



mb

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church planting

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Where in the world could you be for GOD?

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- people who want to make Jesus known



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this is **REALITY**



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CONTENTS

RECEIVED

26 -04- 1999

features

10 Wide and deep?

Stanley Davies looks at church growth globally

12 Dynamite

What's happened to the Church in Nepal

14 The forgotten continent?

Two accounts of church growth in Africa

16 From Brazil to Brae

One man's church planting journey

regulars

9 Owen Clark

A new series about emerging church leaders

20 Our Town

Featuring Barletta

24 Volunteers and Action Teams

Where will you be 31 December 1999?

28 People, Projects, Prayer

Latest news and updates

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COVER PICTURE CHANTEL TEHE, STUDENT WORKER IN IVORY COAST
PICTURE PAM BRYAN

mh May / June 1999

world

What do you think of when you hear the words 'church planting' or 'church growth'?

It's understandable if we equate what is happening worldwide with what we know in our own back yard — whether that's tremendous growth, stagnation, or total decline.

On the whole churches in Europe are experiencing the latter two. When we're rubbing shoulders on a regular basis with discouraged Christians it's easy to lose sight of the big picture — what we're about. Then we get dragged down in the quagmire of church maintenance rather than mission, looking to the parochial rather than worldwide, seeing things in tunnel vision rather than widescreen.

Someone once said, "Blessed is the person who expects nothing, for they shall not be disappointed."

I'm always tremendously excited when I read what has been called the Parable of the Sower, because, whatever else you might glean from it, the crop promised is a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. I'm excited because in those days ten times was considered to be a good harvest!

Ephesians 3:20 says, "Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us..." Our prayers for building God's kingdom need to be focused and verbalised — exactly what is it we're asking, even pleading with God for? And before this happens, our prayers need thoughts, dreams and imagination realising how great God is, and how much he wants to move in our world today. This verse tells us that God can do greater things than our imagination would limit us to. That's mind-blowing!

This issue of *mb* is looking at areas of the world where God is working, bringing about situations of church growth, even a few years back thought impossible.

We're all involved in God's worldwide work: by our prayers, giving of time and money, by raising awareness in churches and cell groups, and some will leave their homes and get their hands dirty serving God in cross-cultural mission work. Let's raise our imaginations a notch higher in what we're asking God for, trusting that we won't be disappointed.

You'll find a free collecting box on the cover of this issue. It's an incentive to give a little extra to the work of BMS: making Jesus known worldwide.

With best wishes,

Jan



editorial editorial editorial editorial editorial editorial editorial editorial editorial



Jordan Theological students expelled

Three students from Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary (JETS) in Amman have been expelled from the country in a 'painful manner', according to JETS President, Imad Shehadeh.

The students, one each from Iraq, Egypt, and Sudan all had legal residence in the country, and were registered as legal students of JETS. They were put in prison for a week, along with real criminals. It was cold, and

they had little food. When released, the students were sent directly to the airport, and flown out on the next available flight.

Having seen this happen, three more students decided to leave JETS of their own accord. "These students that we lost are some of the most godly people on earth, outstanding Christian scholars, and dear friends," said Dr Shehadeh. JETS was given full government recognition in March 1995. In three years it has reached an enrolment of 150 students from 14 countries. (EBPS).

Russia 'Land of ice' receives fire of gospel

Young Christians — most of whom have only been converted in the last four or five years — in the remote easternmost part of Russia have travelled across the isolated Kamchatka region to Petropavlovsk to take part in a Discipleship Training School to equip them for church and missionary service.

In this area, nine time zones east of Moscow, there have been nationwide fuel shortages. The number of

news



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Russian army in military training

fatal accidents and suicides are reported to have increased dramatically in recent weeks.

“It’s absolutely unbelievable what they are enduring,” said Al Akimoff, Training School Director. “They are having to survive on very little food, without power most of the time. Some of them have to walk several miles every day to get to class.” One of the students from a distant community walked for 12 hours to reach a plane that could fly him to Petropavlovsk. Two others sailed across rough seas for two days.

Until a few years ago, there were few, if any, Christians in the frozen peninsula which was home to major Soviet military bases and closed to outsiders. Since the fall of Communism, missionaries have been able to visit the area – once called the impenetrable ‘land of fire and ice’ because of its sub-zero temperatures and range of active volcanoes. There



are now 13 churches here. (YWAM)

Cuba Bibles burned

Despite reports that Cuba is becoming more open to matters of faith and religion following the visit of Pope John II a year ago, it appears that the Government’s policy towards the Bible has not changed.

On 3 February, Miami’s Radio Mamba reported, “Thousands of Bibles from

news in brief ○ news in brief ○ news in brief ○ news in brief ○ news in brief

Japan

“A return to pre-war nationalistic morality, and the enforced use of the Japanese flag and national anthem, is not the answer for the problems we currently face in Japanese schools,” said Junichiro Naito, General Secretary of the Japan Baptist Convention. While violence in schools, murder, bullying, truancy and suicide is on the rise, he believed that both parents and children need to be released from the extreme competition that exists in Japanese schools. (BWA)

Sierra Leone

The first Baptist church in Africa, the Regent Road Baptist Church in Freetown, Sierra Leone, founded 1794, has been burned by rebels of the Revolutionary United Front. The news came from Moses Khanu, General Secretary of the Baptist Convention of Sierra Leone, but he and his family are safe. The European Baptist Mission offices survived a bomb, and provided a refuge for neighbouring residents. (BWA)

Sri Lanka

An Assembly of God church was attacked by a mob on Sunday 14 February. A mob assaulted some people at the church, which is replacing its small prayer hall with a larger building. Police dispersed the mob, but the church people could not leave the church to go home as they feared attack on the way. The next day two masked motorcyclists told the workers on the church building site that they would be killed if they did not stop their work.

India

Australian Baptist missionary, Graham Staines, and his two sons Philip (10) and Timothy (8) were burned alive while sleeping in their van, in the early hours of 23 January. They were attending a mission camp in the state of Orissa. Staines had served the tribal people of India for 30 years. His wife, Gladys, said “I am terribly upset, but not angry. My husband loved Jesus Christ, who has taught us to forgive our enemies.” Right wing Hindu supporters have been arrested. (BWA/Open Doors)

Uzbekistan

The Union of Churches of Evangelical Christians – Baptists (UCECB) of Uzbekistan received a registration certificate from the Uzbek government earlier this year. Ten congregations were registered as part of the process. Baptists around the world protested when, last year, a new religious law had been passed restricting the religious freedom of groups such as the UCECB. (EPBS)



the United States were burnt near a military unit in Managua, in the municipality of Arroyo Naranjo by (Cuban) authorities, arguing that they were 'subversive books'."

One eyewitness told a reporter that Bibles "were thrown from a truck, thousands of them, into the



OPEN DOORS



dump, and then set on fire."

The Bibles came from the United States, and on their covers were written the words 'Cuba para Cristo' (Cuba for Christ).

A spokesperson said, "We observed the opening towards faith and religion as evidenced by the Pope's visit, and were very encouraged that the evangelical church will have similar opportunities during 1999. We assumed that the ministry of Open Doors, which pioneered Bible deliveries to Cuba since the early 1960s, would be allowed to return to Cuba, (but) the tragic news we receive is of this Bible burning." (Open Doors)

USA Freed ones reversing history



One of the main ports of entry for slave ships coming to the United States is now home to a new reconciliation movement intending to reverse history by sending black Americans to Africa to talk about freedom - in Christ.

The Africa Redemptive Operation (AFRO), based in Richmond, Virginia, is hoping that African-American Christians will travel to their ancestors' homelands as missionaries.

The initiative is headed up by Joseph and Yvette Zintseme from Cameroon, West Africa, who commented, "In the past there have been very few African-American missionaries in Africa, in spite of the fact they can do a better job because of the way they would be welcomed."

By taking groups of black and white Christians from America on prayer and research trips to Africa, the Zintsemes hope to start building a bridge between the two continents. Teams

have travelled to Mali, the Ivory Coast and Senegal, where they visited the infamous Goree Island, the prison from which thousands were shipped into slavery.

These trips focus on



YWAM

reconciliation between black and white, and between black Americans and Africans, "because we realise we cannot hope to mobilise African-Americans as missionaries for Africa and ignore the fact of slave history.

"African-Americans have had their identity taken away by African ancestors who played a part in slavery by selling their brothers and sisters, sons and daughters to the slave traders."

One participant who went to Senegal said, "My trip... opened my eyes to what missionaries endure while serving in foreign countries. I saw that we Americans have so many things we consider necessary, but in reality they have nothing to do with our existence... I take far fewer things for granted since my trip... and I have much more compassion for the lost and the hurting." (YWAM)

Chechnya The aftermath of war

A group of missionaries set out for Chechnya at the end of January to help provide help and hope to the people tortured by war. At least 15 different mission agencies have left this area, and still nothing has been heard of the pastor of Grozny Baptist Church, pastor Alexei, kidnapped in October 1998.

The majority of young people either fled or have died. It is the old who have stayed. Families were split in the war, and many are totally unaware as to whether other family members are alive or not. Boys, too young to be soldiers or terrorists, roam the streets, openly selling guns. They have no homes, no families; they are dirty and without hope. Elderly women - 'grannies' - around the age of 80, are the mainstay of the church and the community. They, themselves, have lost everything: their homes, their wealth, their loved ones, and still they go on helping the needy.

The members of Grozny Baptist Church continue in their faith in spite of grenades erupting in the churchyard. Loss of their pastor has hit them hard; they know bandits usually identify themselves and ask for a ransom after a couple of weeks if they have a hostage. This has not happened. There has been no information about Pastor Alexei.

The group also visited a refugee camp at Vladikavkaz, and a hospital



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where many people live, disabled from injuries in civil war. Again, it is the old women who are giving the help here. The Baptist church's project for the year is the support of the hospital and the home for the refugees.

The group embarked on their mission, believing their task was to give. Instead, they came away feeling it was they who were given to.

England Hope for gender benders

People struggling with sexual identity problems – that scare away most churches, because they don't know how to cope – have at last found help from a Christian who understands their problems.

The counselling and support ministry is for transvestites, transsexuals and those looking for help in how best to handle such pastoral situations. It is run by Keith Tiller, a man who, himself, once had a secret life as a cross-dresser and considered undergoing a

'sex change' operation. "Many transsexuals and transvestites claim to be happy dressing and living as women, but a large number suffer depression, and often turn to drugs and alcohol," said Tiller from research and his own experience. He had a nervous breakdown after the collapse of his second marriage, and while in hospital was advised to consider 'sex change' surgery. He became a Christian before going through with it.

At the start of this ministry, Tiller met regularly with men who believed they were women trapped in male bodies, or who enjoyed dressing in female clothes, to offer advice and pray as they sought to change their lifestyles. "I know what it's like to feel that no-one can possibly understand you. I can come alongside and say, 'I know, I have been there,'" he said. "I am here to listen, pray, cry, whatever is necessary as they try to move forward."

Tiller averages one new inquiry a day – from someone struggling with their sexual identity, their partner or a church leader looking for help. As well as men, he now has an increasing number of inquiries from women wanting to become men.

Tiller is now hoping to start an international Christian organisation teaching and counselling on transsexual and



Alistair Brown



Reflects.....



The pictures of a bridge and a cemetery are linked. They're both in Thailand. It's a railway bridge. The graves, in Kanchanaburi, are of prisoners of war. The bridge spans the River Kwai.

The directive from the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters to build a 250-mile long railway from Thailand to Burma was issued in June 1942. Though it would have to be hacked out of thick jungle, the railway had to be finished in 14 months.

More than 61,000 POWs and a much larger number of coolies from Thailand, Burma and neighbouring countries were all set to work. The conditions were dreadful. In the work camps men sometimes lived for weeks on only the daily ration of rice with a little salt. Malaria, dysentery and the vitamin deficiency disease pellagra attacked the prisoners. Up to 80 per cent of a camp might be sick, but a certain quota had to work each day so men were sometimes carried out on stretchers to hard labour.

In the end the railway and several bridges over the River Kwai were built, bombed, repaired and bombed again. More than 16,000 POWs and 100,000 native labourers died building the railway.

Last *mb* I wrote about the Colosseum, how people can do terrible things to others. That wasn't just 2,000 years ago. It's 20th century too, as the Thailand-Burma railway horrors show. And as we head into the 21st century, it's Rwanda, Congo, Sierra Leone, Orissa, Kosovo and many more; some all too near to home. Humankind is not getting better. We are not redeeming ourselves. I see no evidence to contradict an ancient but bold statement about Jesus, Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved. ●

Alistair Brown is General Director of BMS





transvestitism issues. His on-going study has led him to "become more convinced that we are looking at a relational deficit in their lives that is manifesting itself in this sort of behaviour." (YWAM)

The Action Gap



Thursday 24 June 1999 7.30-9.00pm
Abingdon Baptist Church, Ock Street
Admission Free

The BMS 28:19 Action Teams present The Action Gap
They took a year out, put their faith into action, and want to tell you their story.

Their lives have been challenged and changed. Yours can be too. A lively presentation that will keep you on the edge of your seat and will challenge your young people to rethink their attitude towards mission.

For more details, or to reserve tickets, contact Gill Crippen on 01295 721460

NB The Action Teams will not be attending June General Committee this year.

action

card



Vision 2020

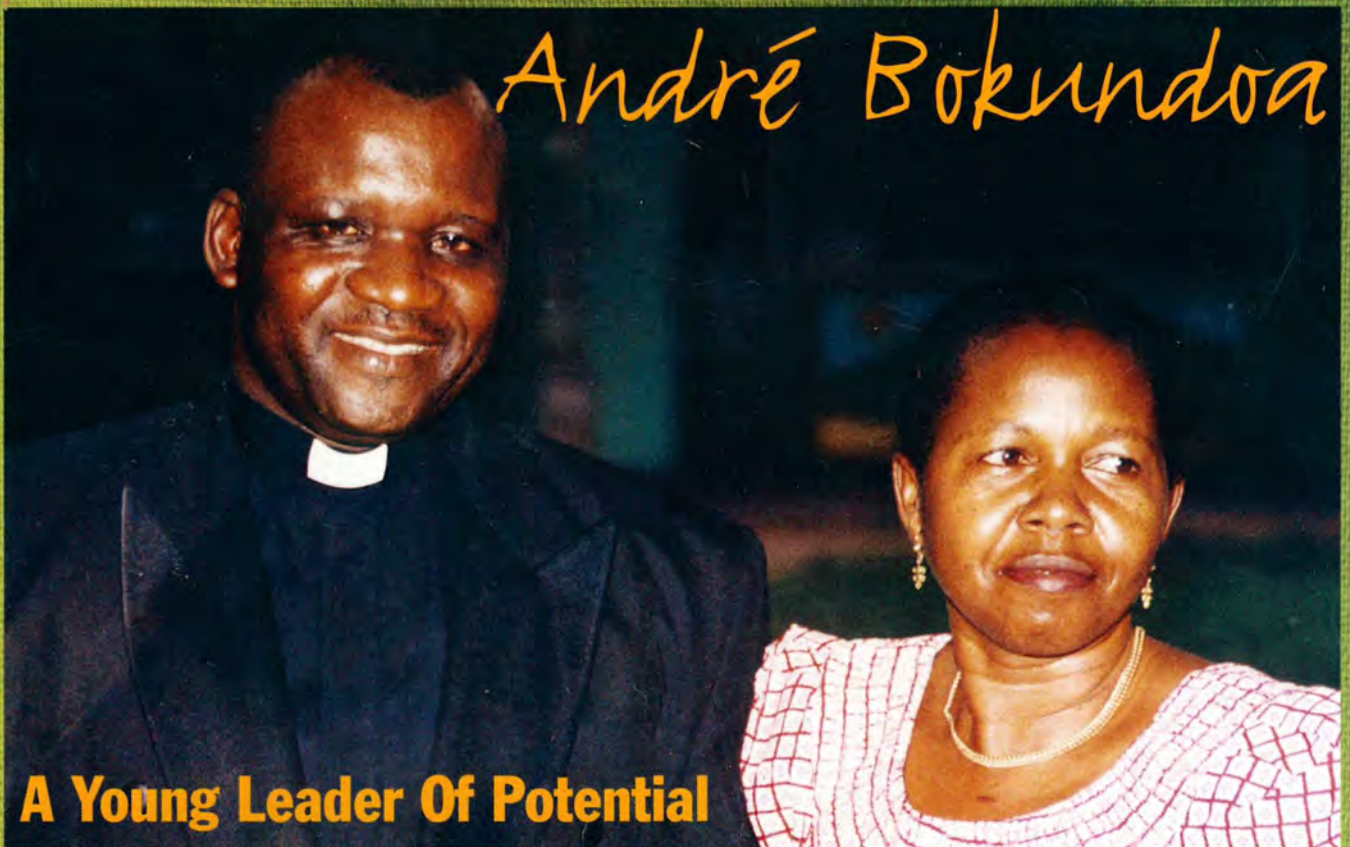
There are 36 million people in the world today who are needlessly blind, people whose blindness could have either been prevented or cured. Nine out of ten of these people live in the Third World. Vision 2020, is a campaign inspired and initiated by the Christian Blind Mission International and supported by many other agencies, including the World Health Organisation, aiming to eradicate avoidable blindness in the next 20 years by:

- increasing awareness of blindness as a major public health issue
- controlling the four major causes of blindness by: doubling the number of cataract operations performed (a simple and inexpensive operation can restore sight); improving access to clean water in the worst affected areas (repeated infection from poor hygiene and polluted water have led to six million people being irreversibly blinded and another 146 million suffering from Trachoma); eradicating River Blindness (18 million people in Central Africa are blinded by a worm which is passed by the bite of a fly in fertile river areas) and supporting vitamin A distribution programmes (vitamin A deficiency blinds 350,000 and kills two million children in Africa and Asia every year)
- training enough eye care workers to treat even the remotest and poorest communities of the world
- creating infrastructures in all countries to ensure eye care is available to all.

These aims are achievable, with the necessary finance, and Vision 2020 will be appealing to governments to raise their spending on development programmes, and asking large corporations and the public for extra donations. It is hoped the campaign will prevent 100 million people from going blind.

Please send this month's card, asking that the British Government financially support the Vision 2020 campaign, to: The Rt Hon Clare Short, Department for International Affairs, House of Commons, London, SW1. ●

BMS, Baptist Union, Christians Aware, Church of Scotland, Methodist Church, United Reformed Church.



A Young Leader Of Potential

OWEN CLARK
CONTINUES HIS
SERIES ON PRESENT
AND FUTURE
CHURCH
LEADERSHIP IN THE
DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC OF
CONGO (FORMERLY
ZAIRE)

How did I get into this?" André Bokundoa entered the office looking bemused. "I was invited to lead opening prayers for the Executive Committee, and they went on to choose me as chairman for the meetings!"

Things would only get worse. Or better, depending on your point of view. Chosen later to chair the General Assembly which had to appoint a new General Secretary, the mantle again fell on him. Morale was low, the finances in a mess. The CBFC needed pulling up by its bootlaces and setting on a new path.

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you," God said to Jeremiah,

"before you were born I set you apart." André was born in 1954 at Mongana, son of a village chief and his wife. He attended the primary school at Bosondjo and secondary school at Upoto. He grew up in a Christian environment, but a book given by the Head gripped him. He committed his life to God, and was baptised in 1972. With his State diploma he began teaching in 1975, and married a year later.

He considered studying medicine,

"He considered studying medicine, but that book continued to speak..."

but that book continued to speak, and he opted for Theology. Descending the river to Kinshasa in 1980, he entered the Protestant Faculty of Theology, with the support of a BMS grant. So well did André shine that, on graduating, the Faculty retained him to teach in the Old Testament department.

When the Faculty suggested doctoral studies and, again, the BMS helped, he obtained a Diploma at the French Biblical and Archaeological School in Jerusalem. He went on from there to gain a doctorate at Sheffield University. His wife, Christine, and their children joined him, and they took part in the life of Cemetery Road Baptist Church in Sheffield.

On returning in 1996 he picked up his teaching again at the Protestant University of Zaire, and was promoted to Departmental Head in 1998. He also began to pastor a CBFC French-speaking church.

Life for André Bokundoa was already busy and fulfilling before he walked into trouble in 1998. It was bad enough to jump from local church pastor to General Secretary, but to do so when things had hit rock bottom was enough to daunt the boldest spirit.

There is no question that André is a young leader of potential. His priority is reconciliation, enabling the Community, in peace and unity, to get on with the task of making Jesus known to the world. For that, he says, he needs God's help and the prayers of God's people. ●

Owen Clark is a church worker with BMS in DRC

STANLEY DAVIES
LOOKS AT THE HOW
AND WHERE OF
CHURCH GROWTH
AROUND THE WORLD
OVER THE LAST 40
YEARS

“One of the great untold stories of Christianity in this century has been the astonishing growth of vital indigenous Christianity in many countries of the world.”¹

This growth has been predominantly among Evangelicals and Pentecostals in Latin America, Africa and Asia. At the same time there has been a massive decline of Christianity in Europe and in the Pacific. This decline has been the loss of nominal Christians in the West to secularism and in the Pacific islands to sects. When we compare the rate of growth of world population (1.7 per cent per annum) with the growth rate of different world religions, it is true that taking Christianity as a whole, its rate of growth is slower than that of Islam (2.6 per cent per annum). However, when we examine the

statistics in more detail, we see that Roman Catholics are growing more slowly than the world's population while Protestant Christians are growing at about twice the rate of the world's population. The significant fact however is that Evangelicals are growing at over three times the population growth rate of the world.

Patrick Johnstone in his latest excellent book entitled, *The Church is Bigger than you Think*, has recorded where the greatest growth has taken place and in what decade:

“In the 1960s the growth in Africa was the most marked. The massive increase followed the ending of colonial rule when most African countries became independent states. Christianity became indigenised in a remarkable way – some groups being more syncretic, others more

evangelical and charismatic in flavour. Never before in history has a whole continent seen such a radical change with Christianity gaining over 50 per cent of the population in a single century. The spiritual turning to God has sadly not impacted the politics of the continent. Numerous dictators, gross corruption, terrible wars and ghastly genocide have all occurred in countries with many active Christians. Yet in many of the countries of Africa with the worst conditions, the Christian Church is one of the only stable structures that remain.

The 1970s were marked by the rise to prominence of Evangelicals in Latin America. Over this century the

wide and deep





number of Evangelicals has multiplied from under 250,000 in 1900, to around 40 million in 1990 and possibly over 60 million by the end of the century. There are now more Evangelicals in church on an average Sunday than in Roman Catholic churches – and this in a purportedly ‘Catholic’ continent. There are still more Evangelicals in Brazil than in the whole of Europe. Evangelicals have become a force that cannot be ignored.

In the 1980s it was East Asia’s turn. The growth of the Church among South Koreans, the 50 million Overseas Chinese and the Javanese in Indonesia was followed by the extraordinary growth of the Church in the post-Mao era in China. The result of this has been that Evangelicals in Asia have become more numerous than in North America. The Singaporean Church has now become the most missionary-minded Church in the world in terms of number of missionaries sent out for every 1,000 Christians. Of the ten largest evangelical congregations in the world, seven of these are in one Korean city, Seoul – a city where only 110 years ago there was not one single congregation. There still remain vast areas and many large peoples of Asia where there has been no breakthrough yet, so this positive picture is still only partial.

In the 1990s, the spotlight moved to Eurasia. The spectacular disappearance of the Iron Curtain led to extraordinary changes, with the resurrection of the older indigenous Churches (mainly

Orthodox) and also massive growth in evangelical activity, both indigenous and foreign. Sadly much of the latter was stronger on zeal and weaker on cultural sensitivity and co-operation. The reaction of Orthodox Churches has been to limit or even outlaw foreign and evangelical activities.”²

The challenge wherever numerical church growth has taken place is to ensure that there is growth in depth as well as in width. Gotfried Osei-Mensah, a prominent Christian leader from Ghana has said, “The Church in Africa is miles wide but only inches deep.” There is a desperate need for appropriate Bible teaching and a radical look at the methods of leadership training. The wholesale export of western models of training are totally inadequate to meet the needs of growing churches around the world. Discovering new and dynamic training programmes for each region of the world that prepare pastors and teachers “to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up... and become mature...” (Eph 4:12-13) is a mammoth but urgent task. ●

¹ *The Church is Bigger than you Think*,

Patrick Johnstone, *Christian Focus*

² *ibid*



Stanley Davies is General Secretary of The Evangelical Missionary Alliance



DYNAMITE

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHURCH IN NEPAL

Fifty years ago there were no Nepali Christians in Nepal. Today believers are estimated to be around 200,000, and churches have been planted nationwide.

This is a remarkable expansion of the gospel in a Hindu kingdom. Such a rapid expansion of the Church over such a large geographic area in so short a time could not have taken place without the perseverance of many Nepali Christians.

1 Prior to 1950

Before the 1600s it is doubtful if the name of Christ had ever been heard in Nepal. In the 1700s 80 Catholic converts were recorded. However in 1769 under the Shah dynasty the small Christian community was forced to leave Nepal and a policy of exclusion towards all foreigners and Christians came into force. This attitude hardened and the "closed door" of Nepal was not to be opened for nearly 200 years. The door was locked, the key lost and the hinge rusted.

William Carey was the first to translate and print a Nepali translation of the New Testament in 1821 but few copies reached Nepal. In the 1800s the British developed Darjeeling, India for

tea, attracting thousands of labourers from Nepal. Through Christian missionaries working in the Darjeeling area the Nepali church first began.

Ganga Prasad Pradhan

An early convert in Darjeeling was Ganga Prasad Pradhan, a worker on the tea plantations. In 40 years he helped to translate the Bible into Nepali, and to print it; he also became the first Nepali ordained pastor in Darjeeling. Ganga Prasad Pradhan had a vision to go back to Nepal, and as an old man he and his family (a group of about 40 people) attempted to go back to Kathmandu to establish a Christian presence, but were refused settlement.

In 1933 the first meeting of the Nepal Border Fellowship was held along the southern border with India. At Raxaul (India) – the most important entry point from India to Nepal – a small hospital was opened to minister to Nepali needs.

Some Nepalis made forays into Nepal even though it was illegal. One such evangelist, John, was determined to enter Nepal; he did so, but there was no record of his return. Others were "praying and waiting for the Lord to open the way".



2 The 1950s and 1960s

The winter of 1950/51 saw a revolution in Nepal. The King of Nepal regained power from the Rana family that had isolated the country for 200 years, and the way was open for Nepali Christians to live there. During the 1950s the three main centres of early church development were Kathmandu, Pokhara and Nepalganj. All three churches were under the leadership of Nepalis (and some Indians) and were encouraged to do so, because the government was still suspicious of foreign missionaries.

Western missionaries were working side by side with the Nepalis but accepted a specific Government restriction against proselytising and were content to play a supportive role. In these decades Nepali Christians experienced relative freedom. The churches joined together in a non-denominational Nepal Christian Fellowship in 1961. However there were relatively few baptisms. The first major imprisonment for being baptised and for baptising was in 1960 in Tansen (nine people), and for the next 30 years all converts had to face both the threat of imprisonment and the pain of ostracism from their Hindu family, the latter of which was often far worse. Persecution resulted in a strong though small Church which grew very slowly.

Tir Bahadur

Baptised in 1938 Tir Bahadur began to "work for the Lord" at Indian mission stations along the border. In 1954 he was finally allowed to settle near Kathmandu where the United Mission to Nepal (UMN) began its work. He was pastor to the small group that ran a dispensary there. The work was hard with few tangible results at first. Growth did not take place until the 1970s when the UMN turned their hospital over to the government so releasing Tir Bahadur to work full time as a pastor and evangelist. In the next ten years over 100 baptisms were recorded.

3 To date

Recently the church has grown more and more independent of mission influence, especially in the cities. In the 1970s and 1980s persecution persisted but the Church



The first major imprisonment for being baptised was in 1960... for the next 30 years all converts had to face the pain of ostracism from their Hindu family...



grew rapidly from 20,000 to around 50,000. Nepali and Indian evangelists took a lead in the spread of the gospel. New churches were planted in far-outlying areas of Nepal, and with the help of western missions the church began to expand very rapidly.

Following the introduction of democracy in 1990 restrictions in many areas were reduced. Persecution has nearly disappeared and evangelism is now widespread with hundreds of baptisms each week and a huge increase in the number of churches. In Butwal there were until

recently three churches; now there are nine. However the new challenge is to find enough local leaders who know God's word and communicate effectively to believers and non-believers alike.

The gospel has been taken into Nepal by Nepali Christians, supported and encouraged by the mission organisations of the West. The dedication and faith of the Nepali Christians has been a beacon to the Hindu kingdom of Nepal. The resulting rapid growth of the church has therefore been of little surprise. ●

Writer's name withheld for security reasons

peace + vision = a thriving church



Above: Chantel Tehé, full time-worker with Christian students

Below right: the new Church plant

IN THE LAST ISSUE OF **mb** PAM BRYAN TOLD OF HER SEARCH FOR A BASE IN AFRICA. HERE SHE TELLS OF CHURCH LIFE AND GROWTH IN ABIDJAN, THE COMMERCIAL CAPITAL OF THE IVORY COAST

Abidjan in the Ivory Coast was different to the Africa I had encountered before. It is a modern city, with good roads and high rise buildings in the commercial centre.

But it's still very much Africa, with the hustle and bustle in the suburbs, and in some pockets is almost village-like. Even in the city centre, outside a very sophisticated bank, I saw a mother washing her baby in a bucket.

Because this is West Africa, it is also the least evangelised part of the continent. The Ivory Coast was a French colony, and the French influence is still very much in evidence. Of the 15 million or so people, 50 per cent are animist, 30 per cent are Muslim, and 20 per cent Christian. Abidjan has mosques in every suburb, and the largest mosque in West Africa is being built right in the centre.

I visited a four-month-old church plant in a suburb of Abidjan called Riviera Attoban. It was the second plant from the mother church - a Southern Baptist Church, and it started with ten people including the dynamic minister's wife. The minister, pastor Luc Monnaie, is a man of vision with a heart for mission. The first church plant in another suburb is now autonomous.

The walls of the church plant are half built, and they have got a roof. They are hoping to complete the building before the rainy season. Riviera Attoban is on the edge of the city, and the church is surrounded on two sides by building sites for new housing estates, and on the other two sides by fields. In

no time at all the church will be in the centre of a large number of houses.

I visited a church meeting and was delighted that the core group were very keen to reach the people in the neighbourhood, and were discussing the way forward.

Had they heard of Willow Creek? They were so concerned that the preaching was understandable by the new people who came to the church, and were very keen that the words of the hymns were available to everyone - not usually a priority in African churches, where people either don't read, or know the hymns by heart.

They had started cell groups. The children were pouring in too - they now had between 50 and 70 kids in their Sunday School. It

"They had started cell groups ... It was all very exciting"

was all very exciting.

I compared what I had seen in Abidjan, with where I had worked in the Congo. I realised it is so much easier to have vision and to build a church when you have enough to eat, when you are relatively secure, when your country is not constantly in conflict, where your communications systems work, and most of all where keeping body and soul together doesn't take up your entire life. ● Pam Bryan is BMS Regional Secretary for Africa





Six days of hard pedalling

Opposite: one of the evangelism bicycles
Below: on the steps of Bolobo Church,
Ngamakala. Pastor Mompanda front right



EVEN IN THIS DAY
AND AGE OF HI-TEC
COMMUNICATIONS,
MANY PEOPLE
GROUPS ARE STILL
VERY ISOLATED.

**ELIZABETH
ALLFORD** RECEIVED
AN ACCOUNT OF A
JOURNEY WITH
MISSION AS ITS
PURPOSE INTO THE
HEART OF AFRICA

It was with great anticipation that we prepared for our latest evangelism trip. The team consisted of four of us, with myself, Revd Pastor Mompanda Mansimba, the Regional Evangelist, leading the group. We bought batteries for our loud speaker and a few medicines plus a cassava bread each for the journey. We encouraged our church members to pray hard that God would protect us and our bicycles and that he would give us strength to complete our month long trip.

It was decided to leave very early in the morning to avoid some of the heat of the day. After a short time of prayer we left Bolobo at 4.30 am. It took six

days of hard pedalling to reach Selenge, covering a distance of 385 km. On the way we slept in small villages where there were no pastors, only a lay preacher/catechist.

That same evening, the 26 July, we crossed over the Mai Ndombe Lake by dug out canoe to Inongo. We then continued paddling, not pedalling, to reach Nkonde, a village 35km away on the far northern end of the Lake. There we were able to leave the canoe on the bank and had to walk for three kilometres in mud! It was too hard to ride our bikes at that point!

We finally arrived at our destination, a village called Iyombo where there are many pygmies. This was our third trip to the region with the aim of telling this long forgotten and abandoned people of the love of Jesus. As yet this village has no school nor church and has had very few visits from pastors or evangelists. Other tribes in the area either look down upon this race or are frightened of these forest people.

There was a large open space with some shade, an ideal site for our open air evangelism campaign. We set up a table, put some flowers on it and began singing. Once we had a large crowd I was able to tell them we had brought them some Good News. I was able to explain the gospel to them and thanks be to God, many were converted during the campaign.

We were able to hold three

discipleship seminars, the first on repentance, the second on faith and the third on rebirth in Jesus. In total 83 pygmies were baptised, two were nominated as deacons, one as a catechist. Before returning to Bolobo I was able to leave them a Bible. Praise God for his journeying mercies towards us and for his saving grace for the people of Iyombo. ●



Elizabeth Allford is joint Secretary for Mission Affairs in Kinshasa, along with her husband Steve



from Brazil to Brae



VINCE MACDOUGALL GAVE UP THE SUNSHINE OF BRAZIL FOR A CHURCH PLANT IN THE MOST NORTHERLY BAPTIST CHURCH IN THE BRITISH ISLES. HE TOLD HIS STORY TO **BILL PETERSON.**



Appointed as BMS missionaries in 1985, Vince and his wife Sadie had gone to work in Brazil. For six years he and his family had lived and worked in the Amazon Basin. They were responsible for 20 congregations and 1,000 church members. During the next six years they moved south to Joinville, one of the largest industrial

cities in the world. Here Vince was responsible for five churches. Vince was born in Oban and he has now returned to Scotland because of the educational needs of his sons. His passion for church planting, however, is unabated. But why Brae?

The overall population of Shetland is about 23,000 with Brae having

“... church planting is rather like surfing the waves.”

approximately 3,300 people. It is a large village, quite elongated, with housing spread along the main road. It has a police station, firestation, swimming pool, eight pubs, three churches, a high school and a mini-supermarket.

Brae has grown over the last 20 years as a result of the oil industry coming to Shetland. Europe's largest oil refinery has been built just five miles away, at Sullom Voe.

The population is about 40 per cent rural Shetlanders and 60 per cent residents from outside Shetland, brought to Brae as a result of the oil boom. People make a living in the oil industry, salmon farming, fishing,

crofting, and service industries. Some commute to Lerwick. Forty per cent of its population are children, and 20 per cent are elderly. Between five and ten per cent are regular church attenders. Shetland Baptist Association

showed an interest in developing church life in the area and, as a result, in September 1982 a local printer and his wife opened their home as a base for a congregation and fellowship group.

The Brae Fellowship, as it is known, was involved in outreach to youth and children's clubs. They were visited by an evangelistic team from America in the mid 1980s.

Vince and Sadie have been in Brae for five months. Now the congregation comprises of eight members including Nelson Smith (the printer), his wife Mary, and daughter Dawn and ten adherents. They have left the Smith's home, and now meet in a rented hall. How does Vince do it? He described church planting rather like surfing the



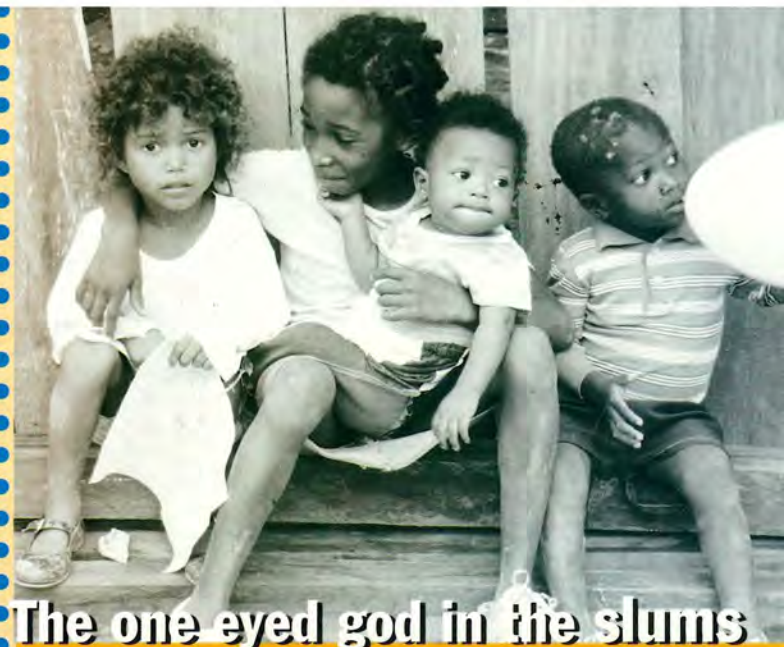
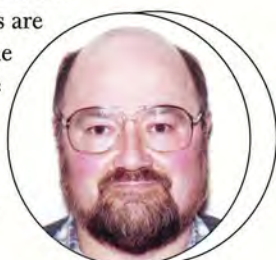


Photographs: Page 16, Vince MacDougall preaching in the community hall; founder members of the new church; Page 17, Induction, September 1998, Congregation at the induction 1998.



waves. The surfer waits for the right wave and then puts all his or her effort into riding it. In much the same way the church planter treads water until he can see the way the Spirit leads. Therafter, all effort is put into riding the wave. That is a good analogy because water sports are popular in this part of the world. During the summer months when the sun never quite sets and the day's work is over, sailing boats are seen all over the Voe as the Brae residents and visitors enjoy the pleasures of the sea.

And Vince's main wish: to be a fisher of men. ●
Bill Peterson is joint Missionary Secretary of Lerwick Baptist Church.



The one eyed god in the slums

STEVE FLASHMAN

You'll find this god in some of the poorest urban slums in the world. It sits there in the corner demanding attention from all who enter. It's a status symbol that lifts its adherents above the level of their neighbours, and even the monochrome sort leave the onlookers in no doubt who is the boss! It's man-made, like all 'gods' are, but soon has worshippers flocking to peer at the vast array of material things enthusiastically devoured by rich Westerners – only TV images of course, but highly dangerous. They deliver two dimensional goods utterly out of reach of the viewers and tragically preach a mindset that shouts, "material possessions will make you happy!"

How dare we invade peoples lives in this way! The fact that TV sets are given out at next to nothing prices, encouraged by multinational companies, only speaks about manipulation and exploitation of the poor in one of the most cruel and damaging ways possible. There is something exceedingly grotesque about TV images beamed into homes where the children beg on the streets for survival, or mum has contracted AIDS because the only way she can feed her family is through immoral earnings, or the death of a child with diarrhoea is a 'normal' part of everyday life.

If you have ever sat with people who are struggling to feed their six children in a home the size of an average garden shed, you will have found that your personal values and Western mindset have been challenged beyond belief! For there you will often find a sense of 'family' and 'community' that is rarely discovered in our 'rich' culture or even in our churches. And the wonderful thing is that you will have probably sensed the presence of God in that struggling family in a way that is rarely experienced in the cosy comforts of the West.

Some say that the 'one-eyed god' is a window on the world. Many would dispute that because the information we receive is so often 'screened' to present information biased to the presenter. Our prayer is that the church, which is the Body of Christ, should be a window on the truth about God – his character and his rescue plan for a hurting world. Who needs a 'one-eyed god' when the God of the universe is in control of the big picture! ●

Steve Flashman is a Baptist minister and International Director of Soapbox Expeditions



Photographs: Top; Ecuador street children. Left: Slums in India with TV aerials



MIKE AND DAVEEN WILSON GIVE AN UPDATE ON THEIR FLEDGLING CHURCH IN TRAPIÁ

Gales of laughter rocked the congregation as the drama unfolded on the TV screen. Those of us who'd seen the video before rushed back to check that a comedy had not somehow got into the wrong box, but no – it was the right tape and the laughter continued right through all 47 baptisms – their own – until we switched off at the end with everyone happily reminiscing.

One smiling face belonged to our 57-year-old neighbour – Josué. He'd been famous for having lots of sworn enemies and for brutally beating his wife and daughters. Gradually, over the years, God had shown him that he was being looked after and helped him give up drink. Then we were able to convince him that you didn't need to be able to

sing or read in order to be a Christian and, with great relief, he gave God the ownership of his life.

Some time later Josué was visiting a friend's farm when he realised that a man out in the yard was one of his sworn enemies who had moved away.

“Josué has also discovered, ... that he actually has a beautiful deep singing voice.”

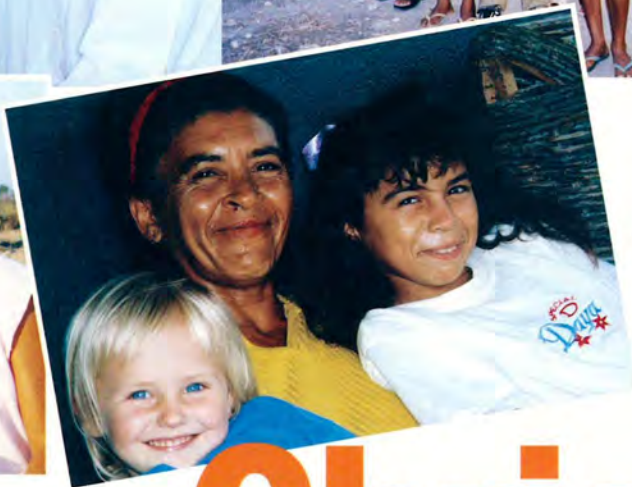
The man looked frightened as a serious-faced Josué strode across the yard to meet him, but then Josué said, “Good afternoon, I've become a Christian!” “So have I!” replied the former enemy, and the two men gave each other a big hug. Josué has also discovered, to all our delight, that he actually has a beautiful deep singing voice.

Some of the loudest laughter was coming from Nilcéia, a 38-year-old skinny mother of seven. Rejected all

her life in favour of a prettier, lighter-skinned sister, she was a bitter, sarcastic woman when we first got to know her. Critical of everyone, but most of all, herself, she neglected her children, her home and herself. She began to blossom after she started working in our home, earning regular money for the first time in her life.

But the real change began when she decided to follow Jesus. He has softened her with his love and helped her remain silent when her family insult her. She has begun to take a pride in herself and her home, and to care better for her children. She's proudly learning to read the Bible and has a gift of standing up for right – in spite of criticism.

Trapiá, where we live amongst such neighbours as Josué and Nilcéia, is a scattered rural community in the harsh semi-arid north-east of Brazil. The country people have been despised and ill-treated for generations, and tend to be illiterate, poor, embarrassed in front of outsiders – but highly skilled in coping with hunger, bereavement and



Photographs: Top Left: Josué. Centre: Nilcéia's baptism. Right: A group of newly baptised Christians at Trapiá in front of the beginnings of a church building. Inset: Nilcéia and some of her family. Right: Nilcéia with her daughter Ludmira and Julia Wilson.

g to be a Christian!

insecurity. We find ourselves in yet another year of drought where the people live off handouts from the government. It's not emotionally healthy, but it's all part of a well established system for keeping the rich 'up' and the poor 'down'.

Jesus has a lot to say to such people about their real value and the possibilities of living in partnership with God. As they listen and trust enough to throw themselves into his arms, he begins to change them and, through them, their community. They remain imperfect (both Josué and Nilcéia are still struggling to give up smoking) just like you and me and all the people in your church – but out of these living stones he is making for himself, a church here in Trapiá. ●

Mike and Daveen Wilson are BMS missionaries involved in agricultural and development work in Brazil



But the real change began when **Nilcéia** decided to follow **Jesus.**



Barletta

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

Introduction

Barletta is situated on the Adriatic coast in southern Italy in the region of Puglia or Apulia, as it is better known. It is very warm from April to October; temperatures rise well into the 40°s. November and December become cold - much like a cold, bright, day in our spring. It can also rain here, but the really cold, rainy, weather arrives around February and March.

History

Barletta is famous for the historical event called La Disfida which means The Challenge. Italian school children study it with great enthusiasm from their books, in which they read the names of the 13 Italian cavaliers who, in 1503, routed the same number of Frenchmen, who had challenged the valour of the Barlettanos.

The most curious and important historical item in the town is the bronze statue called Il Colosso, 4.50m high. It was cast in the fourth century AD and is believed to be of Emperor Valentino I. The statue was actually found in the sea and no one knows how it came to

be there. The Duomo di Barletta, built on a Romanesque structure, is a cathedral with Gothic features. Its facade is high and decorated with heavily worked windows including a rose window, and its main door was hung during the Renaissance.

Today - Recession

Barletta has 15 km of sandy beach which, unfortunately, lies mainly undeveloped and neglected. Many people, especially the Barlettanos, would love to see the town developed as it would bring much needed work to the area. In the 1970s Barletta was an enterprising town with a thriving industry in shoe making, but due to recession and foreign imports there is a lot of unemployment. Sadly now a generation of people are missing, and the next generation are all set to follow. The problem is that people leave and emigrate in their search for work. Add to this the problem of lack of government funds and initiative, and of course, corruption, which sadly forms a great part of the system here, there does not seem to be much hope.

Unemployment and Crime

Barletta has around 90,000 population with 20 per cent unemployed. Unlike Britain, there is no system of welfare system to help. If people are young and out of work, there is no financial help from anywhere and the burden then falls on the family to support them.

Unfortunately this then leads to lots of petty crime, black market activities, and drugs. Here in Barletta, as in most parts of southern Italy, there is the





presence of the Mafia.

The Mafia deal mainly in money-laundering, extortion, prostitution, drugs, and, of course, the black market. They are subtle but present. Every region or area has their own, with the most famous and the big daddy of them all being the Sicilian Mafia. In fact, they have a union which unites them all together and forms a formidable crime syndicate. If you have a business, such as coffee bar, shop, or factory, you most probably would be asked to pay 'la tangente' which means protection money.

Schools and health care

In Barletta it is common to leave school when you are 14, and most young girls and children in poorer families do this. Very often girls are not encouraged to seek a career or even a job. There are women in our church who are only in their 30s who left school at nine years old. Families would send their sons to school, but could not really see the



High School children demonstrating

sense of sending a daughter. Fortunately the trend is now changing. Schools here in the south of Italy are nothing like British schools. They are in need of lots of organisation! At the start of every term there are always strikes — not only by the teachers but by the pupils as well! They take over the school and have big demonstrations in the street.

When children go to middle school at the age of 11, they, then, are

responsible for providing everything they will need at school: books, pencils, paper — everything. Classrooms are bleak, with no maps or pictures on the walls; no computers or practical teaching aids either.

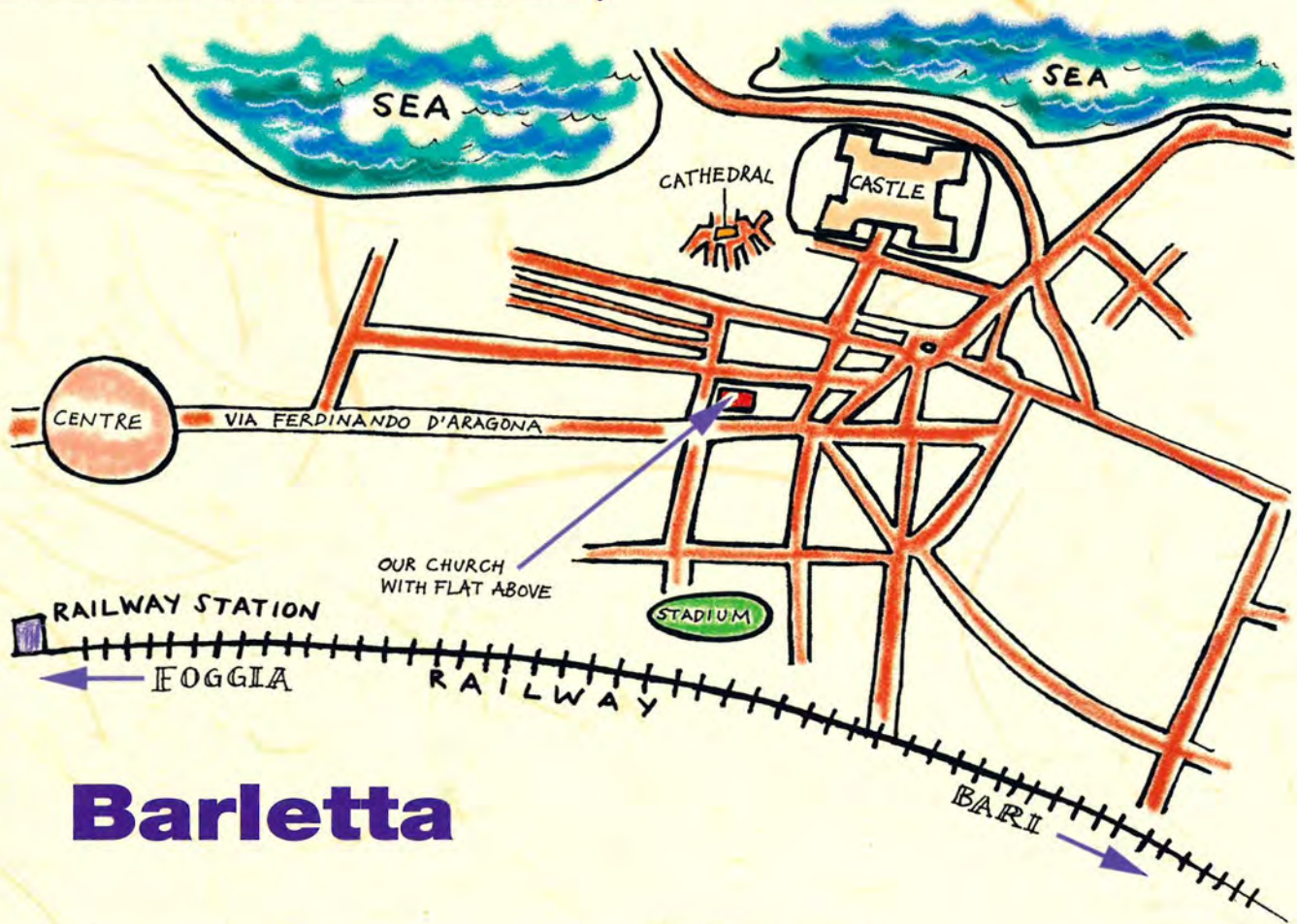
In Barletta the hospital is very poorly equipped. Nursing care is at a minimum and often relatives of the patients have to stay with them to assist them. Visitors come and go as they please, and wards can become very overcrowded. Unfortunately money that is earmarked for the hospital and other projects here in the south usually falls into the wrong hands.

Religion

The people are warm and friendly, hospitable and kind. They are also very superstitious. The Baptist Church in Barletta still finds difficulty in being accepted in the community. For example, our daughter Elizabeth attends a school with 1,000 pupils, and Elizabeth is the only Protestant pupil in

the school — the other 999 are Catholic or of Catholic background. Hardly a week passes by without some kind of religious festival. There is usually a procession with statues, bells and incense. The people throw rose petals out onto the street so that the Madonna or Saint has a bed of flowers to walk on. The women spread their best tablecloth or bedspread over the railings of the balcony. And of course there is the usual bancarelli which sell all

our town: Barletta, Italy



Barletta

sorts of things — usually a special type of sweet for the occasion. Here the people — not the Baptists — celebrate their name day in the same way we celebrate our birthday (usually because they are called after a Saint).

Food Some typical dishes of Barletta:

Orecchiette pasta (small ear shaped pasta) which is handmade at home,

and served with a very thick (horse) meat and tomato sauce. Also fish soup, shell fish, baby squid, mussels, cuttlefish, sea urchin and red mullet. Salt meats, smoked sausage, raw sausage. Fruit and vegetables in abundance. Vegetables include fennel, turnips, cappuccio lettuce, white onions, radishes, peppers, tomatoes. Fruit also grows in abundance eg Turkish grapes, Regina grapes, apricots, pears, melons, and peaches. Barletta and surrounding area is mainly grape and olive growing and our olive oil is the best.

Casseruola di polpetti (octopus)

The reason why the baby octopuses caught in the waters off Barletta and the

Bari coast taste so good according to the experts, is because the Adriatic is so deep there. The deeper the sea, the more saturated with salt the baby octopuses are, and those that live in such a salty situation take on a better flavour. Before they are eaten they must be pounded against the ground or rocks; the fishermen then wait a few minutes, then make them curl up by shaking them in a wicker basket and then dip them into the sea water. Pounded and curled, they can be eaten raw, fried, baked, or boiled without water, and used in salad. Casseruola di polpetti has special Ragu sauce made of oil, onion, dry white wine, pepper, tomatoes, and parsley. It is used as a dip for bread or as a topping for pasta.



Top far right: Colosso di Barletta - Eraclio
Top left: Street in Barletta
Below left: The little port, Barletta



Italy

Leisure

The Italians love to dress up at the weekend, and they then walk up and down the street at night, young and old alike. Grandparents, mums and dads, teenagers, young children and babies all do this, although in Barletta this is reserved for a Sunday and special occasions.

Traffic and shops

The streets are very congested with traffic: lots of cars and loads of motorinos (scooters), winding in and out of the traffic, everywhere you turn. Your first impressions would be that the traffic does what it likes, and you would not be far wrong! The streets tend to be narrow and parking is almost impossible. The roads in the town are

not very well maintained with lots of holes. The shops open in the morning around 7.30pm and there is also lots of little street markets or people selling fruit and vegetables from the doorways of their homes. The people shout to you as you pass by, encouraging you to buy from them. The town in the morning is very busy, and all of a sudden as 1.00pm arrives the street clears and every one seems to vanish. Shops open again around 5.00pm in the afternoon and the streets become a hive of business till around 9.00pm when they close down. The young people of the town then come out and the stand out in the street till around midnight. Black market cigarettes are sold openly in the street along with copy CDs, music discs, and video and computer games.



David and Ann MacFarlane, BMS personnel in Barletta, Italy

Volunteers

CAROLYN COLE ASKS THE QUESTION:
WHERE WILL YOU BE?



When I was at primary school I was asked to draw a picture of the way I thought people would be living in the year 2000. In my design, people flew everywhere in little vehicles, they wore wild and colourful clothes and had eccentric and futuristic hairstyles. But as we approach the year 2000, Levi jeans are still fashionable, hair styles have changed little and we still drive with our feet to the ground! In some ways, little has changed, and yet the Millennium is a focal point in many people's minds at the moment.

Imagine it's the year 2010 and your children/grandchildren/nieces/ nephews want to know, "What were you doing

when the new Millennium dawned?" I'm sure we all have a scrap book, photos or some other piece of memorabilia to help us remember important events, such as the last day at school (I have a dress which everyone signed), a wedding, the birth of a first niece/nephew, an anniversary or a special holiday. What will your Millennium memorabilia show?

As I drew my picture as a young child, the one thing I didn't anticipate was that in the year 2000 I would be where I am now – enthusing and mobilising people into overseas mission through my role as the BMS Volunteers Co-ordinator.

Each person you see represented by the faces on this page, already knows how they'll be seeing in the Millennium. Two

thousand years ago, Jesus Christ came into a fallen world, into the midst of its suffering, pain, bitterness and unforgiveness, to save a lost people. As the Millennium dawns, BMS volunteers of all ages will be out in the world, responding to the voice which called them out of darkness, by taking the good news of Jesus Christ into all the world. They will be serving and giving of themselves in order to see the knowledge of the love of God spread throughout the nations.

I can't think of anything more exciting than being on the mission field and serving God when the clock strikes midnight on 31 December 1999. I plan to be there. What about you? ●

BMS Volunteers



BMS has volunteer opportunities for adults of all ages to serve overseas for between four weeks and two years. To find out more, please contact Carolyn Cole, Volunteers Co-ordinator. Telephone 01235 517700 Email ccole@bms.org.uk

Brazil action team



learning humility the hard way

Fraser Nicholson was a 23-year-old shop assistant in Hamilton, Scotland, when he felt God calling him to leave his job and do something new. That 'something new' turned out to be joining Craig, Mel and Becky to form a 28:19 Action Team to Brazil. After five months working in Fortaleza, Brazil, Fraser writes of some of his experiences.

"As I look back at my time in Brazil, there are several things which really strike me. The first is something I first detected before we even departed Britain, while we were on training. The Lord wanted to humble me. I was too sure of my own abilities, I can see that now clearer than ever. I knew I was far from perfect, and had much to learn, but I thought I was able to complete this scheme in my own strength. How foolish!

The big obstacle I came across on arrival in Brazil, was that I struggled with the language - big time. I was hopeless at French at

school, but that hadn't mattered, I mean, I wasn't living in France! This was different.

Another thing which can do nothing but humble you, is the nature of the work which we do out here. Sitting on the ground in a city square in the middle of Fortaleza with dirty, ragged street kids jumping on your back, is not your average pastime, as the looks on the faces of many

"...it is a joy to bring these kids practical love."

passers-by tell us. What they do not understand is that it is a joy to bring these kids practical love. We take them water and so on, but it is the fact that we love them and come back to see them week after week that they remember.

One week in January, we visited 'Minha Casa' a Christian-run home for ex-street boys. It was tremendous, and one particular incident showed me that I had really changed. All of the kids there were what we would call clingy, and always

wanted to be shown attention and love - things they had been deprived of. We had been playing with them all and then it was time to go into the dining room for devotions. Two of the kids grabbed my hands and dragged me over to sit with them on the bench. As I sat there, with their tiny palms in mine, I knew I was a different person to the one that left Glasgow in October. God is good.

The final thing which I will mention is the gospel, the one thing that never changes. It has been such a tremendous privilege to be out here, and to be able to share the glorious gospel with many people. We have spoken to many hundreds in person, and thousands more when we went on the radio. Thousands of seeds sown, with people hearing the good news simply at open airs, services and schools amongst others.

We as a team are eagerly awaiting the rest of our time here, as well as the tour we undertake in the UK in May and June, when we will get the chance to do some of the same things in our homeland." ●

Fraser Nicholson, Brazil Action Team 1998/99

How do you plant a church?



Go where the Lord sends – not just to a country, but to people's homes.

Live as the Lord intends – with the people, as Christ to them.

Speak what the Lord says – tell them what Jesus has done and is doing.

Do what the Lord commands – obey him, not the expectations of people.

Give what the Lord gives – as a model for others to follow.

Ryder Rogers



1 By waiting on God for wisdom and guidance

Be open to God's will/direction - personally and in planning. Vision is important. Keep on looking for something bigger. Set goals and have regular assessments. Seize all opportunities for witnessing, praying and expounding the Bible. Identify (1) Areas of opportunity, (2) Church planters to send there, and (3) Networks of relationships to build on.

2 The Christians already there must:

Be committed to Jesus and the project realising it's a six days a week commitment. Live in the area where the church is to be planted. Be a praying fellowship, believing God wants them to form a church. Maintain the spiritual and not let practical things dominate. Find homes/families for enquirer/Bible groups.

3 How the new church needs to grow

Sunday services must be welcoming to non-churchgoers with challenging Bible studies and messages; there should be mid-week meetings too with an evangelism programme. There should be flexibility in structures - a willingness to change and listen to others. Look for leadership gifts based on function/service, not position, with the agreement of the group - set these people aside preferably working alongside them for a time. Discern and develop giftings in people. If necessary throw people in at the deep end even if they feel they can't do it well by making them responsible for different aspects of church life eg visiting/phoning. Enable rather than do. New converts have zeal, contacts and spirituality. Form gifting groups for evangelism /worship / pastoring / teaching/ finance etc Encourage all to have their own Bibles and show them how to have their own Quiet Time. Have a follow-up programme for new Christians.

4 The church needs to carry on evangelism

The new church needs to grow so there must be an emphasis on mission and evangelism from Day One. Eating together encourages people to come to events/meetings. Be involved in mission, both locally and further afield. Make sure your evangelism is based on bridge-building and friendship . Sometimes do something unusual eg street barbeque / Sunday service on a hired boat or on the beach.

5 The relationship with the 'mother' church

The church plant must have the commitment of a 'mother' church behind it. Links should be strong to begin with, gradually loosening.

Contributed by: Kevin and Linda Donaghy, Stuart and Joyce Filby, John and Valerie Furrage, Saverio Guarna, Wayne Hadley, and Ryder Rogers.

“Nothing is achieved without prayer and it cannot be just a few earnest prayers in the group; everyone must be committed. I would love to introduce you to Pastor José Soares in Curitiba, Brazil. This pastor has taken the church in Vila Centenário from 45 members to 450+ and he puts it all down to prayer. They have a week of prayer every month when there is a prayer meeting every night from 8.00pm to midnight and they pray for four hours. They don't break for coffee or chit chat. It is serious business and the business is prayer, much of it kneeling.”

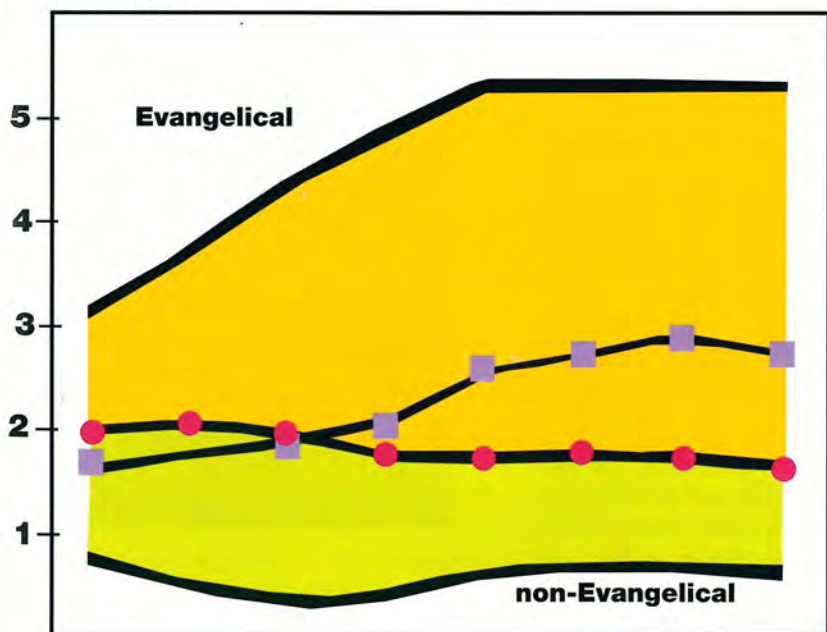
Kevin and Linda Donaghy

DIARY OF PLANTING A CHURCH IN CONGO

Usually by invitation, contact Christians or interested people in a village with a view to organising an evangelistic campaign • Visit the village and meet the chief • If he is favourable, agree with him a date to return to conduct a three or four day evangelistic campaign. He and any Christians in the village to publicise the event. • Return on the agreed date with the District Evangelist and one or two young volunteers. • Late afternoon, when people have mainly returned from the fields or the forest, the young people circulate through the village calling people to the meeting through a loud hailer. • Using a drum for rhythm, one of the young people starts to get those gathered to sing. • In the meantime the Evangelist sets up a rough, wooden framework on which to hang his large pictures. • The Evangelist speaks, giving an appeal at the end. • Those who want to make a commitment to Christ come forward for prayer - one of us prays for them. • They are given a tract - usually in Lingala - and encouraged to come back the next day. • This is repeated for the duration of the campaign. • On the last day people are encouraged to attend a service the next Sunday, to be followed by a meeting of those who wish to form a fellowship in the village. • At this meeting we take their names and suggest they chose a leader. Also that they begin to put up a 'temporary' building of sticks and palm fronds for worship on the plot designated by the chief. • We leave them a Lingala Bible, one or two hymn books, and suggested Order of Service for worship, encourage them to meet regularly and agree to return to the village in about a month • Owen and Deanna Clark

Protestant Conversion Rates since 1965

% Annual Growth



1965 70 75 80 85 90 95 2000

- World pop
- Protestant pop
- Loss
- Conversion growth

Note the contrast within Protestantism between the decline of non-Evangelicals and rapid growth of Evangelicals.

Taken from Operation World by Patrick Johnstone, published by OM Publishing



Photographs: From the top: Group outside church; Nsuri village - evangelistic campaign; Nsuri church; Evangelist Mputu preaching at Kinzono, Bateke plateau; Belesi (with megaphone) getting the children singing at Nsuri village, Bateke plateau, to attract adults prior to Evangelist Mputu preaching the gospel



projects prayer people



PROJECTS UPDATE

Project 9059

To provide drinking water and sanitation in a remote district of Nepal. Cost £22,000

The Taplejung District in eastern Nepal is one of the most neglected in the country, because of its far distance from Kathmandu. To travel from the capital city, will take you two days and a night, on at least three different buses and a lorry.

BMS missionary Tlana Hnamler has conducted a feasibility study for clean water and sanitation to be brought to Phungling Village Development Committee, ward numbers 4, 5 and 7.

The communities in these areas face lots of problems getting clean water, and they

are willing to contribute manual labour so they can have a clean and safe system.

The sanitation practice here is very unhygienic, and children are especially vulnerable to disease as contaminated water flows openly – water that is also used for cultivating vegetables and for animal consumption.

When the project is up and running – and it is hoped it will be by the year 2000 – it will provide clean water for a 15-bedded hospital, two schools, a church and nearly 200 households. Thirty-eight households, at present without any sort of latrine, will be encouraged to have one, and all 200 households will benefit from health education.

If you would like to know more about how you or your church could support a BMS project, please contact BMS Projects Administrator Ruth Berry on 01235 517700.



PRAYER FOCUS




**Margaret Gibbs:
Durrës,
Albania**

For many in Albania, a feeling of hopelessness is all pervading. Belief in a brighter future which came when the country first began to open its borders to the outside world was cruelly crushed when the majority of the people lost all they had through bad investments in pyramid saving schemes. The ensuing uprising of a people hurt and angry that their government had not protected them destroyed much of what was left, with shooting, looting and the destruction of property. Of the three million strong population, around one million have left the country convinced that a better life can only be found far from the country of their birth.

Margaret Gibbs lives in this country now, teaching the children of missionaries in the port town of Durrës and sharing her Christian faith with those she meets. She says: "Sometimes the task of trying to help, to establish something constructive for people who have been given so few chances to understand that life can be better, seems overwhelming. Following a hard winter, when electricity and consequently heat, light and water were rarely available and as the country fills up with refugees from Kosovo, it is easy to fall into uncertainty and despondency. Tempers can get short! Signs of hope are all around however. The churches are busy providing clothing and education for Kosovan

refugees. The children's club run by missionaries and Albanians all around Durrës are fuller every week – the children love them and are learning to trust each other and their leaders."

Please pray

 Continue to pray for a brighter future for Albania and its people. The churches are only a few years old and their leaders are young but they are vibrant and growing. Pray for these leaders, for wisdom beyond their years, for a deep grounding in their faith which they can pass on to others, and for the hope that these younger people still carry in their hearts to be spread throughout their country.




**Jenny Smith:
Budapest,
Hungary**


Jenny is a BMS volunteer who has been


teaching English to students at the Baptist Theological Academy in Budapest since August 1998. These students are lay workers from Baptist churches across Eastern Europe and learning English gives them access to theological texts which are often not translated into their own mother tongues. One of the long-term aims of the Academy is to establish the first centre in Eastern Europe where Baptist students can study for a Masters degree and a PhD in Theology. With students coming from different countries, the courses will need to be taught in a common language – most likely to be English. This would mean that Jenny and other teachers like her would be assisting in the training, not only of future church workers and leaders, but also of future Theology teachers for the whole region. "What a privilege!" Jenny says. But her task is not easy. She is the only full-time English teacher at the Academy and recently lost one of her part-time assistants who could not continue the commitment on top of her

full-time job. The head of languages, Laci Bacsı (Uncle Laszlo), is teaching the assistant's eight lessons until someone else can be found. He already has about three jobs, and can ill-afford the time for this extra work.

Please pray

 For another volunteer English teacher to share the load with Jenny and 'Uncle Laszlo' (maybe even someone reading this article)


 Jenny says, "There is much darkness in Hungarian society and experience, and we would be the Lord's light here." Pray the Lord would honour this desire and help Jenny and her colleagues and students.

 For language learning. Jenny has worked in Hungary before but she continues to take evening classes in the Hungarian language

**Chris and Sarah Mattock:
Carlentini, Italy**

After five years in Italy, Chris and Sarah Mattock feel that God is guiding them back to Britain earlier than they had originally planned. Chris headed to Italy as a pastor at a time when the Italian Baptist Union had around 40 pastors for 140 churches, and no students training for ministry. That situation has now begun to change, and the numbers of Italian ministers are growing.



The couple are also concerned about the education of their children, Simon (five) and Judith (almost three) and feel that there will be more openings for Sarah, an Occupational Therapist, to use her skills in the 

UK than in Italy. The couple however, remain certain of their calling to serve Christ through involvement in world mission, but not exclusively to overseas mission. Chris is on the list of ministers seeking settlement in Britain and Sarah intends to continue her career in Occupational Therapy, on a part-time basis, back in the UK. Chris is also exploring other possible options.

Please pray

P *This has not been an easy decision to make; pray that the children will settle quickly into the UK, especially Simon who will be starting school.*

P *Pray for God's guidance in this next stage of the family's lives.*

Sue Headlam: Chandraghona, Bangladesh



Sue is a nurse, involved in a community health programme at Chandraghona, a Christian Hospital originally carved out of the forest. As well as physical

healing, the health programme includes an income generating weaving project which helps women to earn their own money by training and providing them with looms to use, and then selling their products. Sue is currently the only member of BMS personnel in Bangladesh, and is likely to be alone for some time as there is currently no one else 'in the pipeline'.

Please pray

P *For the right people to hear God's call to work in Bangladesh.*

P *For God's continued blessing on the weaving project and for the development of outlets for the sale of goods.*

P *For Sue's safety and for excellent friendships with national colleagues and other expatriates.*



Simon and Karen Collins: Luanda, Angola

GP Simon and teacher Karen finally found a permanent home in mid February, after

arriving in Luanda, Angola, in late November 1998. Suitable accommodation is very scarce but they are now living in a house which was formerly occupied by Assemblies of God missionaries. It is located ten minutes away from their place of work and has mango and banana trees in the garden! More good news was soon to follow when they received a letter saying they had been granted a residence visa after almost two years of waiting.

Please pray

P *Praise God for the issue of a visa which will allow the couple to get on with their work.*

P *Pray for safety, especially now the United Nations have pulled out of Angola.*

P *For the building of good friendships and that the couple would settle into the very different way of life which is Africa.*



PEOPLE WORLDWIDE

expanding Prayer Focus. In this series BMS personnel introduce friends and acquaintances whom they meet from day to day



Jacky and Gina Bredene, Belgium

Before Gina and Jacky became Christians they were very involved in all their local clubs – music, darts, dance and more! Their son Marco's best friend's parents were Christians, and over time they shared with Marco about Jesus and the Bible.

To Marco this was completely new and he, in turn, shared what he had learnt with his parents.

Gina visited a local Protestant church on Christmas Day, and during this service gave her life to the Lord. Her husband, Jacky, reacted strongly against this and told her to stay away from church. She did, but Jacky saw that something had changed Gina's life. Jacky was enslaved to gambling, and, as a result the family went deeper into debt. Some time later – more out of desperation than curiosity – Jacky went to the Sunday service and felt immediately welcomed. He and Gina then became regular attenders.

One evening Jacky was reading Doreen Irvine's book, 'Set free to follow Christ'

and at 3.00am knelt down by his bed and asked Jesus into his life. The next day he burnt all his gambling formulas and books, and knew that his slavery to gambling had been broken. Jesus had set him free.

Gina and Jacky have grown and changed. Now they are experiencing the pain of seeing their son Marco fight a battle against a drug habit. They believe he too will find release and freedom in Christ as they have done. ●

Stuart and Joyce Filby (BMS church workers in Belgium)

Everaldo Santa Catarina, Brazil

Everaldo Prateat da Silva was born into a very poor family, one of seven children. His father was a car painter, and it wasn't till he was older that his mother went out to work. He remembers being poor and



hungry, selling jars, and aluminium plates so that they had something to eat that day.

Everaldo's parents split up when he was 12, and he went to live with his eldest sister. A year later he moved back to live with his mother, and soon after his parents got back together again. Around this time his youngest brother and his mother became Christians.

Everaldo became a Christian at the age of 17. He says he tried four times to get into University to study medicine, but then he got a place studying psychology.

Since he became a Christian Everaldo says he has developed a great thirst for God's Word. "I would ask the pastor: 'If God's Word is so good, why are there so many people with problems?' I had a

great anxiety for the Word and to minister God's Word."

Today, Everaldo is married to Adriana whom he got to know at University. He is studying Theology and believes God has called him to the ministry of the Word. ●
John and Maria Dyer (BMS missionaries involved in the co-ordination of theological education in Brazil)

Christophe and Dalila Goussot Morsang-sur-Orge, France

Dalila and Christophe have been Christians for five years and have been going to John and Sue Wilson's church in Morsang-sur-Orge for almost two years. Christophe has Christian parents, but Dalila does not have a Christian background – in fact her father is a Muslim.

They were married in September 1998 and live on the 12th floor of a block of flats in the southern suburbs of Paris, next to the motorway. It's easy to find their flat: it has a big 'Welcome' sign on the door, inviting any who wish to do so, to come in and chat.

They both work outside the home: Dalila as a teacher's assistant in a primary school, and Christophe as a security guard.

They say, "We became members at Morsang-sur-Orge Baptist Church last year and we rejoice in the love of Christ poured into the hearts of our brothers and sisters."

Dalila often prays: "Lord, please grow your church." Since their arrival, there have been definite answers to her prayer.



The last person to be baptised at Morsang church specifically gave testimony to the way they had encouraged him in his faith. ●

John Wilson (BMS church worker in France)



PEOPLE
WORLDWIDE

Baptist House News



Welcome: John Chalkley

John joins us as Senior Accounts Clerk in the Department of Finance and Administration. He has come from the United Bible Society

in Reading where he was the Financial Services Co-ordinator. Prior to that he was the Financial Secretary of the Methodist Missionary Society. He enjoys walking, reading, gardening and jiving in his spare time.

Patrick Guiry

Patrick has joined BMS as a Receiving Clerk in the Finance and Administration Department. He was previously a Civil Servant with the Department of Employment, and more recently worked for four years as a civilian with the Thames Valley Police.



Stephen Harris

Stephen started worked at BMS at the



beginning of March in the IT section. He describes himself as being the person "people scream at when their systems go down!" Up until recently he was a full-time student at a Bible College in

Gloucester, during which time he had opportunity to visit Uganda for two months and work with a child sponsorship programme. He then studied Social Development (Third World Studies) at Swansea, and comes to BMS having spent six months as a helpdesk consultant with the Prudential.



Congratulations Tim!



Tim Trimble, who currently serves with BMS as an Account Controller with UMN in Nepal has been appointed UMN Finance Director as from 1 May 1999. UMN has around 250 missionaries from

various countries and 1,000 Nepali staff. It works in around 40 projects throughout Nepal with a combined budget of £5 million, which Tim says, "goes an awful long way in Nepal." He added, "It will be a challenge to ensure that all UMN's activities are funded and properly accounted for. However I am excited to be able to continue working with a team I have worked with for the last three years."

Paul Drinkwater

Paul, who teaches Electronics at Kathmandu University had a severe heart attack in Nepal. After several days in intensive care, he was allowed out of hospital, and subsequently flown back to the UK. He has been given the 'all-clear' from the John Radcliffe

Hospital in Oxford, and will now be convalescing in Gloucester. Paul and his wife, Hilary, have been with BMS in Nepal for three years, living in the outskirts of Kathmandu. Hilary is a nurse by profession, and has been working with local women setting up an income-generating craftwork project.

Jubilee 2000

In Uganda £11.50 per person is spent on debt repayments... but only £2 per person is spent on health care. Live Aid raised \$200 million to help the poorest in our world... yet Africa pays that back in debt repayments every week.



The cost of the Millennium Dome is around £750 million... a sufficient sum to pay Britain's share of cancelling all the debts of the 18 poorest countries.

The Jubilee 2000 campaign is now being supported and promoted in over 120 countries throughout the world. People like Desmond Tutu and Muhammed Ali, the Dalai Lama and Bono have added their voices to individuals, organisations and countries around the world who want to see real change.

BMS is one of the Jubilee 2000 Coalition members, committed to fighting for a new start for the poor. We believe this is a Gospel issue and deserves our practical

support and involvement. Each of us has a part to play in this vital campaign, particularly as the G8 Summit in Cologne in June draws near. Possible actions you can take include:

- wearing the chain
- sending a card to Tony Blair urging the G8 countries to give a lead in cancelling debt
- participating in events in the UK on the weekend before the G8 Summit
- joining the human chain in Cologne on 19 June.

For further information about the Jubilee 2000 campaign, contact their office direct (0171 401 9999) or ring Graham Sparkes at Baptist House (01235 517700).

Farewell to Chris Hutt



Chris Hutt, BMS Director of Finance and Administration, left BMS at the end of April to take up the post of Bursar at Regent's

Park College, Oxford. Chris studied for the ministry at Regent's and has retained a strong affection for the college. The work of Bursar will allow Chris to continue to use many of his accounting skills.

After 23 years on staff, the BMS home team will feel strange without Chris, and there is much that will be lost now we no longer have Chris and his encyclopaedic knowledge to hand. General Director

Alistair Brown said of him, "There is no indexing system compared to Chris' brain."

At his farewell tribute at BMS General Committee in March Chris said, "I have come to see that now is the time to leave BMS and a job that I have loved. I hope that in these last 23 years I have at least paid some small part in building God's kingdom through BMS."

Photograph Left: Community Health Programme, Bangladesh



Bangladesh health

Of the 13,430 children who attended the eye screening programme run by the Community Health Programme, (CHP), Chandraghona, Bangladesh, over 1,500 were treated for eye problems, two-thirds of the children having conjunctivitis. This was one of the highlights reviewed in the CHP annual report. BMS missionary and nurse Sue Headlam co-ordinates this project.

The report also gave account of other innovative

work that had taken place over the last year: a renewed family planning programme; a health awareness project amongst slum dwellers; and dental work by BMS Volunteer Simon Shillaker.

A recent paper produced by a United Nations agency has claimed that Bangladesh is probably the only country in the world whose population has been growing shorter because of the effects of malnutrition.

Photograph Left: Christian Aid campaigners outside the German Embassy in London, handing in a one and a quarter mile long red white and black paper chain made by 15,000 people at the Greenbelt Festival, as a symbol of the debt entrapping the world's poorest countries. Germany is in the campaigners' sights in view of its opposition to debt relief.

BMS Co-ordinators are here to help you!

Please check you have up-to-date contact numbers.

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Check Out May/June 1999

May

Arrivals

Ryder and Heather Rogers from Tirana, Albania

Kevin and Linda Donaghy from Palmela, Portugal

Departures

Helen Johnston to Amp Pipal, Nepal

June

Arrivals

Andrew and Michelle Furber from Tansen, Nepal

Tim Lehane and Alison MacLean from Butwal, Nepal

David and Sue Jackson from Colombo, Sri Lanka

Sheila Samuels from Delhi, India

Stuart and Georgie Christine from São Paulo, Brazil

Keith and Barbara Hodges from Carnaxide, Portugal

Philip and Rosemary Halliday from Paris, France

Departures

None

world

Getting in on the Action

Priority Street (York), and Gorsley Baptist churches opened their doors to host pre-selection weekends for the 1999/2000 Action Teams earlier this year. Thirty three young people, strangers at the beginning, but firm friends by the end of the weekends, met to learn more about BMS, and what being an Action Teamer is all about, prior to interview.

Everything about the weekends was used to help the young people experience life overseas, from eating an Indian meal with their hands, to being put into teams and given just 30 minutes to come up with a church service to present to the rest of the group. There were also live telephone links with the current teams in Trinidad and Brazil. It wasn't all hard work, though; there was a party on the Saturday night and impromptu worship times went on most of the night!

Another first for Clive!

Just 50 minutes short of their 24 hour target, minister and BMS General Committee member Clive Doubleday along with companions Andy Gore and Paul Grinyer arrived at Lands End, having started out at John O'Groats at one minute past midnight that same day. The three raced through Scotland, Wales and England, stopping to preach in Edinburgh, Penarth and Torquay en route. Having travelled the 971 miles they raised £2,290 for BMS work in Nepal.



Photographs: Top, Charlotte Chapel, Edinburgh; Right, Clive Doubleday with John James at Penarth Tabernacle; Above, with Andrew Green at Upton Vale Baptist Church, Torquay



BMS celebration & praise

Leicester Celebrates

Over 160 people gathered in Leicester Central Baptist Church for a BMS Celebration Praise evening. It was an event filled with inspiration and mission motivation, including a live telephone link with the Nepal Action Team and drama supplied by the Translucent Theatre Company. Bruce Nadin challenged those present to be both 'sent' and 'spent' for God.



Flowers for BMS

Burnley District of nine churches rose to the task of producing a flower arrangement depicting an aspect of BMS's work. Using their green fingers they produced a wide variety of displays and miniature gardens.

Photograph: Set on brightly coloured Indian silk and with the addition of Indian ornaments the church focused on the work of BMS in India.



BMS at CRE 18 - 21 May 1999

Come and visit the BMS stand at the Christian Resources Exhibition, Sandown Park, Esher, and bring your friends!

This is the best place to be, not only to see latest products and services in the Christian market, but also to hear key speakers taking part in the CRE lecture programme.



Outrage: Christian or Pagan?

Christians in the West were rightly outraged when an Australian missionary, Graham Staines, and his two young sons were brutally murdered by a Hindu mob in India earlier this year. However, the killing of national Christians, and the burning down of local church buildings, never seems to generate the same passion either in the world's media or the typical church in the West. Does this mean that it is the victim's nationality (or the colour of his skin) that determines the heinousness of a crime?

Most Christians in South Asia are no less insular or one-sided in their outrage. How many Indian Christians, for instance, have risked their lives to defend Muslim and Sikh neighbours attacked by militant Hindu mobs – or to defend Hindus attacked by Muslims? Where are the Indian Christian leaders who openly condemned the destruction of the Ayodhya mosque in 1991? Which Indian or Pakistani Christians have spoken out against the massive military build-up in the region and the whipping up of chauvinistic sentiments on both sides of the border?

We often like to quote William Temple's description of the Church as "the only society in the world that exists for those who do not belong to it". But, in practice, we deny it. How refreshing, then, to read of Graham Staines' widow demonstrating publicly the true missionary cast of mind. She told a newspaper reporter, "I am upset, but not angry. Jesus has taught us to love our enemies." If we love only our friends, Jesus reminds us, how are we different from the pagans? ●



Vinoth Ramachandra is South Asia Regional Secretary of IFES



"I think we'd get a whole lot more accomplished in our meetings if you all weren't so negative."

CARTOON BY DIK LAPINE

What future for Emy?



Living in a Brazilian shanty town world of poverty, illiteracy and hopelessness, where 90 per cent of children get sucked into crime, drugs and prostitution?

Specially for harvest, Streets Ahead shows how children like Emy can get a head start by receiving a pre-school education. BMS personnel Stuart and Georgie Christine are spearheading a project to give basic schooling in the São Paulo slums. That way the kids are less likely to drop out of school later on and turn to a life of drugs or prostitution.



Make sure you get the July/August issue of *mb*, containing a special pull-out section featuring more of how life has changed for Emy and her friends since BMS/Operation Agri took an interest in her future. You'll also be able to send for a Streets Ahead resource pack containing a poster, video, OHPs, children's material, project book, place mat, envelopes and other harvest celebration ideas.

You can help pave the way for a new generation too!

To subscribe to *mb* phone Rob Vaines on 01235 517617 or speak to your BMS Co-ordinator or church magazine distributor.



paving the way for a new generation

Harvest Appeal 1999

BMS & OA Harvest Appeal



BMS making mission possible
Operation Agri supports a wide variety of development projects in different countries