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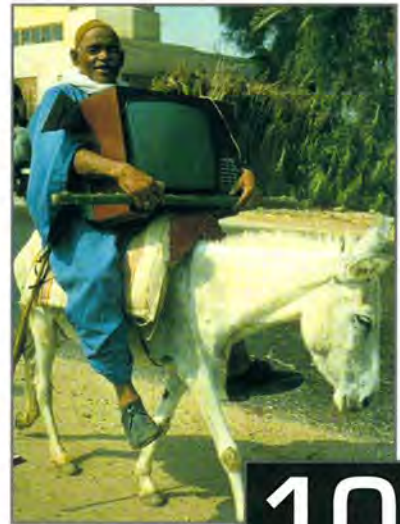
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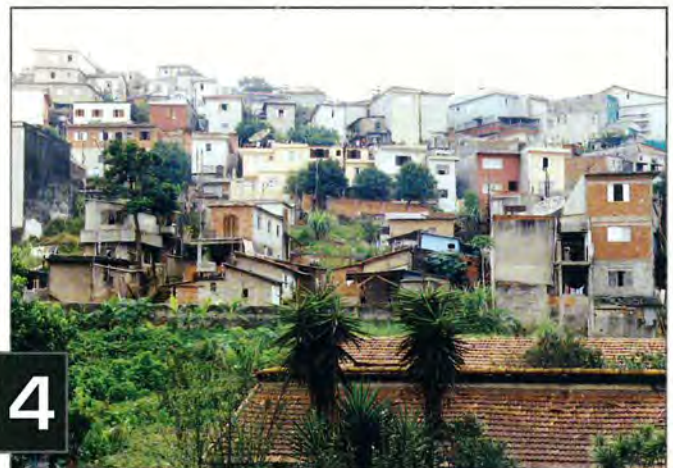
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rights groups in the wake of murders of the clergy and bombings of churches. "We are scared. We have to go to international organisations because we have no faith in the Indian government", said Herod Malik, head of the United Forum of Catholics and Protestants of West Bengal.

Senior government officials deny any bias against Christians. A senior ministry official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the Christian community had nothing to fear and the government was taking steps to prevent such attacks.

(CDN)

Chechnya Grozny receives Baptist aid

"We went out to the streets to distribute food and the people stormed to us!" That was the experience of Sandor Szenczy, Director of Hungarian Baptist Aid (HBAid) when he accompanied Grozny



BVA

PA NEWS

Baptists now living in Ingushetia on a trip back to Grozny. The Chechen Baptists were distributing relief supplies in this ruined city through their ministry, Mission Vera. Apart from a small group of Polish doctors who work in Grozny Hospital, they were the first to give direct aid distribution to the local population.

Reporting on his visit, Szenczy said, "Right now Grozny is not appropriate for normal living. There is no electricity, gas, food or medicine. Nobody can worry about the dead under the ruins. The danger of an epidemic is great. The army is able to keep the order more or less during the day but hell breaks loose after nightfall. Murder, violence, kidnappings, decapitations and torture are happening all the time.

"We went out to the streets to distribute food. The people stormed to us in spite of the pouring rain. It was barely possible to keep the order. Because of the hysterical reactions of the old, shaggy, physically and emotionally exhausted people we had to work in the noise of insane shouting.

"We met two old Baptist sisters as well. When they heard that we were going to a Lord's Supper service in the ruins of the Grozny Baptist church they started crying and came with us. The church was there, in ruins, everything stolen and burnt.

"We read the Word of God, broke the bread and drank the wine remembering the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Bullets, metal pieces from rockets covered the floor, a gas mask in the mud, destruction and decay everywhere... We held each others hands and just wept."

The BMS Relief Fund has given grants this year of nearly £49,000 for food parcels and emergency aid in Grozny, channelled via HBAid. (EBPS)

Cuba Christianity growing

Controlled by decades of persecution, Cuba's churches have been growing steadily in the last decade, and especially in the last 12 months.



PA NEWS

Religious leaders are attributing the sea change to last summer's government-approved evangelical celebrations, which created freedom. Hundreds of thousands of Christians participated in four celebrations, including one in Revolution Square attended by Fidel Castro and his Cabinet members. The increased tolerance of Christianity by the government has made people more willing to embrace the faith, although some persecution continues, said Dick Nicholson, Latin America director for the Assemblies of God.

Cuban Christians acknowledge that evangelicals are preaching openly, and that the message of Christ is being taken to homes, hospitals, prisons and schools. It is reported that one church in Havana has added 8,000 members to its cell groups in a year.

The government's openness is limited. "They have opened the door, but are very guarded. They are watching churches very closely," Nicholson said.

Christians still experience persecution and discrimination. Pastors are reported to be harassed, threatened by police and forbidden to buy homes or cars. Churches are subject to unannounced searches, and literature, printers and fax machines can be confiscated.

A Havana Baptist church was closed at Easter.

Authorities told members that they would face fines or contempt of court if they did not comply with the closure – no reason was given. The church has now split into five housegroups and will continue to worship.

Since 1990 the Church in Cuba has experienced a greater level of acceptance by the government. In 1992 the constitution was amended prohibiting discrimination against Christians in Cuban society. Cuba observed Christmas as a public holiday in 1998 for the first time in 40 years and allowed the first outdoor religious meetings when the Pope visited in

1999. Baptist leaders from all around the world met here in July for the first Baptist World Alliance General Council to be held in Cuba. Baptists make up the largest number of Protestants in Cuba with 35,000 members. (Religion Today)

Indonesia BMS helps refugees from fighting



BMS has made a Relief Fund grant of £18,000 to help with refugees, who are mostly Christians, fleeing the fighting between Muslim and Christian groups. Muslim extremists in Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim country, have formed paramilitary groups, calling themselves jihad or 'holy war' fighters to attack Christians.

Violence erupted again in early June in Sulawesi when hundreds of residents attacked the village of Malei and torched and destroyed dozens of houses. Yunan Lampase, an official at the central Sulawesi governor's office said, "More than 7,000 fleeing residents are now being sheltered at the soccer field in Palu." (Palu is the provincial capital.)

Later in June, about 160 people – 152 Christians and eight Muslims – were killed when militant Muslim extremists attacked the village of Duma on the remote Indonesian island of Halmahera.

Christians started to flee Halmahera in overcrowded boats. An official news agency reported that a ship carrying around 270 people sank in Indonesia. The 270 were all refugees from Duma. A separate report gave the figure as 450 to 500 people on the sunken ferry, among them 100 Baptists, including eight pastors, four delegates to the Baptist Congress, and Samuel Andreas, a BMS-funded student and his parents. Andreas had gone to his parents' home in Halmahera to collect them to take them to the Congress.

The state governor of north Sulawesi reported that they are currently caring for about 250 refugees from other parts of Indonesia, mostly Halmahera. BMS partner in Indonesia, the KGBI, is also caring for many who are spread around churches and families.

Of the £18,000 relief grant, about 15 per cent will be used by the KGBI to buy food and clothing for refugees they are accommodating. The remaining 85 per cent will be given through KGBI for use in association with the state governor for people from all groups who have fled there. (CDN)

Rwanda Churches help child-led households

So many families in Rwanda are headed up by children because of war and

Alistair Brown



Reflects....

I remember taking this photograph. It was in Orissa last autumn, not long after dreadful cyclones wiped out tens of thousands as killer winds and waves ravaged India's poorest state. Many survivors stood near, helpless. Everything they owned – little that it was – had been destroyed. Many were bereaved. And here were these children, wide-eyed at a visitor in their remote village. I took their picture, wondering what future they were facing, glad we'd been able to bring them some immediate aid in their dire circumstances.

It's ironic and (in the true sense) pathetic that the tousle-haired lass is wearing a Titanic tee shirt, symbol of a ship of death. The child lives in rural India but she's wearing an icon of a Hollywood blockbuster film.

Everywhere I go I see global brands. Perhaps it's Coca Cola seemingly with factories in every land on earth. Maybe it's a McDonald's restaurant in Ukraine. There's a dubbed version of Ally McBeal in Germany. In Pakistan I avoid the cinema showing a Urdu voice-over of Mr Bean. Of course my local Tesco has plenty of foods from Africa or Asia, so there's east to west drift too.

Values are changing, especially in the have-not part of the world. The west's materialism is scorned simultaneously with a desperate longing for its glamour and goods. It's changing local traditions. It's also changing what people look for from westerners. Pumped full of ideas of western prosperity and the promotion of self, many don't or can't hear a message of a Jesus who scorned wealth, made himself poor and humbled himself to die for others. Sacrifice, discipline, and looking beyond this life aren't attractive concepts for a materialistic-hungry generation which wants its reward now.

What'll make the world notice? Only when Christians really have other values, really rank heaven above earth. And when they really care, really put others first. And when Jesus is really seen in lives which don't beat to the world's tune. But I'm not sure that's happening enough among us. I'm not sure that's happening enough with me. And if it doesn't...? Then, while a few may be saved from our Titanic, I fear the fate of most. ●



Alistair Brown is General Director of BMS

AIDS that churches are now spearheading relief programmes, arranging food, shelter, education and moral support.

An estimated 85,000 Rwandan households are headed up by children, according to Rwanda's

National AIDS Control Programme, with 60,000 children orphaned by AIDS last year alone. The government estimates that orphans head 90 per cent of Rwanda's poorest households, family units that typically include four or five children.



A 1999 United Nations report noted that, "most of these children live on the edge of subsistence without regular meals, adequate clothing or acceptable housing. Some have been chased from the homes of their dead parents by neighbours or members of extended families."

A survey of households headed up by children conducted by Save the

Children found that nearly three-quarters were headed up by a girl, and only 15 per cent had some sort of regular income.

Churches now are running orphanages and primary and secondary schools to care for these orphans. Nationwide the churches have also produced a step-by-step manual to help those caring for family members with AIDS, written especially for children aged ten to 12, with simple language, photos and diagrams.

"Leaders now realise that they must make every effort to fight this global pandemic," said Jean Ndahayo, a lay counsellor with the Baptist Union in Cyanguu, Rwanda. "If the church sleeps instead of attacking the problem, it will become nothing but an empty building with all its people lost." (Newsroom)

Vinoth Ramachandra

New missionary challenges

It has often been noted that the 'centre of gravity' of the Church has shifted this century to the countries of the South. With this shift has come a transformation in missionary profiles. Evangelism has reverted to the 'laity', as it was from the beginnings of the Christian movement. For instance, immigrant Filipino housemaids 'gossip the gospel' with their rich mistresses in the feudal states of the Persian Gulf. Sudanese and Chadean Christians take the gospel as refugees into 'unreached' parts of North Africa and beyond. Russian university students were enthusiastically evangelised by African room mates in the pre-Glasnost era. Korean pastors work in Brazilian slums. Hispanic, African and Asian ethnic churches are found in the heart of decaying inner city areas in Europe and North America. In the past two decades, hundreds of university graduates in India have crossed socio-economic barriers to serve, in the name of Christ, as health workers, teachers, engineers, or agricultural advisors to marginalised and under-privileged peoples across that great subcontinent.

But we dare not be complacent. Much of the numerical growth in the South is superficial. Large churches seem to have little impact on the surrounding culture and nation. Countries which boast staggering rates of church growth do not seem to be more humane and just than those in which the Church is quite negligible. In many countries the Church is small, in some non-existent. Christians are often deeply divided, not only theologically but across ethnic, and cultural barriers. How has the call to discipleship become separated from the preaching of the gospel? And Christian unity from witness to the world? And has the call to 'go' as a missionary obscured the more fundamental calling to 'be' a missionary in the everyday context in which God has placed us? ●

Vinoth Ramachandra is South Asia Regional Secretary of IFES



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Lee Bray's diary



LEE BRAY accompanied BMS President Andrew Green on a journey to Bangladesh and Thailand. Continuing the extracts from his diary.

Tuesday 2

Today we fly on to Thailand. As we board the plane, everything is suddenly comfort and smart sophistication. We get a pre-booked taxi to take us to the Christian Guest House in the city. We check in, then stroll out to find somewhere to eat. After the repression of Muslim Bangladesh the anything-goes Buddhist culture of Thailand slaps us in the face. We find the nearest decent looking restaurant and dive in. The food is good.

Wednesday 3

The whole day is given to travel. Finally met by Angus and Carol MacNeill and driven to their home.

Thursday 4

Woken at 6am by dawn chorus. We set off early for the River Kwai Christian Hospital to take part in the morning service. We collect a few passengers en route, until the car is brimful. A small boy sits on my lap - still, silent and poorly. At Huey Malai the hospital has been relocated from its original site beneath the waters of a reservoir. We visit the under-5s clinic where babies are being weighed, measured, checked - organised pandemonium.



Friday 5

Today promises to be a real highlight of our trip - we are travelling to Pilokkhi village, only accessible by boat and/or on foot. We have little idea of what to expect, but Carol says it is one of her favourite places. After a couple of hours drive we arrive near the shores of a vast, man-made lake where we are met by four local pastors who will travel with us to join in the weekend of teaching and seminars. Together we make our way down to the water's edge and clamber into a long narrow boat. Before getting into the boat, according to Thai custom, we remove our shoes. At the other side, one-and-a-half hours later, there is a welcome party to meet us. They have a small two-wheeled tractor and cart to carry our bags. It is only two or three km to Pilokkhi, but in the heat it takes us another hour and a half to walk the distance. Our bags get there more quickly, accompanied by the tractor driver and a group of excited, laughing children. Pilokkhi rises up the hill from the waterside. Pastor David and his wife, Lady, have left their home in Sangklaburi to come and plant a church here. That church is now the centre of community life in the village. David and Lady's home is charming. We are served a fine meal - meat, pumpkin, noodles, rice - seated on the floor around a low circular table. In Thailand we are given cutlery but no chairs. In Bangladesh there were chairs but no cutlery! Above us there is a small fluorescent light connected to a small car battery! That evening there is a service in the church building. It is positively western in design, almost Lutheran. It has a tower and inside are a raised platform with pulpit, rows of chairs and a gallery. (More surprising are the electric lights, ceiling fans, PA system, and overhead projector. Where does the electricity come from? There are no power lines to be seen.) First of all the children come to the front and sing. They are utterly charming, and I am completely won over by them. Then it is the turn of the choir, before Angus and Carol begin the weekend's teaching. After an hour or two we walk back to the house beneath a canopy of brilliant stars. No wonder this is one of Carol's favourite places.



To be continued next issue

Nothing stands

says BMS General Director **Alistair Brown**

everything is new and nothing is new. William Carey would see today's world very out of focus through his 18th century spectacles. Yet the work of mission, telling people about Jesus and healing and helping hurt and exploited people, would be more than a little familiar.

Outwardly much is different about 21st century mission. What's changed?

The way we see the world

Look at the opening verse of this 1861 children's mission hymn:

I love my happy home,
On Britain's favour'd shore;
And if, in thought, I roam,
I love it more and more.
I see how Providence has smiled,
In making me an English child.

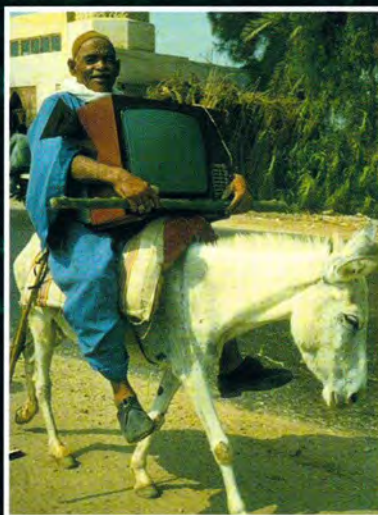
On it goes giving thanks for our blessings. Here's verse 3:

No cruel rites are found,
Nor blood-stained altars here;
No savage yells resound,
To fill our hearts with fear.
Abroad, at home, in work or play,
We are secure by night and day.

The world-view of the writer is that *we* are Christian and civilised; *they* are heathen barbarians. Today, we hold firmly to the world's need of knowing Jesus, but we wouldn't assume a Christian Britain nor our culture so superior.

Globalisation

What's the world's most watched TV programme? Answer: Bay Watch. An Indian writer pleaded sympathy for the village woman who now found her husband comparing her with Pamela Anderson. How could she



compete in his imagination with a Californian beach beauty?

Mission today happens in a global village. In Angola a high number of the young men in the church I visited wore football shirts with the names and colours of Arsenal or Manchester United. In a poor area of India a youngster sported a Titanic tee-shirt. (See the picture on page 7). No previous generation of missionaries has faced a world so aware of global issues, so concerned about image and style, so ready to reject presentations which smack of being outmoded or irrelevant.

Resistance to missionaries

At least two reasons make missionaries unwelcome in many countries today. Colonialisation brought the colonialists' faith, usually Christianity. Reject colonialism and you reject most things associated with it including those who still bring that faith. Add to that the rise of fundamentalism and a kind of religious totalitarianism and there's no room for people propagating another faith.

Rapidity of change

I can't buy an up-to-date map or atlas. Not many now refer to the

USSR, but plenty still reckon Zaire covers a major part of central Africa.

The world spins ever faster. No-one is a master of detail for everywhere or even of anywhere for long. Missionaries used to expect little change from when they arrived to when they left 30 years later. Now they can't.

Shorter-term mission

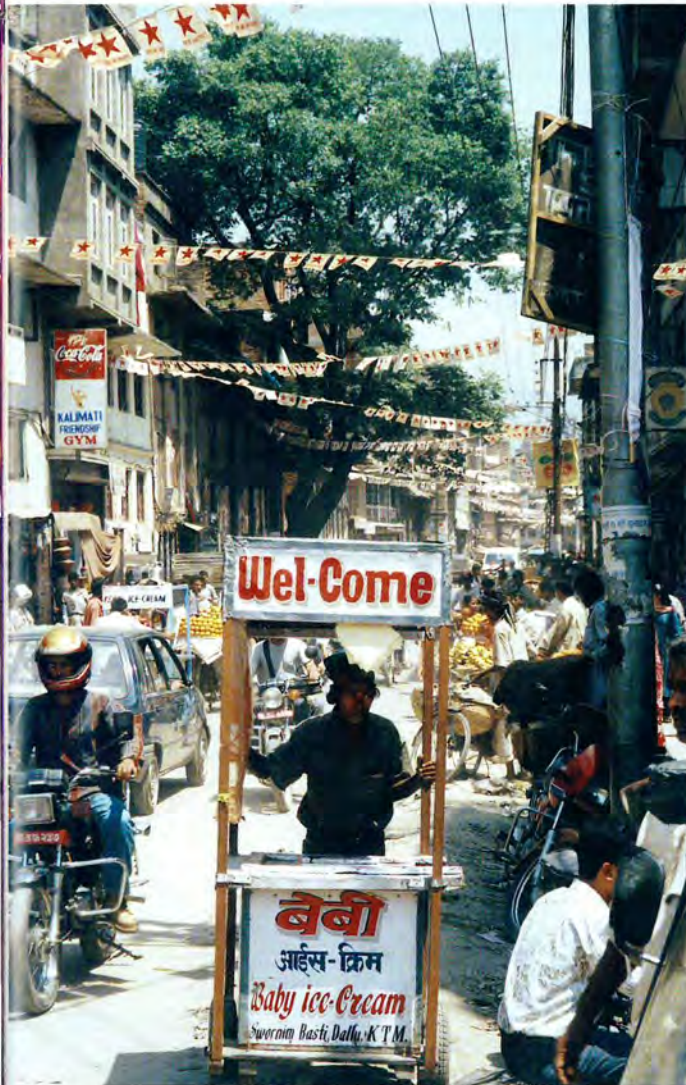
Few today stay anywhere for decades. Some agencies reckon their average length of missionary service is now under five years. BMS is a bit longer, but not much. These days few parents are willing for long separations from children so education needs bring them home. And many see mission work as part of their career rather than their career. Moving around, switching locations and work are all part of a modern lifestyle, and missionaries aren't different. In recruitment terms, BMS has to run fast even to stand still.

Fast response

Back in 1792, when BMS began, news of a hurricane or earthquake would take at least six weeks to reach Britain. The critical period was long

still

Far left: Portable TV!
(Photo courtesy of Sat-7)
Left: McDonald's in Sri Lanka.
Below left: Street scene, Nepal.
Below right: Satellite dishes, Albania.
Below middle: Bedouin watch TV.
(Photo courtesy of Sat-7)
Bottom: Statue of Buddha in Sri Lanka.
Right: Cigarette advertising, Sri Lanka.



makes mission possible even when there's no strong local church.

A moving target

Only three per cent of the world's mission force works among unreached peoples, perhaps the most shocking statistic in Christendom. Why so few? Because mission agencies tend to work where they've always worked. BMS always had a better statistic, but recently we've made decisions to reposition our work and people into the neediest areas of the world. That's difficult and discomfiting but it takes BMS back to its pioneering roots, and now we have a presence in some of the most inaccessible countries for the gospel in places like south-central Asia, North Africa and the Middle East. And it means we can invest in opportunities like the SAT-7 satellite TV broadcasting of Christian programmes across a wide spread of Mediterranean and western Asia countries. Millions now have satellite dishes and they're attracted to good programming.

It's all new. And yet it's only new on the surface. Underneath mission hasn't changed. It's still about people, still about caring, still about sacrifice, still about making Jesus known to every man, woman and child in God's world. That's our business. We do a 1st century task in a 21st century context and with 21st century tools. Mission has a changing face, but the heart beats the same steady rhythm of love for a lost world. ●

Alistair Brown is General Director of BMS World Mission



past before anyone here knew, and help would have taken months to arrive. Now we hear of disasters within minutes. And sometimes we can provide help only a few hours later. A fast moving world facilitates fast response. We can get money to local contacts to buy aid. We've even begun to send emergency teams to troubled areas as we did when Kosovo refugees were pouring over the border into Albania. That couldn't have happened without fast communication and fast travel, every day realities of the 21st century.

New partnerships

I'm often amazed that people ask me if BMS works with other groups overseas. When didn't we? Especially for the last half century, partnership has been a given of mission societies, sharing decisions and resourcing local personnel. But there are new features. Some partnerships aren't as effective as they should be. One answer has been for like-minded mission agencies to form umbrella organisations to oversee work in a country. That's high level and effective co-operation, and

“Work...while it is day”

BMS signs a partnership to work in a new country

Whilst in general terms North Africa and the Middle East are hard areas to work in, there is one country in this region that is still open to Christianity and Christian workers – Lebanon.

In April this year BMS World Mission signed a partnership agreement with Lebanese Baptists, and already, BMS is sending its first volunteer workers to this country.

Lebanon has just over three million people, 60 per cent of whom are Muslim and 40 per cent Christian. There are 21 Baptist churches there with a total of 2,000 members. There is no political pressure for the government to increase the number of Muslims. The Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon in May has made some born into the ‘Christian’ sector jittery and a few have fled to Israel for safety; but the long-term impact on the Middle East peace process – and the situation in Lebanon in particular – is what is giving most people cause for concern.

The Lebanese Society for Education and Social Development (LSESD), under the executive directorship of Nabil Costa, is responsible for proclaiming the Christian message through the various properties it owns. These properties include the Beirut Baptist School, the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary (ABTS), and an office block with a publications department.

Nabil Costa was previously a marketing manager for Eastman Kodak in the Gulf area, but he gave up this job to run the operations of LSESD. When first approached, he said, “I prayed about it, and found life was too short.” So he accepted the change of role.

ABTS is 40 years old, and is having to turn away students because it does not have enough space to accommodate them. Following a fundraising appeal in Britain and Europe it will start to build an extension, adding an additional two storeys to the existing two floors. This will allow the number of students they can take to double from the present 50 to 100. Lebanon is the only Arab country where a seminary can operate. Students come

from all over the Arab world eg from Morocco, Iraq, Tunisia and Sudan. One of the Sudanese students is a bishop in the Sudanese Anglican church. In addition to Bachelor level courses, students can enrol for a two-month course to learn about Islam; this is especially geared towards those who will work in Islamic areas.

The Baptist school in Beirut has 1,100 students aged up to 12. It is situated in the Muslim area of the city, and only 50 of the pupils are Christian; the rest are Muslim. It was originally set up by American Baptists, and today still has the reputation of giving a first-class education, which is why Muslim parents send their children there. It also has highly skilled and motivated teachers, combined with low tuition fees. Nabil Costa commented, “It is our intention not to make money, but to honour Jesus.”

Nabil admits that church planting is a new concept for Lebanese Baptists, but now that the war is over, it is one they are working hard to embrace. Lebanese Baptists are using both the Seminary and the school to proclaim the gospel.

He said, “We have a window of opportunity, and we should take advantage of it. We have to work hard while we can. We don’t know how long we will have the freedom we have now.” ●

Left: Elias Bitar, principal of Baptist School, Beirut
Right: Nabil Costa
Below: The Baptist School in Beirut





Seven instead of one

A new way of doing mission

ten thousand pounds does not go far in supporting mission personnel. It will pay the living expenses for one couple overseas for six months or will provide half a landrover for BMS workers in a country like Angola.

But in Indonesia that amount of money pays for the support of seven national BMS personnel, and there's enough left over to support three students at theological seminary! BMS has been working in partnership with the Kerapatan Gereja Baptis Indonesia (KGBI), that is, the Convention of Indonesian Baptists, since 1992.

It's a different way of 'doing mission', but how much more cost effective! Instead of training one person or couple in the UK, taking them through learning the language and adapting to the new culture, for the same amount of money here we have seven committed Baptist Christians who already are fully acquainted with the language and the culture, and are raring to go. Six of the seven missionaries work on the island of Sumatra – the fifth largest island in the world, over double the size of Britain.



There's Samuji who lives and works in Bandur Lampung. Someone has described him as 'treasure in jars of clay'; he is a man with endless stamina and energy. The situation in Lampung Province is very tense at the moment between Muslims and Christians. Christians have to observe a night-time curfew, and many have received death threats.



Ariston, who is the newest of the missionaries, and is being mentored by Samuji. He and his wife live in Kotabumi.

They have a house with a very large room which would be ideal for Christian worship, but their landlord is adamant that they will be thrown out the minute the house is used for Christian worship.



Yosia and his wife live and work in Medan, a city of 2.4 million in the north of Sumatra. They pastor a church, which regularly has

20 adults and 60-plus children attending. Yosia also teaches in the Medan Bible School.



Juliannus is involved in a church planting work in Kabanjahe. In a short space of time the church has grown from 0 to 30.

Juliannus loves people and spends a lot of time making contacts, particularly through the many local coffee shops around the church.



Onekesi has also worked in the Kabanjahe fellowship, but has also started a cell-group of 40-plus people which meets in the slums of Medan two to three times a week. He originally came from the island of Nias, and his work is amongst migrant workers from Nias.



Walben and his wife, Grace, also work in a church in Medan. Church growth for him, too, has also gone from 0 to 30 during his time in the city. Their church meets in new premises on the main road out of Medan.



Lastly, there's Youbert Warou, who is Mission Co-ordinator for the KGBI. He is based in Manado on the island of Sulawesi and oversees and co-ordinates the work of the KGBI not just in Sumatra, but also in the Maluku Islands and Kalimantan.

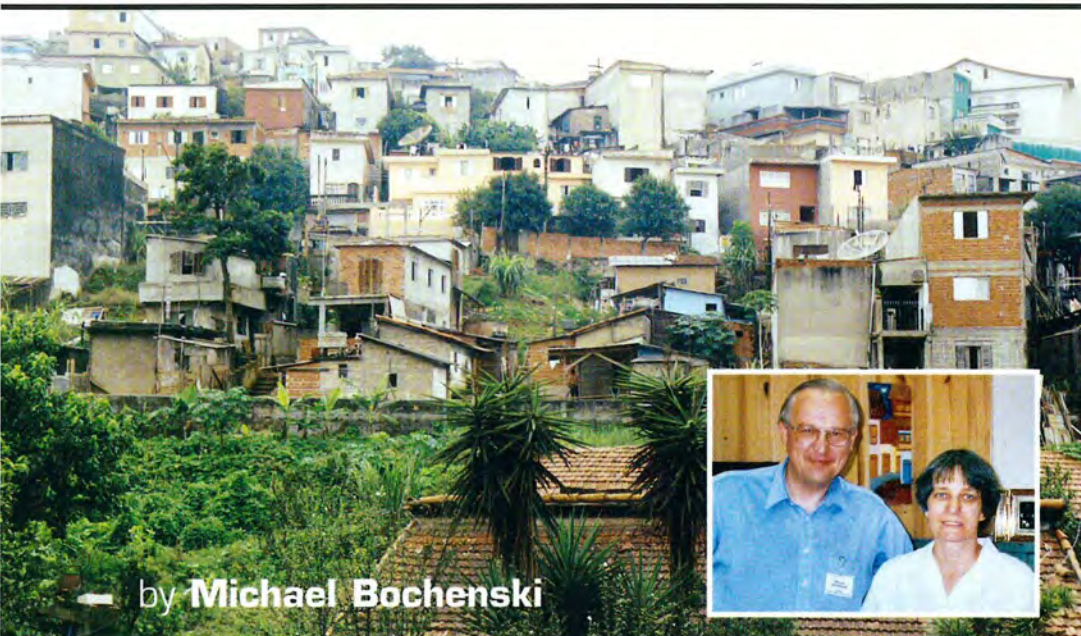
As in other parts of the world, there is a sense that this door of opportunity for Christians to be able to work openly in Indonesia may not be open for long. For Indonesian Christians, too, the words of John 9:4 are very timely:

"As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no-one can work."

The recent conflicts between Muslims and Christians have highlighted this. ●



a personal **encounter** with the work of BMS



← by **Michael Bochenski**

my wife Jane and I visited Brazil in September 1999 during my year as President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB). BMS Regional Secretary Derek Punchard organised an excellent programme for us and we are grateful to him and to the BMS and the BUGB for making it possible.

The changing face of mission was evident wherever we travelled. At the historic March 2000 meeting of the BMS General Committee, the same was true there too. The imaginative new logo and mission statement were introduced on that occasion. BMS World Mission is committed to 'sharing life in all its fullness with the world's people by enabling them to know Christ; alleviating suffering and injustice and improving the quality of life'. We saw this in practice in Brazil throughout our visit.

Enabling them to know Christ

We experienced this in:

- the favela team ministry Stuart and Georgie Christine had helped to build in São Paulo
- meeting Pele's wife, Assyria, a patron of the favela ministry, and hearing of her family's commitment to evangelism
- speaking at the seminaries in Curitiba and Fortaleza where men and women, often young, were training for

present and future leadership – usually in the evenings after a long day's work

- hearing of the goodwill legacy from recent BMS Action Team visits
- preparations for the ecumenical 'Curitiba para Cristo' mission with preacher, Nelson Fanini
- preaching in full churches, morning and evening
- the community church Mike and Daveen Wilson have loved and prayed into life in Trapiá, deep in the Brazilian interior
- Andy and Linda Eaves' church planting ministry in the picturesque setting of Baturité
- an evangelistic church retreat organised by Mark Greenwood on the weekend of his daughter Ana's birth!
- an inspirational woman pastor-led baptismal service in Fortaleza

Alleviating suffering and injustice

We witnessed this in:

- the commitment of BMS missionaries to favela ministry in situations of grinding poverty within São Paulo and Fortaleza
- Devanir Carrasco's ministry in Heliópolis, one of the best established favela churches
- an orphanage in Curitiba
- the faith community in Trapiá where work and worship, witness and social action have come so creatively together



Far left: São Paulo favelas.
Inset: Michael and Jane.
Centre left: Jane in Heliopolis, São Paulo.
Left: Parque Selecta Baptist Church, São Paulo.
Above left: Teaching at pre-school in favela.
Above right: Penha favela.

- in a social action project the Eaves had helped to develop during their time in Fortaleza, including beautifully crafted cards marketed through BMS and other outlets
- in a conversation with a base community priest who had worked with Bishop Dom Helder Camara as he spoke with us of the liberation movement's past, present and future

Improving the quality of life

This was evident in:

- life skills taught to pre-school children, from numbers to using toothbrushes
- courses in computer training and new technology
- health and hygiene policies
- literacy classes and a community library
- the provision of basic health care and advice
- employment initiatives
- 'free' English lessons
- quality seminary education

Most good mission happens nowadays in partnership with national Unions and Conventions. BMS World Mission's partnership with the Brazilian Baptist Convention was evident wherever we travelled. Indeed, over the course of this decade and subject to appropriate re-evaluation, our BMS missionaries will probably be leaving Brazil in the next few years. The changing face of mission involves beginnings and endings, transition and sometimes pain. We were privileged to glimpse something of the living history of this during our time in Brazil.

BMS has been in this vast country since 1953, enabling people to know Christ; alleviating suffering and injustice and improving the quality of life. We thank God for them and as we know from many comments during our visit, so do the Brazilian Baptists. ●

Michael Bochenski was President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, 1999-2000

Making disciples the British way!

Hands up who believes in a blue-eyed, blond Jesus? Nobody? Thank goodness for that! You would have thought that Jesus was definitely British, or at worst, European, if you had attended the display of art through the centuries at the exhibition, 'Seeing Salvation' at the National Gallery. Magnificent it may have been, but it did tell the sad story of how "British" forms of Christianity have invaded the world.

Our mandate to 'go into all the world' has not changed – unfortunately in the past we have sought to 'make disciples' in the image of British Christianity with British cultural thought forms and traditions as part of the package. We are now reaping the side effects of this world-wide religious domination as more and more people are discovering a vibrant, living and relevant faith which is being creatively expressed through their own cultural forms discarding any attachments to the older style missionary movement to which they owed so much.

Friends visiting Zambia recently were puzzled by how divorced from their own culture were the local Christian communities. Then they discovered that Western missionaries had told the people that it was evil to dance. That is much more to do with Western Christian culture than biblical teaching!

The way we do mission is radically changing but there are major issues to be grappled with. The old hymn language of 'terrestrial orbs', 'angel strains' and the classic 'heavenly lay' does not work in Camden or Calcutta, Birmingham or Bombay. And the recent fashion to take the gospel message down to the lowest common denominator to make it inclusive and tolerant of any approach is a huge blunder and a travesty of the truth. Equally, making the requirement for church membership and participation so strict that we build hurdles far too high for anybody to jump is also putting us on a course for annihilation!

Mrs 'X', who complained after a recent service I preached at that it was not a gospel service, 'and we always have a gospel service in the evenings', hadn't quite grasped the fact that there were rarely any non-Christians in church – probably because of Mrs 'X'!

Loving relationships, a caring community, relevant lifestyles, not compromising on issues of justice and faith and a readiness to walk into unknown territory with a gospel loosed from the shackles of British imperialism – these are some of the ingredients which make for successful mission in today's world. ●

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



steve



Mission in a moral vacuum

how do you go about building the church in a society that lacks moral foundations? This is a question quite pertinent to the challenge of mission in a post-communist country like Albania. Albania is the only country to have ever declared itself to be officially atheist, a country in which religion was almost totally eradicated. The result is a society that operates on the basis of unashamed and usually short-sighted self-interest, a society in which corruption is normal practice.

Part of the excitement of working in a country such as Albania is that out of this background many people – especially young people – have come to Christ. Churches have been planted in towns and villages throughout a land that was once totally closed to the gospel. Already Albanian believers have been recognised as leaders and have been trained for Christian ministry.

All of this is encouraging and exciting. But it is only the beginning. Conversion brings new life, a new orientation, a change in lifestyle. Together with this, however, there is a huge amount of baggage that the new convert brings into his or her new life in Christ. The social and moral background of the new Christian has an immense influence over the way they think and behave. This is especially so in Albanian culture in which individualism is an alien concept and the family network is all encompassing. Even when an individual decides to follow Christ, the social context remains an incredibly powerful influence.

Those of us that have had the privilege of training some of the emerging Albanian church leaders have

Paul Towlson gives a lesson from Albania

also struggled with the level of moral and social maturity that we have encountered. Sometimes we have reflected that some of the patterns of behaviour seen in the context of a school to train Christian leaders would be entirely out of place in seminaries in other parts of the world. Are these then the wrong people that are being trained? Are they unspiritual and unsuited to Christian ministry? I believe very firmly that the answer to these questions is “No”.

How then do we go about building the church in this kind of context? How do we go about the task of training national leaders? Recognising the need to reach unchurched people, the vocabulary and practice of church planting has come into vogue. No doubt there is a need for more churches, that within every locality there is a living witness to Christ. But is there a more effective metaphor for the challenge of mission in a moral vacuum?

When we turn to the words of Christ recorded by Matthew at the giving of the Great Commission, there is a surprise that awaits us. There is no mention of programmes of evangelism or of church planting. Instead there is a command to “go

and make disciples”, initiating them into the life of the new community through baptism, and teaching obedience to the commands of Christ.

Could it be that these words of Jesus are the key to the way we do mission in a moral vacuum? If so, then there are a number of implications for mission strategy.

Firstly, we invest in individuals. Discipleship takes place in a relationship that takes time. This is where our Western culture and evangelical heritage conspire to put all the emphasis on conversion rather than on the investment into someone’s life through the costly process of discipling.

Secondly, we think much longer term. The church in Albania is a first generation church, which means that there are no established patterns of Christian behaviour. There are no mature role models for new believers other than the missionaries who come from a foreign culture. The task of working out what it means to be a disciple of Jesus in a new context is a lengthy and difficult task.

Thirdly, we work in community. Often, missionaries are rugged individualists, but this can never be an excuse for not attempting to

“There are no mature role models for new believers other than the missionaries who come from a foreign culture. The task of working out what it means to be a disciple of Jesus in a new context is a lengthy and difficult task.”

“This means persisting with new believers, even when they let us down”

demonstrate the reality of Christian community! One of the particular challenges for discipling in the Albanian context is the social and cultural pressure on individual believers. These strong relationships should not be cut off, but they do need to be counteracted by the persistent fellowship and example of a Christian community.

Fourthly and finally, we remember the gospel. The gospel is a message of grace, of free forgiveness, of unconditional acceptance, and of the second and third chance. In a culture that has been so damaged by its historical experience, the message of grace is vital. This means persisting with new believers, even when they let us down, even when they discredit the call to discipleship. It also means that we hold open the possibility that we too are mistaken in what we do and in what we expect in a culture that is foreign to our own.

Perhaps these comments are relevant too, to mission at home, in a society that is also characterised by moral and spiritual confusion, a society in which the church faces an increasing challenge of being a different kind of community. ●

Paul Towison worked in Albania with BMS from 1995 - 1999



New Horizons

Ethnic cleansing has opened the door for work in Kosovo

two years ago hardly anyone had heard of it: Kosovo – a nominally Muslim province north-east of Albania with nearly two million people, who enjoyed a reasonably high standard of living. It had no Christian witness to speak of.

The peace of Kosovo was shattered when ethnic cleansing resulted in hundreds of thousands fleeing their homes, escaping into Albania.

Some months later those who had fled returned to the ashes of their homes, to try to rebuild their lives emotionally and practically. Some families had lost all their menfolk – fathers, husbands and sons – they were taken forcibly by the Serbs, some to be killed, some to be imprisoned in inhumane conditions, and others were just missing – whereabouts and fate unknown.

At the time of the crisis Geni Begu, General Secretary of the Albanian Evangelical Alliance said, “The crisis situation in Kosovo is a mission field for the Albanian church. Since January 1998 the Albanian church has adopted Kosovo as another country to pray for. We as a church have been praying for Kosovo, but have never had the opportunity to go to them. Now the Lord is using this situation and has brought them to us. Now is the time the Lord has opened the doors for Kosovo. Of course, our goal is not to take advantage of their situation. We recognise we can show them the gospel by serving, by caring for them, by listening to them, by living the gospel in front of their eyes.”

Last July BMS sent a volunteer response team of 15 people to Albania, to help rebuild lives, four of whom went to Kosovo.

One of these volunteers, Phil Chant from Kingsbridge Baptist Church, Devon, made a return visit to the town of Gjakova in Kosovo earlier this year.

When he left Kosovo, last July, a church had already begun to meet in one of the local schools under the leadership of Gary and Kathy Ofper, independent missionaries.

Within a few weeks numbers had reached several hundred. Some

came out of gratitude for the food they had received; others only came once or twice, but all would have had the opportunity to hear the gospel.

When winter came numbers dropped off; it was a particularly harsh winter – temperatures down to -28°C, water supplies frozen, only occasional electricity, and not uncommon for three feet of snow to fall in two days.

By spring the numbers at the embryonic church had settled down, and they now get a regular attendance of 80 to 90 people, including 15 to 20 children. They have 15 people waiting for baptism. Sundays are used as a time for sharing and encouragement and opportunity for all who come to hear the gospel. In addition to those attending the Sunday service there are 30 to 40 children in Sunday school, and 50 to 60 older kids who go to a youth service at 1.00pm. Every Sunday there's also an evening prayer meeting in the park for the families of prisoners, followed by a church prayer time to which 20 to 25 people come.

Midweek there's a Bible study night, which has a higher emphasis on teaching for Christians. It's held in the Solid Rock café, a youth outreach, originally established by YWAM. Although Gary and Kathy are leading the church at the moment, their hope is to train nationals to take over the leadership.

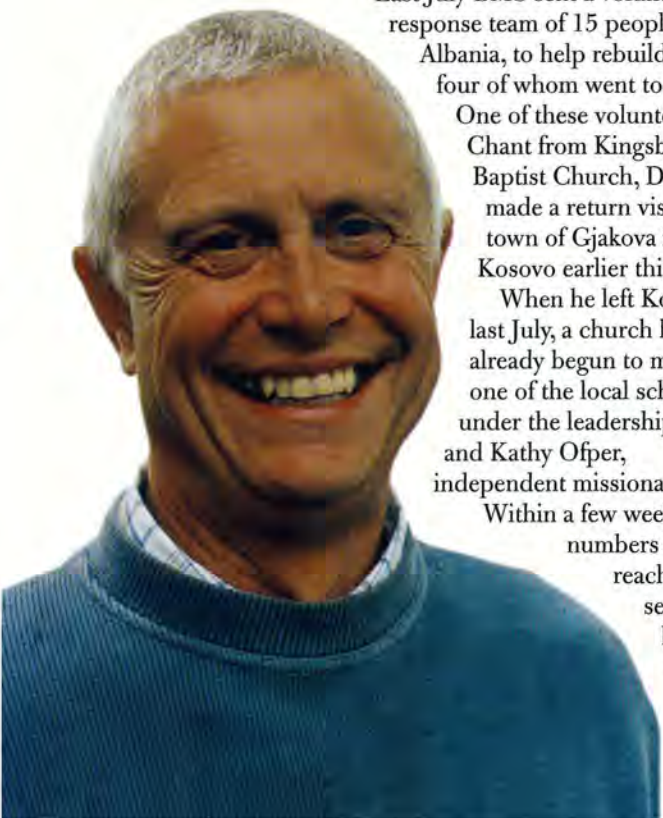
Phil Chant used his latest time in Kosovo to visit local people, church members and families of prisoners and missing men, listening to their stories, trying to share their sorrows, praying and caring for them. He visited with Faton, who acted as translator, a potential leader of this young church. Previously no one had any idea exactly who was coming to church or who had been visited. They were able to start keeping some records.

Phil said, “It's now just over a year since the end of the war. People are living with terrible hurt in their lives, and there is a great need for forgiveness and reconciliation, which are only truly possible through Jesus.”

Many mission agencies have now left Kosovo; the aid is reducing, and with it the obvious scope to share the love of Jesus with ordinary people. When other agencies have gone BMS World Mission will still be in Kosovo, using the opportunities that have opened up. BMS Volunteers Clem and Elaine Mason are currently in Pristina, Kosovo, working with Love in Action, and at the beginning of 2001 BMS will be sending Justine Horsfall to Kosovo. Justine will help with administration in the Love in Action office. A former Albania Action Team member and leader of the Albania volunteer response team, Justine will be BMS's first long-term worker in Kosovo. ●

Left: Phil Chant.

Right: Kosovar refugees with (inset) Kosovo church meetings.





Budapest

A series edited by **Jan Kendall** that looks at towns and cities around the world where BMS personnel are working by **Jenny Smith**



History

The capital of Hungary, Budapest, straddles a curve in the River Danube. The Romans built a settlement called Aquincum here around the first and second centuries AD, which flourished as the regional capital for the Roman province of Pannonia. The Roman legion was stationed at Aquincum and guarded the north-eastern frontier of the Empire. The Roman aqueduct and amphitheatres can still be seen today just north of Óbuda.

In the fifth century the city was taken over first by Goths, then Huns, who also settled on the Pest side of the Danube.

The tribe of Magyars took over the whole country in about 900 AD, and terrorised Europe with raids as far as France and Italy, until they converted to Roman Catholicism in the late tenth century. Hungary's first king and patron saint, Stephen I, was crowned on Christmas Day in 1000, marking the foundation of the Hungarian State.

Originally there were three separate cities; Buda, Óbuda, and Pest. They were under Turkish rule from 1526 to 1686, as was the rest of Hungary, but were never fully integrated into the Ottoman Empire.

In a revolution in 1848, the first Hungarian government chose Pest for its seat.

In 1849 Budapest officially became one town, and the capital of Hungary. Unification finally happened in 1873.

After the First World War the Treaty of Trianon (1920) reduced Hungary's area by more than half, but Budapest received 325,000 refugees from ceded areas and thus expanded.

It was occupied by German troops in 1944, heavily bombed, and under siege for six weeks. Three-quarters of Budapest's buildings were damaged or destroyed.

Hungary was liberated from the Nazis by the Soviets in 1945, and was a Soviet bloc country till 1989.

During the Soviet occupation



there was a brief revolution in 1956, when Budapest citizens held out against the Russian troops for several days, but it was finally quashed, after much bloodshed. At this time many people left the country. As a result there are more Hungarians living outside Hungary today than within its borders.

Following the collapse of the USSR in 1991, Hungary has developed close political and economic relations with western Europe.

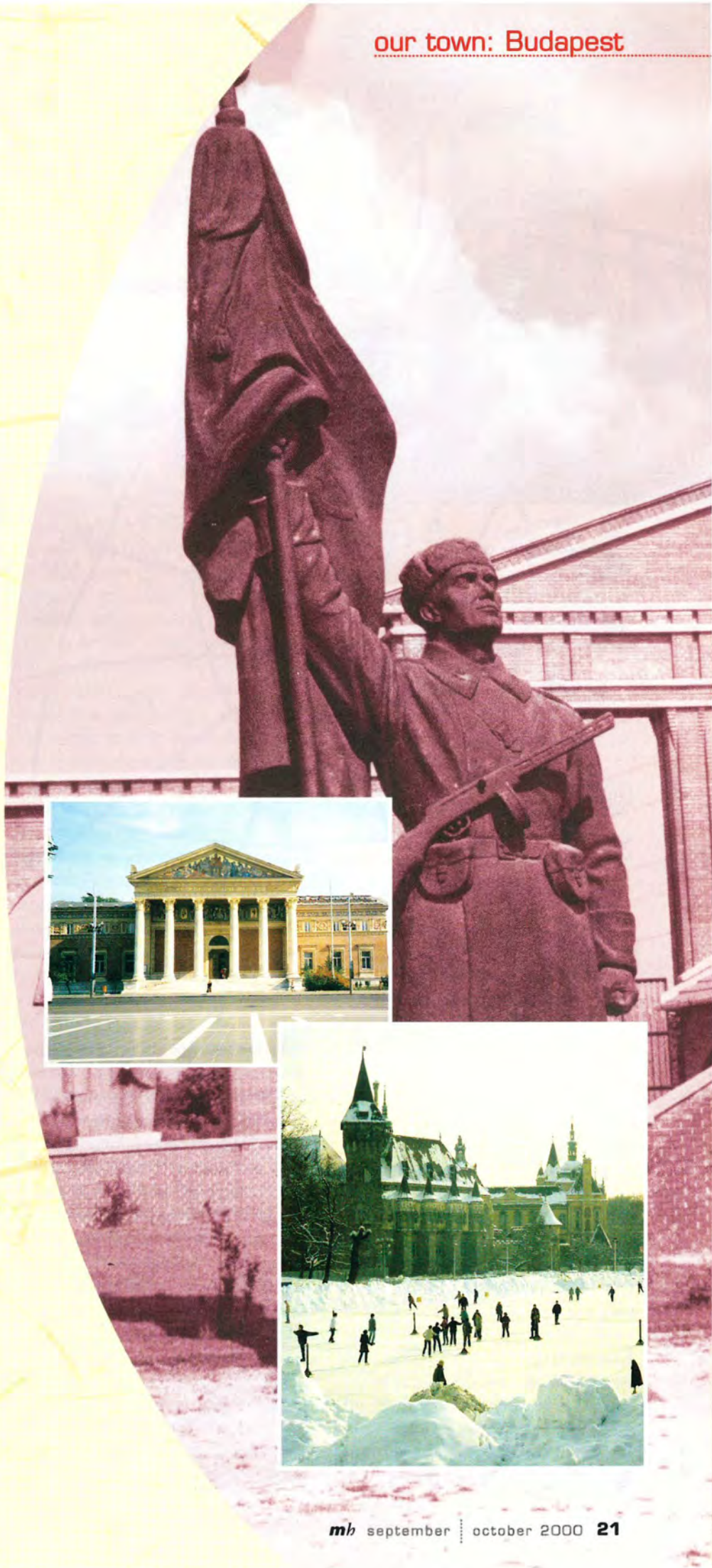
First Impressions

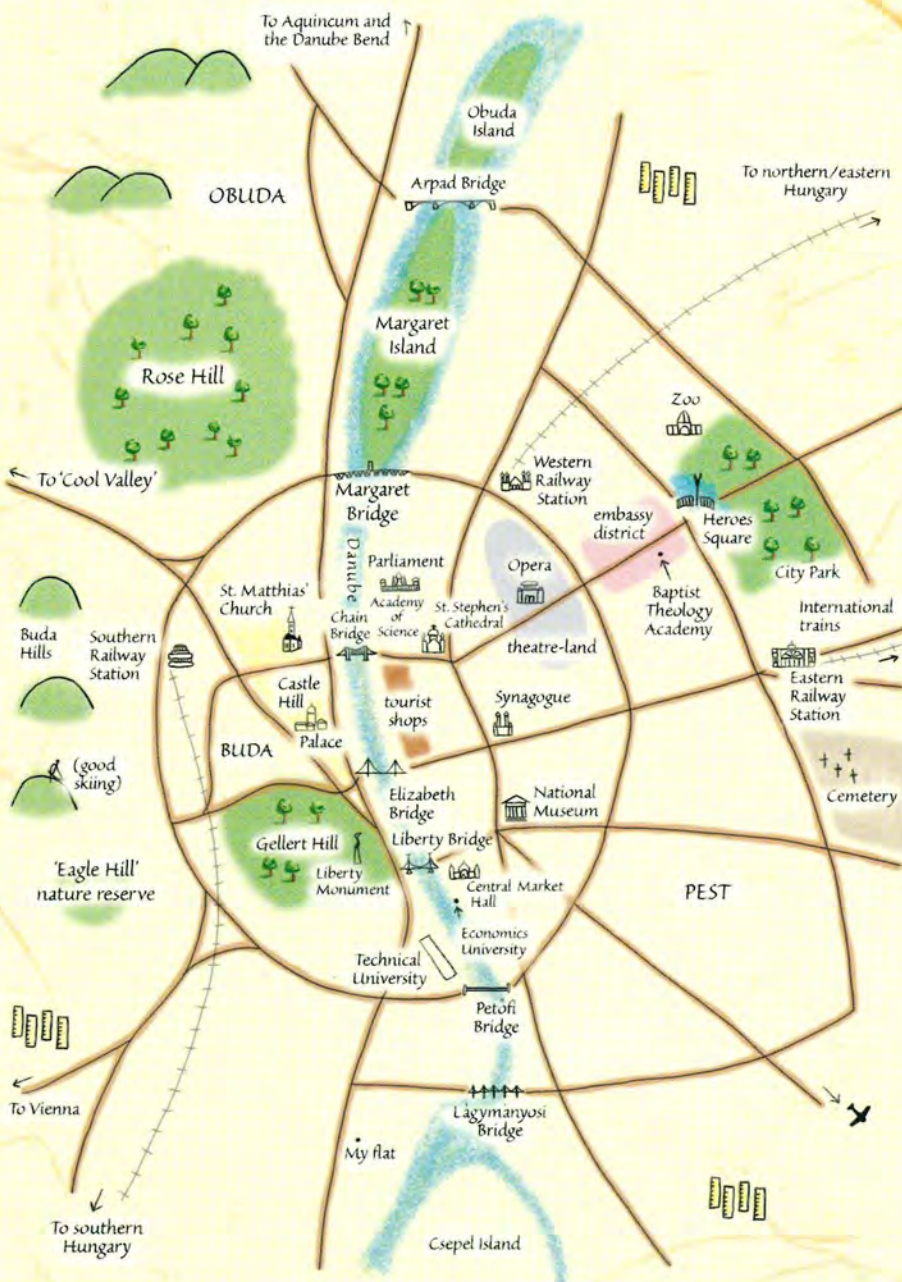
- stunning architecture
- pleasant place for a holiday
- people are very friendly in informal situations, and most unhelpful in official situations
- a frequent comment from many visitors, especially the children, is "Can I come and live here?"

People

Hungarians are neither a Slavic, nor a Germanic people. Minorities within the country include Germans, Slovaks, South Slavs and Romanians. There are difficulties between Hungarians and Romanians, including the ongoing dispute over the area of Transylvanian ownership. Many Romanians come to Budapest to sell their products and make some money, but are generally not too well received.

Altogether there are a quarter of a million Gypsies living in Hungary, and they have a hard





- It has the oldest underground railway on the continent, built in 1896, and one of the world's greatest public transport systems (metro, bus, tram, trolleybus).
- Budapest has the biggest synagogue in Europe, the second biggest in the world.

Leisure

In their spare time the people of Budapest like to:

- take trips to the countryside
- visit family members
- watch TV – and recent years have seen a multiplication in channels available
- do some gardening – many have an orchard or plot in the countryside that they visit regularly
- get involved in a sporting activity. The average Hungarian goes swimming once a week, especially in natural thermal baths which have Roman and Turkish origins. Budapest is a major spa centre with 123 springs producing 40 million litres of warm mineral water every day
- listen to music and play too. Famous Hungarian composers include Liszt, Kodaly, and Bartok
- Talk! There are very few conversational taboos; it is quite alright to ask what your salary is, how much rent you pay, or talk about your illnesses in great detail!

time. They are seen as not working for a living, and bringing down the tone of a neighbourhood. There aren't many black people in Budapest, although their numbers are now increasing, but they too experience difficulties. Anyone who is remotely different will find they are stared at, and will find it difficult to find a job or a flat to rent.

Economy

Hungary was the first eastern European country to move successfully towards market reform. It had received US\$7 billion in foreign investment by

mid-1994, more than the rest of eastern Europe combined. The country appears to have entered a period of sustainable growth, with gradually falling inflation (14 per cent in 1998), but the unemployment rate stands at 10.8%. Its main industries are tourism, food, entertainment, and chemicals. Hungary is the fifth most visited country in the world.

Budapest is famous for:

- The Petö Institute, offering treatment and education to children with brain damage. World famous, it has taken many children from the UK, until similar institutes were established there too.

Social Aspects

- Two million people live in Budapest – one-fifth of the country's population.
- Most families average two children. People live in a flat (in a block), or in a house with a



garden, but often more than one generation will live together. This is partly economic, as grandparents can look after children while both parents work, to earn enough money to keep them all. Two salaries are usually needed to cover even the most basic needs of a family. Traditionally there are much closer extended family bonds than in UK.

- Budapest has 15 to 20,000 homeless people, and a lot of beggars. If you leave school and have never had a job, you get no state benefit.
- A combination of traffic and factory output from manufacturing industries results in bad air and pollution. Road and rail networks are centred on Budapest – they are highly developed, but increasingly crowded. Budapest has nine road bridges; all were destroyed by bombs during World War Two. The 380m Chain Bridge is the best-known symbol of the city, and was built between 1839-49.
- Hungary has the world's highest rates of suicide and abortion – yet it also has more poets per head than any other country in Europe.

The Christian scene

Two thirds of the population is Roman Catholic; others include Calvinist, Lutheran, and Baptist. There are 20 Baptist congregations in Budapest, all with their own buildings, averaging between 100 to 200 members. Most have services once or twice on a Sunday, and

probably a youth meeting on a Friday evening. Sunday may include a prayer meeting before the service. Many churches are very full on Sunday, but a lot are merely nominal.

PEOPLE PROFILES

Zoltán Horváth

Age 32, from Pesterzsébet, a suburb of southern Pest. He used to work as an electrician.



Zoli's wife is a nursery school teacher, and they have four children, from 20 months to eight years old, the older ones go to a Christian school in the city.

Zoli became a Christian on 29 January 1995. His parents were not believers, and he realised he was living a sinful life, and began to look for God. He was much influenced by his wife's Baptist family.

He is in his third year at the Baptist Theology Academy in Budapest, studying theology. He attends Pesterzsébet Baptist church, which is quite big, with about 200 members, and is 100 years old. He describes it as a very loving and kind congregation, with lots of young people. It has a very modern, light and airy building, and often hosts special services for the Academy.

Zoli came to BTA because he felt God call him there, and he wants to be a pastor in a country church. Please pray with him that he will be a good pastor all his life, and that he will truly love his church, as Christ does.

Dávid Boros

Age 19, lives with his family in Budapest. Of his two elder brothers, one is a student at the Technical University in Budapest, now also working for Nokia, and



the other is a psychiatric prison nurse. His father has had many jobs over the years, and is now a bus driver, because he wanted work with less stress. His mother is a typist in the city centre.

Dávid is very grateful for his Christian upbringing, and made his major step of commitment at a worship meeting around the campfire on a children's camp in Tahi, the Baptist camp just north of Budapest. He says of that time, "It was just the first step. All steps are important."

He is just entering his second year of theology studies at BTA, with the aim of being a pastor. He is aware of how important it is to learn many things before he can fulfil that role sufficiently.

He is a member of Újpest Baptist church, but as part of his studies is on placement at a small congregation in the village of Súlysáp, 40km from Budapest. It is a simple church with a total congregation of about 20, including children, and another part of the congregation in another village, sharing one pastor. Dávid attends every Sunday, preaching once a fortnight, and having lunch with different church members after the service.

Please pray that his studies will be useful, and that what he learns at the Academy and in his practical assignments will equip him for the job that lies ahead. ●

TEFL: opening many doors



Gillian Wotton



Margaret Pitt

The teaching of English is opening many doors for mission workers overseas. **Sam Gibson** reports.

I feel the call of God to serve him overseas but I'm not a doctor or a school teacher, a secretary or an engineer. I'm not sure what I can offer."

Does this ring a bell? There are many ways in which Christians can offer themselves in short-term service. One opportunity is to serve simply by using a knowledge of the English language. With a little retraining – sometimes just a one-term evening course at a local college – those with the aptitude can be equipped with a TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) qualification, which can be used in an increasing number of situations. Often today mission personnel who go out to do an entirely different job can end up teaching English in some capacity as the need to have at least a basic understanding of the language is vital to many people across the world. Two women who have taken up the TEFL challenge with BMS are Gillian Wotton and Margaret Pitt.

Gillian served as a BMS missionary in Brazil from 1971 to 1984. As a retired Biology teacher, she already had the skills to teach but recognising the need for English teachers overseas, Gillian gained a TEFL qualification, and headed for Poland this month (September). Today she is teaching at the Baptist Theological Seminary in Radosc, Warsaw, helping students preparing for ministry in the Baptist churches of Poland. Most of her time is spent working with the theological students, improving their language skills to help them access texts written in English, and she is also involved in an outreach programme to the local community, offering English lessons to adults and children and bringing non-Christians into relationship with the seminary and the Baptist church which meets on site.

Margaret Pitt has been teaching English with BMS for over four years. Initially based in Novi Sad, Serbia, she moved to the International Baptist Lay Academy (IBLA) in Hungary in September 1998.

Margaret has been teaching lay leaders from a variety of countries across Eastern Europe, as well as members of the local community, as a form of outreach. To the church workers, English is a vital skill as it enables them to take a

full part in the activities of the European Baptist Federation (whose official language is English), as well as to study theological texts only available in English. Many of these students come from countries where there is great political tension – such as Kosovo, Serbia, Albania and the former Russian republics, and many are very poor. Margaret has often found herself inspired and challenged by the faith of her students; she says,

"[2Tim 2:2] is a wonderful reminder of the privilege we have here in being involved in God's work and Paul describes how the message of truth must be passed on. I am so grateful to God for allowing me to play a small part in the equipping of young men and women who will go back and teach their own people the great truths about Jesus."

TEFL opens many doors, from teaching street children in Brazil to theological students who will change the face of the churches across Eastern Europe, and anything in between. This is a changing world and mission opportunities change with it! ●

"I am so grateful to God for allowing me to play a small part in the equipping of young men and women who will go back and teach their own people the great truths about Jesus."

worlds apart

The Brazil Action Team have their thinking turned upside-down



When people imagine São Paulo they think of many different things – tropical climates, football, children, perhaps even favelas (shanty towns). Something we never imagined was huge skyscrapers and shiny Mercedes. Two worlds exist in São Paulo, one of the poor and one of the rich. What's really shocking is how close together they are.

We had always imagined that favelas were on the outskirts of the city and the centre was where everyone else lived. Coming to São Paulo showed us that the people who have nothing live next door to the people who have everything. The wooden

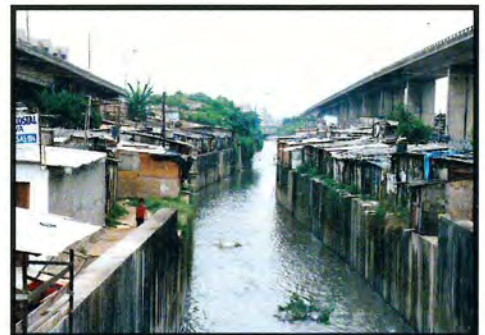
shacks of favela people are everywhere, even the most exclusive areas of the city are home to a favela.

But, although these two worlds exist together physically, socially there is a huge divide. The rich live in a different world to their poorer neighbours. We discovered a University Christian Union in São Paulo where, of the 20 members present, none had ever actually been in a favela. At this particular meeting the group were challenged to go into the favela next to their University and start helping their neighbours.

When Brazilians recognise a need, they respond in any way they can. Whilst we've been here in Brazil we've seen many examples of people meeting the needs of their neighbours. From the church in Itajai, Santa Catarina, who organised a Christmas party for 300 children who live in the favelas and have nothing, to the ladies in favelas who share kitchen utensils to cook their meals. The Christians here actively seek to help their neighbours and meet their needs.

What we've learned here is that being a 'Good Samaritan' isn't limited

to doing good things, we also have to look out and try to meet people's needs. The Brazilian Christians have shown us that there are always ways to help people, we just have to be looking to help. ●



Seven historical steps

Dr Richard Foster, author of the book "Celebration of Discipline," believes that the 21st Century could experience a historical missionary climax. He sees seven important steps which must be taken if this is to happen:

- 1 Christians must orient themselves towards God in all things, not themselves, success, church or seeking non-Christians.
- 2 Christians should not form church around marketing methods - don't "try to copy our culture's entertainment industry, and we should not win people for Christ through entertainment, but rather through the power of the Holy Spirit."
- 3 Christians should develop "habits of the heart" - daily spiritual discipline instead of sporadic outbreaks of inspiration and enthusiasm.
- 4 Christians should "say goodbye to the strutting peacock and self-satisfied director" as leadership examples.
- 5 The church exists to serve the world, not itself - put less value in our own institutions and more in serving the poor.
- 6 Get rid of the "building complex. Buildings can help to serve others, but they are not supposed to be monuments to our egos," he says.
- 7 "Christians should evangelize with power, but also with cultural sensitivity. All people must hear of Jesus and his love."

(Christian Daily News)

How many missionaries have been sent out by your congregation?

Country	Protestant Congregations	Protestant Missionaries	Missys per cong
Singapore	393	567	1.44
Norway	2,341	1,654	0.71
Finland	1,965	1,317	0.67
New Zealand	3,730	1,701	0.46
Sweden	8,332	1,749	0.21
USA	383,328	59,074	0.15
UK	46,262	7,012	0.15
Germany	23,487	3,510	0.15
India	97,796	11,284	0.12
Japan	6,581	407	0.06
Korea	37,985	2,237	0.06
Brazil	148,976	2,755	0.02
Total	761,176	93,267	0.12

* are newer sending countries

Of all the major missionary-sending nations, only in Singapore have Protestant churches sent out more missionaries than there are congregations.

On average Protestant congregations are only sending out one missionary for every eight churches.

(Patrick Johnstone, *The Church is bigger than you think*)

More Bibles distributed

In 1999 the Bible Societies distributed 627 million copies of biblical literature worldwide – 7.2 per cent more than in 1998. The number of distributed complete Bibles (Old and New Testament) rose by 15.7 per cent to 24 million.

Figures dropped by 18.1 per cent for Asia because of the economic crisis.

But they rose for Africa by 11.9 per cent.

Bible distribution in Europe and the Middle East rose by 22.8 per cent. (UBS)

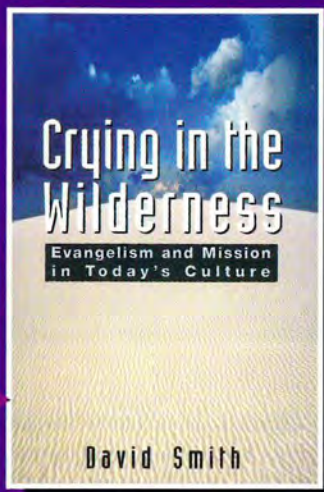
Church growth: dramatic figures

In Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and the Middle East churches are multiplying rapidly, according to Stephen Steele of *Discipling a Whole Nation (or DAWN)*.

"Churches are starting congregations at a pace never seen before," Steele said, "and in some nations are increasing by more than half every year. Church growth experts consider a ten per cent increase a good year."

He added, "churches are started in homes, on street corners and under trees. We look on church more as an event than a place. If people are gathering regularly to worship and hear Bible teaching, that is a church."

The DAWN report identified 33 countries where there is a great potential for dramatic church growth. They include: Argentina, Brazil, Botswana, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, England, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Malawi, Norway, Philippines, Romania, Switzerland, Ukraine and many Middle East and North African countries as well. (*Religion Today*)



Book Title: **Crying in the Wilderness**
Evangelism and Mission In Today's Culture
Author: **David Smith**
Publisher: **Paternoster Press, 2000**
(ISBN 0-85364-811-5)
Reviewer: **Simon Jones, BMS Co-ordinator for London and South East**
No of pages: **89**
Price: **£7.99**

So just what's happening in the church in the UK? The Financial Times (no less) runs articles telling us that pin-striped young city types are coming through Alpha to faith in the ultimate boss – Jesus. Meanwhile statistical surveys of church attendance chart a miserable decline in numbers: just 7.5 per cent of the UK population now go to church regularly. The 1990s – the decade of evangelism, the decade of Alpha – saw church attendance plummet by a million.

What's going on? David Smith's slim volume does not have the answer. But it does help us to raise the right questions, starting with William Carey – something to thrill the heart of every *mh* reader!

Smith's succinct analysis of the birth of the modern missionary movement uncovers an important shift in Christian thinking. The BMS believed that the gospel of Christ could and would transform society.

But 50 years after Carey had set sail for India such a view of mission was giving way to one founded on a much more negative view of the world and individualistic understanding of the gospel. 'The social dimension for witness receded as emphasis was increasingly placed on rescuing individuals from a world for which no hope could be entertained,' says Smith. Exemplified by the ministry of DL Moody and the hymns of Philip Bliss, this view still holds sway over large sections of the church – especially among evangelicals.

Having sketched this historical shift, Smith turns his attention to the church's need for a missionary theology. Sadly too many people are trained in a theology where mission is an option – perhaps chosen over linguistics or church history. This means that as the church decays in the west, Christians – from pastors to youth leaders to home group leaders to regular Sunday attenders – do not have the tools to understand what is happening or engage with the post-Christian culture emerging all around us.

Having looked at the church in Scotland as a case study, Smith turns his attention to how Christians might engage in mission in the modern western context. His analysis does not make for comfortable reading. Indeed at one point he suggests that perhaps the church in the west is unsalvageable in its present form. He is not the only one saying this: New Zealander Mike Riddell announced a similar prognosis in his 1998 book *Threshold of the Future* (SPCK).

Smith's book is short on answers – for which I for one am very grateful. We are not ready for answers until we have begun to ask the right questions. This short, well-argued and nicely-written book helps us to do that. ●



Book Title: **Bricks without Straw**
Author: **Ryder and Heather Rodgers**
Publisher: **Life Changing Books**
(ISBN 0-9530487-1-3)
Reviewer: **John Smith, BMS Co-ordinator, Central & Eastern England**
No of pages: **179**
Price: **£3.99**

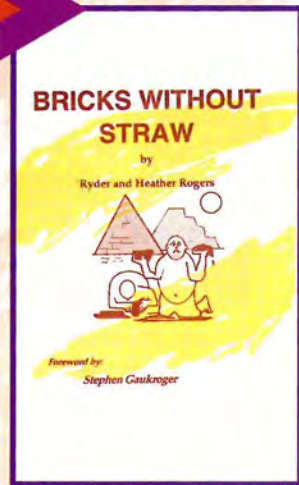
Mission is incarnational. You don't sit outside of a situation; you actually get in to it, live in it, and work it out with the people you are trying to touch. Ryder and Heather Rodgers know all about incarnational mission. Currently BMS missionaries at Bregu-i-Lumit, Albania, they write this potpourri of a book of the joys and challenges of planting a church in Luton.

Bricks without Straw tells the story of a new church, born from an Association vision to plant a church on a new housing scheme. It is an extraordinary story of how within just eight years the church was born, a building constructed, leadership established, and the first missionaries sent out. It is a no-holds barred insider account.

But this book also contains a wealth of helpful insights into the church's developing philosophy of mission and ministry; covenants, leadership structures and evangelistic materials are usefully included. This book has depth as well as breadth. It is a good book for those exploring effective church planting models.

It is also a family story. Of one family who moved in, built a church, and then moved on to build again. For Ryder and Heather were those first missionaries. It is the story of a church family, which they saw come to life, one which should have been called "The Church of the Happy Family", because they laughed such a lot together.

I joined those two families in that building recently for the funeral of Rachel Ryder, their daughter, following her untimely and sudden death. Rachel was still a member of the Bramingham Park church. I recall then wondering how this new, vibrant, joyful church, meeting next door to the supermarket, might have come to be. Bricks without Straw answers that question. ●





Projects



Prayer



People

PROJECTS UPDATE



**Too many choices?
Too much pressure to succeed?
Out of step with fashion?
Sometimes it's tough being young.**

Talking helps to

get these issues into perspective, and here's a publication to help you.

Rock 'n' Roll is a resource pack for youth group leaders, with chapters on identity, peer pressure, self esteem, fashion and music, which will strike a chord with teenagers. Presented in a lively way, each chapter has leader's notes, suggestions for ice breakers and activities, pages that can be copied onto OHP acetates, statistics and world wide case studies, showing that issues of youth culture are not confined to this country. The discussion questions in each chapter will get your group thinking in depth about what influences their decisions and actions, and there are also biblical quotes from a Christian perspective.

Rock 'n' Roll is the final part of the three year youth project Sex, Drugs, Rock 'n' Roll, and will be available from BMS in October. Single copies of Rock 'n' Roll are free of charge, but a donation of £2 per copy is requested if you need two or more copies. Copies of Sex and Drugs are also available.

Not reading this project could seriously damage your street cred!

PRAYER FOCUS

**Reuben and Katie Martin:
Dubrovnik, Croatia**



After six months training at Spurgeon's College in London, followed by several months of Croatian language study based in Zagreb, the capital of Croatia, Reuben and Katie move to Dubrovnik this month (September) to plant a new church.

During the 1991-2 war, Dubrovnik was heavily bombed by Serbian troops destroying 60 per cent of the buildings in the old town. The area is now peaceful and restoration work is taking place on the buildings, but the emotional scars take longer to heal. There are no evangelical churches in this town of 50,000 people – the nearest is three hours away. Reuben and Katie have therefore been asked by the Baptist Union of Croatia to live in Dubrovnik and start a work there with the help of Croatian couple, Daniel and Lidija MacKenzie.

Reuben and Katie say, "The prospect of planting a church in Dubrovnik is exciting but also scary. None of us feel like natural church planters but believe that the people in the town need to know Jesus and we believe that's what we've been called to do. We are not going to Dubrovnik with great plans concerning what we are going to do, but instead are planning

initially to make contact with people, listen to the needs in the town and then try and lead people to Jesus. We are aware of our limitations, we're foreign, we're Baptist in a Catholic society, we're missionaries and we're not yet fluent in the language – we have many weaknesses and we know that we have to simply rely on God and give him the glory for all that he will do in Dubrovnik."

Please pray:

- That Reuben and Katie will quickly settle into their new home and life in Dubrovnik.**
- That they, Daniel and Lidija, will work well as a team and make good contacts and friendships in the town. Pray that they will be inspired and encouraged.**
- For other believers to be quickly added to the church.**
- That many people in Dubrovnik will come to know Jesus through this work.**

Jenny Smith: Budapest, Hungary



Jenny has clocked up several years of voluntary service with BMS, teaching English as a foreign language in Hungary in 1993-95 and again from



August 1998. Now she has made the arrangement more permanent by joining BMS as a long-term missionary Since August 1998

Jenny has been teaching students at the Baptist Theological Academy in Budapest, enabling them to access the many texts that are only available in English. The Academy now has a vision to establish the first centre in Eastern Europe where Baptist students can study for a Master's degree and a PhD in Theology. If it is to be a centre



for surrounding countries, courses will have to be taught in a common language, which is most likely to be English. Jenny says, "If my contribution can assist in the training, not only of future church workers and leaders but also of future theology teachers for the whole region, what a privilege!"

Please pray

- ! That the Lord would provide a new prayer partner as Jenny's current partner is leaving the country.**
- ! For the plans and visions being pursued at the Academy; that the Lord would bring the right ones to fruition.**

Akha churches in Chiang Rai every other weekend. When she is there, Judy lives on the site of a children's hostel, teaching around 50 teenagers English, helping with homework, overseeing health needs and assisting the Akha churches that she visits.

Please pray:

- ! For Judy as she investigates possible areas of future work.**
- ! For patience in forming new friendships and for protection from loneliness.**
- ! For strength to deal with the emotional turmoil of building close friendships with people who are suffering and dying.**

Judy Cook: Chiang Mai, Thailand



In March BMS nurse Judy completed her period of formal language training in Bangkok and headed up to the hill country in the



Clem and Elaine Mason: Pristina, Kosovo

Clem and Elaine were due to head for Nepal as

BMS volunteers but, responding at short notice to a greater need, they have instead been based in Kosovo since April. Their role is varied but includes administration, supporting the local church and its evangelism work, building relationships between the various evangelical and other groups working in Kosovo, providing hospitality to visiting Christian workers and the all-encompassing anything else that God wants them to do! During their first two months, they saw the average congregation size at the church in Pristina double to 25. They now run out of seats on some Sundays and are considering what to do for the future. A Bible study in Gllgovc is strong and well attended and has seen two members make a commitment to Christ. The Masons are working on starting a Sunday evening service there too.

A Hungarian Baptist Aid team have made the aid warehouse in Pristina more efficient and have set up a programme to provide doors and



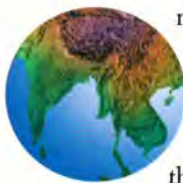
windows for the many homes that still

do not have them. Love in Action, the organisation through which the Masons are working, are negotiating with the authorities for some land on which to build a social centre with classrooms, bookshop, offices, a Christian library and a Baptist church.

Daily life in Pristina is gradually improving. Clem says, "In between the dirt and devastation you suddenly come upon a pretty house with a well kept garden, and people are making an effort in all sorts of small ways. The tree-lined streets are lovely and give us a taste of how the city used to be." There is much left to do to rebuild though. There are regular power cuts, the water is off every night with cuts increasing through the day too, and the roads are being patched up in many places. Social Services are fully stretched coping with 80 per cent unemployment and 2,500 refugees returning every week. This places enormous pressure on housing, hospitals, welfare programmes, etc. The UN are organising registration ready for municipal elections in October – this is likely to be a time of increased tension as the various parties struggle for power. Security is improving as far as serious crime is concerned, but there are still the occasional major security alerts and petty crime is high.

Please pray:

- ! For continued health and strength for the Masons.**
- ! That the Gllgovc church will attract many local people who are open to God's word.**
- ! For continued growth of the church in Pristina.**
- ! For God's peace on the people as they look ahead to October's elections and opportunities for a brighter future.**



north of Thailand to begin health work and continue part-time language study. Judy is now based in

Chiang Mai working with the House of Love, a

hospice for women and children with HIV/Aids, and with the Health Project for Tribal People, visiting villages to observe the health teams as they teach and helping with surveys such as the use of herbal medicine and the ever increasing orphan problem due to deaths from Aids. She is also building relationships with the women and children at the House of Love. Judy works with several tribal groups who all speak their own language so as well as learning Thai, she will need to pick up the basics at least of several other languages. She is currently learning Akha whilst working with the

BMS personnel introduce some friends and acquaintances whom they meet from day to day

PEOPLE WORLDWIDE



Doctors Mathew and Anna

Mathew's life was changed while a medical student in Nagpur. An idealistic young man, he had been influenced by Communism and by Ghandi, but through reading John's Gospel, he came face to face with Jesus. Later he married Anna, who had been a medical student in Vellore and life seemed set for a career in paediatrics.

Anna and Mathew's second child, Anita, had severe difficulties soon after birth and died at the age of four months. Mathew had begun to think about the problems of children with special needs but this was a new area and almost no work or thought had been given to it in India. To travel along this road would mean giving up good prospects in mainstream medicine. But they were sure that God was speaking through that tragedy.

Mathew and Anna moved to Madras and took a room next to a hotel. It was here, without equipment or income that they set up the Child Development and Research Centre. At first no parents brought their children. To have what many termed a disabled child was a shame. Encouraged by

friends to follow their vision, they pressed on. Gradually parents began to bring their children. The centre moved to a rented house and the work slowly expanded.

There may be as many as five million children in India with various needs and there are few who care or understand. We laughed together as Mathew remembered the time he was referred to as the 'handicapped doctor'. Almost three years ago now the centre in Madras was invited to join CMCH in Vellore as a special unit within the Department of Paediatrics. Now the department can hardly cope with the numbers of children brought in from all over the country. It is through Mathew and Anna's faith and witness to a God who cares for every individual that has influenced and continues to influence all who visit the Department of Developmental Paediatrics.

From Ann Bothamley, BMS nurse and hostel parent in Vellore, India



MiiSaa

MiiSaa is an Akha lady in her mid-late 30s, who was 'sold' as a young child by her family, to be 'adopted' by a rich, childless family in a nearby Akha village in north Thailand. When she was 15, this family were able to have a child of their own, so MiiSaa was no longer wanted. Once more she was sold, into marriage - but her husband was a drug addict, and abused MiiSaa and her young child. MiiSaa was eventually forced to run away, leaving her child with a neighbour, and she ran to relatives in the city. These relatives also tried to sell her, to a rich man, but MiiSaa overheard their plans and ran away again.

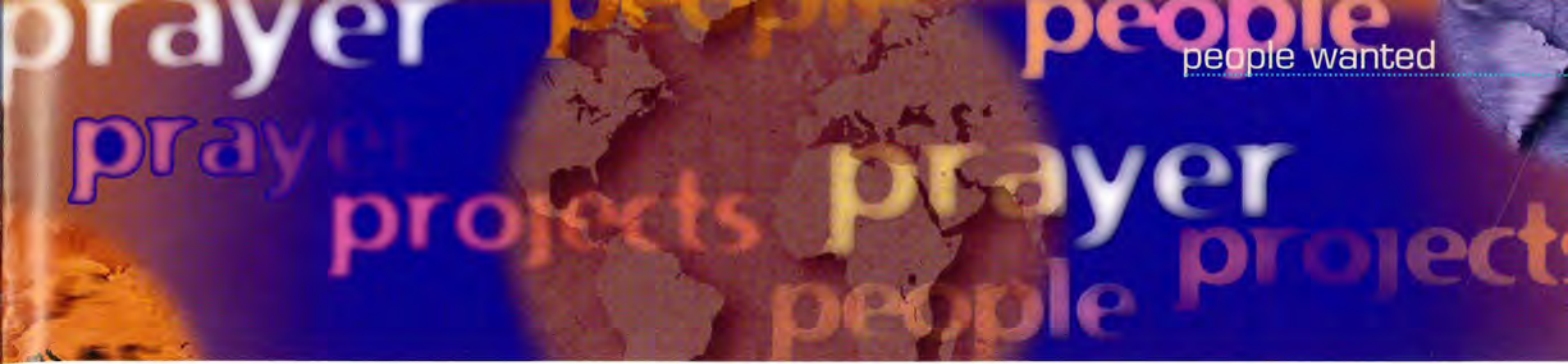
She had nowhere to go, but met a man selling fish, and he seemed to care for her. Soon she had a second



child with this man, and they were content for a while, but he became ill. He died of AIDS, and had passed on the virus to MiiSaa. After his death MiiSaa and her son sought help from the Health Project for Tribal People, and now they live in the House of Love. Here they receive loving care and security.

Over her time here MiiSaa has come to learn about a God who loves her, and cares for her, and she is learning to trust people once more. MiiSaa has a loving, outgoing nature which extends to all the children at the House, not just her own son. MiiSaa explains: "I love God, and now I know that God loves me, I want to say thank you for that." MiiSaa's story is the text of the Akha video used to teach other Akha villages about AIDS, as one of many home-made teaching materials prepared by the Akha Team at the Health Project for Tribal People.

From Judy Cook, BMS nurse working with the Health Project for Tribal People, Thailand



people wanted

People Wanted

Could this be you?

Cyprus

Information Officer (SAT-7)

Urgently required to research, write and distribute information relating to SAT-7 activities, prayer letters, newsletters, press releases etc. This person also will prepare and distribute promotional view graphs, promotional videos, brochures, manage the SAT-7 web site, manage the calendar for critical events and funding applications, arrange conferences and hotel accommodation, escort visitors in Nicosia and the Middle East, facilitate Board meetings, distribute agendas and record minutes.

Bulgaria

Minister

Experienced Pastor for pastoring, evangelistic work and training of leaders is required by the Baptist Union of Bulgaria. Experience of church strategy and administration would be useful, to assist the Union in its development and growth. Learning the language would be essential and a minimum of five years commitment is asked for. At present there are about 40 congregations and 12 full-time pastors, most of whom have had little or no formal training.

Nepal (INF)

Pastoral Carer/Couple

To provide INF and its members with pastoral care and to assist the Director in duties relating to the spiritual support and encouragement of members. Qualifications required: professional qualification plus three years relevant experience. Counselling skills, teaching, pastoral and personnel care experience and an understanding of mission and missionaries are also required.

Kosovo

Ministers/ Ministerial couples

Required for general church work and church planting. Many exciting new opportunities for discipling new Christians and identifying and working with future church leaders. Opportunities for both experienced and recently qualified ministers.

South Central Asia

Opticians, Optometrists, Technicians

Ophthalmic Specialists are needed to teach and demonstrate appropriate skills in basic eye-care, optics, or optometry and to work in co-operation with national staff in an eye hospital and/or community-based eye-care project. Opportunities for community/rural work are also available.

Nepal (UMN)

Primary/Elementary Teachers

Experienced professional teachers for small groups of five to eleven-year-old missionaries children of several nationalities are urgently required. Will need to teach all subjects at primary/elementary level in English.

This is only a very small selection of the kind of vacancies we have available at any one time. Our 'People Wanted' list is changing all the time. Please contact us, and ask if we have anything for you. See page 35.

New personnel

Danja Klaes

Danja is a Senior House Officer in Obstetrics and Gynaecology at a hospital in Kilmarnock, Ayrshire. She got to know BMS while at Hazel Grove Baptist Church in Stockport, and is currently a member of Fullarton Church in Irvine. Danja's service with BMS will begin after a period of training at IMC from September 2001. The likely location for service is South Central Asia.



Jenny Smith

Jenny has been a BMS volunteer in Hungary teaching English at the International Baptist Lay Academy, and more recently at the Baptist Theological Academy. She is a member of St Matthew's Anglican Church, Oxford and also the International Baptist Church in Budapest. It is anticipated that Jenny will start long-term service with BMS during the summer of 2000, and following a period of training at IMC, go back to Hungary.



(See Jenny's feature Our Town: Budapest in this *mb*, page 20.)

Jane Waites

Jane has also been a volunteer with BMS, working in Albania for 18 months, teaching at the GDQ School in Tirana. She is a member of South Parade Baptist Church in Leeds. It is anticipated that Jane will start long-term service with BMS during the summer of 2000, and following a period of training it is likely she will return to Albania.




BMS
world mission

news

Baptist House News

Welcome to:

Malcolm Macdonald

who took up the new post of Volunteer Programme Organiser from 7 August. Malcolm, previously, was an evangelist and pastoral assistant at St Stephen's Church, Twickenham. He has been involved in short-term summer missions with Faith Mission Canada.

Farewell to:

Richard Wells

Richard joined BMS as Publicity Manager in March 1995, having come as Editor of the Bucks Herald. He swapped one Herald



for another, and took over the editorship of the Missionary Herald magazine. In November 1996 he became Director of Communications, and in his time has overseen many changes in the department. He was also responsible for much of the behind the scenes work involved in putting on an annual Baptist Assembly.

Richard is leaving to join Scripture Union as Head of Promotion and Communication. We shall miss him, but know that God is leading him on to a new phase of service.

BMS Relief Fund Grants

The following recent grants have been made:

Ethiopia £10,000

To provide food for those affected by the most recent outbreak of famine in Ethiopia. This money will be transferred through Baptist World Aid to the Mekane Yesus Ethiopian Evangelical Church.

South Central Asia £20,000

For relief work among the nomadic and settled communities affected by drought in this area. To be administered through IAM.

Sierra Leone £450

To provide 300 digging hoes for use by the Mohal Community Development Programme in Sierra Leone. These hoes will be used to rejuvenate projects devastated in recent unrest, replacing

Signs and Blunders

Many of the men here travel around the streets on mopeds. They drive on the pavements, towards oncoming traffic, and round corners with little regard for safety. The idea that they might have an accident is far from their heads. Many years ago, someone recognised the danger of head injury when falling from a fast-moving bike, and they invented the crash helmet, a round object that fits neatly over the head, protecting all that is inside. The men here often have crash helmets, but the helmet's role of saving them from severe brain injury is not their primary one. For the most part they hang on the handle bars. The other day I discovered the crash helmet's primary role. When buying fresh milk from the shop, it is decanted into a plastic bag, and then carefully placed in the gently swinging crash helmet, where it is free from harm for the duration of the journey.

From North Africa

As part of my farewells in Bangladesh I was given some plaques and packed them in my boxes to be shipped home. All the contents had to be listed, but a typing error occurred when being copied onto the export permit, and so when they came to collect the boxes the man from the shipping company wanted to know where the three plaques were!

From Sue Headlam, BMS worker in Bangladesh



I've always wondered what happens
to all the excess baggage



PA NEWS

tools that have been destroyed or stolen. This money will be channelled through TWAM.

Congo £26,000

This grant will help to provide medicine, food, clothes and bedding for around 500 families in Kisangani and Yakusu following a confrontation between Rwandan and Ugandan soldiers in and around Kisangani, in which many innocent Congolese people were trapped. The Red Cross has confirmed over 400 civilian deaths, and many hundreds of families are suffering from lack of basic provisions.

Above: Famine in Ethiopia.
Right: Nomads in Afghanistan.
Below: Planting crops in
Sierra Leone.



PA NEWS



Check Out September/October 2000

September 2000

Arrivals

Simon and Karen Collins from Luanda, Angola

David and Ann MacFarlane from Barletta, Italy

Departures

Adrian and Sylvia Hopkins to Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo

Pat Woolhouse to Kimpese, Democratic Republic of Congo

October 2000

Arrivals

Saverio and Betsy Guarna-Moore from Tirana, Albania

Departures

David and Ann MacFarlane to Barletta, Italy

world mission link



Access All Areas

The finale of the 1999/2000 BMS Action Teams, held at Shirley Baptist church, Birmingham, did not disappoint its audience of 150 or so people. "An amazing evening" people commented as the Teams challenged those present to give God access to all areas of their lives. They took part in a mixture of interviews, sketches and a talk was given by Isabel Gearty of the Nicaragua Team.



Silver Wedding gifts for BMS

When Dawn and Phil Trattles of South Bank Baptist church, Middlesbrough, celebrated their Silver Wedding anniversary recently, they asked that anyone wishing to give a gift, give to BMS instead. Doris Burdett, the



church Missionary Secretary, had recently received information about the BMS Project 'All Aboard!' – a project to raise money to help buy a new boat for Gerry Myhill's ministry among the people who live on the islands in the Bay of Paraguá, and other aspects of his work in southern Brazil – and decided this would be ideal to give to. Doris made a boat, and explained about 'All Aboard!' by writing on the sails. Altogether £300 was given to BMS for 'All Aboard!'



Chernobyl children get a holiday

Forty eight children from Belarus, accompanied by six leaders, enjoyed a summer holiday in East Anglia thanks to churches in the area. The children stayed in pairs with families based in Bar Hill, Dereham, Histon, Ipswich, Southend and Woodbridge.

By coming to the UK the children were given a break from their surroundings, affected by radiation 14 years ago. They enjoyed themselves by visiting theme parks and other places of interest, the seaside, playing sports and eating lots of ice cream.

Holiday 2000 was arranged, and mainly financed by the Baptist churches in the area, but Bar Hill LEP also took a leading part.

The changing face of mission

Now it's your opportunity to find out more, to give, to pray and to go...

INFORMATION AND PRAYER RESOURCES

I would like to find out more about BMS work in:

- Albania/Kosovo
- Brazil
- Hungary
- Indonesia
- Lebanon

I would like to start receiving news/prayer letters from:

- Jenny Smith

GOING

I would like to find out more about:

- the vacancies advertised on page 31, especially(please state)
- other long-term vacancies
- being a BMS Volunteer
- overseas Action Teams (Year Teams)
- UK Action Teams
- Summer Teams

GIVING TO BMS

I would like to give financially to BMS. Please send me:

- Ways of Giving leaflet which tells me about all the different ways I can give
- More information about the BMS Birthday Scheme (see back cover)
- details of the BMS Relief Fund
- Gift Aid

PROJECTS

I would like to order:

- Sex qty..... Drugs qty.....
- Rock 'n' Roll (available October) qty.....

For these items only we request a donation of £2.00 per copy if two or more copies are ordered

Anything else, not mentioned above (please specify)

Name

Address

.....

..... Post Code

Please cut out whole page or photocopy and send to: Rob Vaines, BMS World Mission, PO Box 49, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 8XA

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mb magazine - maybe you've had this copy given to you, and you'd like to start receiving it regularly, or you'd like to give someone else a copy as a gift that will last all year round. At only £9.90 and with a free prayer guide three times a year it's excellent value!

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If you want to give mb as a gift please fill in the recipient's name in the space provided plus payment details and your own name and address at the bottom of the page.

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Birthday Scheme

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the **BMS Birthday Scheme** enables you to make a difference.

help improve the **quality of life** by supporting

BMS World Mission and its medical workers around the world.

join the BMS Birthday Scheme in your church and help share a smile

tick the box on page 35 for more details