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Justice and Peace issues

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Making Jesus Known

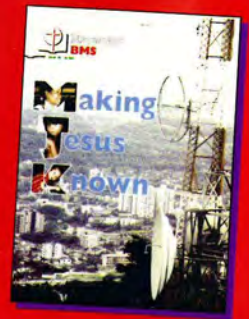
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**THIS ISSUE
JUSTICE AND PEACE**



Jan Kendall

It's good every now and again to stand still and take stock of where we're at in our lives. New year is a natural time to do this, with an old year ending, and a new one beginning. I always get really excited when I think of all the "new things" that God has planned and is wanting to do in our lives - individually and corporately.

mb takes on a new look along with the new year, and I hope you like it. We've expanded world news, and changed Take Two so that it is easier for you to cut out and keep. The Action Team page will now include features on other BMS volunteers as well, and kicks off with a profile of the new BMS Volunteer Co-ordinator, Carolyn Cole. We also welcome Philip Clements-Jewery and Gerry Myhill to the team of contributors.

This time we focus on justice and peace issues - serious, sobering, and sometimes we can feel submerged because of the enormosity of the situation, and the task that faces us. But, as they say, (with apologies to vegetarians) "the best way to eat an elephant is in small chunks" - everything is manageable if we break it down to bite size pieces. As I write the Scottish BU Assembly has just voted to boycott all Nestlé products because they do not follow the ethical international code in the marketing of breast milk substitutes. This is not a new campaign, but it needs sustained support. We can all take part in a large or small way, and to help you make a start, put away your Nescafé, and have a cup of fairly traded Cafédirect coffee on us.

May our missionary God bless you and lead you further in his will in 1998

Jan



Photo: ©1996 PHOTODISC Inc

News

WORLD NEWS 4
WORLD MISSION LINK NEWS 7
BMS NEWS 8

Features

CONSUMER POWER 10
 You can change things by what you buy
WE CAN DRAW THE CURTAINS 12
 Burmese refugees on the Thai border
THE INVISIBLE MILLIONS 15
 Child slavery today
THEY EAT BABIES DON'T THEY? 16
 Being an Evangelical Christian in Bulgaria
CENTRE SPREAD: ANGELA SMITH MP ... 18
 Profile of the Traidcraft rep in the Houses of Parliament

Regulars

OUR TOWN 20
 Featuring Harare
OWEN CLARK'S DIARY 24
 Life in the Democratic Republic of Congo
PRAYER FOCUS 28
 Latest information for your prayers
TAKE TWO 31
 Mission file of facts, figures and background
PHILIP CLEMENTS-JEWERY 33
 Getting to grips with a topical issue
GERRY MYHILL 35
 Takes a humorous look at Christian life

**NEXT ISSUE MARCH - APRIL
THE CHALLENGE OF URBAN MISSION**

Poland

Poznan, Poland's Second Baptist Church rededicated its chapel building at the end of last year after overcoming many seemingly impossible barriers. No church service had taken place in the main sanctuary since 1945 and it seemed that the dilapidated structure was doomed to become a fitness centre or discotheque. But its pastor Piotr Ozana scattered 1,600 letters to interested people on the Internet, and the purchase price was raised several days before the deadline. (EBPS)

Mongolia

Physically handicapped children are being given their first chance to have an education thanks to the efforts of a 62-year old American grandmother. She has worked alongside doctors in the capital Ulaan Baatar and helped develop a pilot programme for 15 children who had never previously been inside a school. This is a joint project between the local government and a consortium of Christian Ministries working in Mongolia where overt evangelism is prohibited. (YWAM News)

El Salvador

According to a study published by the Jesuit University in San Salvador, El Salvador has become the most violent country in Latin America. More than 150,000 San Salvador residents - 20 per cent of the capital's adult population of 765,000 - have been victims of armed robbery, within the past year. (LAP)

Romanies

Printing of a complete Bible in the Romani (Gypsy) language will begin in 1998, following the first printing of a Romani New Testament in 1995. It was decided to go ahead with this as the initial printing of 3,300 copies of the New Testament had begun to run low. The text comes from the only surviving copy of a Romani Old Testament housed in the library of Cambridge University. (EBPS)

News in Brief

News

Peru Quecha Christians Graduate in Bible Training



Last autumn at the largest ever gathering of Quecha Christians in the history of Peru, a special ceremony was held to mark

the end of a special training series. Seventy eager participants stepped forward to receive their graduation gift - a bundle of training materials including a Bible dictionary, concordance, systematic theology studies and a book on church history. After the gathering was over, they travelled to their homes scattered across the Peruvian Andes, equipped to disciple Christians in their home towns and villages.



During the week's training, which was conducted by Open Doors, there were a number of seminars in the Quecha language, teaching the participants how to study the Bible for themselves. Additional studies

included foundations of doctrine and church unity.

The timing of the gathering also marked the anniversary of the tragic killing five years ago of a prominent Quechan evangelist, Romulo Saune, who was gunned down by Shining Path guerillas, together with three other Christian workers. This date now marks a time when Quechan Christians gather from all over Peru, giving testimony to a faith that cannot be extinguished.

At the end of the ceremonies an invitation was

Over 700 people lined up to receive the Open Doors sponsored Bibles.

given to all those who wanted a copy of the Bible in their Quecha language. Over 700 people lined up to receive the Open Doors sponsored Bibles. (Open Doors)

Scotland Message of Hope for Inner City Kids

An innovative "mobile church" programme is taking the message of Jesus to children in high risk inner city areas.

A specially converted lorry takes PlayPeace Church to Elder Park in the Govan district of Glasgow every Wednesday evening for an hour and a quarter of open air music, games and Christian teaching for local children.

With widespread drug abuse reported among young



Scots - fuelled by high levels of unemployment - drug prevention features strongly.

"The needs in some Scottish urban areas are immense," said Andy Kennedy, leader of Youth With A Mission's King's Kids ministry in Scotland and one of the originators of the programme. "Many young people feel they have no future or stake in the society in which they live. Drugs are a growing problem. Our view is



"The needs in some Scottish urban areas are immense,"

that it's no use spending lots of money on prevention work with youth without first having a preventative strategy to reach and train children in their pre-teen years."

Up to 100 five - 12 year-olds attend the weekly sessions which are staged in front of watching local residents and curious passers-by. "The street is what many of these kids are familiar with - it's where they live, play, learn, and it's the closest any of them will ever come to stepping inside a regular church," explains Kennedy. PlayPeace is a partnership between King's Kids, the city's Queen's Park Baptist Church, and the local Teen Challenge centre, and takes its name from the traditional Scottish "play piece", a sandwich children took to school to eat during their "play time" break from classes. "It reminds us that the

Bible tells us that Jesus is not only our peace, but also the bread of life," said Kennedy. (YWAM News)

India Computer Classes Opens Doors for High Castes

Computer classes for high caste Hindus in the city of Madras are helping to build bridges with people who typically want to have nothing to do with Christianity.

The classes are run by Youth With A Mission in a part of the city with the largest population of Brahmins - Hindus who largely dismiss Christianity because they associate it with the country's lower, despised classes.

Up to 12 students can enrol at any time, and they are given three special tracts explaining more about the gospel, and offered a free New Testament if they want to study further. Instructors and teachers also talk about their faith during the two and three month courses.

"Many have acknowledged that Jesus Christ is the only true God, but have held back from following him, due to the cost that they would have to pay to do so," said Dr Alex Harris, the Indian director who founded the programme a year ago.

He chose the Mylapore area of Madras because it had few Christians, despite being the place, according to

Alistair Brown

Slavery then and now

Sun glints through the tree, a dark shadow falling onto a cobbled road. This is Pirenopolis, a small town in Goias, right in the interior of Brazil. Many visitors walk its cobbled streets.

I felt almost guilty walking there, because every small cobble stone was hammered into place by a slave. Teams of them on their knees built those roads in baking heat. My imagination pictures the poor conditions and demanding masters.

That was only a little over a hundred years ago, for Brazil was late to abolish slavery. Today Pirenopolis is rife with spiritism. Though Christians in Brazil are amongst the most evangelistic in the world, there's little Christian presence in Pirenopolis. It's unreached. Like so many

places, it's still in the grip of slavery as terrible as any in its history. May God help his people end that soon. ●

tradition, where St Thomas began his ministry in the early years of the Church.

The computer training is advertised locally and welcomed by the Brahmins,

implemented to help the lower castes.

Students from teenagers to 60 year-olds are taught the latest software and Internet programs, and receive a

certificate at the end of their time. Some have gone on to find work with small firms.

"There are many different people groups in India, each needing a different strategy to reach them," said YWAM's Madras director, Tim Svoboda. "For the Brahmins in Madras, we believe that providing this kind of technological training is the best way of building friendships and establishing relationships." (YWAM News)



many of whom find it hard to find places in colleges or work because of government-regulated reservation systems

Ukraine Gospel Reaches Millions in Crusade

UECB plus more than 10,000 letters received in response to the broadcasts.

Sergio Karpenko, vice-president of the Union and co-ordinator for the crusade, pointed out, "to understand the real significance of the response by mail, you must understand first that postage is very high and stationery is almost impossible to secure and that Ukrainian people, conditioned by 70 years of communism and interception of letters by the KGB, do not easily decide to write such letters."

With that level of initial response, "it is safe to believe that about 30,000 have received Jesus," Karpenko wrote, adding "attendance in churches across Ukraine in these few weeks has risen dramatically."

The crusade was one in a series of regional Capital Crusades carried out by Jim Ponder Ministries in partnership with the Ukrainian Baptist Union. The crusades are undertaken in co-operation with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board (USA) and the Fellowship of Baptist World Ministries. (EBPS)

Thousands of people made decisions to accept Christ as Saviour at a three-night crusade in Kiev and a week-long evangelistic effort led by American

evangelist Jim Ponder.

The services were broadcast on the Ukraine National Television Network to an audience estimated to number 52 million in Ukraine plus five regions of Russia.

The president of the Union of Evangelical Christian Baptists (UECB) in Ukraine described the crusade as "the greatest religious meeting in the history of the Ukraine. Millions of people have heard the gospel for the first time and thousands have received Jesus."

The crusade and personal witnessing efforts during the week led to 8,417 professions of faith, according to the



World Ex-Freedom Fighter Encourages Others to Pray

The testimony of a one-time member of the Lebanese Christian militia is being featured in a prayer guide for the sixth annual 30 Days Muslim Prayer Focus, which begins on New Year's Day, parallel to Ramadan.

Organisers hope the testimony of this converted soldier will inspire many to take part in the month-long prayer event, which is expected to draw up to ten million participants around the world.

The ex-freedom fighter grew up during the long-running civil war that devastated Lebanon, a time in which he

was taught to use guns and "saw severed hands and ears that were brought back ... as trophies of war." At 17, following the death of his sister, he officially joined the militia, but turned to heroin to deal with the pressures.

Then he met a "real Christian", and visited a church where "the people welcomed me like an old friend. It was my first experience in seeing Christians who loved each other and lived

according to the Bible. I prayed and cried and forgave the people who had killed my sister and other relatives. I felt the love of Jesus overwhelming me..."

The story introduces readers to the new prayer guide, some 500,000 copies of which have been printed in 31 languages, with the newest translations being available in Spanish and Kazak. There is also a special children's edition for six-to-ten-year-olds. (YWAM News)



LEBANESE SOLDIERS SUPPLIED BY ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dates for your Diary

Events & Meetings

Leicestershire

Sat 3 January

Leicester Auxiliary New Year Prayer Meeting

North Evington Free Church, Leicestershire

More information - Theo Lambourne 0116 271 3633

Adelaide Place Baptist Church, Glasgow

More information - Jan Watson 0141 882 1201

Luton

Sat 7/ Sun 8 February

BMS President visits Luton

More information - Gerald Hemp 01582 564701

Nottingham

Mon 5 January

Nottingham E Group BMS meeting

Whitemoor Baptist Church, Nottingham

More information - Rhoda Ridal 0115 928 4922

Glasgow

Mon 9 February

Womens Missionary Fellowship

Adelaide Place Baptist Church, Glasgow

More information - Jan Watson 0141 882 1201

Cambridge

Tues 6 January

Cambridgeshire Baptist Missionary Fellowship New Year Prayer Meeting
Mill Road Baptist Church, Cambridge

More information - Sheila Bull 01954 231404

Leicester

Sat 21 February

Leicester Auxiliary Celebration Praise
Central Baptist Church, Leicester

More information - Theo Lambourne 0116 271 3633

Glasgow

Mon 12 January

Womens Missionary Fellowship

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

World Mission Link



Take the Risk

A challenging and fast moving evening featuring BMS President Martin Pearse, tackling important world mission issues, presented through drama, music, multimedia presentations, video and live phone links from around the world.

Take the Risk is for 20s - 30s in 16 venues throughout the UK during 1998.

Risk it and ring!

Wed 4 - Sat 7 March

Leeds, Newcastle, Edinburgh, Glasgow

Wed 25 - Sat 28 March

Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Nottingham

Wed 6 - Sat 9 May

Southampton, Exeter, Cardiff, Bristol/Cheltenham

Wed 13 - Sat 16 May

Cambridge, Luton, London NE, London S

For more details contact your BMS Co-ordinator or ring Katrina Dando at BMS on 01235 512077.

Letter from Nepal



Ben and Carolin Keenan spent a year as Barnabas Project Volunteers in Nepal. They worked with the INF in the Primary Studies Centre in Pokhara.

Here are some thoughts they had about things you can do to help and encourage those in God's service away from your fellowship:



Round and about

Lee Mount Baptist Church Halifax used the BMS/Op Agri 'Skills to Survive' material. They donated products of their skills, and these were then auctioned. They raised £ 373.



Ideas to help you give Encouragement

- Christmas and Birthdays are important - send a card and a small present. Ask what they are particularly missing. Chances are that once in a while it can easily be sent by post as a very special treat. (In our case it was Angel Delight, Cheese Sauces and Custard!) To find something in your post box is always exciting, but to find a small parcel is something to go wild about!
- Prayers for health and safety are never wasted. Every time you think of the person, send up a short prayer for these things. We were in one or two rather serious scrapes through the year and needed protecting angels. It was an encouragement to us to know that we had so many people supporting us in prayer.
The young people of our church were particularly faithful - they even phoned us at lunch time at school in Pokhara (around 7.00 am in the UK) to ask us what they could pray for! It was also great for us to be adopted by a housegroup, and sometimes we sent them special prayer requests.
- If you don't have time to write a letter, send a postcard. They are just as great to receive, don't take a moment to write, and have the added bonus of a picture of home! (We had half a door full of postcards. Our favourites were of Dartmoor and of the sea. We'd stand and look at them to remind us of what home was like.)
- Another idea is for the church-link-person to regularly hand out a pre-addressed aerogramme to someone in the church. You can share the writing of this with others. You don't have to write about anything special - when you're away you like to hear about everyday life. It allows you to feel part of Church life enabling you to pray for people at home.

First BMS missionaries for Croatia

Reuben and Katie Martin from Leigh Road Baptist Church, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex will be the first BMS full-time personnel to work in Croatia. BMS has been in partnership with the Baptist Union of Croatia since 1995.

Reuben is in his final year at Spurgeon's College, studying for a theology degree. He also has a BA in Social Policy and Administration from Brighton University, and spent the summer of 1992 in Vellore, India, working in the Christian Medical College Hospital.

His wife Katie is a teacher, and she has spent three months with the Oxford Mission in Bangladesh in 1990, and has led a STEP building project to Bolivia with Latin Link.

After completing their time at Spurgeon's College, Reuben and Katie will spend up to six months in 1998 in a UK church. As part of her training Katie will also take a course on Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

Once in Croatia Reuben and Katie will be involved in pastoral work.

Your Giving (for a twelve month period, as at the end of October 1997):



**Arise and Build!
Project 96**

£ 21,981

PROJECT 97
a piece of the ACTION

Project 97 A piece of the Action

£ 10,119

**Lights Camera Action
(Youth project)**

£267

Children's Project: Globetrotter

£1,178

Relief Fund - Compassion in Action

£91,193

News in Brief

News

October 1997 General Committee News...

Jubilee 2000

Members of General Committee were urged to support the Jubilee 2000 event in Birmingham on May 16,



1998. Jubilee 2000 hope to establish a chain of people all around the building where the G7 Summit is taking place, symbolising breaking the chains of debt.

The speaker at General Committee was

Nick Buxton, Communications Officer of Jubilee 2000 Coalition.

He also spoke of the factors which had given rise to debt in the world's poorest nations, and the ways in which those in the UK could help to campaign to cancel these unpayable debts.



Just as Christians took the lead in the anti-slavery movement in the 1830s, so General Committee members were urged to support Jubilee 2000, and to campaign to celebrate the Millennium by abolishing the slavery of debt.

New Vice-President announced

Revd Andrew Rigden Green, Senior Pastor at Upton Vale Baptist Church, Torquay has been nominated as the next Vice-President of BMS for the year 1998/99, which will result in him becoming BMS President leading up to the Millennium 1999/2000.

The voting for the new Vice-President is usually taken at the following March General Committee, but because of the strategic nature of this important year, and the need to plan ahead for it, the procedure for voting for the next Vice-President was brought forward from March 1998 to October 1997.

Andrew has as his vision to make some important "connections" which, he believes, are often ignored; for example, the connection between worship and mission, between evangelism and foreign mission, and between spirituality and mission. He says, "In all these connections there is a common concern for the honour and glory of God."

He believes that for too long mission has been regarded as the arena for specialists, and pleads for both individuals and local churches to make the connection that mission is at the heart of everything.

Andrew's nomination will be ratified at the BMS Annual Meeting in May.

Travel Agents targeted

An appeal to General Committee delegates to encourage their travel agents to become involved in an anti child prostitution and sex tourism campaign was made by Peter Briggs, Secretary of the BMS Justice and Peace Advisory Group.

A new leaflet has been launched that has the support of the Home Office and aims to educate business travellers and holiday makers concerning the exploitation of women and children in Far Eastern countries. He urged them to take a copy of this leaflet to their local travel agents and to carry out a short questionnaire to make their travel agents aware of the situation.



Managers spice things up

"Tell me what you want, what you really, really want
If you want to see some changes

You gotta move on with the times,
look towards the future
and do not be surprised."
"Spice girls" Fiona Pimlott, Katrina Dando and Carolyn Cole stormed on to the stage at Queens Road

With a zeal for Jesus, and to walk the land he trod."

Katrina Dando, the new Publicity Manager, was actually called "Feisty Spice" by her previous boss at Smith and Nephew. Her vision:

"I want to see this mission growing and alive with a brand new image before it's gone and died."

Carolyn Cole, Volunteer Co-ordinator sang:

"I want to see all people travelling abroad with a heart for mission and dynamic for the Lord."

Their slot in the



Church, Wimbledon, introducing themselves with their own musical contribution of their vision for the work involved in their new jobs.

Fiona Pimlott, the new Youth and Children's Co-ordinator, sang

"I want to see our youth
Moving on with God,

programme continued with a sketch in which they were being interviewed for their current jobs. World Mission Link organiser Audrey Rowland played the part of a General Committee member interviewing each in turn. The item finished with Carolyn (who sang at her interview) singing another song.

Baptist House News

Welcome to

Ralph Hall

Ralph is the new Graphic Designer in the Department for Constituency Support. He is responsible for the design of much of *mb*, as well as other publicity materials. He comes to BMS from Belfast and previously worked for Derek Prince Ministries in Harpenden and Omega Design in Londonderry.



Joy Knapman

Technically there is no need to welcome Joy, as she is a well-known and well-loved face around BMS, but from the autumn of 1997 Joy came to Didcot and took over as Director for Missionaries.



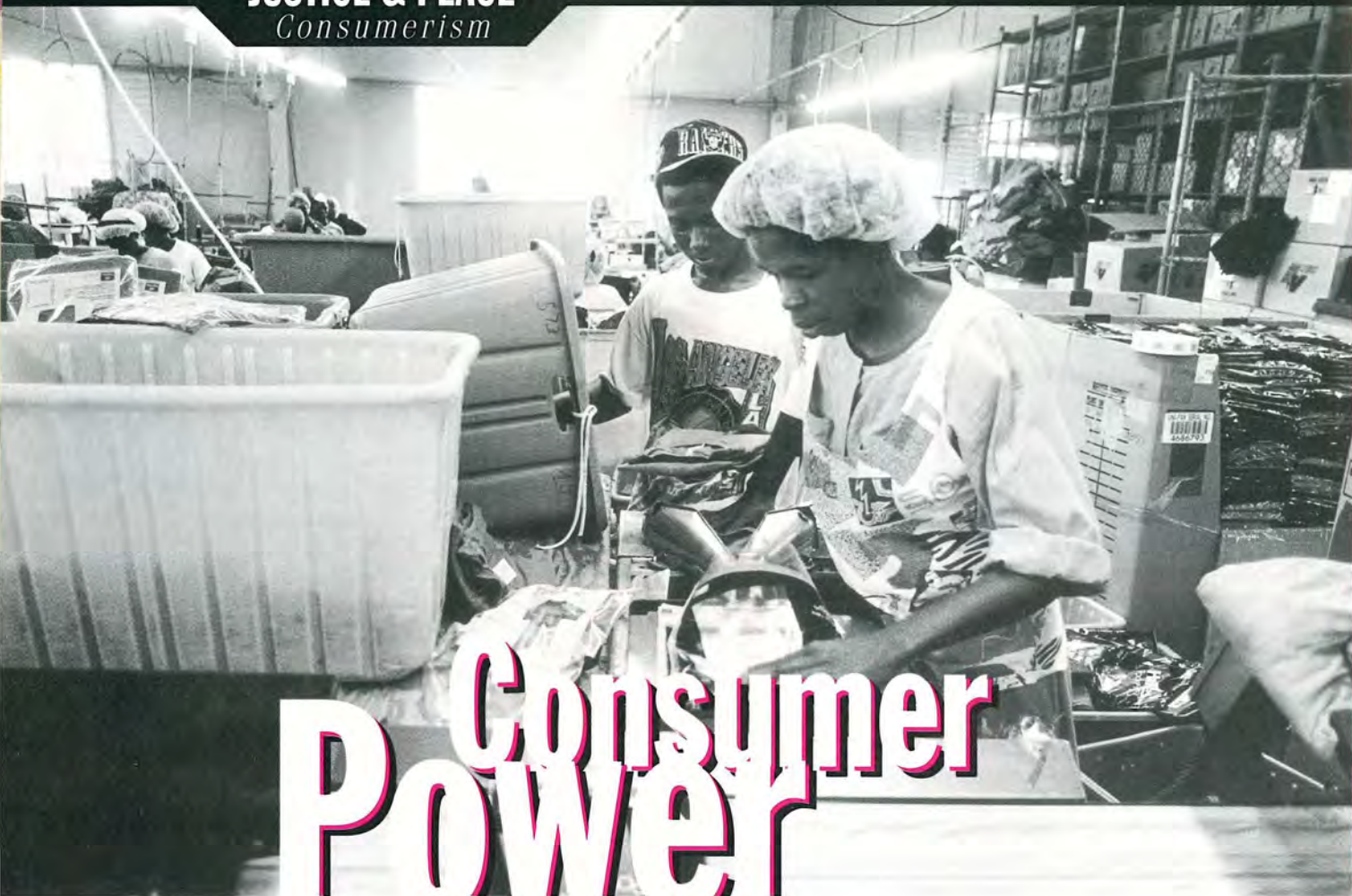
Born in Exeter, Joy was part of a long-established Baptist family and she remembers her personal commitment to Christ as a child "quite vividly." After school she began work as a secretary in a solicitor's office in Exeter, and, she says, "I was beginning to feel a hint that the Lord might want me elsewhere." She dismissed the hint, and looked for alternative employment, finding it in the Civil Service. But the sense of God's call did not go away, and she found herself contacting BMS. At that time missionaries went into education, medical or church work. Joy continues the story: "I went to Candidate Board, and two requests had come in for secretarial work!"

In 1960 Joy went to Calcutta, India, one of 160 BMS missionaries who were in India and Bangladesh at that time. She describes herself as "a small cog in the wheel." In Calcutta she worked with Neil McVicar, the Finance Secretary and Administrator, for the first ten years. Then, when Neil left, she assumed some of his responsibilities. Almost inevitably she says, she got involved in legal matters for BMS, but her first love is to work with people, and she also established personal links with individuals, churches and church partners.

In 1979 she returned to the UK to look after elderly parents and started a new career as a social worker focusing on mental health work. But she left this in 1988 to come back to BMS as Regional Representative for Asia, and "for the last nine years" she says, "I have lived out of a suitcase." The highlight of these nine years for her was to make the initial visit to Indonesia.

Having signalled to BMS that she would like to withdraw from all the travelling by May 1998, she found herself back into a more settled life earlier than expected, when upon Sian William's departure, she was asked by BMS if she would come back to take over as Director for Missionaries. This appointment will last during the period of management review at BMS. Joy says, "I feel so privileged at how God has led me. All the bits of the jigsaw have fitted together. It's been amazing!"

BMS NEWS



Consumer Power

INCREASING PRESSURE ON RETAILERS IS MAKING THEM THINK CAREFULLY ABOUT THE SOURCE OF THEIR PRODUCTS AND THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THEY ARE PRODUCED. **RICHARD WELLS** FINDS THAT THINGS ARE CHANGING IN THE CONSUMER WORLD

No one likes being told what to buy. So when someone comes along with the message that you should use Brand X instead of Brand Y, you quickly discover the challenge to your brand loyalty generates an interesting assertive response.

“Who on earth are they to tell me!”

To the business world this presents a distinct commercial disadvantage so it has had to develop an effective method of persuading consumers to brand switch.

It's called advertising.

They convince you of your “need” or persuade you that you can improve your lifestyle and – guess what – their product fits the bill . . . exactly.

And so you swap to Brand X.

It's a different story with pressure groups which are driven by an environmental or economic passion for changing attitudes to purchase decisions. However worthwhile the cause, their stark, demanding and often unsubtle messages have in the past left the adult population largely unmoved.

Were it not so, it would be reasonable to expect supermarket shelves to heave with stocks of fairly-traded goods, or furniture warehouses to make a louder noise about

Third World workers turn out goods for the West . . . but at what cost?

Pictures by Nancy Durrell McKenna, Oxfam

the source of timber for their products—brought about by public demand.

Things are changing, though.

Emerging today is a generation of thinking young people who show signs of caring passionately about issues affecting the environment, justice and fairness.

These are the children of the advertising age.

Marketeers know that as well as having the largest disposable income of any age group, young people have easily moulded opinions, and their influence is a force to be reckoned with.

Research has shown that children and young people affect significantly the purchase decisions made within the family. It won't be long before this influence is being measured in the number of fairly traded goods on the shelves. In fact, in a recent Sainsbury's supermarket customer vote, two brands of fairly traded tea bags were among the top 100 products.

The groundswell of opinion is beginning to make a difference to suppliers' thinking.

Sainsbury's says it is looking at the whole concept of ethically traded products and has stocked Cafédirect, one of the fairly-traded coffees, since 1993.

Last year Tesco formed a group to examine how standards among suppliers could be improved and how the company should respond to ethical issues like child exploitative labour and minimum wages in developing countries.

Safeway, too, said it was monitoring conditions relevant to ethical purchasing.

For some, this is not moving quickly enough. The long-term aim of Christian Aid is to change current supermarket practices so that customers can sit down for their meals in the knowledge that people have not had to suffer appalling treatment to put the food on their plates. Aid organisations' investigations during the past year revealed an alarming incidence of injustice to workers in developing countries.

In Asia the aid agency Oxfam has uncovered cottage industries producing clothes for the British market employing cheap labour in conditions which, it says, are an affront to human dignity.

Many suffer ill health, restricted toilet breaks, poor ventilation and lighting, and long hours. One woman in Bangladesh, working to supplement the family income, was paid the equivalent of £4.64 a month for sewing on collars daily from 7am to 10pm. (Exchange rate: for every £1, you get about 75 Taka. A family could exist on about 2,000 Taka, or £26.50, a month.)

In Central America, from which Britain imports annually more than 300 million kilogrammes of bananas, workers on large plantations treat job insecurity, violence and attack as an everyday hazard.

When Christian Aid asked Sainsbury's and Waitrose about the source of their own-brand mini bananas from Colombia, it says both declined to give details.

The agency's plan is that shoppers should use their consumer power to get supermarkets to use theirs. Something like 80% of consumers in Britain do their shopping in supermarkets. In 1996 they spent about £36,000 million in the top ten supermarkets, whose groups account

for almost 64% of total supermarket food sales.

Not only do these companies dominate the market, but as their share of the market grows so does their influence over how food is produced. And it was here that Christian Aid's campaign was aimed.

It enlisted the help of tens of thousands of students, youth groups, churches, company employees and individual consumers to put pressure on supermarkets to adopt externally verified codes of conduct which promoted good working conditions among suppliers' workers in the Third World.

The campaigners' demands were backed by millions of pounds' worth of till receipts and thousands of letters to supermarkets.

Today seven out of the top ten supermarkets have drafted ethical policies. Six of the ten have adopted a code of conduct and agreed in principle to external verification. Christian Aid is

**Many suffer ill health,
restricted toilet
breaks, poor
ventilation and lighting,
and long hours.**



encouraged but firm in its aim to see uniform standards to measure the whole industry and the independent checking of codes of conduct. Whatever the speed of progress by stores, the report provides strong evidence of growing support among Britain's shoppers for action by supermarkets to ensure Third World producers provide a fairer deal for their workers.

It also shows a developing climate of openness to change from Brand Y to Brand X . . . so long as Brand X didn't get there at the expense of someone's livelihood — or their life. ●

**Richard Wells is a journalist and is the BMS
Director for Constituency Support**



We can draw the curtains

"Alarming news of serious violations of human rights is coming out of Burma. The Karen living in that country are often suppressed and killed by the Burmese troops. Refugees living in the most appalling situation in Thailand are forced to return to Burma into a very dangerous situation."

Part of the International Federation of Rural Adult Catholic Movements' statement concerning indigenous issues at the 53rd Session of the UN Commission on Human Rights.

IT IS ESTIMATED THERE ARE 22.7 MILLION REFUGEES IN THE WORLD TODAY. JAN KENDALL LOOKS AT ONE GROUP OF REFUGEES ON THE BURMESE /THAI BORDER.

Nobody wants to become a refugee. But for the Karen people living in the Karen state in Burma, there is very little option. The Burmese State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), formerly the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), has intensified its campaign against the Karen people, subjecting them to forced labour or portering carrying heavy weaponry, arbitrary taxation, land confiscation, torture, rape and executions. In the latest offensive around 20,000 Karen civilians have left their homes and opted to flee to Thailand.

New refugees continue to arrive all the time at various locations along the border. In some areas the camps are still open, but in others the Thai army is refusing to allow new arrivals into the camps.

The Thai government has sent signals that it will only provide temporary asylum to the refugees. Some 2,700 of them, arriving at Pu Muang camp (K24) were not provided with any adequate shelter for the first two weeks after arrival: they received one plastic sheet per family and were not allowed to build even a temporary structure.

The UNHCR were not allowed into the camp and people went without medical help for four days. More than half of the refugees suffered malaria, diarrhoea and other sicknesses.

Now that some camps are closed, the refugees cannot leave them to do daily or seasonal work outside, such as working in the Thai rice plantations, for which they earn 50 to 60 Thai baht a day (less than two US dollars) and so it is getting more difficult for the average family to make ends meet.

**Family A**

Family A - (names omitted to preserve identities) husband, wife and four children - could no longer survive. The husband was forced to act as a porter for the SPDC troops for five days every month. Eventually he became ill and was too sick to do this any more. SPDC then demanded that his family pay huge amounts of money in lieu of his work. On 15 March 1997 this family along with all the other villagers were driven out of their homes, which were then destroyed. Families were scattered. At first they did not want to suffer the indignity of being refugees; they hid in the forest for months, but eventually they had no choice and went to the border. On 29 August 1997 they arrived at Mae La Refugee Camp (K14).

**Family B**

Family B - husband, wife and two children - also arrived at Mae La Camp in August 1997. Their story was a similar one. The husband too had been required to do heavy portering work for SPDC and had become ill. In response he was beaten, threatened with death, tied to a tree and tortured with hot irons and left for days. Following that ordeal he was forced into building roads, and finally their village was destroyed. After many months they too came to the border.

A refugee, a mother of four children said, "We get basic food from these foreign (humanitarian) organisations, but we still need some money to spend for general things such as good diets for sick children, a few clothes and school fees. So we need small jobs for a small income."

Camp closures have the knock-on effect that non-government organisations (NGOs) such as the Burmese Border Consortium are left with no choice but to provide basic necessities and it is feared that this in turn will make the refugees more dependent.

The refugees receive a diet of rice, salt, fish paste and tomato sauce. Yellow beans and soya bean oil were recently added in some camps. Vegetables are needed to make up nutritional deficiencies.

Camps 2 and 3 had been plagued with rats which destroyed rice, but with help, the camp leaders were able to overcome this problem. People were offered prizes (noodles or sardines) for catching the rats and in one month 2,000 rats were handed in!

Camp resources seem to get more and more stretched: medical staff numbers are cut with government cut backs, and inflation has reduced the buying power for basic foodstuffs. The Thai baht has dropped from 25 to the US dollar in June to

**"For I
was hungry
and you gave me
something to eat, I
was thirsty and you
gave me something to
drink, I was a stranger
and you invited me in, I
needed clothes and you
clothed me, I was sick
and you looked after
me, I was in prison
and you came to
visit me."**

(Matthew 25:35,36)

nearly 40 in October which has had its effect on prices. Petrol has increased by 30%, rice by 20%, and yellow beans by 50% since the last purchase.

Weather brings its own problems. The monsoon season brought flooding to Mae La camp (K14), where three times in 1997 the refugees had to take part in a major clean-up.

But the coming of the dry season brings different fears. Earlier in the year the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) and SPDC soldiers attacked refugee camps inside Thailand. In January 1997 DKBA and SPDC troops burned down Wangka camp (K16) and Don Pa Kiang camp (K15), making more than 10,000 refugees homeless.

The threats continue, and although there is no large scale fighting SPDC troops are still entering villages, burning and looting houses, and killing people.

The refugee problem here and elsewhere is not just an internal matter. It will not go away if we pretend it does not exist. Refugees cross international borders, and they ask for their voice to be heard: "We need to be able to return to our country and stay there in love and peace. We want to govern ourselves with unity and co-operation for a land of peace."●

Jan Kendall is Editor of *mb*

Arms to Indonesia

The 1997 Baptist Assembly in London unanimously passed a resolution calling for an end to arms sales to Indonesia.

The day before the motion was put, the neighbouring Queen Elizabeth II Centre was the scene of non-violent protests on the same issue, directed at (and within) the AGM of British Aerospace, suppliers of Hawk aircraft. Sixteen more of these were approved for export to Indonesia from the UK in November 1996.

Why this concern? Because of human rights abuses in Indonesia against opposition politicians, trade unionists, protesting students and underpaid workers. This led Amnesty International to speak critically of another export licence granted in December 1996 for 50 Alvis

sale of arms to regimes that might use them for internal repression or international aggression." The minister responsible for Indonesian affairs at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office agreed in October that, "certain goods have more obvious potential for use in internal repression than others, such as armoured personnel carriers designed for internal security." Although the armoured vehicles from Coventry's Alvis have not been cancelled, a much smaller new order for specially adapted Landrovers from nearby Courtauld's Aerospace has not been permitted. We now have a peace camp at Alvis on the north side of Coventry, a daily reminder of the ongoing issue.

Foreign Secretary Robin Cook's visit to Indonesia last August was



Scorpion armoured vehicles. This was the first time that Amnesty International had

commented on a UK arms export.

Furthermore, Indonesia has for years ignored United Nations resolutions calling for the people of East Timor to be allowed to determine

their own future. This former Portuguese colony lived separately from surrounding Indonesia for generations, until invaded and absorbed by Indonesia as long ago as 1975. Two hundred thousand East Timorese have been killed since then, most notoriously the 200 massacred at a cemetery in the capital Dili in November 1991. This was what alerted the world to what was going on.

The day our Assembly resolution was being passed, the UK was changing its Government. New criteria for arms exports were announced in July, applying to any country. They prohibited "the

meant to encourage

Indonesia's economic growth, in which the UK is the second largest foreign investor (Japan is first)

apart from oil. At the same time he wanted to explain that economic progress is not hampered by concerns for human rights, but rather is helped by them – human rights as laid out in the UN Declaration on Human Rights, not as 'adapted' for local political convenience.

The tide of opinion against arms exports in general, and to repressive regimes in particular, is growing, both in our country and abroad. Christians are always challenged to be peacemakers (Psalm 34:14; Matthew 5:9; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5), and Christians will still be concerned whichever way the tide flows (Luke 9:62).●

Alan Betteridge is one of the ministers of Queen's Road Baptist Church, Coventry and Chairman of 'Stop Alvis Tanks to Indonesia', a 'Campaign Against the Arms Trade' campaign.

ALAN BETTERIDGE SPEAKS OUT

OFTEN UNSEEN, EASILY EXPLOITED, CHILDREN ACROSS THE WORLD ARE FORCED INTO WORK BECAUSE OF POVERTY. MANY BECOME VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE OR PERSONAL VIOLENCE, BUT NOT ALL. SOME ARE PAID A WAGE AND TAUGHT A SKILL.

SAM GIBSON ASKS WHEN IS CHILD LABOUR EXPLOITATIVE, AND WHEN IS IT EMPLOYMENT?

The 'Invisible Millions'



Eleven year old Sonia earns around 6p per hour hand-stitching footballs for export from India to Europe. It takes her four to five hours to complete one ball and she earns less than one per cent of its retail value.

Vindod was eight when he began working for 12 to 14 hours each day weaving carpets in India. He was not paid a penny for his first year, was once hung upside down for a minor fault and had small knife wounds filled with match-stick powder and burned.

Cases like Vindod's are clearly situations of abuse and Sonia's pitiful wage is exploitative, but can all child labour be seen as such? Some child domestic workers live and work in homes which are

cleaner and safer than the homes of their parents and helping out in the home has always been part of a child's upbringing.

The difference is that the child's labour has now become a traded commodity and that they often have no say over conditions of service, no privacy, no access to their earnings, no opportunity to go to school or to interact with their peers and little access to their parents. Isolation can often cause severe psychological stress.

What about stitching footballs? This is not a hazardous occupation and some children slot it around their schooling. Sonia's mother was ill and her father gave up work to take care of her. Without her tiny income, the family would be destitute

and Sonia forced into more exploitative forms of child labour. On the other hand, working for several hours a day in a hunched, squatting position to the exclusion of other pursuits is not good for the development of any child.

So, what is the answer? Many would say "simple – stop all child labour" but, when garment manufacturers in Bangladesh agreed in July 1995 to phase out the use of child labour, up to 30,000 children lost their jobs and many were forced onto the streets.

In the short term, children freed from work need to be rehabilitated. The Rugmark Foundation issues licences to looms in India who agree not to employ children. Regular spot checks paid for by exporters ensure this, while

importers of the carpets contribute to a UNICEF fund to run a rehabilitation shelter, teaching ex-child workers, and a primary school for weavers' children. Rugmark's work proves that carpet manufacture, free of child labour, is economically viable and that labour standards can be maintained nationally.

Long term however, the only answer is to change attitudes. Without sufficient jobs for adult relatives, some children will need to help earn enough money to feed their families but that work should never be at the expense of their childhood.

The child's rights also need to be safeguarded so that they are treated as employees with fair pay and proper working conditions. There are no overnight solutions. ●



They eat Babies, don't they?

THEO ANGELOV SPOKE TO JAN KENDALL ABOUT WHAT IT'S LIKE BEING AN EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN IN BULGARIA TODAY



It was in February 1995 that the Bulgarian Baptists asked fellow Baptists all over the world for help as they were suffering increasing discrimination and reporting growing opposition and acts of moral, if not physical, abuse.

Three years on, what has changed? Bulgarian Baptists suffered much under Communism, and their membership was reduced to less than 1,000 believers through imprisonments and political "disappearances". People were arrested because they were pastors or church members. When freedom came in 1990 there was much rejoicing. Numbers have consistently increased since then because of a commitment to evangelism. Today there are 54 Baptist churches in Bulgaria, with a total membership of 3,200.

Dr Theo Angelov, President of the Bulgarian Baptist Union says "These changes were good for us. We received the freedom to worship and to evangelise as we liked." But this was only in the beginning. Gradually restrictions began to stifle evangelical life.

In July 1992 the Baptist Union of

Bulgaria obtained some land in Sofia. They intended to build a theological college, church, school, and an orphanage, but work stopped when the City Council overturned the plans because of their "negative effects".

Later the Council reversed their decision and allowed the college and orphanage to go ahead. But very little has happened since - the Mayor of Sofia has still not put his signature on the relevant piece of paper.

The Baptists in Sofia are struggling for space in their church which is old and too small for their needs. But, at the moment, there seems little possibility that the decision will be overturned which will allow them to build a new church.

The logic of the Council runs as follows, says Dr Angelov: "They say, 'How shall we allow the Baptists to look after orphans? It will be dangerous for the children because they will teach them and the children will become Baptists'." He adds ironically: "So it seems that it's better for them to run on the streets or become drug addicts."

Other Evangelical churches are suffering similarly. The Methodists built a church in the city of Varna, on the

Black Sea, and when they got to the roof the local authorities stopped them building. It has been two years now and no one knows when they will be allowed to continue.

The main church in Bulgaria is the Orthodox church, and Dr Angelov says, "It looks on Bulgaria as its own territory. It tries to protect itself from all the others - especially the Evangelical churches."

Officially all the churches have equal rights once they have been officially registered and recognised. But the Orthodox church is more equal than some of the others. For example it has all the access to the mass media - to TV, radio and the newspapers, whereas the Baptists have no access to these things. It is not so long ago that one national newspaper carried a news report under the heading, "Baptists eat babies for breakfast!"

They have also been accused of being a dangerous sect, threatening the culture and tradition of the country, and distributing drugs to young people, and they do not have the right to defend themselves. Dr Angelov says: "You can imagine the mass media print something about a denomination or a church, and there is no answer. People begin to think it's true."

Church newspapers and magazines are allowed

A lot of books have even been printed in Bulgaria in the last year, but when it comes to importing religious books from elsewhere, that is a different matter.

"Last year," says Dr Angelov, "we received a shipment (of books) from the States for distribution free of charge, but the Customs charged us a lot. Even for Bibles sent from outside, we have to pay all kinds of customs duties and get all sorts of permission."

Missionaries who want to stay longer than a month also have a tough time - that's the length of time that their visa will be issued for. So every 30 days they have to leave Bulgaria, and come back again. "You can imagine the effect this has on their work," says Dr Angelov.

Bulgaria is only one of several countries in Eastern Europe where life is becoming increasingly difficult for Evangelical Christians. "Pray for us," appeals Dr Angelov. "Remember the special cases, and where possible put political pressure on your government. All Eastern European governments are interested in investments from the West. They are ready to take help and accept money."

The inference from this is clear: You have a voice, which will be heard. Use it. ●

Theo Angelov is President of the Bulgarian Baptist Union



Officially all the churches have equal rights... But the Orthodox church is more equal than the others



Mike Pilavachi

Jesus and Justice

Jesus announced the beginning of his ministry in Luke 4 with these words: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor; he has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind; to release the oppressed; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

This was his manifesto. He came to preach good news of forgiveness and salvation. He came to proclaim freedom. He came to bring healing and release from oppression. He came to bring Social Justice! The good news was for the poor. Not simply the poor in spirit, but the financially and materially poor. The freedom was for those unjustly imprisoned, the release was for those who were under the yoke of oppression, the year of the Lord's favour was the time when debts were cancelled and slaves set free.

Jesus did not simply proclaim this "good news", he was the good news. He not only sided with the poor and oppressed, he became one of them. Jesus was God become poor. He spent time with the "publicans and sinners".

In John 4 we find Jesus talking with a Samaritan woman who was living in immorality. Until we understand the context, we cannot begin to see what a revolutionary thing this was. A respectable Jewish man did not talk to a woman at a well at midday on his own. A respectable Jew would not talk to a Samaritan - the social outcasts of the time. A little like Wimbledon supporters. A respectable Jew would not hold a civil conversation with someone who was living in obvious immorality. Jesus talked with and treated with dignity a Samaritan woman caught in immorality. He loved those whom society had no time for. So must we.

What does this mean in practice? First of all it means we must learn to be generous with what we have. This has to involve our money and our possessions. Many of us hate talking about money. Yet I believe how we use our money is one of the key tests of discipleship. It has been said that the last thing to get converted is a Christian's wallet! The Bible is full of teaching on wealth and poverty. It is the second most common topic in the Old Testament after idolatry. In the New Testament there are more than 500 verses of direct teaching on the subject. That is an incredible one in sixteen verses. Jesus talked more about wealth and poverty than he did about heaven and hell, sexual morality, the law or the second coming. One in every five verses in James' letter is about the rich and poor. In Luke's gospel, it is one in seven.

Jesus said, "Give and it will be given to you, pressed down, shaken together, running over, it will be poured into your lap." The first Christians were known as the people of the Way before they were called Christians. This was because of the way they lived. They were not known as the people of the doctrine or the people of the experience but the people of the Way.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta was once asked why she and those who worked with her gave themselves on behalf of the poor, the starving, the dying. Her reply hit the nail on the head. She said, "We do it for Jesus." This is true worship of Jesus, to care for the poor, feed the hungry, speak for those who have no voice. For he said, "If you do this to one of the least of my brethren, you do it for me." Let's dance upon injustice - for Jesus! ■

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

TRAIDCRAFT Voting

in Fair



**JOHN MARTIN SPOKE TO
ANGELA SMITH MP,
TRAIDCRAFT
REPRESENTATIVE IN THE
HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.**

Angela Smith, the 38 year-old Labour and Co-operative Member for Basildon and East Thurrock, is a symbol of the new breed of Parliamentarians entering the scene following the election of May 1997. She eschews the severe black uniform that was the hallmark of women members. When she greeted me in the

Members Lobby she was wearing a House of Commons-green trouser suit. As she poured me a coffee in the Members Tea Room she remarked ruefully that the battle to get fairly traded coffee in the Mother of Parliaments had still to be won.

Fair trade is an issue close to her heart. "I first got involved with it almost by accident," she said. "I was very interested in what was happening in Nicaragua and was involved in the Nicaragua solidarity campaign." Then came a letter from Traidcraft. Since she was interested in helping Nicaragua, would she consider taking a box of Nicaraguan coffee along to meetings of the local branch of the Labour Party? "I took the box of 36 packs of coffee. The people came back for more because they liked the coffee. So I got involved in Traidcraft from that angle."

It became the perfect shop window for her interest in international issues. As a member of the local Labour Party Executive she would turn up at meetings with an assortment of Traidcraft pens, key rings and crafts. Alongside them she kept a store of leaflets promoting Third World causes.

In her first year she sold £1,000's worth of Nicaraguan coffee. Cuban peppermints became a great seller. (With a lick of the lips she adds that they are back on sale in the latest Traidcraft catalogue). Later, on a holiday in Cuba she met people whose goods are sold through Traidcraft. She found herself providing goods for churches and schools. "I would literally take my carrier bags along, set up a table with goods and leaflets on what it was about. People

Trade

would come up, chat and buy some things. It started very small."

Over a dozen years she has seen Traidcraft change a lot. The packaging of goods has improved. "When I started there was a lot of tatty packaging around and you had to get past that for people to realise the quality of the products was excellent," she says.

I asked her to spell out what the fair trade campaign was trying to achieve and how it went about it. "What we're trying to do is ensure that the people who are producing a particular product get a fair price for it."

Most small farmers and producers in the Third World would have few options but to sell their products to the representatives of cartels and name the price.

Traidcraft enables them to form co-operatives to process, package and distribute their products. By cutting out the middle men, and not being forced to accept low prices set by big wholesalers, they benefit economically.

Traidcraft trains people in the basics of business and makes available seed capital for items like sewing machines and kilns. It can mean a higher return for groups of women setting up co-operatives to market their jewellery, or that farming communities can now send their children to school.

Obviously Traidcraft helps farmers get a better return. The all important test, is whether the coffee or other items are good enough to stand the marketplace test. "Initially people bought coffee from me because it helped a good cause," she recalls. "But when people started turning up at my door wanting more, I knew it was good coffee."



Peter Bottomley MP & Angela Smith MP

I pressed further. It's one thing to get people to buy packs of coffee at a Labour Party meeting or church fete. To make a real difference fair traded products need to find their way into the economic mainstream to retailers shelves.

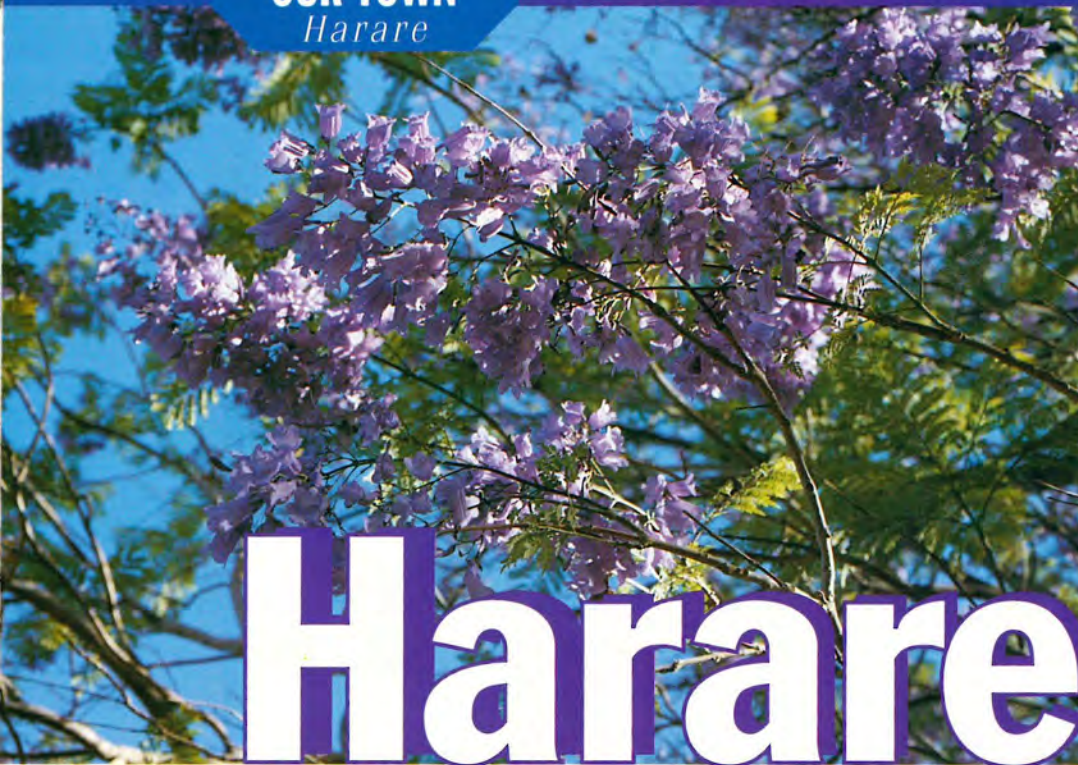
"In the early days you couldn't buy them in the supermarkets," she recalls. "Now Cafédirect is on the shelves at my local supermarket. That's a tremendous achievement. The trouble is there's still not enough information out there to raise people's consciousness. As it does, more people will opt to buy fairly traded products."

The products range looks set to increase even more. Demand for fairly traded tea is growing. Traidcraft has diversified into sugar, peppermints, chocolates, crafts, and jewellery. Fabrics have always been popular and the range of products available in Britain is growing all the time.

Now that she has entered Parliament and sits in the Council of Europe, what hopes does Angela Smith have for raising the issue of fair trade on the national scene? "What I'm hoping to do as the MP in my area is raise consciousness. A lot of people aren't aware of it."

She is conscious that as one of many hundreds of Traidcraft representatives she is "just a small cog". But it's a task offering enormous satisfaction. So, on she goes, holding coffee mornings for members of the local Labour Party where they can learn about the issue, pushing for attention for the issue in newspapers throughout her constituency. As we spoke she was planning to promote Traidcraft at a meeting of the United Nations Association. "There's no point in being in politics if you can't make a difference. ●

John Martin is a writer and broadcaster, and the former editor of the Church of England Newspaper.



Harare

PHOTOGRAPH: KENNETH BECKET NATURAL SCIENCE PHOTOS

A SERIES EDITED BY
JAN KENDALL
THAT LOOKS AT TOWNS
AND CITIES AROUND
THE WORLD WHERE
BMS PERSONNEL ARE
WORKING

**BY PHILIP IGOE,
RACHEL HICKS,
PETER HUNT
& DAVID COBBY**



Introduction

Michael Palin has suggested that Zimbabwe is "Africa sanitised". A gross understatement of the rich diversity that exists in Zimbabwe generally and Harare in particular. Certainly Harare refuses to submit to the stereotypical view of an African town or city. It is as cosmopolitan as any capital, and has the social life and amenities to go with it. Its high rise buildings, many put up post independence, suggest a wealth which many people would not ascribe to Africa. Yet it still retains a vibrancy that exudes only from Africa!

History

The first thing to notice about Harare is the colonial planning, all the streets are on a grid system. This neatly divided (and to a large extent still divides) rich and poor, black and white. Outside the city centre the leafy, roomy suburbs were for whites residences only. Around the very edges of Harare you can find the huge, sprawling 'townships' where the black work force were housed.

The first inhabitants of the area now known as Harare were Shona, led by a chief called Ne-Harawa meaning 'the one who doesn't sleep'. Through the years black inhabitants still called Salisbury 'Harare', until after independence in

1980 when Zimbabwe's capital was renamed.

Post independence many whites fled the country, leaving the way clear for some black people to take on decent jobs and housing. Now the leafy suburbs contain homes to both black and white. Sadly Harare is not a good example of multi racial harmony; there are still unofficial white and black areas. You'll not find whites living in the high density 'townships', or if you do they work for mission societies! Also there are the cafes and shops with a largely white clientele and as you sit and sip your coffee it's easy to forget you're in Africa - except that the people who serve you will be black...

First Impressions

Harare: it's mid October, and the jacaranda trees are blossoming purple/pink. Not just one or two here and there but whole avenues of them. It is truly a sight that you have to see for yourself. Overloaded taxi-buses cram the streets, babies sleep as they bounce along on their mothers backs, delicately piled pyramids of fruit and vegetables are spread out at road-side stalls. How do people manage not to fall over when there are so many banana skins littering the pavement?

Further down the street, in the Central



Views of Harare

Park, office workers are whiling away their lunch hour sitting on the grass. A pastor is moving among them with his bible, stopping to chat and explain a few verses to anyone willing to listen. Very few refuse; most nod as he talks about Jesus' death and resurrection, and say yes, they believe it. But who knows how many of them really understand the implications of this message for their lives and for their city?

£23) and as a trip to the cinema costs about \$19, and a shirt/blouse from a shop in Westgate costs about \$400, prices create a barrier. The liveliest place to shop in Harare is Mbare market, attached to one of the larger townships. Here you can haggle over the price of tomatoes, get a nice shirt (with only two previous, careful owners) and stock up on traditional herbal medicines.



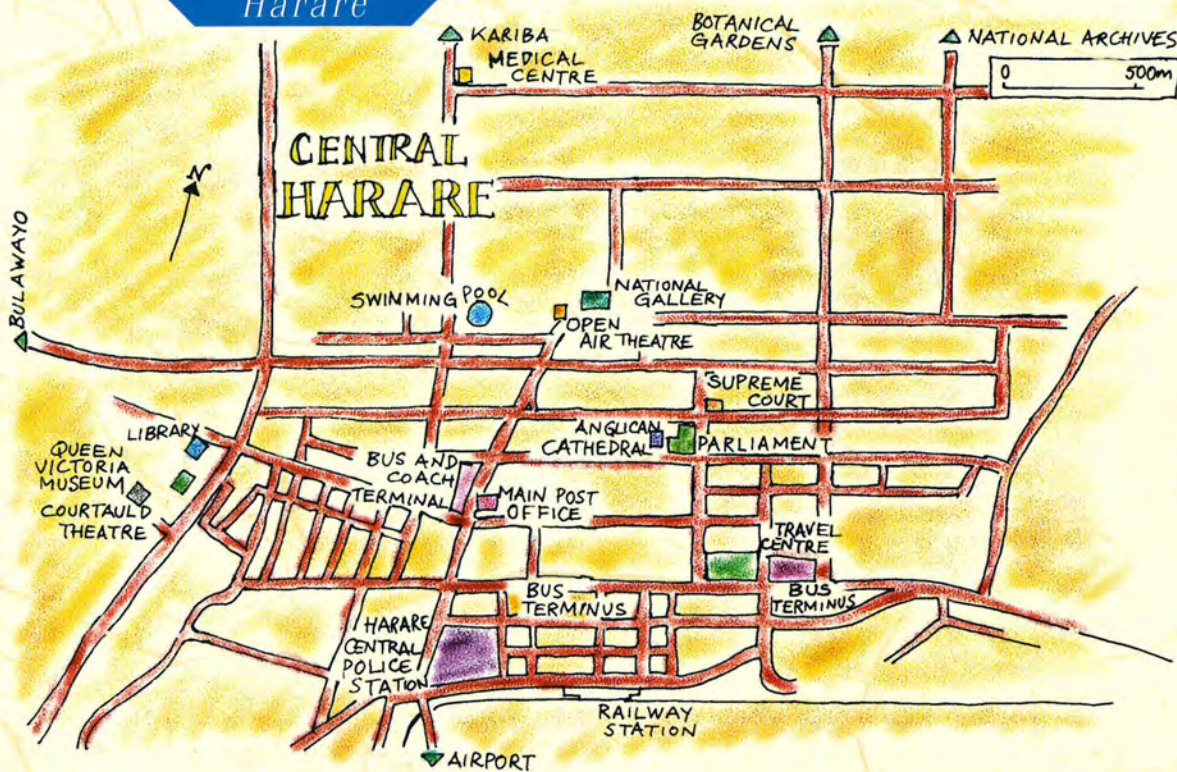
PHOTOGRAPH: PETER HUNT

Shops

Shopping areas, although not designated white and black areas are often more frequented by a certain clientele. The newest development in Harare is a shopping mall called Westgate, a large complex with many modern stores, a four screen cinema, water fountains and a food court with pizza and Chinese takeaways. There is an increasing variety of goods in places such as Westgate including many imports from South Africa, USA and Europe, all with a hefty price tag. The minimum wage for a domestic worker in Harare is \$450 (about



Tuck Shops are commonly found in many of the high density suburbs



Social aspects Transport

Harare is a fast growing metropolis, with new buildings going up all the time. It is by far the biggest city in Zimbabwe, attracting many people in from rural areas. Most of these people come to the city to find jobs. Many of them fail, and wind up begging in the streets. One of the most distressing sights is to see children begging in the streets: young children, poorly dressed. But many of the children are sent out to beg by their parents, and are not really homeless at all.

Harare has its share of places not fit for human habitation. There's a young Christian couple, for instance, who live in a small house, which they rent. It is not much more than a brick shed. They and their baby all live in one room which can barely hold a double bed. They have no lights in their home other than one or two candles.

Travel anywhere in Harare means using public transport. The buses are affectionately called "Chicken buses", mainly because most of the time someone on the bus had chickens with them. They are not all that reliable, being prone to break down, and are not environmentally friendly. But they are a means of meeting people! The other popular form of transport is the Emergency Taxi (ET) - in effect, an old estate car with only the seats in it - no other luxuries. Into this car you fit as many people as possible (nine minimum, but sometimes 14 or more). This laden vehicle then attempts to move from A to B dropping off and picking up as it goes. For this luxury drive, one would expect to pay 1.5 Zim dollar (15p).

PHOTOGRAPH: PETER HUNT





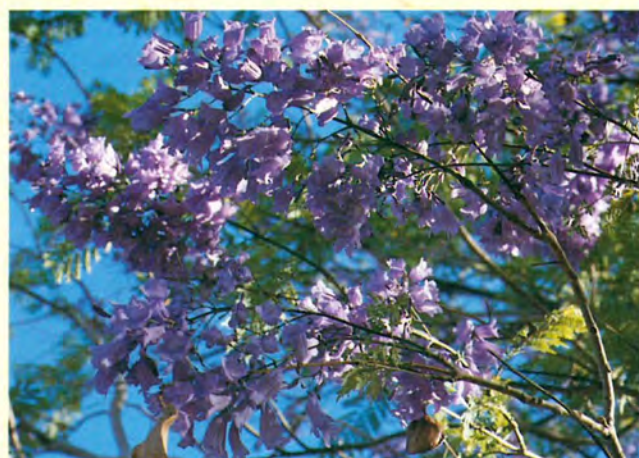
Church life

Churches are a little like shops, in that they too cater for a certain type of clientele. Traditional African churches tend to be vibrant with lots of singing, dancing and long, loud sermons, the services will last for around four hours including an hour long sermon. These can be contrasted with your more English churches, including the Anglican where the sermon lasts for 7.5 minutes and English hymns are sung to a piano/organ. The sad thing about churches in Harare is that there are very few that have any kind of racial harmony, as black people moved into the previous white areas and began to attend the churches there, the whites moved out in droves to a certain few churches, which are now still predominantly white.

An Action Team member going home

It was four months later when the four of us, in the same red National Baptist Convention truck we'd arrived in, with the same people in the same positions entered Harare from the opposite direction. In that time we'd experienced life in many townships. But I'd been immersed in a culture so different, able to experience life from such a radically different viewpoint, that this time I saw a very different Harare. Before, I'd noticed

the spiders and lizards, the old cars, the simple accommodation and the black people. This time I noticed the white people; the absurd contrast between the townships and rural areas just outside the city, and the almost richer- than-western shopping centres. I noticed the expensive new cars, the swimming pools and the massive glass towers of banking and business. Harare is a most incredible city, beautiful and able to cater for just about anything you could want. But step outside the city, and then step back in, it'll certainly challenge your first impressions.



PHOTOGRAPH: KENNETH BECKET NATURAL SCIENCE PHOTOS

A small catering company in Harare inner city: helped with training in business management by Steve Seymour, BMS



The Democratic Republic of Congo

CONGO

Six months is a long time. A long time to be away from work and friends. A long time to leave newly planted churches unvisited. Time enough, as it happened, for a rebel army to march across the country and oust a corrupt kleptocracy from power in Kinshasa. Time enough to encounter mortal danger.

When on the Bateke plateau in March we had followed the taking of Kisangani by Kabila's troops on the radio. Then in April the fall of Lubumbashi and the advance to Kikwit. Where would Mobutu's troops make their last stand? Would our people be caught in the crossfire?

Hard news was scant. Rumour was rife. By May the defenders had retreated to the Mai Ndombe river, hotly pursued by the attackers. The bridge was blown up to stop their advance, but they found a way round. Routing those still fighting

they pressed on to Nsele. Next stop the airport.

On the night of 16 May, they just missed the flight of Mobutu and family. General Mahele, the army commander, was assassinated. In a power vacuum Kinshasa held its breath, but not for long. At dawn Kabila's AFDL forces, many of them young people, entered the city to a rapturous welcome by the long-suffering population. Liberation at last!

Pockets of resistance were flushed out and some semblance of normality returned to the capital. Elsewhere security was still patchy. Pastor Mbieme and others from the plateau came by. They had their stories to tell, but everyone was safe.

It wasn't till September that we began to plan with District Evangelist Mputu our first trip back to the plateau. How, we wondered, had those young churches fared?

The loss of the Mai Ndombe and Lufimi bridges had cut the area in two. On a first trip we would take a long road round to get to Bwantaba, and visit Mbankana, Nguene and Bombo-Lumene from there. At each place a service of thanksgiving for God's protection would be followed by a working session on practical issues. On a subsequent trip, by a different road, we would aim for Kinzono and Nsuni.

Rough, long and bumpy though it was, the road brought us via scenic valleys, across small, but solid bridges over the turbulent waters of the Bombo and Lumene rivers, to the Bwantaba road. We entered the village to a great welcome from the children.

"We don't have to walk to Mbankana for school any more," they cried excitedly. "Our classes are here in the village!" Two classes, started for the youngest children the previous year with Education Department authorisation, had been expanded to the full six classes. Only children at secondary level would still walk the seven miles to Mbankana.

Next day the little stick-and-palm-frond church was full for a joyous service of thanksgiving, during which testimonies were shared. When the war came, most people had fled to a distant village. Only the old chief and some young men had stayed. Pastor Mbieme had served communion at Nguene, then made his way back on his bicycle to Bwantaba, meeting groups of fleeing soldiers, who stopped, searched and threatened him. Each time he showed his Pastor's card. When it was safe he had gone to bring his wife and children and



A long time

... a time
when the faithfulness of
God to his people had been
amply demonstrated.

the others home.

Later with the church members we helped sort out difficulties which had arisen. A small matter of transfer of membership had blown up into a quarrel. Two members had been suspended. Others were backbiting. Many weren't pulling their weight in building the classrooms or working in the church fields. The women's meeting had folded. Faith had cooled and love was lacking. You could see how Paul came to write his letters to young churches. Each evening the children sang and danced to the drum, and the adults gathered. In the flickering light of a log fire Mputu and Belesi called people back to the basics of their faith, to heart searching, repentance and a new commitment to Christ.

At Mbankana too, in the middle of the week, people in their Sunday best filled the little church. They had fled when Mbankana had been shelled and the Lufimi bridge blown up. Their leader, Matondo, had taken his wife and family to a distant village for safety, but his eldest son had insisted on returning home. He didn't want soldiers stealing the fufu laid out to dry. Matondo had followed, but had been arrested as a spy. A soldier was ordered to shoot him, but as he loaded his gun the bullet fell to the ground. Taking him to be a powerful sorcerer the soldiers let him go. No civilian had been lost in Mbankana, and thanks were offered to God.

On the long, slow journey home there was time to reflect on ten days of listening, encouraging and teaching. Yes, six months had been a long time to be away. Time when the devil had not been idle. Thankfully, though, a time when the faithfulness of God to his people had been amply demonstrated. ●





Watch out or this cou

1995, an eventful decade later, Carolyn retraced her steps to the Peace and Hope village.

“Carolina, Carolina!” exclaimed a Quechua mother as she hastily dropped her banana leaves and came running towards this returning friend. A decade past had not in any way diminished the depth of relationship forged in adversity. At a civic reception in the northern city of Moyobamba, the governor of San Martin and Christian leader Dr Apolos Landa explained how unknown to the young team, their presence had afforded a measure of protection to the Quechua refugees living under the guerrilla death threat.

Four years as an undergraduate at Southampton University gave Carolyn four precious long vacations for frontline mission projects in four continents: Recife, Brazil; Jos, Nigeria; Fara, Portugal; and to the isolated former cannibal Gogodala people of the Fly River Delta in Papua New Guinea. On graduating, Carolyn joined the staff of Clayesmore School,

Blandford to teach Geography, support the Christian Union and lead the infantry battalion in the CCF. This was followed with officer training at the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst, commissioned as Second Lieutenant Carolyn Cole TA!

Stepping from a public school arena to the arches of Waterloo Bridge and cardboard city, Carolyn joined Oasis at Haddon Hall Baptist Church to work with a Frontline Team, as directed by the Revd Steve Chalke. Two years later, a TV documentary of the work of Steve Chalke was to be, “captivated by Carolyn’s

Carolyn Cole, the recently appointed Volunteer Co-ordinator undertook short-term adventure trips as a school girl; which turned into substantial mission projects, which turned into long-term mission commitments, which led to.... the BMS!

In 1985, Carolyn, then a sixth former, responded to a plea from the leaders of Peruvian Christians under attack from terrorists, the guerilla group the Shining Path. Six church elders had been assassinated at a prayer meeting. A pioneering team of 15 dedicated young Christians (many Baptist) helped establish a safe refuge in the northern jungles of Peru, an act of notable encouragement to a beleaguered people. The village was known as PazY Ezperanza – Peace and Hope. In

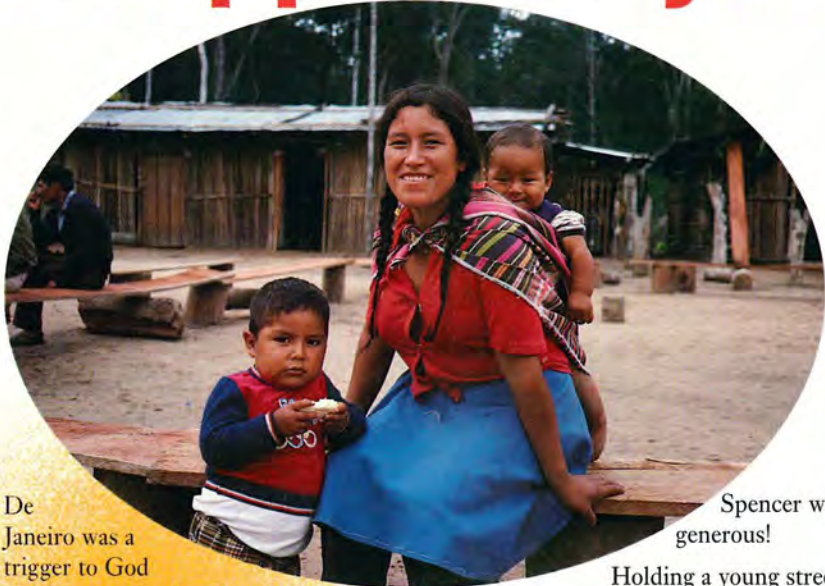


radiant smile”, (quote from a TV reviewer). She had earlier spent a night in a street doorway in a cardboard box on the embankment to be “able to really empathise with those living on the streets .”

Study followed at All Nations College and a continued call to serve the street kids of Brazil, a follow-up to her earlier short-term experience in Brazil . A divine intervention on a bus in Rio



ld happen to you



PHOTOGRAPH CAROLYN COLE

De Janeiro was a trigger to God speaking to Carolyn about

returning to the country to work for him. She had found herself lost at night in this most notoriously dangerous city and had been rescued by a divinely placed Carioca (native of Rio) Christian. The love that she had developed for Brazil and its people remained and grew in the six years prior to her returning for full time service. In October 1993, four Waterloo Bridge men and their dog cashed in their 'giros' to travel and spend a weekend at respectable Gorsley Baptist Church, Herefordshire, to give a special, challenging flavour to Carolyn's valedictory – the Holy Spirit never ceases to surprise.

Three years of frontline service in Brazil, at Recife and Belo Horizonte, had many challenging moments. Robbed of her underwear at gunpoint near a favela whilst returning from using a friend's washing machine, became headline news at home. The replacement response of the Gloucester manager of Marks and

Spencer was generous!

Holding a young street child in her arms, brushing the matt and grime and filth from her hair – a young lady worthy of dignity but deprived of it through cruel circumstances. The wild-eyed stare of a boy sniffing glue, in the body of a child but with the experience of a man – his childhood shattered and innocence destroyed. It was seeing the lives of children change which brought Carolyn most joy. A ten-year-old boy laughing and playing as a child, being himself, free and unafraid to express his feelings. She still misses them.

These experiences encapsulate two of Carolyn's distinctive contributions to the overseas children: demonstrating that unskilled but committed young people can make a significant and lasting impact in the most needy and isolated areas of the developing world and building specific lasting relationships with the pastor of the poor.

Carolyn is a tireless encourager of young people and a natural communicator of her radical vision to the UK churches. Many young people will testify how Carolyn's encouragement has resulted in a deepening commitment and life changing consequences. Carolyn now shares these special gifts with the BMS and the young people of the Baptist churches. ●



PHOTOGRAPH CAROLYN COLE



Where are they now?

...Mat Wilson

After finishing his year on the 28:19 Action Team to Jamaica (92/93), Mat gained a degree in Sociology from Sussex University (where he co-ordinated Bible studies for the Christian Union), then took up a post in Portsmouth, working in a school for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Beginning with his time overseas and continuing throughout this period however, God's calling on his life was clear:

"The time spent in Jamaica had a profound effect upon me..... it helped me realise and appreciate the Baptist community throughout the world. The challenge of preaching..... as well as the experience of pastoral visits helped give me a small insight into ministerial life".

Married in May 1997, Mat has obeyed the call and is now training at Spurgeons College along with Steve Barber, the husband of his Action Team colleague Carolyn Hughes.

Prayer focus



ASIA



**Peter and Karen Lloyd
Pokhara, NEPAL**

Peter and Karen have taken a year out from their jobs to serve God as Barnabas Project volunteers. Peter, a teacher, has been given unpaid leave by his school and Karen has given up her job as a Christian careworker. The couple are members of Chipping Camden Baptist Church where Peter was a deacon and lay preacher and Karen served as overseas mission co-ordinator. They have long had a heart for mission but wanted an opportunity to serve God in a more full time capacity – the Barnabas Project gave them that opportunity.

Peter and Karen arrived in Nepal in early August last year. Just one day after their arrival Peter, thrown in at the deep end, had to begin teaching a class of 15 seven to nine-year-olds. All the children are from missionary

families and the school encourages the children not only in their learning, but also in their Christian life.

After completing a basic Nepali language survival course, Karen began work with the Partnership for Rehabilitation team, helping those disabled by leprosy to learn practical skills. The aim is to make their clients economically and socially self-sufficient and to rehabilitate them back into their own society – not an easy task due to the social stigma still attached to the disease. Karen is involved in setting up vocational training programmes and dealing with publicity and marketing for products which the leprosy survivors produce for sale.

Please pray:

- **the Lloyds are developing good relationships with many Nepali people and need to be able to communicate easily – pray for their language skills.**
- **for good health**
- **pupils at the school come and go quickly – some are in class for only a week making organisation and planning difficult. Peter needs to come with new ways of dealing with this**

EUROPE



**Ann and David MacFarlane
Barletta, ITALY**

David has been pastoring the Baptist church at Barletta, in southern Italy since September 1996. There has been a lot of work to do as many general aspects of church life, such as Bible studies and prayer meetings, had been run down. Indeed, the first church prayer meeting held after the MacFarlanes induction marked the first time in 23 years that the church had met together for prayer! Ann is responsible for the Sunday school and women's meetings as well as being heavily involved in her own pastoral work and David is also responsible for helping the other 15 Baptist churches in his Association with evangelism and worship projects.

David and Ann are encouraged by the fruit they are seeing at Barletta. The

church is rediscovering its responsibility to the community and the MacFarlanes are helping its members to discover and use their own God given gifts. The couple are particularly praying for revival amongst the young people. The BMS 28:19 Action Team of four British youngsters which joined the MacFarlanes in October, is helping with the work in that area.

Please pray:

- **that the church would continue to look outwards and would increase in its ability to aid its local community**
- **for strength, that David and Ann would not grow too tired from the many responsibilities they have.**
- **for the Action Team – that they would not be too homesick and would be able to use their gifts to really benefit the people of Barletta.**



**Saverio and Betsy Guarna
Tirana, ALBANIA**

Saverio and Betsy have been working with BMS as



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

missionaries in Albania since July 1994. Until their evacuation from the country during the civil war in March 1997, Saverio was pastor of the First Baptist Church, Tirana. They returned to a very different country and situation in August. Many people stopped going to the church during this time of danger and distress, but others, remaining firm in their faith managed somehow to continue in fellowship despite bans on public meetings. The young church, bereft of its leaders, took matters into its own hands and God raised up leaders to take care of on-going church responsibilities.

1997 was a year of immense uncertainty for the Guarnas. First there was the pain of separation, being forced to leave the country and people they consider their own and feeling that they were abandoning their friends. There followed four and a half months of uncertainty, not knowing when they could return, nor to what. Finally, on 1 August, they landed at Tirana airport. The question – what now?

‘Treading softly’ is the word for the people of Albania. Submerged unrest and a potentially dangerous atmosphere still reside across the country and the Guarnas

are entering a period of reflection, along with the church, to take stock and plan the way forward. Saverio and Betsy now see their role more as counsellors and co-workers to those who have proved their ability to lead during tough times. The task is still demanding however – to encourage emerging leaders to take their responsibilities a step further and to comfort and encourage those who still need to find their way in the church.

Please pray:

- for security in people's lives and the opportunity for poor people to make a living
- that the church will emerge from this crisis strong and dedicated
- wisdom for Saverio, Betsy and the church leaders in seeking God's way forward
- God's continued protection over his people



AFRICA



Simon and Karen Collins
Luanda, ANGOLA

Simon and Karen have been waiting since around April 1997 for visas to go out to Angola. The Bromsgrove GP and his teacher wife were originally told their visa application would take only one to two months but at the time of going to press, there had still been no news.

It has been a frustrating period for the couple as they are not sure why they have had to wait. Possibilities are that God is giving them time to prepare more fully for what is ahead, that it is time to sort out health problems or that he is keeping them safe whilst the situation in Angola is unstable. There are no easy answers however and Simon and Karen are instead trying to focus on using this period of waiting wisely.

Please pray:

- for visas!
- that Simon and Karen would remain focussed on the task ahead and not be distracted by uncertainties
- for the families – the stress of saying goodbye and then finding another deadline passed and they have not gone

Around the world

TENTMAKERS INTERNATIONAL

THIS ISSUE WE START A NEW SERIES
ON "TENTMAKING MINISTRIES".
BUT WHAT IS "TENTMAKING"?
DAVID KERRIGAN EXPLAINS.



ILLUSTRATION SARAH PRENTICE

When the apostle Paul went to Corinth we're told that he stayed with Aquila and Priscilla, because they, like Paul, were tentmakers. He stayed and worked with them, and "every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks." (Acts 18:3,4)



Ian and Sally Smith were medical missionaries in Nepal for 13 years. For the last two years Ian has been seconded to the Nepal government as their national TB advisor, a post co-funded by the British High Commission, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Government of Nepal. Ian has

now been asked to join WHO full-time, in Nepal for now, but later postings could take them anywhere in the world. Is this an end to their missionary service? Ian replies, "From our perspective it certainly isn't the end; it's simply the next stage of our missionary work."

From those early beginnings in Corinth, Christians have often spoken of "tentmakers" as those whose work provides for their daily needs and makes a positive contribution to their

community, but who also see the possibilities of christian witness in that place as an integral part of their reason for being there.

In one sense, then, we can all be tentmakers.

Donald and Julie

have worked in Brussels for the last four years where Julie is employed by the Government as a translator, and Donald works as a freelance journalist. They are members at Finkwick Baptist Church, and worship in Brussels at a local French-speaking church. In their daily work they are constantly amazed at how often they are able to share their faith with others.

At any one given time there are thousands of UK Christians working overseas in a wide variety of work situations. Some work for international conglomerates; others are self-employed. Some are with national governments, and some are with our own government. Some work in the great cities

of the world, whilst many are working and living in isolated, rural settings. Whatever the circumstances, wherever the place, the command is the same: to "Let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." ●

David Kerrigan is BMS Regional Representative for Asia

TAKE 2

Take Two –
a resource for
church leaders
and workers

Burma: statistics

Ranking of Burma in world Human Development Index, 1996: **133/174**

Infrastructure

SPDC (formerly SLORC) estimate of "People's contributions" to roads built in 1994/95 (FY): **33%**

People forced to work on the Pakokku-Monywa section of the Chaung oo-Pakokku Railroad: **921,753**

Estimated number of households assigned work duties on the Thanbyuzayat Motor Road in Mon State: **2,600**

People forced to build 100-mile extension for Ye-Tavoy railway: **200,000**

People forced to work on Bassein Airport extension: **30,000**

Number of prisoners in all the camps working on the New Kabaw Valley project in Chin State: **4,000**

Education

SPDC estimate of "People's contributions" to education in 1994/95 (FY): **40%**

Number of students attending new schools built since 1989: **34,322**

Number of school children whose schools were closed for five months by government order: **7,000,000**

Number of universities which remain closed as of August 1997: **30**

Total of forced contributions to one new high school built in Thayet Taung township: **US \$11,079** or **1,396,000 kyat**

Agriculture

SPDC estimate of "People's contributions" to agricultural projects 1994/95 (FY): **33%**

Number of "agricultural supervisors" whose job it is to ensure that farmers comply with agricultural quotas: **7,000**

Rice export target set by Burma for 1996: **1.5 million tons**

Actual rice exports for 1996: **112,000 tons**

Communications:

TVs per 1000 people: **1.9**

TV broadcast stations: **1**

Radio receivers per 1000 people: **82**

Prison sentence for operation of an unlicensed satellite television receiver in Burma: **up to 3 years**

Forests

Saw mills built by Burma's Forestry Department since 1989: **12**

Amount villagers were paid in 1996 for cutting one ton of logs in Shan State: **US \$ 2 (250 kyat)**

Traders selling price in 1996 of one ton of logs in Shan State: **US \$ 95 (12,000 kyat)**

Value of Burma's teak exports in 1995/1996: **US \$ 175.2 million**

Health

One doctor for every: **12,900 people**

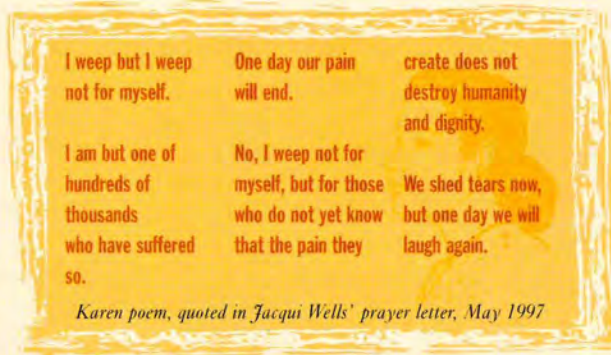
Under five mortality: **117 per 1,000**

Percentage of population with access to safe water: **31%**

Defence

SPDC government defence spending in 1995/1996: **US \$ 155 million**

Figures taken from *Burma Issues*, August 1997, and *Third World Guide*



Fair Trade - How you can help

Food

Write to your local supermarket managers with a copy to head office (the local branch will have that address) asking them to stock fairly traded goods. Then buy them.

resource. If not, write to the company head office and to the manufacturer.

Watch out for these fairly traded products in your supermarket:

Colombia Percol
Fairtrade Latin American Organic
Cafédirect ground
Cafédirect instant
Cafédirect decaffeinated
Equal Exchange organic

Clothing

Check the country of manufacture. If in doubt, think twice before buying. Try asking the shop manager whether he or she knows the source and write to the company's head office for more information if you don't get a satisfactory answer.

Tea

Clipper Sri Lanka Golden Clipper
Nilgiri Blue Mountain
Clipper Earl Grey Nilgiri
Clipper Fairtrade
Seyté Tea
TopQualiTea

Chocolate

Green & Black's Maya Gold

Coffee

Percol
Fairtrade
Nicaragua
Percol
Fairtrade

Orange juice

None

Timber products

Before you buy furniture or other timber products, check whether it has been made from a renewable

More information from:

Christian Aid, Change at the Check-out campaign, PO Box 100, London SE1 7RT. Telephone 0171 620 4444.

Oxfam, Fair Trade Works, 274 Banbury Road, Oxford, OX2 7DZ. Telephone 01865 312603.

The Fairtrade Foundation, 7th Floor Regents House, 89 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6RH. Telephone 0171 405 5942.

Fauna and Flora Preservation Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London, SW7 2AR. Telephone 0171 823 8899.

Tree Aid, 28 Hobbs Lane, Bristol, BS1 5ED. Telephone 0117 934 9442.

Forests Forever, Clareville House, 26/27 Oxendon Street, London, SW1Y 4EL. Telephone 0171 839 1891.

RESOURCES for Leaders

CUT & DETATCH

TAKE 2

Take Two –
a resource for
church leaders
and workers

Let Us Pray

Father, forgive us that prayers for justice and peace are so often the prayers we should have prayed but didn't.

Corporate prayer – YOU–ME–GOD – God, who sent his Son to redeem us, and sends his Holy Spirit to empower us, is HERE.

Father, show us your will and purpose...
– you know my will – I require that you act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with me. (*Micah*)

Lord, let there be peace and justice in

the world.
– and let it begin with you, says
the Lord.

Lord, for how long will our prayers be blinded by self-interest?

Where are the fruits of justice in Congo?
Where are the signs of peace in Angola?
When will the church be a real instrument of peace and reconciliation in Albania, in Ireland, in Sierra Leone?

When will the wronged be righted in Mozambique, in Brazil?

You question me, says the Lord. Let me ask you some questions.

When will you make justice and peace a priority in your lives, your work and in this missionary society?

You have the seeds of justice and peace in your hands – when will you plant them, water them, tend them?

When will your words give birth to actions?

Father, forgive us for wearying you with our prayers – we have the answers, but lack courage and compassion.

Father, stir our hearts to fight and struggle for justice and make us willing to be hurt, even broken as we promote and nurture peace.

Wilma Aitchison

Religious freedom in Europe

The following statistics were given at a recent European Baptist Federation Council meeting as to what is happening to Baptists around certain parts of Europe and the Middle East.

Former EBF President Theo Angelov has appealed to all European Baptists to be aware of human rights abuses hindering the ministries of Baptists and others. "A new wave of restrictions is coming. It is a spirit coming against us," he said. Writing letters, meeting with representatives from the traditional churches, and other such initiatives are necessary, but not enough. Baptists need to be more active and influential on the local government and parliamentary levels, he said. Government leaders "understand the hard language of political pressure." And above all, pray. (EBPS)

Country	Baptist Union Churches	Members	Situation
AZERBAIJAN	15	520	A jailed pastor has been released. Situation quiet at the moment.
KIRGHIZSTAN	33	3,118	Young Kirghiz churches under a lot of pressure. Some buildings have been closed. There is a law in preparation to put pressure on non-state religious groups.
RUSSIA	1,200	92,000	President Boris Yeltsin has signed a revised version of a law limiting religious freedom that is worse than the version he earlier vetoed ostensibly because of its unfair limits on some religious groups. In 35 regions of Russia laws are being considered limiting street evangelism and activities of non-Russian Christians such as missionaries.
GEORGIA	49	5,000	A new law on the church and state will come up this winter. Believers are struggling and suffering. Books such as Billy Graham's writings, a Children's Bible, New Testament charts, and parts of the New Testament have been burnt on the grounds that they are undesirable and dangerous reading material.
ARMENIA	25	900	Described as "a brighter spot on the human rights map." Baptists and other evangelicals have friendly relations with the Apostolic Church, and there is no serious persecution from either the Orthodox Church or the government. Catholics, evangelicals and others are identified as "traditional" groups.
ISRAEL	12	923	There is a proposed law which will greatly restrict any attempts to evangelise, though Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has assured evangelicals that he will not sign such a law. His government, however, is seen as dependent on the ultra-orthodox Jewish political representatives in the legislature.
LEBANON	19	1,114	There is both pressure on and persecution of Christians in the multi-religious land of Lebanon. Pressure is applied in local situations to delay or stop evangelical groups from growing and getting adequate buildings in which to meet.
MACEDONIA	3	150	Provisions of a law passed July 1997 are very restrictive and fines levied against those who break the new laws are very high. If anything, the situation is worse now than in Communist times. Baptists have been among the most vocal advocates for religious freedom. One legislator said, "Send a bulldozer and level the Baptists." Special police approval is now required to receive Bible translations in English and other Christian material.

RESOURCES for leaders





The WAY I SEE IT

AT THE HEART OF THEIR WORLD-WIDE MISSION STRATEGY, ALONGSIDE DIRECT EVANGELISM, BRITISH BAPTISTS HAVE ALWAYS PLACED MEETING PHYSICAL NEEDS AND, IF NECESSARY, CAMPAIGNING ON THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CAUSES OF THOSE NEEDS. SOME OF OUR MISSION PARTNERS HOWEVER MAY HAVE DIFFERENT PRIORITIES, AS REVEALED IN THIS EXTRACT FROM THE PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE OF PHILIP CLEMENTS-JEWERY.

Dear Philip

I write in Christian love to suggest that your concern for social issues and for justice and peace is a distraction from the vital task of evangelism. As we see it here in Brazil, the urgent necessity is to win souls for Christ.

Millions of our fellow Brazilians live in darkness and error and have never heard the real message of salvation. There is a spiritual vacuum in our country which is rapidly being filled by spiritist cults. That's why we believe that preaching the gospel is the only thing that matters.

Your brother in Christ.
Joao

Dear Joao

Thank you for your letter. I very much admire the evangelistic zeal of Brazilian Baptists and I am sure that we here in Britain have much to learn from you. But I am also sure that a concern for justice and peace is not a departure from the gospel and belongs alongside the presentation of Christ as Saviour. In the gospels, Jesus himself not only preached and taught, he also demonstrated in signs the presence of God's kingdom reflecting the very clear 'bias to the poor' that is attributed to God in scripture.

Yours in Christ
Philip

Dear Philip

I understand what you are saying but we are also sure that the Lord is coming soon and that if people have not accepted him by then, it will be too late when he returns. The material conditions under which people have lived

on earth are utterly insignificant in comparison with the possibility of an eternity without Christ. It's because we want to stop people going to hell that we concentrate 100 per cent on evangelism. I also think that the way you talk

about a 'bias to the poor' concedes too much to the error of Communism.

In Christian love.
Joao

Dear Joao

The Bible teaches us that God wants justice and righteousness on earth as well as the salvation of our souls. I'm sorry if you think that sounds like Marxist teaching. As Creator, God gave us bodies and put us in communities as well as giving us souls and spirits. It's for reasons like these, and more, that the BMS has put justice and peace alongside other concerns at the heart of its missionary strategy. A purely spiritual gospel can be too easy. Christ certainly comforted the disturbed, but what he said and did was also very disturbing for people who were too comfortable.

Yours in the service of the Gospel.
Philip

What do you think? Take part in this debate. Write to us in about 120 words: BMS, Baptist House, 129 Broadway, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 8XA or Email: mail@bms.org.uk

Action Card

Racial Justice

Since the 1950s, Britain has been developing into a multi-cultural and multi-religious society. People have come into the country mainly from the Caribbean, Africa and Asia because they were invited for work or because they were offered asylum or refuge from troubles in their countries of origin. At first, many immigrants intended to be in Britain temporarily, but their children were born here and they have become committed to work and life in Britain.

Many people enjoy living in multi-cultural Britain, but others find it difficult. A very recent story is told by a black church leader, of meeting for many years with his people in the afternoons in a London church where the congregation was white. He noticed that the members of the church celebrated One World Week every year and finally, one year, he decided to go to their service which was held in the mornings. As the announcement of One World Week was made, he stood up and said, "We are here."

The challenge in living in late 20th Century Britain is the challenge to live with the reality of a mixed society and to build up authentic community amongst the different races. It is vital



that people who have enjoyed learning from those who are racially different should help others to overcome their prejudices and fears, by offering opportunities for people to meet each other, through the churches, and in their homes. There is also the responsibility to work for justice in society, equality in education, equal treatment for people from all races when they apply for citizenship and for opportunities in work. Send your card to The Centres for Black and White Christian Partnership, Selly Oak Colleges, Bristol Road, Birmingham, B29 6LQ. Encourage the work being done and if you would like to know more, do ask for information.

WALLINGTON MISSIONARY AUCTIONS

Do you have any of the following that you no longer need?

antique furniture
jewellery
silver and plated goods
paintings
prints
etchings

antique books
postcards
porcelain
musical instruments
scientific instruments

clocks
old dolls, toys
linen
Victoriana
stamps
coins and medals

Provisional auction dates for 1998 are:

5 & 6	March
23 & 24	April
18 & 19	June
17 & 18	Sept
26 & 27	Nov

Goods like these are donated to Wallington Missionary Auctions every year. They are then sold on the donor's behalf and the money raised goes to support the work of Missionary Societies.

Last year BMS received £3,400 through the sale of goods at these auctions.

For more details write to: Wallington Missionary Auctions, 105 Stafford Road, Wallington, Surrey SM6 9AP. Wallington Missionary Auctions is operated by Wallington Missionary Mart & Auctions, a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee. UK Reg No. 1797729. VAT No 218 3885 51.

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BARNABAS PROJECT

SHORT-TERM OPPORTUNITIES

Nepal

Teachers of all subjects required for Kathmandu Study Centre, an international school for the children of missionaries and other expatriates.

Albania

Craft project manager/trainer required for six to nine months in Bregu-i-Lumit, a village five miles from Tirana, helping to put an income generating project on to a solid business footing. The ideal person must have business training and marketing skills, knowledge of import/export and an ability to judge the quality of work in areas of knitting, embroidery, crochet etc. They must also be a Christian, willing to share their faith in appropriate ways.

India

People with skills in building, surveying and architecture urgently required in Mizoram, North India to answer an SOS by Baptist World Aid. The area has suffered floods and landslides and has asked for a team to give advice on safe housing and site selection.

For further information, please contact Carolyn Cole, BMS Volunteer Co-ordinator. Tel 01235 512077

Checkout

Missionary Movements

JANUARY

Arrivals

none

Departures

Andrew and Michelle Furber to Tansen

Colin and Denise Clark to Pokhara

David and Sheila Brown to Rio de

Janeiro

John and Rena Mellor to Kinshasa

FEBRUARY

Arrivals

John and Maria Dyer from Penha

Departures

Tim and Rosimar Deller to Goiânia

Stan and Maureen Porter to Sao Paulo

One has to climb several hundred feet up the side of a mountain to reach Dona Francelina's house, in the village of EufRASINA. It isn't really very far from the village centre, nor from the Baptist church, but it is a haven of peace. The only sounds to be heard are the songs of the birds in the trees, Dona Francelina's chatter, and her husband Sebastião's laughter. I am not able to visit them as often as I

GERRY MYHILL

Gerry Myhill is a BMS missionary working in Antonina, Brazil

would like, and even though there is little physical comfort, I always come away refreshed both in body and spirit. Their house is not really much more than a shelter made of wood branches, with more gaps than wood; however, it has meant shelter and security to them, to their many children and grandchildren, and also to countless cats, dogs, chickens and ducks, which come and go as they please. What makes their home special is the constant awareness of God's presence and love.

One Sunday, Francelina was celebrating her birthday, and many people visited her home to express to her their birthday greetings, and to

enjoy a dish of canjica. Canjica consists of white maize boiled with milk, sugar, and either grated coconut or ground peanuts. We sang and prayed, asking God's continued blessing upon Francelina, after which she made herself

'Their house is not really much more than a shelter made of wood branches, with more gaps than wood.'

busy, dishing out endless bowls of canjica. A large bowl of sugar was placed in the centre of the table for those who required extra sweetening, while all available spoons were stuck in the sugar. Those who finished eating their canjica were expected to replace their spoons in the sugar for others to use. Washing up was kept to a minimum due to the fact that all water had to be carried up the hillside in buckets.

Because I am their pastor, I was privileged with a seat at the table, and I watched, fascinated, the two ladies opposite me who were so absorbed in their conversation that they didn't notice the chicken which calmly stepped into the middle of their bowls, tucking in. When finally one of the ladies did notice, she let out such a scream that the startled

chicken took off, flapping its wings, and splatting everybody and everything with canjica, while leaving two lovely black footprints in the bowl. With all the calm in the world, Dona Francelina simply dipped the ladle once more into the cauldron and refilled the bowl. Footprints forgotten, the party continued.

Shortly afterwards one of the daughters appeared with a huge cake which was placed on the table in front of me. I was asked to pray again, and thinking it might be wise to get on with it before the chickens returned, I hastily rose to my feet, only to discover that I had been sitting right underneath one of the beams which supports the roof! My prayer was probably one of the briefest ever, and was uttered amid a shower of celestial bodies.

Now when people ask me to pray, I carefully examine my surroundings before rising.

And if there are chickens present, I keep one eye on them.



ILLUSTRATION BY SARAH PRENTICE

BMS Relief

FUND

When a disaster strikes there's no time to arrange an appeal for funds to help victims. They require our support and money instantly.

So give money now in order that when a disaster strikes, and that could be tomorrow, BMS - with your help - can step in immediately.

Give now so BMS can act later.

'Give generously to him, and do so without a grudging heart.'

(Deut. 15:10)

**BMS Compassion
in Action**

PHOTO: PA NEWS

CUT & DETATCH

I want to give my money now, so that BMS can act later

I have enclosed:

£10 £25 £50

£100 £250* Other

for the BMS Relief Fund.

(Cheques to be made payable to Baptist Missionary Society)

You can also covenant your gift. If you wish to do so please tick

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Church _____

*We can make this up to £324 reclaiming tax through Gift Aid.

If you require a Gift Aid form please tick

For further information ask your church treasurer, or call Rob Vaines at BMS on 01235 512077. BMS, Baptist House, 129 Broadway, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 8XA. Registered Charity No. 233782