)

Rwanda

A dramatic meeting took place in prison between a widow and her husband's murderer. Both had become Christians since the killing, and the widow explained how she had been praying for the man who killed her family. He, in turn, wanted to ask her forgiveness for what he had done. Since then she has returned to the prison to take in food to supplement the man's meagre diet. (YWAM News)

World Wide Web

The Bible is going 'on line' in many European languages. The complete Arabic Bible is the latest addition to the International Bible Society's Internet web pages and thus is providing access to the Bible in places around the world where having a Bible is unknown or dangerous. During 1997 IBS plans to add Bible translations to its internet service in Armenian, Croatian, Indonesian, Latvian, Macedonian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Slovakian, Thai, Ukrainian and Vietnamese. (EBPS)

News in Brief

Belgian Baptists appeal

Samuel Verhaeghe, the General Secretary of the Belgian Baptist Union, has made a direct appeal for the



Appeal for an end to discrimination: Samuel Verhaeghe (left) has a similar challenge to Dr Renato Maiocchi, President of the Italian Baptist Union

discrimination against Belgian Baptists to end, and for Baptists and other evangelicals to be officially recognised.

The present situation in this predominantly Roman Catholic country means recognition only of the United Protestant Church of Belgium (which, in terms of churches is half the size of the Federation of Belgian Evangelical churches), a small Anglican church and a small Orthodox church. Evangelicals do not recognise the United Protestant Church, which is Reformed in its theology, as its official representative, nor do they have any

influence in its government. The Belgian Baptists say the fact that the largest non-Catholic group of churches is not recognised is discrimination, especially as it was only a few years ago that the Belgian government recognised the very small Orthodox church.

Up to this point in time the Belgian Baptists have been prepared to keep a low profile in the hope that events would change. But now in a change of policy they are seeking the support of partner bodies (including BMS) and individuals. They are asking for the support of any who would write to the Belgian Minister of Justice pleading for their cause, asking for official recognition, and emphasising that Evangelical Protestants belong to a worldwide family of about 500 million Evangelicals, living in all countries in Europe, and that they are not a sect.

Write to: The Minister of Justice, Mr Stefaan DE CLERCK, Waterloolaan, 115 1000, Brussels, Belgium. Because they would like to gauge support levels Samuel would also appreciate a copy of your letter: you can send it to BMS Didcot and we will pass it on.

Section from a Belgian school text book (in translation)

SECT: A closed religious group, created or defining itself in opposition to dominant religious ideas and practices. (Larousse)

1 SECTS OF BIBLICAL ORIGIN These can be categorised according to three

FEDERATION OF BELGIAN EVANGELICAL CHURCHES

French speaking 125 churches or 65%
Flemish speaking 100 churches or 74%

UNITED PROTESTANT CHURCH OF BELGIUM

French speaking 70 churches or 35%
Flemish speaking 34 churches or 26%

tendencies:

- Those who believe that the end of the world is imminent (and who often give a date for it). Millenialists, Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, and other groups, fall into this category.

- *Renewal groups, who look to a revival of the Church based on a return to the Bible and prayer. Baptists, Mennonites, Methodists, Pentecostals, Brethren (all sects which have issued from Protestantism) are here; but so are Quakers, Salvationists, Hellenists, Christian Scientists etc.*

- Modernists, meaning here those sects claiming to take a special interest in the ills from which men suffer, and to heal them: The Friends of Man, Scientology, Transcendental Meditation etc

2 EASTERN SECTS Hare Krishna, Shri Mataji etc

3 ISLAMIC SECTS Wannabism, the Muslim Brotherhood, the Ba'hai faith etc



THE ATTRACTION OF THE SECTS

The sects are seen by some as being able to give them what the religions no longer can. In this unstable world in which we are living, some people feel the need to believe something, and to give themselves to helping others. The Salvation Army springs to mind, and their collections for the poor; or again, the Ba'hais whose teaching is based on the values of kindness, fraternity, refusal of alcohol etc.

Child labour in Latin America

The 1997 UNICEF report on the state of the world's children claims that "exploitative child labour" is one of the worst possible infringements of the rights of boys and girls.

Figures for child labour in Latin America claim that one out of every five children works. It is estimated that 18 million children between the ages of five and 14 work, usually in domestic service, in the home or in the fields.

It is claimed that girls work more hours than boys, get paid less, and are denied access to education in more cases. They are also exposed to greater risk, such as sexual abuse.

UNICEF concludes that any programme aimed at combating child labour will only be successful if it takes into account the special dangers girls encounter.

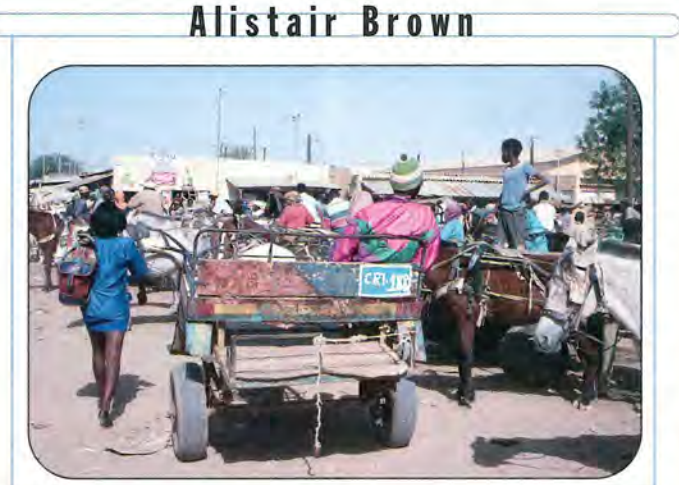
New religious freedom law in Macedonia

The most restrictive religious laws in Europe have been proposed in the Republic of Macedonia, part of the former Yugoslavia.

Macedonia is believed to be one of the least evangelised countries in Europe, with only 400-500 born-again believers.

Most of its inhabitants are Slavic Orthodox or Muslim.

A draft law concerning religious freedoms in Macedonia has already been sent to certain religious groups (the Macedonian Orthodox church, the Catholic Church and the



Open Channels in closed countries

I was lining up the shot of a donkey cart 'taxi' rank, paused because one cart got in the way, and then the young lady in the short skirt walked past. I just had to click the shutter.

For this was a small town in northern Senegal. In a Muslim country, in a rural backwater, the young lady was well out of line with custom, making a strong statement that she didn't identify with the old ways. She was more interested in modern, western fashion than observing the traditional dress code for Muslim women.

Throughout the world, satellite dishes are sprouting on flat roofed (even thatched roof) houses. Secular images are flooding minds, stirring new ideas. A quiet revolution is happening. People are changing. My goal is that when minds are open they get the chance to be open to Jesus. Mission has never had a greater opportunity than it has right now.

Islamic Organisation) but not to any Protestant or evangelical representatives, according to a report by Baptists in the country.

When the Baptists and evangelicals were able to see a copy, this led to further concerns:

- the term 'Church' is to be reserved for the Macedonian Orthodox Church only
- the possibility of Alliances or Associations of Churches or other Interdenominational Organisations is to be denied
- Churches will not be allowed public activities such as conferences, distribution of Bibles or religious literature. Such activities are to be restricted to within church buildings, and in quantities no greater than the membership of a particular local church

- penalties for Protestant church leaders will be high, (up to an average one year's income)

- massive restrictions on visiting speakers
- foreign missionaries will be forbidden to engage in legal work within a church or as part of a legal missionary organisation

Christians in the West are being urged to write either to Prime Minister Branko Crvenkovski, Vlada na Republika Makedonija, 91000 Skopje, Republic of Macedonia or to Minister Vladimir Naumovski (main author of the draft law for religious groups) at the same address, upholding the rights of all Macedonians in drafting their religious freedom law.

Letter to the WML desk

Dear Audrey,

I enclose the completed Link-Up Evaluation form, we had a lovely visit. Our women's meeting made some displays and many said how good it was to hear about mission in another country. But we won't have another visit for two years. It's difficult to keep people interested when we have to wait so long before we can have another Missionary weekend.

Why wait? Go ahead, organise a weekend now. Ask your BMS Co-ordinator about the possibility of a World Mission Link Speaker. Get people together to talk about what they want to do. Use the BMS Resources Catalogue - there's lots of material available. And, if you want more ideas, try PowerPack.

We like the Link-Up Scheme but are sad that we now only seem to hear about one country. Our minister has asked me to write to you and ask if we can have a second Link-Up, someone from another country.

I'm afraid it is not possible for Link-Up groups to have more than one Link-Up. If some groups had two Link-Ups we'd have to tell other groups that

they couldn't even have one. But having only one Link-Up should not limit your church to one country and there are many ways your church can find out about what is happening in other parts of the world. Here are some ideas

- use the Missionary Herald; every edition is packed with up-to-date information
- see that the Prayer Guide that comes with Herald is used each week in your church
- encourage church organisations to get involved in the BMS projects. In the past two years there have been projects about Zimbabwe, Albania and India.
- buy a copy of the BMS video 'Making Jesus Known'
- order BMS News for your church newsletter; all you have to do is photocopy it and you will have a world mission insert for everyone
- talk to your BMS Co-ordinator or people at Didcot about any displays available
- decide a country theme for your next BMS event, book a speaker through your BMS Co-ordinator, and order resources from Didcot.
- And don't forget to tell your Link-Up missionary what you are doing when you write; they will be delighted to be involved with a church which has a passion for world mission!

Audrey

Getting it Taped

When a service was broadcast recently from Ebenezer Baptist Church, Abertillery, by BBC Radio, the congregation quickly used the occasion to raise money for BMS. Audio cassettes of the service, (which was led by their minister Keith Fanthum) were produced and made available to the church for £2 each. After covering their costs the church was able to send £67.50 to BMS.



Notice Board

What is the first thing you do when you go to a new church? There are some folk who head for the World Mission Notice



Board; after all what's on the board will say a lot about the church and its involvement in world mission. What would people see if they stood in front of the World Mission Notice Board in your church?

Over the past weeks the following have been seen in churches:

- a 1995 Praying with Missionaries poster
- a prayer letter from a missionary with the back page missing
- a missionary prayer card covered with drawing pin holes, (address unreadable)
- several notices about a BMS event that took place two months previously
- even more notices about events that took place in other churches one, two and even three months ago

- a creased, torn or grubby Link-Up missionary profile
- a copy of Nov/Dec *mb* under the sign - New, Read Now!!
- a notice advertising BMS Deputation Weekend
- colour faded order forms for Missionary Herald and WOW
- and the lovely big notice board, in a conspicuous place entitled

WORLD MISSION BOARD A

Of course your church's World Mission notice board isn't like have any of these, is it...?

When did you really look at your World Mission notice board? Is it up-to-date, attractive, easy to read? Or is it saying that world mission is unimportant, out-of-date, dull and uninteresting?

Now is a good time to give your notice board a facelift - check the notices, renew the missionary information, throw away torn or crumbled material, put up an interesting display. Make your notice board so attractive that people will stop, look and read. And when you've finished, remember that a good notice board is one that is renewed regularly so put some renewal dates in your diary.

Inspiration, motivation, ideas,
news on world mission for
churches

ission Link

Eurostar backs Eurorev!



When Philip Halliday, BMS missionary and minister of Massy Language School, Paris, invited Clive Doubleday, minister of Poverest Road Baptist Church, Orpington, Kent to preach on the morning of Palm Sunday, he did not quite know where all this would lead to.

Clive accepted the invitation, but soon realised he needed to be back at his own church for the evening service on Palm Sunday 23 March and the only possible way of preaching in the two countries on the same Sunday was Eurostar! Clive contacted Eurostar and asked if they would sponsor the preach. They said they had never been asked to sponsor such a unique event and agreed to donate a free return train ticket to Paris on Eurostar; Clive is pictured (right) receiving his ticket from Keith Grey, Eurostar Manager.

The concept began to snowball. BMS have a number of missionaries in France besides Philip and Rosemary Halliday; so why not use this opportunity for raising finance and the profile of BMS work in France?

Clive then produced a leaflet giving notice of the preach which went out to every church with the March/April *mb* so that both churches and individuals could sponsor him for covering the 420 miles, the distance between London and Paris. Even well after the event he's still happy to accept donations for the work of BMS.

Clive's Sponsored Preach total to April 2: £1000

WOW it's Amazing

A Cheshire church which set out to raise £100 for the WOW project surprised itself by raising nearly three times that amount. The whole church took the project on board, from the very youngest who collected money in sweet tubes, and two

twelve year olds who decided to go on a sponsored walk, to just about everyone who attended an Indian "Dinner for Deepa". They are now looking forward to the next project 'Globetrotters' and have made every first Sunday of the month a WOW Sunday.

Dates for your Diary

Events and Meetings

Wednesday 7 May

Wales WMA Annual Meetings (bilingual), Newtown Baptist Church

Further details - Delyth Wyn Davies 01766 512957

Thursday 8 May

Nottingham BMS Support Group Resources Evening, Mansfield Road Baptist Church

Further details - Joan Manicom 0115 962 3235

Wednesday 14 May

Carmarthen and Cardigan Association (Welsh) Missionary meeting, Tabernacl, Carmarthen

Further details - Nesta Harries 01570 42214

Friday 16 May

Baptist Union of Wales English Assembly Missionary Service, Maesyrhelem Baptist Church

Further details - Hayden Davies 01597 840688

Saturday 17 May

Southern Association Mission Secretary's Training, Testwood, Totton

Further details - Phil Hindle 01823 698977

Thursday 29 May

Pembroke English Association Annual meeting, Hebron, Saundersfoot

Further details - Haulwen Nicholas 01834 813567

Monday 2 June

West of Scotland Women's Rally, Hillhead Baptist Church, Glasgow

Further details - Freda Kennedy 0141 632 0883

Wednesday 4 June

Pembrokeshire Welsh Association Annual Meeting, Jabes, Cwm Gwaun

Further details - Anna Williams 01239 820433

Saturday-Sunday 7-8 June

Orpington Group BMS Weekend

Further details - Allan Davies 0181 462 6808

Saturday 14 June

Stockport Churches BMS evening

Further details - Karen Bennett 01625 879205

Friday-Saturday-Sunday 20-22 June

Former Missionaries Association, reunion at Hothorpe Hall

Further details Neil McVicar 0141 638 4943

Saturday 21 June

Northern Association Family Day at Gateshead

Further details - Margaret Barnett 01207 504023

Saturday 5 July

East Surrey Region Mission Event

Further details - Stan Creeves 0181 647 2441

We can't all be

Dorothy S



SAM GIBSON WENT TO MEET DOROTHY SMITH, BMS MISSIONARY IN HONG KONG (1962-82)

I knew little of Dorothy Smith before I met her but I count it a real privilege to have been able to hear the story of her remarkable life. Through her time as a missionary and later back in the UK, Dorothy has touched thousands of lives, affecting many of them for the better.

Dorothy knew at the age of 14 that she was going to be a missionary. She trained as a TB and general nurse thinking, "it might be useful" then made an open offer to BMS. God's hand is clearly seen in the process which opened up a placement for a nurse with Dorothy's exact qualifications at Rennie's Mill Medical Centre, Junk Bay, Hong Kong, and on 22 August 1962, at the age of 28, Dorothy got on 'a slow boat to China'. The journey took five and a half weeks.

The clinic at Rennie's Mill was open 24 hours a day, serving the thousands of refugees living in nearby shanty towns. Dorothy's first task was to help plan a new building, as the clinic had been flattened by a typhoon just prior to her arrival. Other responsibilities included general management and administration, examining and treating patients, running the maternity ward, organising mass inoculations, promoting community nursing and organising Christmas parties. In her spare time (!), Dorothy ran a Girl Guide unit, rescued and treated abused dogs and cats and even on occasion – monkeys!

Dorothy still felt she could do more however. In 1969 she took in Simon, a refugee boy, later adopting him and taking him to England. Throughout the 1970s, she offered her home to anyone in need – people recovering from surgery, alcoholics, drug addicts, children needing foster care, and battered wives as well as Christian workers from overseas. Dorothy has always been quick to share the love of God in practical ways.

In 1979 she took in Gemma, a baby whom she later adopted. Having a small baby to take care of made nursing difficult and, as there was a Chinese nurse able to take over from her, after 17



years it seemed the right time to leave Rennie's Mill. In 1980, inspired by previous voluntary work at a home for abandoned children in the Philippines, Dorothy went into full time children's work at a home in Hong Kong. Taking care of the everyday needs of nine four to ten year olds as well as baby Gemma was an exhausting experience.

Dorothy came back to the UK temporarily with Gemma in 1982 but family commitments forced her to stay. For Dorothy, Hong Kong was home and it was difficult to settle back into Britain but she set up home in Oxfordshire, continuing her ministry in another way. Registering as a foster mother, Dorothy has offered care to many children and up until a few years ago, she maintained an open house policy. "Isn't that risky for a single lady?" I ask. "I was never worried" Dorothy replies, "but you do have to be called to it. If you care about your home or your belongings you can't do it; you have to be prepared for your life and your family to face crises."

Dorothy, an elder of Hook Norton Baptist Church, now cares for her mother full time, but at the age of 63, when many people are looking to retirement, Dorothy's story still goes on. "Unfortunately I never got back to Hong Kong," she says, "but I still hope. I would like to work in a Chinese orphanage if circumstances permit. Otherwise I had always intended to become an artist or writer, but it is God's hands."

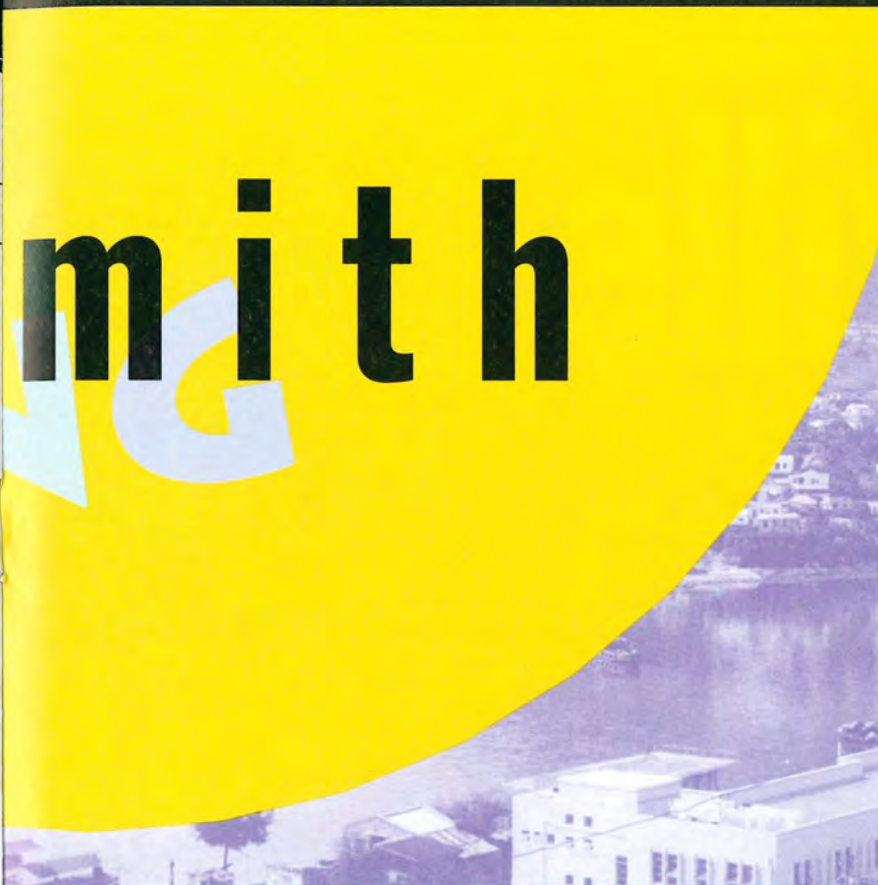
A remarkable life. "It must be good to look back and know you have helped so many people", I say. Dorothy's response is unexpected, "Do you know, you are the only person I've spoken to recently who hasn't asked if I know Jackie Pullinger." As it happens she is good friends with Jackie. "When I compare what the Lord has done through Jackie, then I ask myself, 'what have I done?' But, we can't all be Jackie Pullingers." My response would be, "We can't all be Dorothy Smiths", but I know she wouldn't agree. ●

BACKDROP
Modern Hong Kong harbour

INSETS
Dorothy and friend Irene at Woolwich docks, London, on the day of her departure by sea for Hong Kong

New Haven of Hope hospital near Rennie's Mill where Dorothy served

smith



Joinville

BY VINCE MACDOUGALL

Joinville

Introduction

Joinville (pronounced Jon - villi) is considered by many to be one of the best cities in Brazil. Best because of the quality of life, pleasant climate and surroundings, and the distinct European flavour. The city boasts that it has a German accent. The architecture, city planning, restaurants, festivals, Lutheran churches and the distinctive features of many of its citizens are what gives Joinville a German accent.

History

In 1843, the son of the French King, Louis Philip, received a large land gift in southern Brazil from his father-in-law, Don Pedro of Portugal. The young prince sold this land in 1849 to a group of land speculators who were able to convince 118 immigrants from Germany, Sweden and Norway to settle in what is

now Joinville. These settlers who arrived in 1851 were cultured, educated, hard workers who quickly transformed the land into the Europe of South America. Today the population exceeds 500,000 and the city is the largest industrial centre of Santa Catarina. Production includes household appliances, textiles, steel, industrial machinery and supplies for the car industry. Joinville has even been nicknamed the Manchester of South America.

Geography

1,188 square kilometres
3 metres above sea level
Set among mango swamps
Surrounded by mountains
Set in the South Atlantic rain forest

Climate

Sub tropical, and very humid
Average summer temperature 35 deg. C
Average winter temperature 15 deg. C
High rain fall

First impressions

by Trevor Rowe

Joinville feels more like Europe than Brazil. It is a city with many smart buildings; the older ones reflect the culture of Germany and the Mediterranean countries. It is well organised with friendly people from many different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. It is a city on the move with many new buildings and more being built. New roads are replacing old cobbled streets. The city centre is modern with large shopping centres, but just a few miles away the older parts of Joinville betray its 146 year history.

People

The main influence is European; German, Italian and Polish, in that order. With the industrial explosion over the last 20 years many coloured people from other parts of Brazil have settled here but



they are still a minority. There is colour prejudice amongst the Europeans and the town's mayor's office has a policy of sending coloured immigrants who have not coped back to their place of origin. People mostly work in industry. With the general prosperity leisure pursuits are many; the area has 40 of Brazil's most magnificent beaches which are by far the main leisure attraction.

Social

The city houses working class through to the very rich. There are no shanty towns and very few poor people. The city has a strong social conscience with orphanages as well as social centres for both the young and elderly. The private health service is excellent and the government health service is acceptable. The people have good general health, a nice clean city, little unemployment, leisure time and are therefore very privileged. Any racial discrimination is aimed at protecting this privilege.

O u r T o w n

Profiles

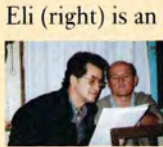
Artur



Artur (left) was the first person to become a Christian when the MacDougalls began

the work at Costa E Silva, Joinville. Shortly after his conversion Artur's wife left him taking their three children with her. At the same time he became unemployed and had many problems. Yet he said, "How could I cope with all this if I did not have Jesus in my heart?"

Eli Soares



Eli (right) is an engineer who makes buses. He has his own house, car and a small farm. Although a Christian, he had no

church connection. His three sons attended church and began telling him what he was missing! Their enthusiasm brought Eli along and he soon became a very committed church member.

Oberdan Snr

Oberdan (far left) is a converted alcoholic, who in recent months has shown signs of spiritual development and



power. He teaches in the Sunday school and runs a boys' club for the church. He retired

when he was 50 after working for 35 years in industry; this has enabled him to become more involved in church activities.

Voni

Voni has featured in Vince and Sadie MacDougall's prayer letters and he has finally accepted Christ. He was a heavy



drinker who often abused and threatened his wife and children.

After nearly destroying his house whilst in a drunken rage he went to Vince in tears, pleading for help. Vince says "I immediately faced him with his sin and the gospel to which he gladly responded. He is making good progress and invited the girls from the Brazil 28:19 Action Team to his house for an ample barbeque."

Our town

Joinville

Religion

Joinville is a beautiful and prosperous city with a strong tourist trade and visitors are impressed by the Catholic Cathedral and the German churches with their clock towers. However all this hides a great spiritual need within a prosperous but godless people. Materialism and the 'good time' have hardened many hearts, creating indifference to the preaching of the gospel. Evangelical Christians are a small minority. However the Baptist Church has awakened and planted five new church congregations during the last four years. They still have less than 500 members in three churches and the five church plants but are heading in the right direction. ●

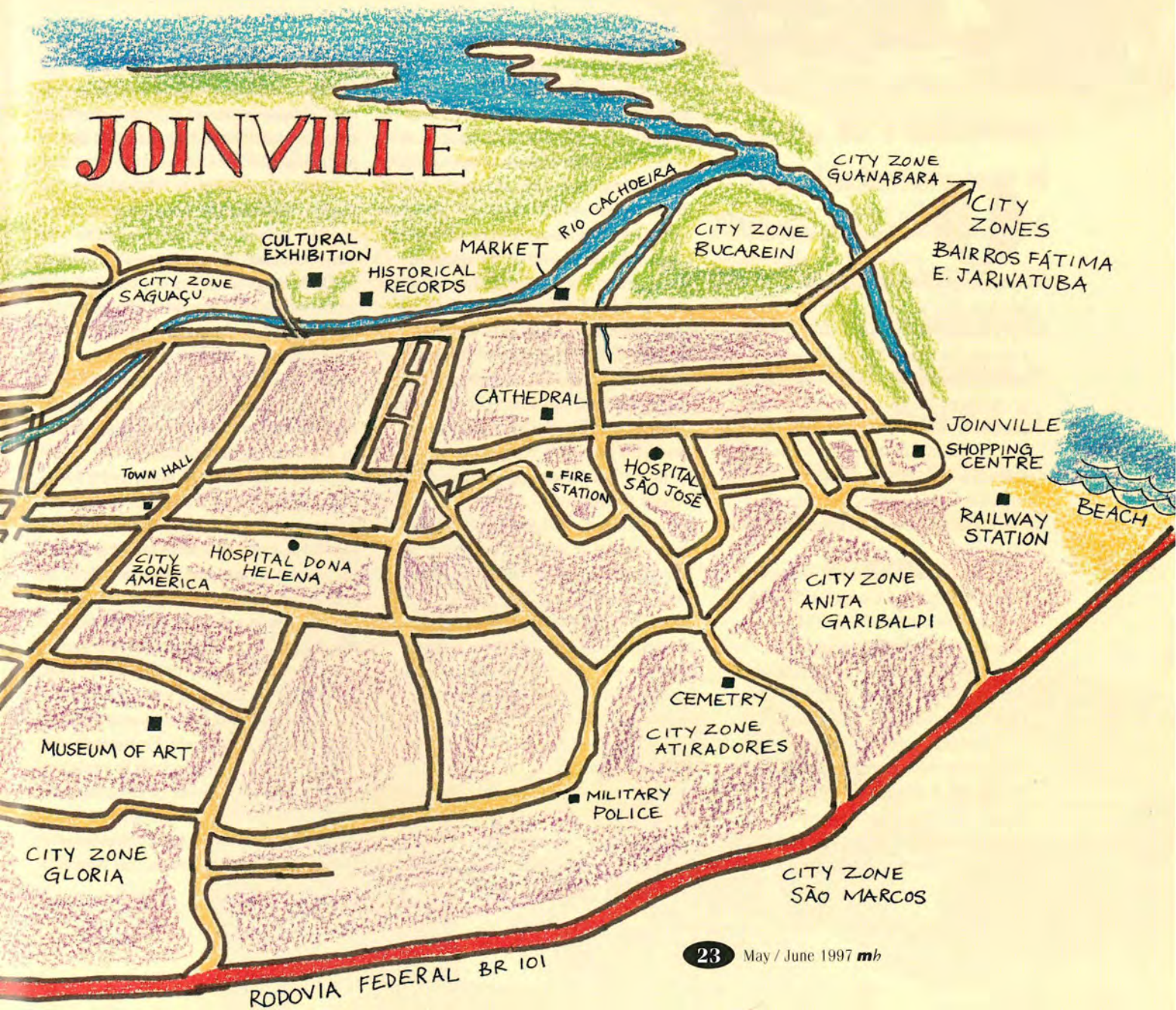


CITY ZONE BOM RETIRO

TO AIRPORT AND UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

CITY ZONE COSTA E SILVA

OUR TOWN



Z A I R E Z A I R E Z A I R E Z A I R E

Z

A



HOW THEY TOOK THE
GOOD NEWS FROM
BWANTABA TO MBANKANA
BY OWEN CLARK

A

On the whole they gave us a fair hearing, though the week was not without incident. Like when Mama Monganga shook the very dust from off her feet. But let's not jump the gun.

The church at Bwantaba had been running for a year. Pastor Mbieme, an old soldier, was now in charge. Mbankana, seven miles on, beckoned as a strategic centre for work on the plateau - 100 miles east of Kinshasa, a stopover for lorries from Kikwit. Catholics, Kimbanguists and other communities were already there, but a new part of town was developing.

Mukoko and Nkie from Bwantaba had contacts, Sims and George, who took us to a 'notable'. He had met BMS missionaries in his youth, as had Mbankana's big chief Labi. "Cast your net into the water," he said, "and see what you catch. I'll give you land."

Thus encouraged, evangelist Mputu's district committee chose a team - Mama Monganga, Clementine, Alphonse, Nestor and Belesi - and we planned a week's evangelistic campaign. Arriving on the agreed Monday, Pastor Mbieme

found places to sleep in Bwantaba. A council-of-war adopted a plan - quarter the town, split into four teams, including Mukoko, Nkie Sims and George, visit people each afternoon when back from their fields, invite them to a meeting at 4.30 at Sims' place. Mputu would preach, Belesi appeal.

Mama Monganga, Mukoko, Nkie and I were allotted certain of the unmade, sandy, grassy streets. Going from plot to plot we invited folk to the meeting, Mama Monganga and I in Lingala, Mukoko and Nkie in Teke. With his charming manner Nkie could have sold encyclopaedias, and several of our people showed up at Sims'. One team had lost time with Jehovah's Witnesses.

Belesi got the singing going and Mputu did his stuff - a good communicator, though untrained, with a natural sense of humour and ability to ham it up. Using pictures he showed how pride (peacock), anger (leopard), hypocrisy (tortoise), selfishness (frog), anything goes (pig), and other satanic spirits in the human heart can only be expelled by the Holy Spirit, through repentance and faith in Jesus. Though quite enthralled, no-one responded to Belesi's appeal.

Next day, without Mukoko, our team was down to three, but picking up where we had left off, we went from house to house. We came to a large plot where

most of the family seemed to be outside, under the shady trees - children playing, teenagers talking, grandma on a little stool chopping greens, a girl minding the baby and mother tending the wood fire under a pot.

After introducing us, Nkie invited them to the meeting. They listened, but an older lad said, No, they wouldn't come. Unusual. People aren't always that frank. Mama Monganga rephrased the invitation just as the man of the house came out of the door asking brusquely what was going on. She told him. It didn't help. Drawing himself up to his full height, such as it was, he said that he could not allow himself to be addressed by a woman on such matters.

Mama Monganga winced, and a flush crept up her rounded cheeks. Not a timid woman, used to the hurly-burly of Kinshasa, and well able to hold her own in mixed company, she was probably unfamiliar with the concept of feminism as such, but in no doubt that she had as much right as the next man to address whomsoever on whatever subject.

"Huh!" she snorted, and gave vent in no uncertain terms to her dismay at meeting such an attitude. Fortunately she had the presence of mind not to prolong the exchange, but withdrew from the scene. Returning with dignity to the entrance, she declared loudly that Jesus had instructed his followers that where

Z A I R E Z A I R E Z A I R E Z A I R E

R E

fair hearing

they were well received, they should leave their peace, but where not, they should shake the very dust from off their feet. Suiting her actions to her words she then stamped her feet vigorously, as one might deal with a nest of cockroaches. Making her way slowly up the street, she shared her regrets with any who might be listening.

Still dumbstruck, Nkie and I were torn between the rival demands of team solidarity and good public relations. Pausing only to repeat our invitation, we hastily took our leave and rejoined her. It took the afternoon for Mama Monganga to regain her cool, and our team was effectively down to two. Fortunately Nkie was all charm and fluency.

At the meeting Mputu put his heart into the message, and an older woman responded to the appeal. It was only on subsequent days that more people began to come forward. On the Sunday morning a service was held, and in the afternoon we met those who were interested in forming a

CBFZ fellowship, about 20 in number.

Underlining that we were not out to steal sheep, but to challenge the uncommitted, we left them to talk. They chose Sims provisionally as leader, agreeing to meet on his plot. With further encouragement and suggestions as to how they might function, we promised to return in a month's time. Final prayers were said and we returned to Bwantaba.

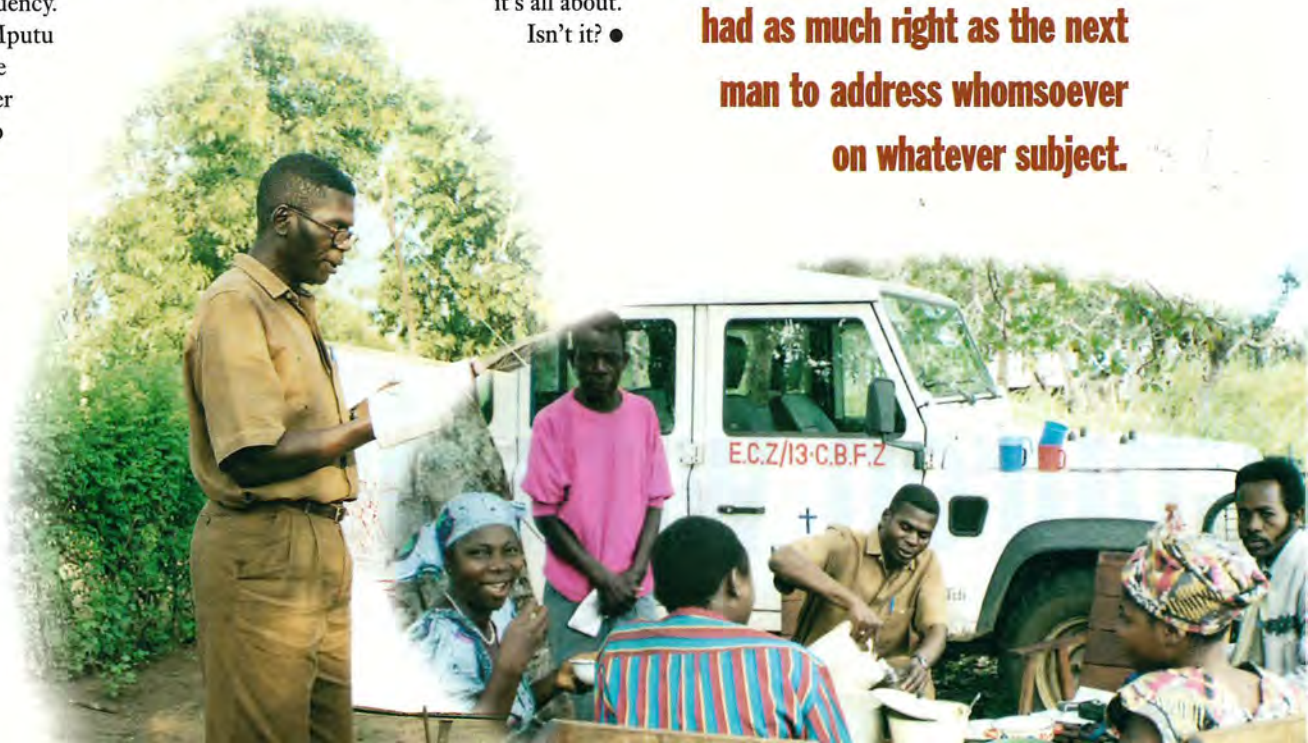
On the whole Mbankana had given us a fair hearing, in spite of the odd incident and Mama Monganga's discomfiture.

The Good News had been told, and a new fellowship begun.

After all, that's what it's all about.

Isn't it? ●

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Church

During my sabbatical last year, I visited Baptist churches in Italy and Albania, in order to learn about the principles and practice of evangelism. In this article I am going to concentrate on the Italian situation.

Sarah Mattock (BMS missionary in Ferrara, now in Sicily) found the market a useful place to talk with folk. Most stall-holders knew her and her three-year-old son by name, and called out "Ciao Simon!" One stall-holder was expecting twins at the same time as Sarah's daughter Judith was born (now one year old). They chatted regularly. Sadly one of her twins died at three months. The sadness gave opportunities to talk about God's love.

The general view of

pastors is that a lot of Italians are unresponsive to the gospel. They are very materialistic, and see no need for the gospel. The Roman Catholic Bishops commissioned a survey in 1994 which found that only ten per cent of the population believed in God. I heard that a journalist had written in a daily newspaper "Dio" (God) with a small "d" and "Chiesa" (church) with a large "C". However 25 per cent of the population will attend church at least once during the year and many more will use the Church for rites of passage. The pastors want to encourage evangelism, but some are not sure how to do it.

The church at Rovigo in the north have plans to replace their buildings, which only seat about 40 at present, with

a sanctuary seating 250. It is a church wanting to grow. I met the founder of the church, a former Jesuit priest called Guisepppe now aged 81 and in frail health, but a man whose vision to see the gospel of Jesus reach the people of Rovigo has been caught in the hearts of the members.

The churches at Ferrara and Rovigo have their own radio station with a potential audience of 500,000. The station is fully automated and controlled by a computer. Both churches have about 30 members.

In the south of Italy, I visited Gioia Della Colle Baptist Church for the final evangelistic meeting of their mission with the Motola church. There was a buffet meal at the end of the meeting and one (British) man at the church now believes in God



INSETS
The church at Rovigo;
the computer-
controlled radio
station

Church with a large C



THERE IS MUCH TO PRAISE GOD FOR AND TO PRAY FOR IN THE ITALIAN CHURCHES' SAYS **ANDREW PHILLIPS**

with a large C

because of the testimony and life of the church members. He said that he and his wife have had more invitations to people's homes than they could accept. The churches are enthusiastic about evangelism. Three had been converted during the mission and a number rededicated their lives to Christ.

Cersosimo is a village of about 1,200 perched high above a valley in the south of Italy. The church is pastored by Mary-Lu Moore who is Betsy Guarna's sister (Betsy is a BMS worker in Albania). The roads in many parts of the village are too small for cars. With the pastor, I walked around the village talking to folk. There is some ill-feeling between the Pentecostals and the Baptists because three men left the Pentecostals and joined the Baptists. Out of a membership of 15, that leaves a large gap. We were invited in by one Pentecostal family and had coffee with them, so there is hope of reconciliation.

Last year they bought a video and TV for their video library. They have all the Christian videos which have

been produced in Italian.

They also have an extensive book library for all-age study. This year they plan to buy a PA system for use in the open air and next year a video projector and screen, again which can be used outdoors.

Mary-Lu is also pastor of the church in Policoro. It stands at the very centre of Italy's 'heel' and has a population of 18,000. It has 11 members and a very attractive building, which they have converted themselves from a barn. They own a large field, which is going to be used for sporting activities. The church is planning to hold a holiday Bible Club this summer. They urgently need running water and toilet facilities supplied to the church. So any plumbers that feel like a "working holiday", would be made very welcome!

Everywhere in Italy I was made very welcome. The churches there face problems and challenges some of which are similar to those in the UK and some specific to Italy. There is much to praise God for and much to pray for in the Italian Baptist churches. ●

Give thanks:

- That evangelism is a high priority in many Italian churches
- For the pastors who long to see people converted to Christ
- For the outworking of their faith in social action

Please pray:

- That pastors will have confidence in the Gospel.
- That the churches will be encouraged in their evangelism.
- That the problems of Catholicism and materialism, would not cause churches to be disheartened.

Andrew Phillips is minister of John Clifford Baptist Church, Beeston, Nottingham, and is a member of BMS General Committee.



The Mattock family: Sarah found the market a useful place to share her faith

TAKE 2

Take Two – a resource for church leaders and workers

How much do you know about China?

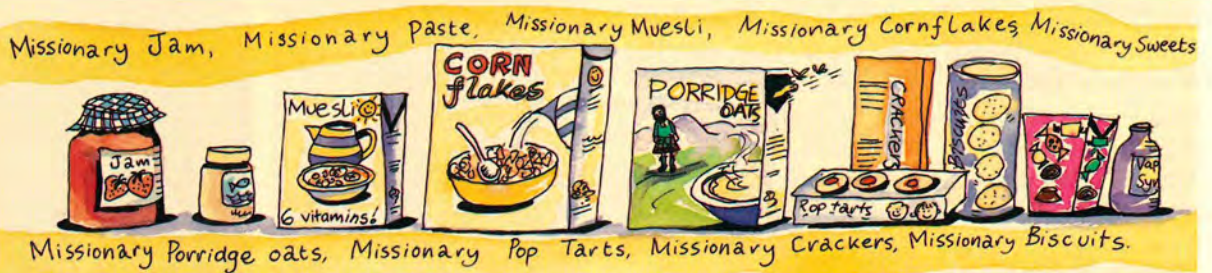
- Which food are you unlikely to get at a Chinese banquet?
a) Beef b) Bamboo shoots c) Rice
- In 1949 average life expectancy in China was 39 years. What is it today?
a) 49 years b) 59 years c) 69 years
- By the year 2000 what percentage of the Chinese population will have colour TVs?
a) 40% b) 60% c) 80%
- Which is the most populous animal in China?
a) Pig b) Cow c) Sheep
- How many miles of motorway are there in China?
a) 0 b) 200 c) 1000
- For every 100 women in China, how many men are there?
a) 105 b) 114 c) 123
- In China the average wages of a garment cutter are 215 yuan a month. What is the average wage of a doctor per month?
a) 216 yuan b) 430 yuan c) 1000 yuan
- How many ethnic groups are there in China?
a) 14 b) 28 c) 56
- Which colour would you see predominating at a Chinese wedding?
a) purple b) red c) gold
- Which of the following are Chinese inventions?
a) paper b) compass c) gunpowder

Prayer requests for Hong Kong

- Pray that Christians worldwide will stand with the people of Hong Kong during this time.
- Pray that Christians in Hong Kong will continue to grow in number and in spirit.
- Pray for the unity of the church in Hong Kong, that their witness may reveal the power and beauty of the kingdom of God.
- Pray that the people of Hong Kong will continue to develop a sense of belonging to Hong Kong and that they will mutually support one another in building up community spirit and identity.
- Pray for the continuation of the process of democratisation in Hong Kong after 1997.
- Pray that Hong Kong will continue to enjoy the freedoms guaranteed in the Bill of Rights and in the Basic Law, including freedom of speech, of the press, of association and assembly and of conscience and religion.
- Pray that the rule of law and an independent, impartial judicial system will be maintained.
- Pray for the rapidly growing number of unemployed and underemployed workers (150,000 in early 1996) due to the restructuring of economic ties between Hong Kong and China.
- Pray for social justice for the most needy in Hong Kong, including new migrants from China, exploited workers, and women and children suffering from marital infidelity, domestic violence and child abuse.
- Pray for opportunities for co-operation and unity between Hong Kong churches and churches in mainland China.

(Supplied by Hong Kong Christian Council and adapted)

resources for leaders



Since becoming a missionary I've been treated to

- Missionary Jam
- Missionary Paste
- Missionary Muesli
- Missionary Cornflakes
- Missionary Porridge Oats
- Missionary Pop Tarts
- Missionary Crackers
- Missionary Biscuits
- Missionary Sweets, and

I mustn't forget

Missionary Vapo-Syrup!
What did all these have in common? They were all past their sell by date.
Don't get me wrong. We appreciated them - well most of them (by that I mean the Quaker Oats that earlier claimants had occupied and flew, or

wriggled out of when the packets were opened).

Sometimes there was something else wrong. Take the Muesli that contained only half the advertised contents. The banned Pop Tarts that burned people's mouths when toasted.

The over-cooked biscuits that had to be

dunked in tea to make them soft enough to eat.

Then I remembered my parents years ago saying, when I wouldn't eat all my food, "Don't waste good food! Remember the missionaries" and my reply, "Can I post it to them?"

Maybe Someone up

there heard and decided to send it now.

Honest, God, I was only joking!

(Written after reading the Mission Supporter's Charter point 2)

Name and address supplied.

Did you know that...?



1 The Great Wall is the only human structure visible from the moon.

2 On the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau the air is very rarefied and visitors have to carry oxygen supplies. It takes a long time to boil things under these conditions and local people resort to pressure cookers to cook their rice.

3 China has over 30,000 species of flowering plants, many of them found nowhere else.

4 Each of the world's 150 or so minerals have been found in China.

5 The shopping streets of Shanghai are so crowded that barriers are placed along pavements to stop pedestrians blocking the traffic.

6 The Chinese do not have a word for privacy - it is impossible when three generations, sometimes four are living under the same roof.

7 The world's first iron chain suspension bridge was made across the Yangzi in Yunnan in 580 AD.

8 The Imperial Palace in Beijing has 9999.5 rooms as it was taken for granted that only God has 10,000 rooms.

9 Since the 1950s over 300 oil and gas fields have been discovered in mainland China, and more than 1400 oil wells have been drilled.

10 Cable TV is now available in Shanghai and Beijing.

Resources

To find out more about the Chinese Church please contact Open Doors about the film 'Bamboo in Winter'. Open Doors PO Box 6 Witney Oxon OX8 7SP. Tel. 01865 300262.

There is also 'A Future and a Hope' resource pack published by the China Forum of the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland. Available from CCBI, Inter-Church House, 35-41 Lower Marsh, London, SE1 7RL. Tel 0171 620 4444.

prayer

*God of many names
Shangdi
Tianzhu
God of all peoples
God of China*

*No great wall
can keep you out,
no great dam
stop your great love flowing.*

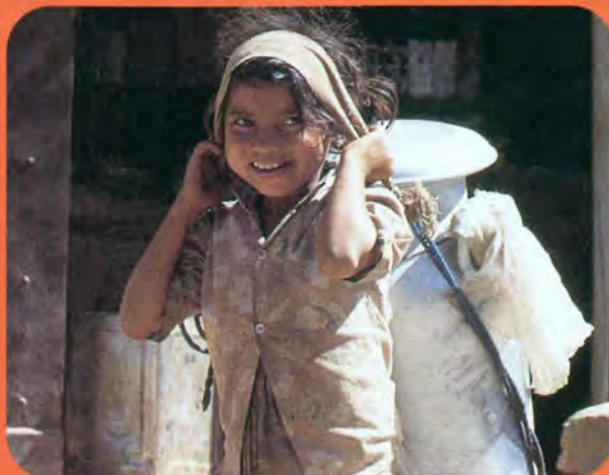
*From mountains to sea
in paddy field and city
you walk with your people,
you see
smile
suffer
weep.*

*In you
strangers become friends
and so
we weep for China's pain
sing of China's faith
pray for China's people
hope for China's future*

*Lord God of all peoples
Tianzhu
Shangdi.*

(Quoted in 'A Future and a Hope' resource pack)

ACTION CARD



Women in Nepal

It's early morning and the girl in the picture is carrying buffalo milk to the dairy. It's common for girls as young as four to work like this carrying huge loads. Then they will do laborious jobs all day: working in the fields or looking after younger children. A very few fortunate ones will go to school after their early morning duties, but female literacy in some parts of Nepal is as low as one per cent.

Usually girls stay with their families until placed into an arranged marriage, around the age of fifteen. Once married, the girl becomes the property of her mother-in-law; and her status will be little more than that of a servant. She might never see her own family again. Life expectancy in Nepal is 52 years. In fact, women in their twenties will look old under the weight of exhausting work and childbearing. It need not be like that.

Corinna Woods is a missionary working with the Baptist Missionary Society United Mission to Nepal, in Dullu, a town in a remote part of Nepal, a day's walk from the nearest road. She is seconded to the staff of a newly created sixth form, sharing in the preparation of teenagers - boys and girls - in becoming primary school teachers. Efforts like these encourage girls, especially, to go to school. If they can become teachers, as married women they will still have all the household chores to do before work, but they will have a greater standing in the community. They

will also provide role models, encouraging other families to send their children to school. Send this month's card to: Mrs Corinna Woods (Dullu), c/o United Mission to Nepal, PO Box 126, Kathmandu, Nepal, encouraging her in what she is doing in a very isolated situation.

ONCE MARRIED, THE GIRL BECOMES THE PROPERTY OF HER MOTHER-IN-LAW, AND HER STATUS WILL BE LITTLE MORE THAN THAT OF A SERVANT.

1 c) Rice. You don't give them rice because it shows you can afford to feed your guests without having to include cheap food.
2 c) 69 years, mainly because of improved food production and food distribution systems
3 b) 60%
4 a) Fig. There are 349.2 million pigs kept there as opposed to 110.6 million sheep and 74.8 million cattle. Mutton is mainly eaten in Muslim dominated areas.
5 a) 0
6 b) 114, because of the one child policy that came into force in 1979
7 a)
8 c) 93% of the people are Han Chinese, and the remaining 92 million belong to one of 55 minority nationalities
9 b) red - this has always been a colour of celebration
10 all of them!

ANSWERS

TAKE
2

Part of the Action



For most, there have been difficult issues to face. The Thailand team have come face to face with suffering, befriending girls dying of Aids, the Brazil team have faced poverty in the favelas of São Paulo and the Malta team have faced apathy amongst many Maltese Christians. All team members, whatever their assignment and country destination, have been involved in work they had never done before, not all of which they enjoyed. All have experienced moments of asking, 'Why am I here, am I doing any good?' All can now look back and see how God has used them in every situation.

"We are realising that God uses us as we are, where we are. We thought we were not being used in the first three months but it is now obvious God has been working through us. We felt we needed to help strengthen the youth of Malta in their faith, as it is them who are left behind, to reach the unreached." (Malta Team)

It has been a challenging

time for Leigh, Ellen, Jennie and Sarah in Thailand who spent the last three months of their overseas assignment in Bangplee, a satellite town of Bangkok and a town of heat, stench, nightmarish traffic, open drains and sewers with brothels on every street corner. Whilst in this town, the team taught English to community groups, kindergarten teachers and in schools. In all cases the team were able to share their faith through teaching and in the more advanced community groups, discussed and challenged attitudes towards women, prostitution, drugs and HIV/Aids.

"The atmosphere around Bangplee certainly felt very oppressive and all of us found it wearing and extremely difficult at times. However, God really provided us with the strength to go on and face new and challenging situations." (Thailand Team)

Some of the difficult times have been when teams were involved in more basic tasks, feeling these tasks were not the best use of their time and skills but part of mission work none the less. Two members of the Nepal team counted every one of the 771 colour coded ID tags they put onto books in a school library – but they felt the sense of pride

when they had completed their task and transformed the library into something of use to the staff and pupils.

Ask the UK Team about the thousands of picture cards they joined BMS home staff in stuffing into tiny plastic bags for the WOW children's magazines however, and they might need a little longer to recognise their contribution fully!

It hasn't all been hard work however, the teams are given some time off to rest and relax although on holiday, the Zimbabwe team decided to risk life and limb white water rafting in the Zambezi river and the Jamaica team spent a day jumping off a 75ft cliff into a lagoon! The all girl Brazil team were a little more restrained, frequenting beaches and churrascos (BBQs with half a cow instead of burgers).

The teams will spend the next two months touring churches, leading meetings and sharing their experiences though a variety of multi media presentations. Contact your BMS Co-ordinator for details of your nearest venue. ●

THE 28:19 ACTION TEAMS HAVE NOW COMPLETED THEIR ASSIGNMENTS AND HAVE EMBARKED ON THEIR TOURS OF THE UK TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES. **SAM GIBSON** REPORTS

This could be you



“We are realising that God uses us as we are, where we are. We thought we were not being used in the first three months but it is now obvious God has been working through us. We felt we needed to help strengthen the youth of Malta in their faith, as it is them who are left behind, to reach the unreached.” (Malta Team)



Prayer focus



News from BMS colleagues and partners around the world to complement the BMS Prayer Guide

Albania



All BMS personnel waiting to be evacuated from Albania were confirmed as being on the Foreign Office list, and were able to board an Italian naval vessel at the port of Durres. They sailed to Brindisi and from there were brought to the UK. Previously BMS worker Elisabeth Towson and her four children had managed to flee the country using a commercial flight from Tirana via Vienna. This was while the airport was still open.

Please pray:

- for all BMS personnel whose work has been tragically cut short:
- Betsy and Saverio Guarna (church planting)
- Gill and Glyn Jones (agricultural work and administration at Baptist HQ)
- Ruth Kelso (teaching)
- Nicola and Roger Pearce and infant son James (development project work)
- Ryder and Heather Rogers (church planting)
- Prema Tennekoon (nurse educator)
- John and Lynne Thompson (teaching)
- Elisabeth and Paul Towson and children Jessica, Michael, Evelyn, and Philip
- David and Yvonne Wheeler (engineering and medical work)
- for the people they've left behind, especially those who have found freedom in Christ in the last few years, but are still young in their faith, and need nurture and support; for all contacts and friendships made by Christians, that such relationships may not be forgotten in the midst of the fighting, and those, of whatever background, who are not able to leave.

EUROPE



Joyce and Stuart Filby
BELGIUM

The new church operating from their house has begun life. In faith Joyce and Stuart had picked up chairs 'off the streets' four years previously and claimed that the Lord would put bottoms and seats together. He did! Twenty six people turned up for the first Sunday, and more people have come every week since! They have had baby Genesis dedicated, and have started a Sunday school in daughter Grace's bedroom.

Please pray:

- giving thanks that at last in this small area the walls of resistance to the gospel are beginning to move
- for each individual who has come to these services that they might find new life in Christ
- for Joyce and Stuart's neighbours. So far they have not complained about the noise or extra cars. Pray that this may continue, and that their curiosity might lead them to come themselves

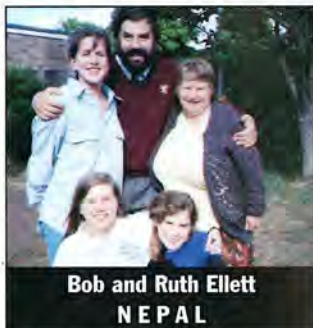
Around the world

- for Marc whom Joyce and Stuart led to the Lord a week after being invited to take part in his wedding
- for the overcoming of practical problems such as lack of plates for the after service lunch and toilet facilities

his hip. The doctors have been surprised at his lack of pain and speedy recovery.

- for Ruth as Bob's incapacity no doubt means extra work for her
- for their children: Ruth in Loughborough; Sarah between courses and looking for short-term employment; and Susanna at school.
- thanking God that the churches in Butwal have begun to meet together. Pray that this won't be a one-off occurrence but will be a continuing process.

ASIA



**Bob and Ruth Ellett
NEPAL**

Early in the year Bob fell down a monsoon drain in Butwal. He was pulled out by Nepali colleagues, taken home in a cycle rickshaw, X-rayed in the clinic and the next day taken by helicopter to Kathmandu. He sustained an impact fracture of the hip joint. In Kathmandu Hospital Bob had three steel pins put into his left hip. He is now convalescing and can get around on crutches.

Please pray:

- thanking God for Bob's recovery and the healing of



**Margaret Gibbs
NEPAL**

Margaret returned to Surkhet in March after a six month home assignment. Just before she left the internal wall in the school was knocked down to create a bigger classroom, and the church front wall was knocked down and the church extended by ten feet. The church leaders have started literacy classes every night for those in the congregation who cannot read or write.

The building of a new TB and leprosy hospital in

Surkhet has begun but the project itself is desperately short of missionary staff, doctors, nurses and administrators.

Please pray:

- for Margaret as she adapts back into Nepali life
- for the literacy classes, as the people concerned all require staying power as progress is only slow
- for more staff for the TB and Leprosy Project



**Glyn and Frankie Phillips
NEPAL**

One of Frankie and Glyn's contacts is Dolma, a Tibetan lady, who has a burden for her Tibetan people. She took Frankie and Glyn to a Tibetan refugee camp in Pokhara. Amongst other things they saw about 280 young boys, training to be monks. Those in the camp who wish to follow Jesus have to live a double life, as to stay in the camp they have to be obedient to the priests. They are very frightened people. If they openly declare their faith they will have to leave the camp, and that means: no home, no

work, no food.

Please pray:

- for Dolma, as she befriends her people, and witnesses to them and cares for them. Pray for the ten orphans in her care. Pray that she will continue to have good health, and that the loneliness she feels as she has left her friends and husband behind in Butwal will disappear.
- for the Christians in these refugee camps (there are four in Pokhara), that they may have the courage and faith to make the necessary sacrifices

Charities Act 1993
Public Notice for the transfer of property under section 74 (2) (a)
Charity Commission number 250447

DECLARATION

The Trustees of the Elizabeth Seward's Charities HEREBY GIVE NOTICE that they have passed a resolution under the above provisions for the following purposes:

Authorising the transfer of the property of 18 constituent charities into the 19th charity, being the Elizabeth Seward Charity for ministers in the provinces.

Any interested person wishing to make representation regarding this said resolution may do so quoting the registered reference at the head of this notice by writing to the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales at Woodfield House, Tangier, Taunton, Somerset TA1 4BL signed by and on behalf of the Trustees, Geoffrey N Hagen, Clerk to the above Trust, 1 November 1996.

Note the above Trust does not exceed £1500 per annum.

Prayer focus



EUROPE



Church
INDONESIA

Towards the end of 1996 and since then there have been a number of attacks upon Christian places of worship. For example 26 December 1996 in Tasikmalaya, West Java a riot broke out in which churches and cars filled with people were burned. In other areas violence and persecution of Christians has increased markedly. One attack on a number of churches in East

Java resulted in a pastor and his family being killed. In other places churches have been destroyed.

Please pray:

- for believers in Indonesia. Pray especially for their protection
- that God will lead government officials to take wise measures to prevent such attacks in the future
- that the Holy Spirit will work in the hearts of the attackers to make them ashamed of these attacks, and that greater numbers of Sundanese will be open to the gospel
- that the church in Indonesia will react as the church did in Acts 4: 24-31 and that many witnesses will be raised up to proclaim the gospel even more boldly

AFRICA



Karen and Simon Collins
ANGOLA

Karen and Simon have now left Portugal and are preparing to go to Angola. Karen will be spending some of the time doing a TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) course. Otherwise they will be packing, and saying their farewells.

Please pray:

- for Simon and Karen

during this period, that everything may go smoothly. Pray that their Angolan visas will come through on time and without difficulty.

- that once they arrive in Angola they may be led to make friendships with the right people. (So far they know of three of their colleagues.)

Correction

March/April 1997 - "Equipping Others" - page 8, column three should read...

The centre wants every village and locality in Zaire - an estimated 80,000 villages - to be churchled and for this each church has to have a leader.

EFFECTIVE PRAYER SUPPORT

BMS colleagues around the world often testify to the power of prayer in their work. They appreciate the support of those who pray regularly. If you would like to pray specifically and personally for personnel, please ask about the BMS Prayer Letter service. Telephone Diane Hayward on 01235 512077.

Checkout

Arrivals

George and Betsy
Lee from Sri Lanka
Tim Lehane and
Alison MacLean from
Nepal
Stuart and Georgie
Christine from Brazil
Vince and Sadie
MacDougall from
Brazil

David and Cath
Meikle from Brazil
Peter and Susan
Cousins from Brazil
Frank and Peggy
Gouthwaite from
Brazil
Tim and Rosimar
Deller from Brazil
Phillip and Vivienne
Hatton from Zaire

Saverio and Betsy
Guarna from Albania
Glyn and Gill Jones
from Albania
Ruth Kelso from
Albania
Roger and Nicola
Pearce from Albania
Ryder and Heather
Rogers from Albania
John and Lynne

Thompson from
Albania
David and Yvonne
Wheeler from
Albania
Prema Tennekoon
from Albania
Paul and Elisabeth
Towilson from
Albania
David MacFarlane

from Italy

Departures

Simon and Karen
Collins to Angola
Stephen and
Elizabeth Allford to
Zaire
David MacFarlane to
Italy
Mike and Jean

Gardiner to Brazil

Overseas Visits

Alistair Brown to
Canada
David Martin to
Canada
Chris Hutt to Zaire
Derek Rumbol to
Zaire

Travel Tales

Ajit gives the thumbs up



When I was in the Khulna district in the south of Bangladesh many of the church members had migrated to the city from the villages in search of work. Some had found employment in the variety of factories which

lined the river banks. These also gave easy access to goods being brought in on small boats from the farms and provided the

export route down river to the ships in the anchorage. There were jute mills, a power station and several newer freezing plants with cold storage. These latter brought their own compensations as my church secretary worked in one and could always be relied

on to provide the king prawns when we had a special occasion. During the rainy season some branched out and added frogs legs to their list. Unlike the prawns, frogs were not farmed but just caught in their hundreds on wet warm nights. Many church members supplemented their income by catching frogs to sell to the freezing plants, but as you can imagine it was not always so easy to catch them and we saw many amusing chases with torches and sacks in hot pursuit of the leaping slippery prey!

One night there was a knock on the door and as I went to answer I saw my church secretary with another member and a man I did not recognise. My immediate thought was that it was Bible study night and I'd forgotten; then I thought that perhaps Ajit had come with a packet of something from his work, but no such luck. The other church member worked in a jute mill and the third man turned out to be a union shop steward.

The poor man had been working on a loom and had forgotten to remove his thumb from the path of the speeding shuttle. Ouch!! He unwrapped his bandaged hand and showed me the result. There followed a rather heated exchange and I was asked to resolve the problem, namely that the Trade Union said the thumb would have to be amputated and the Church said it would heal!! I did what any doctor would have - gave

the man two aspirins and told them all to come back in the morning! Then I made arrangements to see a new, reputedly reliable, doctor who had just arrived in Khulna. He explained to me that this was quite a common injury and the pressure for amputation was because the Union could then press for substantial compensation whereas a few weeks sick leave while the finger healed, would result in nothing more than a loss of earning and minimal sick pay from the Union. Amputate and everyone gets money with the shop steward taking his cut. No operation, and everyone loses money including the Union funds. The doctor assured us that the digit would heal, dressed it properly and prescribed some antibiotics. We all left happy, (well not quite, the shop steward was quietly seething.)

For some reason we had to leave Khulna for a week or so and arrived back late one evening. We were greeted by a note which simply said, 'Ajit came round and it's in the freezer.' Prawns, frogs legs - it had to be. I eagerly went to see but instead of succulent crustacean, there in a plastic bag was a small sausage-like object which looked suspiciously like a thumb. Not a pretty sight, especially by this stage, but sent as Exhibit One, proof that Church and Doctor were wrong and Union knew best.

Somehow the presents from the freezing plant never tasted quite the same again! ●

JOHN PASSMORE

John Passmore is the BMS Europe Representative and was a missionary in Bangladesh for ten years.



Joint Harvest Appeal 1997

● It's different this year ● It's improved this year ● It's more appealing this year

Get *mh* for July and find out for yourself!



The answer to long-term survival is not to pour in continuous aid. For many years you've been generously supporting the annual appeal to help people in developing countries to help themselves. This year we want to provide them with SKILLS TO SURVIVE.

To help you organise your Harvest fund-raising activities, we're preparing an eight-page colour pull-out in the next issue of *mh*, coupled with a video and other audio-visual aids for hire.

Full details in *mh*, July-August issue.

Telephone 01235 512077 ext 283 to subscribe

**Operation AGRI BMM and
Baptist Missionary Society
Joint Harvest Appeal 1997**

Registered Charities

A large, stylized sun graphic in the bottom right corner, with rays extending upwards and outwards. Inside the sun, the words 'LITERACY', 'HEALTH CARE', and 'AGRICULTURE' are written in a hand-drawn, blue font.

LITERACY
HEALTH CARE
AGRICULTURE