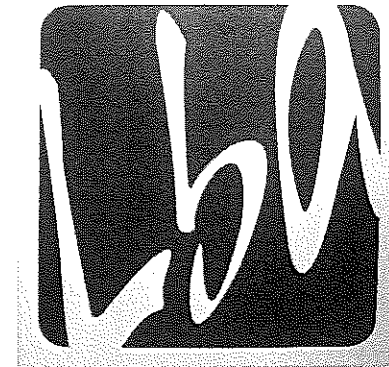


ENCOUNTERING LONDON

London Baptists in the 21st Century



LONDON BAPTIST ASSOCIATION
CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF THE CHURCHES
150TH YEAR

Simon
with good wishes
Faith Jer 29.7

Editors
Faith Bowers, Joe Kapolyo, Israel Olofinjana

© London Baptist Association and authors 2015

ISBN 978-09552400-1-0

Published by the London Baptist Association
235 Shaftesbury Avenue
London WC2H 8EP

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Cover photograph: Greenford Baptist Church at worship

Printed by Tyndale Press (Lowestoft) Ltd

ENCOUNTERING LONDON

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL GROUP	vi
CONTRIBUTORS	vii
FOREWORDS	Lynn Green, General Secretary, BUGB xi John Grant, Moderator, LBA Board of Directors xii
INTRODUCTION	xv
FOR LONDON	Charmaine Howard 1
The Founding Rules of the London Baptist Association 1865	2
SECTION 1 FIFTY YEARS OF CHANGE	3
Fifty Years of Challenge and Change in Inner London	Colin Marchant 5
Mission to Greater London 1965-1980: Historical Overview Part 1	Faith Bowers 15
Mission to a World City 1981-2015: Historical Overview Part 2	Faith Bowers 28
Migration Matters	Sivakumar Rajagopalan 43
Theology in Baptist Life	Ruth Gouldbourne 55
Charismatic Renewal	Geoff Andrews 60
Theology and Culture: An African Perspective	Joe M. Kapolyo 68
When Caesar comes knocking: The growing impact of legislation on local church life	Paul Martin 80
Changes in Technology 1965-2015	Colin Hicks and Richard Littledale 90
Baptist Buildings	Brian Bowers 97
SECTION 2 MINISTRY AND LEADERSHIP	105
Memories of an LBA Secretary 1977-2001	Peter Wortley 107
Women's Ministry in London	Faith Bowers and Ruth Gouldbourne 111
Black Women Ministers in the LBA	Michele Mahon 117
A young minister in suburbia	Lucy Wright 124
Baptist Ecclesiology and Leadership: An Africa and Caribbean Perspective	Philip Lutterodt 126

Historical Development of Black Pentecostal Churches in Britain	
	Israel Olofinjana 136
The Portfolio Route: A prophetic experiment	Pat Took 146
Behind the Scenes	Brian Bowers 153
Local Church and LBA: A Personal Reflection from a Church Secretary	Geraldine Alliston 155

SECTION 3 MISSION IN A WORLD CITY 161

An Association with a passion for mission	
	Cornelius Mereweather-Thompson 163
Integral Mission and Evangelical Churches	Geoff Andrews 168
Partnership Mission	Brenda Forward 178
Small Church is a Big Deal	Hilary Taylor 181
Sector Ministry	Stephen Heap 189
A Hospital Chaplain	Barbara Stanford 192
Heathrow Chaplaincy	Paul Barker 194
A YMCA Chaplain	Jacky Bone 195
University Chaplaincy	Michael Peat 196
Sports Chaplaincy UK	Paul Barker 201
Reverse Mission: Mission Contributions of Africans within the London	
Baptist Association (LBA)	Israel Olofinjana 203
Victory Baptist Church seeks a home	Kwasi Gambrah 214
Emergence of multicultural congregations in the LBA: Reflections on	
Greenford Baptist Church (1965-2015)	David Wise 216
Youth Work in London	Pete Leveson 221
Youth Work Update	Pete James 226
Breathe	Amie Buhari 228

SECTION 4 BETTER TOGETHER: TOWARDS A JUST SOCIETY 235

Baptists and Ecumenism 1965-2015	Faith Bowers 237
Shared Justice campaigns	Tim Jones 245
Foodbanks and Street Pastors	Carol Bostridge 248
Night Shelter	Dawn Savidge 251
Debt counselling	Tim Jones 252
SACRE: Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education	
	Duncan Struthers 253
Racial Justice	Sivakumar Rajagopalan 254
Disability Justice	Faith Bowers 264

Church from a disabled perspective	Martin Rainbow 266
Learning Together	Sally Murray 267
Fifty Years of Inter Faith in London	Duncan Struthers 268
Hostage!	Bob Gardiner 270

ENDPIECE	Joe Kapolyo 279
----------	-----------------

OFFICERS OF THE LBA	283
---------------------	-----

INDEX	285
-------	-----

EDITORIAL GROUP

The Revd Geoffrey Andrews had London ministries at Eldon Road and Perry Rise before serving as LBA Regional Minister Team Leader 2011-2015. He is now minister of Brixham Baptist Church in Devon.

Mrs Faith Bowers, a member of Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church since 1961, has served on the LBA Council and Board of Directors (1981-2010), and on the Councils of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Baptist World Alliance. A Baptist historian, she also writes on disability matters.

Dr Brian Bowers, an historian of electrical and lighting technology, is a Life Deacon of Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church. He was the Church Treasurer 1974-2000, served on the Baptist Listed Buildings Committee, and wrote *In Trust and By Faith*, the history of the London Baptist Property Board.

The Revd Joseph Mutale Kapolyo came from Zambia to All Nations Christian College as Principal 2001-2005, since when he has been Lead Minister of Edmonton Baptist Church.

The Revd Israel Oluwole Olofinjana is the pastor of Woolwich Central Baptist Church, a black-majority, multicultural, multi-ethnic, intergenerational church in South-east London. He is the editor of *Turning the Tables on Mission: Stories of Christians from the Global South in the UK* (2013) and author of *20 Pentecostal Pioneers in Nigeria* (2011) and *Reverse in Ministry and Mission: Africans in the Dark Continent of Europe* (2010). He is the director of the Centre for Missionaries from the Majority World, a training initiative designed to equip pastors and missionaries from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean in Britain. He is happily married to Lucy Olofinjana.

Miss Pat White is a member of Brixton Baptist Church (Kenyon); she is actively involved in the church's youth ministry, was a BUGB Council

Member and a Trustee; she held the role of Moderator for BUGB Racial Justice Working Group for a number of years. Secular experience and interest have included being Principal Youth Officer for a local authority, a part-time Tutor for Oasis College and a lay Magistrate.

CONTRIBUTORS

Mrs Geraldine Alliston is church secretary of Albany Park Baptist Church. She is a retired Senior Civil Servant (Department of Trade and Industry), former government scientist (Laboratory of the Government Chemist), and Chairman of the Institution of Professional Civil Servants. She is currently the Coordinator and Administrator of the LBA Portfolio Management Group.

Mr Paul Barker is a part-time lay chaplain at Heathrow Airport, and also a volunteer chaplain to Hampton & Richmond Borough Football Club, under the umbrella of Sports Chaplaincy UK. Paul, an Elder at Hampton Baptist Church, has been married to Tricia for 34 years and they have two grown-up children.

Amie Bohari is the Founder & Operations Director of the youth charity The Hebe Foundation. She has twenty-two years' experience working with young people. She is also an actor, writer, singer and songwriter. She is a member of Clapham Baptist Church and a worship leader there.

The Revd Jacky Bone has been Lead Chaplain, YMCA London South West since 2005.

The Revd Carol Bostridge, is an LBA District Minister and Co-ordinator for Lewisham Foodbank and Lewisham Street Pastors. She was previously minister of Crofton Park Baptist Church.

Mrs Brenda Forward has been an Association leader both in women's work and evangelism and was LBA President 1981.

The Revd Kwasi Gambah is pastor of Victory Baptist Church in South-west London.

The Revd Robert Gardiner was minister of Harrow Baptist Church 1998-2012, and is Chair of the Baptist Peace Fellowship.

The Revd Dr Ruth Gouldbourne is co-minister, Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church. She taught church history and doctrine at Bristol Baptist College 1995-2006.

The Revd Dr Stephen Heap was Baptist Chaplain to the Universities of London, supported by the LBA, Home Mission and Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, 1992-2001. He then did chaplaincy work in Milton Keynes and Bedford, before becoming the Church of England's National Higher Education Adviser. Retiring from that in 2014, he is now a Visiting Professor at the University of Winchester and a consultant at the Cardiff Chaplaincy Studies Centre.

Dr Colin Hicks is a scientist whose career included Research and Development Policy for the Department of Trade and Industry 1980-99, and Director General of the British National Space Centre 1999-2006. He is a member of Teddington Baptist Church.

The Revd Charmaine Howard is minister of Northolt Park Baptist Church.

Mr Peter James is the Student and Young Adults Worker for King's Cross Baptist Church and the LBA.

Mr Tim Jones, a member of Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, is Policy Officer, Jubilee Debt Campaign.

The Revd Pete Leveson was the LBA Youth Work Coordinator 1999-2010, and is now minister of South Norwood Baptist Church.

The Revd Richard Littledale is minister of Teddington Baptist Church.

The Revd Philip Lutterodt is minister of Mitcham Baptist Church.

The Revd Michele Mahon serves on the LBA Youth Forum, the editorial team for *Baptists Together*, the Councils of Spurgeon's College and the Baptist Union, and as a Trustee of Crossing London. She is also the mother of three young children and helps lead work with children and young people at Brockley Baptist Church.

The Revd Dr Colin Marchant, was Minister of Plaistow Baptist Church 1965-99. He was President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain 1988.

The Revd Paul Martin was LBA Secretary/Regional Minister 2000-2015. He is now minister of Trinity Church, North Finchley.

The Revd Dr Cornelius Mereweather-Thompson is senior minister of Harlesden Baptist Church and was LBA President in 2001.

Mrs Sally Murray, a physiotherapist, leads the Learning Together group at Morden Baptist Church.

The Revd Dr Michael Peat is Free Church Chaplain, University of Bristol.

Mr Martin Rainbow read History at Goldsmiths University, London, and worked at Maudsley Hospital for about twenty-five years. He served at Crofton Park Baptist Church in various capacities, including as deacon and trustee. Sadly he died shortly after writing his contribution for this book.

The Revd Sivakumar Rajagopalan has been an LBA Regional Minister since 2003, following a pastorate at Westbury Avenue, Wood Green.

The Revd Dawn Savidge is Communities Minister, Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church.

The Revd Barbara Stanford MBE is Minister Emerita, Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church where she was on the staff, at first as a deaconess, for forty years.

Mrs Hilary Taylor is the Small Churches Enabler for the LBA.

The Revd Dr Pat Took was minister of Cann Hall and Harrow Green Baptist Church, Leytonstone, 1985-1998 and Metropolitan Area Superintendent/LBA Regional Minister Team Leader 1998-2010.

Mr Duncan Struthers is a member of the leadership team at Hillingdon Park Baptist Church, chair of the Hillingdon Inter Faith Network, Advisor to the Hillingdon SACRE, LBA representative and Clerk to the Heathrow Airport Multi Faith Board of Reference, and a former Director of the LBA.

The Revd David Wise has been Senior Pastor of Greenford Baptist Church since 1987. He also teaches an MA Missional Leadership course at Springdale College, Birmingham.

The Revd Peter Wortley was LBA Secretary, 1977-2001.

The Revd Lucy Wright is minister of Worcester Park Baptist Church.

FOREWORDS

1

Lynn Green
General Secretary
Baptist Union of Great Britain

Anniversaries provide us with opportunities for celebration and reflection and the 150th Anniversary of the London Baptist Association is no exception. This collection of essays and reflections explore and celebrate the rich history of the LBA and all the significant developments there have been over the years. They also raise questions for us about where this trajectory might take us and how we might perceive the Lord leading and challenging us for the future.

At our Baptist Assembly this year a powerful image emerged as young people built a wall of boxes for the 'in memoriam', each with the name of a minister who had recently died. This was then built upon with the Newly Accredited Ministers coming to place their own box on the wall; continuing to build on the foundations of the ministry that had gone before. It was a moving and powerful moment. I had a similar sense as I read this book and remembered and learned more about those whose faith and vision had been faithful to God in the midst of rapidly changing times. These pages contain the stories of so many passionate pioneers.

This book reminds us that there is much to celebrate, but it also makes us realise just how far we still have to go. Whilst we celebrate all the life, richness, diversity and faith that has been gifted to us in the LBA, particularly in the last fifty years, one look at the figures will make plain the stark reality that we have absolutely no cause for complacency. We continue to need to have great faith and hope in the Lord who calls us and his purposes. We continue to need great compassion for all those in our communities. We continue to need a heart that hungers after God's coming Kingdom. We continue to need to be authentic disciples and churches that witness and share the good news of Jesus. We continue to need God's Holy Spirit to move in us and amongst us and

through us and to depend upon Jesus Christ. It is now our turn to take hold of the baton that is offered to us and run with perseverance our part of the race.

Be inspired by the past, be encouraged by all that God is doing in the present and, as you read this, pray that the Lord will give you a fresh vision and equip you for all that he is calling you to be and do in the days ahead.

2

John Grant
The Moderator
LBA Board of Directors

London has been described as a collection of fifty villages. There is much about the community life of a village which is attractive. Being part of a great city has added attractions. The LBA both seeks to serve the local church and provide an added dimension of 'city life' to it.

Encounter in London, the history of the first 100 years of the LBA, is written in chronological order. It finishes in the 'swinging sixties' and cultural changes since have gone on apace. This later part of the story is not chronological but captures the themes of the innovation and diversity of life in our Association. The village church at the heart of the community is now seeking to serve its locality by addressing the changing community needs. The use of many of our buildings is not now exclusively for church-based activities but for wider community uses too. We need to be chaplains both inside and outside our buildings! Many children are coming through our doors but attending independently run groups. The emergence of Messy Church complements the ongoing teaching during Sunday services. Poverty remains an issue but is now being addressed by Debt Counselling, Food Banks, Soup Kitchens and other initiatives. The problems of the late-night scene are helped by Street Pastors, and the social ills rooted in

addictions are addressed by services, including helping drug users. Perhaps in the declining numerical scene we have been experiencing we have been both humbled and led to be more of a servant church. But we now need to be more conscious of a spiritual vacuum and with compassion be equally innovative in ways we live and relate our gospel.

I am challenged by how Jesus, the disciples and Paul addressed the needs of those whom they met. I am even more challenged by the way in which they put the claims of the gospel to everyone regardless of their perceived social or physical needs. If there is now a greater confidence in our worship, initially evidenced in the charismatic renewal movement, we also need to have a greater confidence in relating our gospel. We need both to address issues of those with disabilities and celebrate with them as they give new expressions to their faith. We need both to address issues of justice in general and racial justice in particular, and have a mutual learning and building up of our faith in sharing ways the gospel is related in all communities by all churches. The challenge to relate the gospel to a youth culture is a continuing changing experience, but similar thought needs to be given to other age groups whose lives have always been outside our doors. Church growth is now about new buildings but also about building creative opportunities for relationships.

So where do we start? We start by realising this is not the start! The same God whose works are included in this account of the last fifty years is faithful. Our God is changing His church. He has sustained and inspired the faithful in our commitment, our prayers and, sometimes through struggles, the clergy, leaders and members of churches and the LBA Regional Team and staff, the Board of Directors and committee members. This account helps us to share the joys of the village life and the wider perspective of the joys of the city life too. By sharing this story we can grow through an interdependent fellowship with one another and a total dependence on our God.

INTRODUCTION

The idea of a publication to mark the 150th anniversary of the London Baptist Association came from the regional team. Geoff Andrews, then the LBA Team Leader, gathered as editorial group Joe Kapolyo, Pat White, Israel Olofinjana, and Faith and Brian Bowers.

To mark the centenary in 1965 Charles Johnson wrote a history of the Association, *Encounter in London*. The present book, *Encountering London*, carries that story into the continuous present. The last fifty years have seen many changes, by no means least immigration into London of people from around the world, including many Christians whose lively vigour has had considerable impact on the Association and its member churches. Changes over this half century are documented, but the chief focus is on the current life and mission of London's Baptist churches.

The book speaks in a multitude of voices - the voices of people who have been and are involved in the Baptist churches of London. Many voices make for many styles, so the book is necessarily something of a patchwork with a variety of pieces: we hope that these combine to make an attractive and coherent whole, showing something of the diversity that is London - and Baptist - life today.

The editors and all the contributors to this picture of London Baptist life did this gladly for the Association, neither seeking nor receiving any payment. They are named in the list of contributors. We are particularly glad to have the moving testimony from Martin Rainbow who died shortly after sending it; it stands as his spiritual legacy and shows how good a church can be.

I must add my personal thanks to the LBA Administrator, Norman Kincaid, for his ever patient, pleasant and prompt help at various stages along the way.

Faith Bowers
July 2015

FOR LONDON
Charmaine Howard

London
business and
busy-ness
buzzing, blurred figures
merging with
historic architecture,
Time-less.

Speed, haste
rushing to be some place
shoulder to shoulder
thigh to thigh,
close proximity
strangers -
unnoticed, unseen, unknown.
Eye-contactless.

An island
plugged into the iPhone,
the smart phone
or other device
designed to tune into self;
repelling the other.
Nurturing,
safeguarding
isolation.

Cosmopolitan
multi-layered and multi-
faceted,
searching for identity -
British-ness.
Lost in a sea
of infinite possibility,
flailing for an anchor
to provide
security.

Dense
population
popping religious pills
of every flavour.
Groaning,
aching, yearning to
fill the void
with wholeness
completion.

Compassion
'Go!'
Live the Word.
Satisfying nourishment
and intimacy;
visible, belonging -
fulfilment uniquely
in Jesus
the Christ.

THE FOUNDING RULES OF THE
LONDON BAPTIST ASSOCIATION
10 November 1865

1. That an Association be formed, to be called 'The London Association of Baptist Ministers holding Evangelical Sentiments, and the Churches under their care.

2. That the objects contemplated by the Association be –

the co-operation of the Associated churches in efforts to advance the Kingdom of Christ in connection with the Baptist denomination in London and its suburbs;

the promotion of Christian union amongst their officers and members;

the erection of at least one chapel in each year in the Metropolis or its suburbs;

and the adoption of such measures as shall from time to time be deemed conducive to the prosperity and consolidation of the Associated churches.

FIFTY YEARS OF CHANGE

At the centenary of the London Baptist Association (LBA) Britain was in the 'swinging sixties' and people were beginning to learn new terms like 'permissive society' and 'community care', and before long 'Thatcherism' and 'New Labour'. All these societal changes brought challenges for Christian churches. Immigration has increasingly changed the nature of London, bringing a greater presence of other faiths but also an influx of Christians who have brought a fresh dynamic to the churches.

Churches have been impacted by societal change, but also by changing theological emphases, by charismatic renewal, by increasing technology, by the need to maximise use of their buildings. All this provides the background to a variety of mission initiatives and other responses to contemporary needs covered in later sections.

FIFTY YEARS OF CHALLENGE AND CHANGE IN INNER LONDON

Colin Marchant

In 1965...

Thirty-two new Greater London Boroughs began life. One of them, Newham in East London, chose the Baptist church in Plaistow for the Borough Civic Service. I became minister of that church – the mother church of West Ham Central Mission, known nationally for its network of homes and centres of social action.

Encounter with London, the LBA Centenary book, ended the introduction with a call ‘to meet the needs and stimulate the life of the churches of Inner London’. The LBA responded with the New Century Project for Inner London.

In East London

Both General and Strict Baptists had their historical beginnings here, in Spitalfields and Wapping. Once we had our strength here – East London Tabernacle had 1,490 members in 1875, West Ham Central Mission had 1,000 in the 1930s. But in 1965 it was decline, maintenance and even survival in the face of population drop and ‘white flight’. The problems of unemployment, poverty and inequality persisted. Immigration was just beginning.

The Church Then

I was minister of a church firmly anchored in a glorious past, now moving on to a new chapter as West Ham Central Mission became a separate charity. Membership was 360 [on paper!] with seventeen deacons, many living outside Newham. Sunday services at 11.00 and 6.30 were conducted from a high pulpit, with an organ and a robed choir. Add Sunday School, Boys’ Brigade, Girls’ Brigade, Scouts, Guides, Youth Club, Women’s Meeting, Men’s Fellowship. I was responsible for all the preaching, teaching, visiting and leading. We were firmly linked with the LBA as Gordon Fitch, the LBA Secretary, was a member. We faced

challenges and changes within both the local church and the wider community.

Change in the Community

People were moving out and coming in. It felt like living in a washbasin with both taps running and no plug. One tap still brought a continuing white flow as people came for work from across the UK and Ireland. The other tap ran black as Caribbean people arrived, to be followed quickly by Africans and Asians. Out the plughole went the 'achievers' of the white working class to the suburbs.

Incoming immigrants began to enter our congregations but were not always welcome. An underlying racism permeated the area – and often the church. There were hopeful signs. At Woodgrange, Forest Gate, Heckford Sharpe became the first black deacon and in 1963 assistant minister. But many black groups soon formed their own congregations, the forerunners of London's many new churches. Io Smith, coming from leadership among Jamaican Baptists, told the story of rejection and racism in *Ebony Cross* as she planted her own church in Leytonstone.

Immigration affected the wider community as tensions grew, graffiti appeared, the National Front marched, employment became more difficult and housing became a problem. Inner city areas became the focus of concern locally and nationally. Baptist churches in these districts either 'pulled up the drawbridge' and became gathered congregations, 'travelling in', or began to wrestle with the question of mission in a world becoming multi-cultural, multi-racial and multi-faith as mosques and temples appeared alongside churches.

What was our mission here now?

Traditionally our Baptist emphasis, especially in London, was on Evangelism. We looked for conversions, baptisms and new members in the 'gathered community'. Many of us supported and used the Billy Graham Crusades in the 1960s. I joined the LBA Citizenship and Evangelism Committees and shared in the 1970s' LBA launching of the Shared Evangelism Project, led by Frank Goodwin, with the title *GO! TELL!* The headlines were 'renewal of the individual ... the revival of the

church ... the conversion of the unbeliever ... recovery of the sense of mission'.

Even while I joined the committees, planned outreach, led the church in 'Mission in Friendship' and started house-groups, I felt the church – and its minister – were isolated from the local community. I researched local history, worked on a thesis on 'Inter-Action of Church and Society', and joined emerging networks like the Evangelical Urban Training Project, Evangelicals for Racial Justice and the Frontier Youth Trust.

In Newham the churches launched the Newham Social Workers' Group. This pulled together ministers, social workers, probation officers and doctors to form action groups on homelessness, drugs, poverty, crime and mental health and create a directory of care. In our church we set up working parties on Evangelism, Peace, Education and Prayer.

A Two-Footed Ministry

I was now engaged in a 'two-footed ministry'. On one side, working on in the church, preaching, teaching and visiting. On the other, with the backing of the church, working in the community. In 1970 I became a 'tent minister', continuing to lead a team ministry in a lively church but based in a new community centre. We moved as a family from the manse to Lawrence Hall. OAPs were upstairs in forty-two sheltered housing flats, later we added six 'start-up' flats for local young Christian couples wanting to stay in the area. Downstairs were a kitchen for 'meals and wheels', luncheon clubs, Citizens' Advice Bureau, Chiropody Unit, a nursery, plus halls and rooms open to the whole community. 3,000 people a week passed through the doors; many of the staff and volunteers came from the church. Prayers were held daily in the Quiet Room. Among the groups using our premises were six new, mainly black, churches. We provided a local base for Frontier Youth Group and the London Evangelical Coalition for Urban Mission.

Baptist Initiatives

Around us, ministers worked hard to sustain churches in social change and congregations held on to become anchor churches for the future. Dennis Horwood, at Forest Gate, said 'it feels like laying eggs on a

moving staircase'. Most battled on in the pastorate, proclaiming and living out the Gospel. Some widened their ministries: Thornton Elwyn was a South London Industrial Mission chaplain, Eric Blakeborough launched the Kaleidoscope Project. Baptists joined in a range of Local Ecumenical Projects. Laymen and ministers broke new ground.

Roger Dowley, a solicitor, and his wife Ruth, both members of East London Tabernacle, opened their home for 'hospitality evangelism'. They launched a Housing Association, Victoria Park Homes, which provided bases for young couples to use in evangelism and care. Young people streamed in, many becoming believers. Going across the Thames to Brandon, Camberwell, Roger produced *Towards the Recovery of a Lost Bequest: A Layman's work-notes on the biblical pattern for a just community*. He contributed to the national Evangelical Urban Training Project in 1970s, was at the heart of their Annual Walks which introduced many outside London to the communities and churches of the inner city, and became a founder member of the Evangelical Coalition for Urban Mission in 1980. He told the story in *One thing leads to another: 50 years in Inner London*.

Humphrey Vellacott had a different story. Coming from Toxteth, Liverpool, and offering his services to the LBA, he went to East Ham in 1967 with 'an authoritative, Bible-centred ministry' that resurrected a moribund church. He left a re-shaped building with 100 members, strong morning and evening congregations, together with Prayer and Bible study for fifty to sixty 'converts or restored back-sliders'. He gathered a significant group of younger ministers who transformed struggling churches: Terry Griffiths [Frampton Park], Michael Hearn [Major Road, Stratford], Eric Patterson [Lighthouse, Bow], Stephen Peake [Leyton], Roy Scarsbrook [East Ham], with Alan Griffiths [Bonny Downs, East Ham] as lay-pastor. His stress on the centrality of the minister is seen in *The Pastor in a Pagan Society: a vision for ministry today*.

The Inner London Committee

Both Roger Dowley and Humphrey Vellacott joined the Inner London Committee of the LBA, the successor to the New Century Project. There we shared our concerns, grappled with theology and strategy, gathered

groups, encouraged those who had stayed and called others in. We went public. Following correspondence in the *Baptist Times* we arranged a special weekend. In 1979 *The Inner City Times* appeared as a *Baptist Times* supplement. We quoted Peter Shore, the Minister for the Environment: 'I am in no doubt that the problems faced by the inner urban areas are of a most serious kind ... The causes lie in their relative economic decline, in a major migration of people, often the most skilled, and in a massive reduction in the jobs which are left'. We knew this. We also knew church attendance in the inner city was one-third of the national average. Baptist churches, often small and struggling, were calling for help. Peter Wortley wrote, 'What the inner city churches need now is more personnel. Christians who will deliberately come and live here for the city's sake'. We had a special 'come and see' weekend. One minister, Peter Purkiss, moved in from suburban Eltham Park to Brandon, Camberwell. But the response was small.

Upheaval and Response

Then our concerns were intensified by the 1981 riots. Newspapers and TV showed the pictures of violence and fires on London streets. Researchers uncovered reasons – racism, injustice, inequality. The Scarman Report, *The Brixton Disorders 10-12 April 1981*, followed, together with a wave of response from politicians and churches.

London Baptists responded. Some churches and ministers, like Stuart Cook with a growing church in Brixton, were in the storm centre. Others faced the repercussions in their districts. We contributed to a series of articles in the *Baptist Times* in 1981 that underlined key factors: accelerating unemployment, build-up of racial tension, police insensitivity, social funnelling of the disadvantaged, withdrawal of the educated/professionals, pervading sense of powerlessness, multiple deprivation and extremist provocation.

In 1982 Roy Joslin, at Walworth, wrote *Urban Harvest*, reminding us that 'Baptist work and witness made no serious and sustained inroads into the general alienation of the working classes from the Christian church', and calling us to be more biblical and to forge new patterns of mission as we faced the consequences of the social upheaval.

While there was a wider denominational response – Methodist Mission Alongside the Poor, the Anglican *Faith in the City* – Baptists were to be found working locally or joining in the London and national re-actions. The secretary and two leading members of the national Evangelical Coalition for Urban Mission [ECUM] were London Baptists. The LBA encouraged and funded London ECUM. Initially meeting in the Scripture Union HQ, we called together the growing number of evangelicals engaged in urban mission. Teams were set up in East and South London drawing together those engaged in church planting, politics, racial justice, evangelism. An increasing number were drawn from the charismatic movement and in South London we collaborated with Ichthus.

All round us things were happening. I wrote *Signs in the City* in 1985, telling of green shoots, networks, initiatives, church planting and new churches. Many new churches sprang from the accelerating flow of immigration into London. In 1989 the LBA President, Peter Purkiss, took the LBA Assembly to 'A Day Out in Docklands. When I became Baptist Union President in 1986/7 we arranged walking tours to inner London churches. Shalom was the theme, set out in *Shalom, my Friends* – God's purpose for the wholeness and peace of each individual, relationship, church, nation and universe.

Factors and Forces

Two significant factors and forces were now at work across the inner city, encouraging and refreshing the established 'anchor' churches and leading church planting. The Spirit was moving through the charismatic movement and global Pentecostalism. Douglas McBain embodied and expressed the Charismatic, becoming Metropolitan Area Superintendent after Mustard Seed Ministries and the Chelsea church plant. His *Fire over the Waters: Renewal among Baptists and Others from the 1960s to the 1990s* told the story. Charismatic movement had developed from a minority interest into a movement, influencing both ministers and church life, especially in worship. He said 'For all the faults, the exaggerations, the follies and the sinful distortions of the Gospel that have from time to time become a main characteristic of the Renewal message I stand by my

own conviction that the Spirit of God is stirring in a renewing way for our common good'.

Global Pentecostalism flowed into London through immigration, empowering the many black churches appearing in inner London. In Newham alone, 90% of the 350 new churches planted by the Caribbean, African and Asian communities were Pentecostal.

Church Planting

My Baptist feet were kept firmly on the ground in the 1990s through a series of moderatorships at Custom House, Shoreditch, Walthamstow [Greenleaf], Forest Gate [Woodgrange] and East Ham, revealing the courage, struggles and hopes of our established churches. I saw the scale and diversity of new church planting within the two community centres I led in Forest Gate and Manor Park: twenty-eight faith groups used the premises, twenty-three being Christian.

The nine older Newham Baptist churches were now welcoming a flood of new, mainly Pentecostal, ethnic churches. The Plaistow church hosted congregations from Zaire, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Ghana and the Philippines. Later eleven new Baptist church plants were to join the LBA. The changes were spelt out in 1998 when the LBA published *Mission in the New Millennium: A fresh challenge and call to Christian Commitment in the Capital*. Pat Took emphasised the challenge, Peter Wortley stressed the changes, Rob Warner wrote 'Renew us by Your Spirit', Steve Hill headlined Church Planting and Kingsley Appiagyei did the 'Growth of Ethnic Churches'.

The evidence of church planting and church growth in London was all around us. Ichthus church planters worked with South London Baptists. Oasis, led by Steve Chalke, sent teams to our churches and planted churches at Colliers Wood and Lambeth. Spurgeon's College ran courses on church planting. Urban Expression, led by Stuart Murray, with a committee including Doug Hollidge, Pat Took and Cliff Cotterell, and planters Jim and Juliette Kilpin, Karen Stallard and Phil Warburton planted three churches in Tower Hamlets, now merged into the E1 Community Church. Juliet Kilpin wrote *Urban to the Core: Motives for Incarnational Mission*.

The LBA itself took direct initiative at Royal Docks and Quaystone. Docklands had been a difficult place for Baptists: war closed West Silvertown, Wythes Road shut in 1974 and New Beckton was arsoned in 1978; only Custom House struggled on. As the old docklands were replaced by Canary Wharf, London City Airport, and Excel and as the Thames Gateway development began, the LBA launched an 'appeal for £250,000 to buy two houses in which to start church plants'. Two houses were bought in the Isle of Dogs and Britannia Village, leaders appointed in 1998 and churches begun in a Settlement and a Community centre. They continue to develop.

The Changes

The speed and diversity of change is clear when the 1988/9 *Baptist Directory* is compared with that of 2012. In 1988 Chelsea Manna is the only listed new church. By 2012 there were sixty-four new LBA churches recorded, emerging in the inner city and spreading out to the suburbs. Their names, places and dates tell the story: Bow, Bethel Portuguese Fellowship 1999; Brixton Biserica Romana Baptista 2002; Clapham Eglise Baptiste Francophone de Londres 1999; Merton Park, Wimbledon and District Korean 1999; Norwood, London Spanish-Speaking Baptist Church 1995; Sipson London Arabic Evangelical Church; Southall – Shalom Baptist Ministries, Airport Revival Church, Heal Our Land [Sara Nossa Terra], Igreja Baptista De Londres, New Hope. Trinity in Norwood and Calvary Charismatic in East London grew so rapidly that they soon had 25% of LBA membership.

A closer look at the Borough I know best shows the over-all scale and implications. My *Baptists in Newham 1852-2012* tells the story. Older churches have been transformed – at Custom House membership rose from 20 to over 100; East Ham Bonny Downs doubled its membership, worshipped in a community centre and launched a vigorous Community Association. Eleven new Baptist congregations have emerged and joined the LBA in the last twenty years alongside the nine older churches established before 1908. Calvary Charismatic arrived in 1994 'to invade the East End for Christ', crossing the Thames as a church plant from the Trinity congregation in West Norwood. Victory Life began in a

Methodist church and then took over a Salvation Army hall. Faith Temple went from Major Road, Stratford, to Seven Sisters. Britannia Village Royal Docks Community Church was planted by the LBA as 'a new church for a new millennium'. Harvest Rock Community Church began in a flat in a tower block, linked with Urban Expression and joined the LBA in 2004. Victory Family Christian Centre began in a school and is now worshipping in an Express Inn. All Nations is an Asian congregation which took over Grantham Gospel Mission. IHOPE-International House of Prayer and Encouragement – was planted by USA Conservative Baptist missionaries. Biserica Romana Baptista Hanul uses Stratford Central. The latest, International Praise Centre, took over the Earl of Wakefield pub in 2014. All are in the LBA.

In 2015...

Fifty years have passed. I understand L.P. Hartley's comment, 'The past is a foreign country. They do things differently there'. He is right. Looking back now the changes are almost unbelievable. London is now a growing, pulsating, global city. Religion flourishes. The Open University now has a Department for Religious Studies in London. We have become a multi-cultural, multi-racial, multi-faith city.

In Newham redevelopment and regeneration has changed the housing and skylines. Population is increasing and changing – 70% is black, 15% Eastern European. Religion is strong. Newham had only 9.5% of the population recording 'no religion' in the 2011 Census – the lowest in the UK. 350 new churches have started since 1975. Almost all Christian congregations are black-majority churches. Baptists are the strongest Free Church and the major denominational church planter. The growing Muslim segment is likely to overtake the Christians in 2015. But our churches still need to run Foodbanks and Night Shelters.

The LBA web-site headlines now include South Asia Concern, Street Pastors and Parish Nursing Ministries. District Ministers work alongside our Regional leaders. A multiplicity of new churches, in great variety, stand alongside our established anchor churches. Personal faith is still the key, evangelicals are more dominant, the charismatic movement influential. Old ministry patterns have broken and leadership styles have

shifted. But 'gathered community' independence persists, even though congregations are more open to change and we have lost the clutter of organisations.

Judith and I are still in Newham. Our neighbours now are from Rumania, Ghana, Pakistan, India, Kenya, sprinkled with elderly whites. The world is here. The Plaistow church we came to in 1965, strengthened by a merger with a new church plant, still cares for the homeless and has welcomed a series of congregations. West Ham Central Mission is no more and has been replaced by a new charity operating a counselling service in Essex. Our home church is now Bonny Downs, East Ham, which produced Bonny Downs Community Association to serve the community.

And the future? Challenges will continue and change will accelerate. 'This is the way, walk in it'.

MISSION TO GREATER LONDON 1965-1980

Historical Overview Part 1

Faith Bowers

Both London and its Baptist life have changed considerably over this third of the Association's life. This overview is based on LBA minutes and publications, conversation with Brenda Forward, an email letter from Douglas Sparkes (22 September 2014), and Arthur Thompson's autobiography, 'A Servant of the Gospel' (private publication, c.2004), as well as my own memories. There is more detail for the earlier decades, as recent developments are better addressed in the articles by those actively involved.

The London Baptist Association entered its second century in a state of tentative hope. Wars that had dominated the previous half-century were past; peace brought its own challenges. Many congregations displaced by war had not returned. The 'Swinging Sixties' and 'Permissive Society' were alarming for many Christians, as was the 'Honest to God' debate. As inflation and unemployment rose, industrial unrest loomed. Irish issues provoked IRA bombings in London and beyond. Meanwhile, the London County Council had been superseded by the Greater London Council (GLC) with plans for extensive redevelopment. 'Winds of Change' blew through the Commonwealth as former colonies moved to independence: the troubled aftermath led to a dramatic rise in immigration, with many settling in London. While many British Christians followed the civil rights campaign in America, led until his assassination in 1968 by Martin Luther King, Nobel Peace Prize-winning Baptist minister, and also protested about the apartheid policy of South Africa, they did not always find it easy to be good neighbours to incomers at home.

In the centenary year, 1965, a London minister, Dr Howard Williams, was President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland (BU), and Sir Cyril Black MP was President of the London Baptist Association (LBA). London had no women ministers but five churches had

shifted. But 'gathered community' independence persists, even though congregations are more open to change and we have lost the clutter of organisations.

Judith and I are still in Newham. Our neighbours now are from Rumania, Ghana, Pakistan, India, Kenya, sprinkled with elderly whites. The world is here. The Plaistow church we came to in 1965, strengthened by a merger with a new church plant, still cares for the homeless and has welcomed a series of congregations. West Ham Central Mission is no more and has been replaced by a new charity operating a counselling service in Essex. Our home church is now Bonny Downs, East Ham, which produced Bonny Downs Community Association to serve the community.

And the future? Challenges will continue and change will accelerate. 'This is the way, walk in it'.

MISSION TO GREATER LONDON 1965-1980

Historical Overview Part 1

Faith Bowers

Both London and its Baptist life have changed considerably over this third of the Association's life. This overview is based on LBA minutes and publications, conversation with Brenda Forward, an email letter from Douglas Sparkes (22 September 2014), and Arthur Thompson's autobiography, 'A Servant of the Gospel' (private publication, c.2004), as well as my own memories. There is more detail for the earlier decades, as recent developments are better addressed in the articles by those actively involved.

The London Baptist Association entered its second century in a state of tentative hope. Wars that had dominated the previous half-century were past; peace brought its own challenges. Many congregations displaced by war had not returned. The 'Swinging Sixties' and 'Permissive Society' were alarming for many Christians, as was the 'Honest to God' debate. As inflation and unemployment rose, industrial unrest loomed. Irish issues provoked IRA bombings in London and beyond. Meanwhile, the London County Council had been superseded by the Greater London Council (GLC) with plans for extensive redevelopment. 'Winds of Change' blew through the Commonwealth as former colonies moved to independence: the troubled aftermath led to a dramatic rise in immigration, with many settling in London. While many British Christians followed the civil rights campaign in America, led until his assassination in 1968 by Martin Luther King, Nobel Peace Prize-winning Baptist minister, and also protested about the apartheid policy of South Africa, they did not always find it easy to be good neighbours to incomers at home.

In the centenary year, 1965, a London minister, Dr Howard Williams, was President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland (BU), and Sir Cyril Black MP was President of the London Baptist Association (LBA). London had no women ministers but five churches had

deaconesses in pastoral charge. The LBA Council in January 1965 was attended by fifty-two men and ten women, with one other woman among the sixteen apologies. The centenary celebrations ended with a Youth Rally at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in February 1966, and a Greater London Council Reception for the LBA Council at County Hall on 3 March.

The LBA, with evangelism always high on its agenda, was keen to establish churches in the expanding suburbs, but the primary concern was for Inner London. Highlighting this, Gordon Snelling produced a 20-minute colour film, *London Challenge*.

The 1960s agenda included ecumenism, following the British Council of Churches' (BCC) call for Christian unity by Easter 1980. The coming years would also see huge changes in churches' use of premises and of new technology.

Structures

The LBA was organized in eleven groups, East Surrey, Eastern, Harrow, North Eastern, North Kent, North Western, Northern, South Eastern, South Western, Thames Valley, and Western. Each had its own structures but groups varied in vigour. In 1966 Gordon Fitch succeeded Charles Johnson as Secretary of the LBA and the London Baptist Property Board (LBPB), with Edgar Brown replacing him as Assistant Secretary until 1972, followed by Roger Poolman. Fitch was a layman, a deacon at West Ham and former editor of *The Christian*. The Metropolitan Area Superintendent, a Baptist Union post, was Geoffrey Haden (1961-76).

Much LBA work was done through committees, headed by General Purposes and Finance. Some, like Ministerial Recognition and Grants, worked steadily throughout but figure little in this account because their role changed little, although 'Min Rec' became much busier in later years. The Aid Fund functioned as 'the Association's Communion Fund'. A new Education Committee addressed a range of concerns including



Gordon Fitch

Sunday schools and promotion of the BU Certificate and Diploma courses. The Social Responsibility Committee reflected Baptists' widening approach to societal concerns. A Continental Liaison Representative kept the LBA in touch with European Baptists. The Council received reports from the London Baptist Preachers' Association (200 members were kept busy in 1975), the Baptist Men's Movement (BMM), the Baptist Women's League (BWL), and the London Baptist Men's Luncheon Club. The LBA owned two caravans, at Bognor and Winchelsea, offering ministers' families affordable holidays. With declining use, that at Winchelsea was given up in 1972, but the Bognor caravan was still well used in 1981.

In 1970 LBA committees were regrouped to align with the new BU structures around Administration, Ministry and Mission. The intention was to have more *ad hoc* groups and less standing committees. That year saw the centenaries of a number of London churches, reflecting early church planting from Spurgeon's College. Several churches were renewing or extending premises: Battersea's design was exhibited at the Royal Academy.

1971 saw one of the rare lay presidents, Mr Arthur Thorn, of Temple Hill, Dartford, managing director of a publishing company. Assemblies were reduced from four to two a year because of rising transport costs. The Council had major debates relating to Michael Taylor's controversial address on Christology at the national Baptist Assembly. Attendance at business sessions continued to disappoint. Both Haden and Fitch were moved to write in the *London Baptist* about the cynicism penetrating

churches. Team visits to inform local churches about the LBA went well: twenty-two visits that year made contact with 800 members. Such visits continued over several years, going to 120 locations. In 1973 a first Association Women's Conference was held. By 1975 the LBA decided to economise by duplicating, rather than printing, the Annual Report (alas for the historian, these were no longer systematically filed with minutes!).

Approaching retirement, Geoffrey Haden reflected



Revd Geoffrey Haden

that in forty years of ministry he had seen the working week reduced from fifty to forty hours yet the pace of life seemed faster.

Douglas Sparkes became Superintendent in 1976, and Peter Wortley Association Secretary in 1977. That year saw the first Baptist borough deans. Inner London churches were showing signs of growth by 1978, but the Association had forty churches without ministers, and twenty-three without any real leadership. Having an Honorary Solicitor and Honorary Surveyor who understood churches helped the Association keep abreast of current requirements: for example, with the Minibus Act 1977, the solicitor advised that a Public Service Vehicle (PSV) licence was not necessary if there would only be 8-16 passengers, and under certain conditions a charge to cover operating costs was permitted.

Alternative spiritualities were appearing. Wortley opined in April 1979 that the worrying Unification Church ('Moonies') was 'a novelty that will probably die out'. 'New Age' proved a more persistent attraction.

Immigration

Many Caribbeans were encouraged to come to London in the post-war years. Their labour was welcome, but this 'Windrush Generation' often found English society and English churches as cold as the climate. A Jamaican minister, Hubert Myrie, came to work with those in Brixton in 1965, but returned home in 1967. Some churches were more welcoming: when Rudi Pedro came from Trinidad in 1969, BMS contacts directed him to a North London church with Caribbeans already in the congregation. Within a year he was a deacon and Sunday School superintendent, although two English members objected to his exuberance in worship. But Pedro was a teacher, whereas many Caribbeans provided less skilled labour and lacked confidence for leading roles. Sparkes remembers churches lamenting that Caribbeans with appropriate gifts were not willing to be deacons: 'Many appeared to



Revd Peter Wortley
in 1977

feel these were white British churches and black folk should not expect to take a lead. It took time for that spirit to be supplanted by one of genuine partnership'. Integration had to be a two-way process.

The Charismatic Movement

By now the influence of the Charismatic Movement was felt in Baptist churches, and often proved divisive. As Superintendent, Sparkes often 'felt like a fire engine' as he tried to resolve conflicts. He observed that where the charismatics failed to 'persuade the majority, they took themselves off to worship elsewhere, but on enquiry it was too often found that the breakaways fell out among themselves and then failed to go anywhere'. Happily many churches handled change better. In October 1971 the *London Baptist* ran articles by Dr Bryant Knight of Claremont, Cricklewood, on 'Physical Health and Spiritual Healing', and the Revd Dr Keith Blades of Alperton on 'Divine Healing', both arguing for 'both ... and'. Fitch wrote in *London Baptist* January 1975, affirming that the gift of tongues was real but not essential to spiritual harvest. His greater concern was the 'dangerous doctrinal imbalance' of triumphalism.



Revd Douglas Sparkes

The 1975 London Assembly theme, 'The Relation of Baptism to Church Membership', also reflected changing attitudes, with more stress on conversion and less on gathered church. By 1978 there was concern about churches becoming Brethren Assemblies 'in all but name', forcing out traditional Baptists. Association leaders pleaded for acceptable diversity in member churches, 'Why be all the same?'

Home Mission

Although membership of London Baptist churches was falling, London giving to the BU Home Work Fund (HWF) rose year by year in the late 1960s, reaching a record £33,663 in 1970; however, migration from London left more churches needing grant aid. When two years later London's giving to the Fund, now called Home Mission (HM), surpassed

its target of £37,000 with a further record £39,212, Council sang the Doxology! Grants to London in 1972 aided sixteen ministers, five deaconesses, and six initial pastorates. In 1975 London raised £12,891 for Home Mission, 22% of the national total of £58,356.

Alas, by 1978 London only achieved 66.7% of its HM target: the downturn had begun. The response to the BU Stewardship Campaign was also disappointing, although pioneered by the LBA with promotion campaigns around the Association.

Following the change to decimal currency in 1971, Fitch reminded churches that giving ten new pence instead of the old half-crown 'robs God', the nearest new coin being worth 20% less.

Ministry

In 1967 changes to the national ministerial recognition process included guided study for probationers and the end of the age limit for ministerial training (previously forty). London promptly accepted two candidates coming from business in mid life. Further changes in 1970 prompted Superintendent Haden to reassure ministers fearing redundancy. Bi-vocational ministry was again encouraged: the Downs Chapel in 1975 called the first Supplementary Minister in London, the Revd L.C. Taylor.

To assist the Superintendent with settlement, the LBA set up the Metropolitan Area Committee (five ministers, five lay) in 1972. To guide churches on good practice, a confidential questionnaire asked ministers and deaconesses about stipends and conditions of service: this revealed that less manse families than expected had other sources of income. Concern over ministerial poverty was aggravated when a Government freeze delayed from January to April 1973 the increase of minimum stipend to £70 a month, rising to £105 in 1974 (inflation makes nonsense of comparison but ministry was a not a well-paid profession). Sparkes remembers that churches struggling to meet this increase resisted suggestions of experiment with group or team ministries.

In 1975 the BU recognized all serving deaconesses as ministers: London then had four women in pastoral charge. Gradually more women pastored London churches, often in the inner city.

Immigrant ministers began to appear in London. Fred George, from Sri

Lanka, began his forty-year ministry at New Barnet in 1969. Charles Karunaratna, also Sri Lankan, worked in London for several years. Desmond Gordon, a Caribbean supported by the Purley Church, was recommended for training 'for Supplementary Ministry' in 1975. He ministered at Finchley 1979-2010.

Inner London

Between 1935 and 1965 eighty Free Churches, including twenty-five Baptist, closed in inner London. Charles Johnson lamented that 'We witness in the midst of a generation who have forgotten God'. The Association's New Century Fund was intended to raise £100,000 over four years to assist Inner London churches struggling with large and decaying buildings and the need for spiritual renewal. Launched with enthusiasm – efforts included a sponsored youth walk from Bedford to London raising £1,667 – it only achieved £77,304, but that was 'stretched' to help twenty-six churches have premises 'fit for purpose', plus ten grants for ministry. A team effort linked thirteen churches near the Elephant and Castle for evangelism, with the young Douglas Hollidge, based at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, as 'the key man in Southwark'. Alan Stephens led evangelistic campaigns in Inner London. Some large suburban churches tried to help, but it was local leadership that was needed and housing remained a problem. Sadly, for lack of leaders, King's Cross closed a hostel in 1967 and Canonbury its Girls' Brigade.

In 1968 *London Baptist* noted encouraging progress at Victoria Park, helped by redecoration, an all-age Sunday school, and twinning with Ashurst Drive and Cranbrook Road. A promotional colour film in 1971 told of five churches helped by the Fund. The Superintendent noted in 1969 that the fifty inner churches had between them thirty-four ministers and seven lay pastors; six were seeking ministers. Douglas Sparkes tried to encourage more preachers to consider becoming lay pastors, even arranging a special evening conference, but concluded it was 'too much to expect gifted lay people to hold a responsible job, prepare for leading worship and also to care for a fellowship'. Some small churches could not afford a minister but still had a manse. The colleges arranged to house students in return for some preaching and pastoral care, but student

pastorates 'seldom helped the church make progress': that really needed long-term local workers.

In June 1975 Council decided that GLC plans for Docklands and Thamesmead called for 'a special ministry' there. As Baptist practice normally requires an existing church to call a minister Council considered having an Association Minister able to move around according to strategic need.

Sparkes remembers days 'spent suggesting where twinning of weak and strong churches might work, with personnel from the one travelling to the other to supply physical support for evangelistic ventures. It did not work. People have to be local.' Colin Marchant tried a 'taster weekend', trying to persuade some to move back into the city but that too failed. Frank Cooke attempted to entice young Americans to help reach city people but only one came and she proved unsuitable. Arthur Thompson asked affluent churches with two ministers to give half of one's time to help a small church nearby with no minister. The only response was from North Cheam who supported Ann Luther, a former member, when she went to Clapham.

Marchant, who led LBA concern for urban mission, expressed concern at the 'grave tensions in the community and the need for political understanding and action'. Two-way work between churches and community could be mutually enriching: churches could provide the continuity and security that urban society often lacked. His expertise was widely recognized and he became the ecumenical representative on the Docklands Committee.

Noting some growth in inner churches by 1978, the LBA recommended a grant of £1,500 for a Community Worker at Custom House, seen as the Baptist centre for the area, while New Beckton became the ecumenical centre. Douglas Sparkes remembers his concern to support Baptist churches involved in ecumenical partnerships, sometimes where that was the only way to get a church site in a developing area, or where limited resources were pooled to maintain a Christian witness. 'One initiative that had pleasing results was the bringing together of representatives of such churches simply to give them a chance to confer so that one learned from another of useful ways of living out the gospel'.

Evangelism

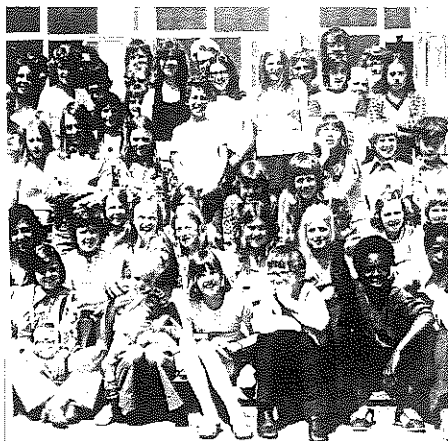
From its earliest days evangelism has been at the Association's heart but this constantly calls for fresh initiatives and methods. In September 1966 many churches took part in the *Evangelism Outreach* programme, but Stanley Turl's report questioned how far outside teams could really help inner-London churches. Eleven churches had 'One Step Forward' campaigns. In 1969 Frank Goodwin was appointed Director for Shared Evangelism, a post he held until April 1972: he proved 'stimulating, irritating, encouraging, inspiring'. That was the year when the Evangelism Committee began to think seriously about outreach in multi-racial communities. Over the years churches supported evangelistic campaigns led by Billy Graham (1966, 1967), Maurice Cerullo (1976) and Luis Palau (1983), as well as running their own local campaigns, and engaging in *Evangelism Explosion*, *Alpha*, and other programmes. In 1967 Arthur Thompson, as LBA President, ran a School of Evangelism at Ruislip. In 1976 the Archbishop's Commission on Evangelism was welcomed, along with the National Initiative in Evangelism.

Education

During 1965 the Education Committee considered the BU Report, *The Child and the Church*. In 1966 the special focus was on all-age Sunday schools on the American model, visiting the US Air Force Base at West Ruislip to see one in practice. Thirteen churches tried the all-age programme, 'Nine weeks to Christmas'. The next year an All-Age Sunday School Conference drew 250 from 50 churches; ten London churches already had such schools, but the concept was not widely adopted. It appealed less to English churches than midweek home study groups. Both require competent lay leaders.

'Equipped to Teach' and 'Grow and Go' programmes were promoted. The Day Conference for Sunday school teachers in 1972 proved 'almost embarrassingly successful' with 200 from over 50 churches. The next year Education and Evangelism jointly arranged a successful conference, 'By All Means', at Spurgeon's College. In 1979, amid much debate about religious education in schools, instead of a conference the Committee arranged a visit to an RE Resource Centre.

The LBA arranged holidays for under-privileged 'but not problem' children, sponsored by their churches. Fifty children, aged 11-14, went to St Osyth in 1974. The next year 32 girls, 11 boys and 8 staff enjoyed the activities at Mundesley-on-Sea, but were not impressed by the food nor the other occupants. This holiday cost £15 per child, plus £3 travel. Thereafter numbers dropped and LBA holidays were soon given up, but churches began to offer Holiday



LBA Children's Holiday 1974

Bible Clubs; promoting these, in 1967 the LBA offered a set of slides based on Hoxton's. By then Broadmead, Woodford, ran a Nursery School. In 1976 the Education Committee's concerns included teaching immigrants, creative activity, and the BU report, *Children and Communion*.

A number of autumn evening lecture series were arranged in the 1970s, in association with Spurgeon's College, in a different area each year, beginning in 1973 with Rex Mason at Brownhill Road, Catford, on 'Saints in the Secular Society'. In subsequent years lectures were given at Haven Green, Balham, and Walthamstow.

London Baptist ran a feature in April 1971 on the Abbey Road Missionary School for the English Language, telling how in 1960 the minister there, the Revd L.R. Barnard, found that a foreign girl he chatted to on the Underground lacked Christian vocabulary in English for missionary work. By 1971 the school had fifty-five students and three full-time staff, plus help from minister and church members. The school ran until 2002.

Youth Work

At the centenary a London Baptist Youth Council was formed. Activities included Youth Rallies, a Youth Speaking Contest run jointly with the Preachers Association, and leadership training courses. Collaboration with statutory and voluntary bodies was encouraged. In 1971 the Youth Council took part in a competitive festival at the Royal Albert Hall, and held a successful 'evangelistic occasion' at Westminster Central Hall. One of the Council's last activities was a Youth Weekend at High Leigh in 1975.

John Brandham was secretary to the Youth Council and then worked as BU Youth Training Officer for five years, before becoming a minister. Interviewed by *London Baptist* in 1979 he observed sadly that young people became attached to their organisations but not to church.

Social Responsibility

Through the first half of the twentieth century Baptist social concern largely focused on gambling and alcohol. These concerns continued – with London's Arthur Davies widely recognized as an expert on alcohol issues – but Clifford Cleal, promoting Christian Citizenship for the BU, persuaded Baptists to widen their horizons. His successors, John Hough and Don Black, continued this. At the same time Evangelicals generally were widening their understanding of mission.

A brief survey of matters considered by the LBA's Social Responsibility Committee highlights social change in the later decades of the twentieth century. In the late 1960s concerns included sex and morality, mental health, drunk driving, and inadequate housing. In 1966 the Harlington church successfully opposed a Betting Shop licence. In 1967 Colin Marchant led 'Who Cares?', an LBA conference on social work and mental health. That year, following a BCC report, the Baptist Board (London ministers' meeting) considered 'Extra-Marital Relationships', resulting in an LBA statement on marriage. *The London Baptist* ran an article, 'Take a Trip', about the drug culture which had recently reached London from America. The LBA registered a protest about the proposed GLC lottery in 1968. Meanwhile some churches set up homes for the elderly.

In 1970 the Citizenship Committee, the first LBA committee to be chaired by a woman, Mrs Margaret Rusling, compiled a central register of churches' community service projects. That year saw the closure of The Haven, which had taken in 1,923 unmarried mothers and placed 1,751 babies, but Baptist women sponsored a new project, Newington Court. The LBA furnished a room at this new women's hostel, formally opened in September 1971. Baptists rejoiced when the GLC was dissuaded from lowering the age for X films to sixteen. Haven Green set up a 'Message Home' service to encourage those who ran away from home to make some contact with anxious parents.

The renamed Social Responsibility Committee was pleased to record in 1975 that its letter to the GLC Film Licensing Committee had been included in the press release prior to debate. Roger Hayden took up with the Thames TV their distorted slogan, 'Christmas means ITV'. Other 1970s issues included entry into Europe, population explosion, world poverty, local broadcasting, the Shelter Campaign for the homeless, healing ministry, Age Action Year 1976, prisoners of conscience, licensing hours, unemployment, penal reform, disposal of unused medicines, sexual exploitation of children, sexual law reform, police use of the Suspected Persons Act, proliferation of lotteries, and vagrancy. In 1979 the far-sighted Edwin Robertson, minister of Westbourne Park, called for a greater understanding of Islam.

The BU asked each Association to focus on a particular concern: London was given housing. The Committee discussed the GLC Strategic Housing Plan, which envisaged a population of 6.5 million by 1981, needing 210,000 extra dwellings. This would involve compulsory purchase of privately rented property and outer boroughs releasing land to inner ones. The retired would move to expanded towns and seaside estates. The Committee foresaw much mental stress and a huge pastoral task. Churches were also thinking about sheltered housing: Carey Court opened in Camberwell in June 1976; a year later it had thirty-two residents, half from churches, half from Southwark Borough.

As immigration and racial tension increased, an LBA Community Relations Group was formed and held a day conference at Balham in 1976, focusing on the church in multi-racial situations. Of particular

concern was the unemployment and harassment of black youths. By 1977 Newham had twenty-three black-led churches of various kinds. Fraternalists were urged to keep communication open with black ministers. A letter of sympathy and £20 gift were sent to a West Indian church in Sheffield 'vandalised by racist elements'. The Brixton riots in 1980 saw Kenyon, with Stuart Cook as minister, reaching out to the ravaged community. The next year a workshop on race relations was included in the LBA Autumn Assembly. Times were changing.

MISSION TO A WORLD CITY 1981-2015

Historical Overview Part 2

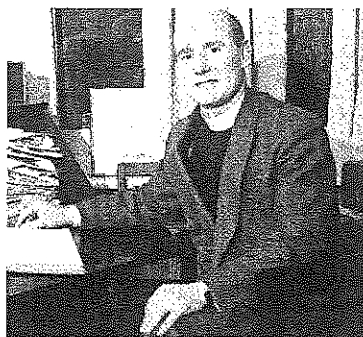
Faith Bowers

In 1981 Brenda Forward, long active in the evangelism and women's committees, became the first and only woman LBA President. She brought a new style and fresh approach to the Association assemblies, with a variety of workshops, drawing widely on Baptist talent, preceding an evening celebration. This drew 650 London Baptists, a considerably better attendance than in previous years. Mrs Forward continued to chair the Women's Work Committee which merged that year's Day Conference with a Scripture Press meeting at Westminster Central Hall to hear Evelyn Christenson, author of *What Happens When Women Pray*.

That year Vicarage Road, Leyton, had the exciting prospect of resurrecting work where the earlier church had closed, but plans for commercial redevelopment of the Drummond Street site failed to secure approval at appeal.

Meanwhile, Douglas Sparkes became BU Deputy General Secretary, succeeded as Superintendent by Arthur Thompson. When the BU moved the national office to Didcot in September 1979, the LBA lost its office at Baptist Church House in Holborn. For twenty years Peter Wortley worked from Methodist premises in Mile End, until the LBA created a London Baptist Centre with offices on Bloomsbury's top floor.

By 1983 communication with churches was a major concern. *London Baptist* had been replaced by *London Link*, appearing twice a year. The possibility of taking a half page of the *Baptist Times* each month was explored, but the prohibitive cost prompted reflection on the limited readership. The idea of an Association Press Officer was considered. Eventually General Purposes Committee decided to install an answer-phone in the office, with weekly news of the



Revd Arthur Thompson

churches running in evenings and weekends. A Consultative Assembly, 'Let's Begin Again', on 18 February 1986 discussed the need to renew LBA structures. At that time there were 25,000 Baptists in London in 268 churches in 13 groups, yet 300 was a 'good' attendance at Assembly. Council had 115 members but rarely drew more than 40 to meetings. Ministers met in five regional fraternals, north, south, east, west and inner. It took until 1992 to implement change.

Earlier in the century Baptists had seen evangelism and 'social gospel' as almost mutually exclusive but attitudes were changing. When Tom Rogers joined Don Black in the BU Mission Department they together launched 'Action in Mission' (AIM) at the 1988 Assembly, encouraging churches to seek a healthy balance between evangelism and social action. Justice campaigns, like the Jubilee one to release the poorest countries from debt and 'Make Poverty History', received wide support. This helped break down the dividing line between 'liberal' and 'evangelical' Baptists at a time when Baptist worship styles were less uniform.

Sunday life was to change considerably with the wider legalisation of Sunday Trading. Churches joined USDAW, the shop workers' trade union, in the 'Keep Sunday Special' campaign and the change was defeated in 1986, but the tide could not be held back for long. The Sunday Trading Act of 1994 permitted most shops to open for part of the day. Even for those people who do not choose to shop on Sundays, there is a marked difference, not least to traffic levels and parking problems. Few London churches have adequate parking on their own land.

Douglas McBain became Superintendent in 1989 and the Association engaged in corporate rebranding around the term 'Capital'. The new periodic publication was *Capital Vision*. Twelve members of Lewin Road, Streatham, McBain's previous church, began a plant in the World's End public house in Chelsea, the only London borough which had been without a Baptist church. But Wortley's piece in *Capital Vision* Autumn 1991, 'Why Assemblies?', implies attendance was again disappointing.



An effort had been made to secure Baptist borough deans: in 1987 there were only three Baptists, but by 1991 there were twenty-nine, including one woman. Brenda Forward explained in *Capital Vision* that this worked best where the ecumenical deans met regularly to share concerns, as advocates for the 'voiceless'. Deans had direct access to the local council on spiritual, moral, or crisis issues, not to criticise but rather to share the burden and offer insights.

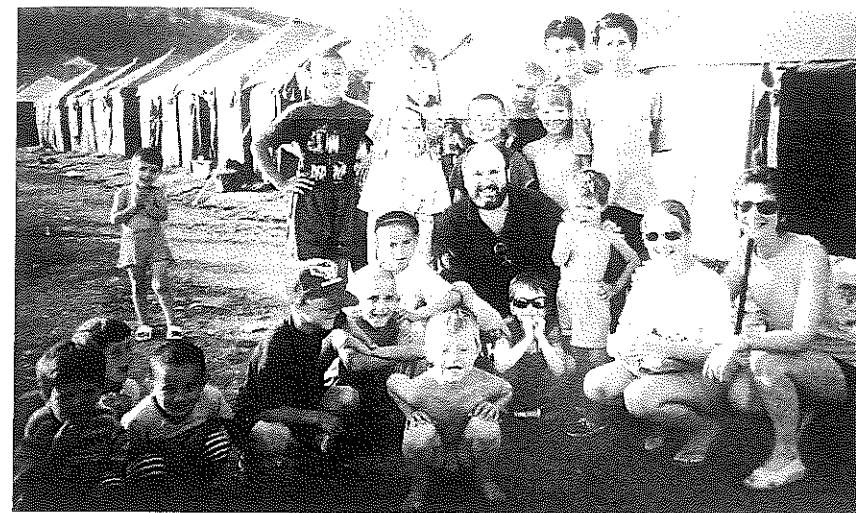
In mid century most church premises were only used when the church had activities. In 1967 Bloomsbury's Friendship Centre pioneered the idea of being open to the local community all week, but staffing limitations meant this was only partially achieved. Soon, however, many churches were making fuller use of their buildings, both with more church-run activities and by letting to other bodies. *Capital Vision*'s lead article in Autumn 1992, 'Open All Hours', featured the 7/7 ministry of the East Barnet church.

Pursuing the vision, McBain held a great Pentecost gathering of London Baptists at the Albert Hall in 1993, following Regional Celebrations and a Simultaneous Celebration at many centres the previous year. Pentecost 1995 saw churches taking part in 'The Great Banquet', an ecumenical initiative to invite guests to a special meal. A second Albert Hall Celebration that autumn followed six weeks of evangelistic outreach by local churches. *Capital Vision* gave examples of local efforts. Teddington, which already arranged monthly street outreach and several café church evenings a year, also arranged a ladies' restaurant meal, Alpha, a choir evening, and guest visits of Fiona Castle and ex-skater Nicky Slater. A small church, Major Road in Stratford, invited people to a meal with gospel drama.



Revd Douglas McBain

European connections featured more prominently again, including an Association visit to Paris in 1992. Another capital-to-capital link took Clive Doubleday, minister of Poverest Road, Petts Wood, to Prague. As LBA President in 1998-99, he took a party to Macedonia. Soon his work



The Doubleday group with Macedonians in 1999

blossomed into SMILE, which now helps people in great need in the Balkans, India and Africa.

McBain wrote about 'London's Global Ministry' (*Capital Vision* Autumn 1991): one in seven Londoners was now black or minority ethnic and their church leaders had met recently at Bloomsbury. Five years later *Capital Vision* noted the new Ghana Christian Support Group, led by Peter Stevenson, and the fast growth of Trinity Baptist Church in Norwood and Calvary Charismatic, planted by Francis Sarpong in Poplar. The LBA invited Southern Baptist missionaries, Stephen and Barbara James, who had experience in Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, to work with Turkish speakers in North London.

Africans were soon vigorously planting and growing churches around London. Kingsley Appiagyei, a Ghanaian trained at Spurgeon's College, began in 1987 with eight people: Trinity grew rapidly, first in Brixton and from 1992 in West Norwood. Soon the young church was sending out church planters, like Kofi Manful with Faith Baptist Church at Manor House. Kingsley Appiagyei was BU President in 2009. Other ethnic churches joining the LBA gathered people from Korea, Myanmar, and Romania, and speakers of French, Spanish and Portuguese. Wagih

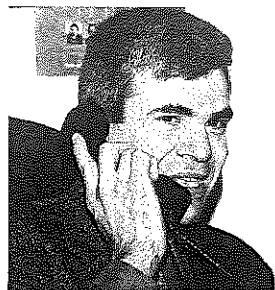
Abdelmassih, from Egypt, began outreach to Arabic speakers, mostly refugees, in 1994, with support from the LBA and Home Mission. By 2000 the LBA had a Black and Asian Ministers' Forum. In 2001 the LBA had an African President, Cornelius Mereweather-Thompson, from Sierra Leone, the minister of Custom House (1993-95) and Harlesden Baptist Church (1995-).

Pat Took succeeded McBain as Superintendent in 1998, the first woman appointed to such a role in the Baptist Union. She had been minister at Cann Hall and Harrow Green, Leytonstone (1985-98). When Wortley brought the nomination to the BU Council it caused a stir, not least because London was seen as one of the most conservative areas. A rather grim meeting of the BU Council was livened up considerably as Wortley described how the Nomination Committee's repeated efforts to find a man were thwarted by the Holy Spirit! In 2000 Paul Martin was appointed LBA Secretary. On retirement, both McBain and Wortley served as BU Presidents.



Revd Dr Pat Took

Increasingly national legislation has impacted on churches in recent decades. Both the LBA and the BU help churches to understand how to comply with the demands of health and safety, safeguarding, equal opportunities, disability provision, catering standards, charity accountability, etc. In 1997 the LBA went on the worldwide web. Today regular emails carry news from around the Association, along with short reflections from Regional staff.



Revd Paul Martin

As the LBA's Racial Justice Co-ordinator Sivakumar Rajagopalan worked with the BU's Wale Hudson-Roberts to promote the first Gathering, held at Bloomsbury in October 2006, and the meetings that led to an Apology for the

Transatlantic Slave Trade. The LBA marked the centenary of the end of the Slave Trade in 2007 with a meeting at the Docklands Museum and a special service at Bloomsbury, 'Lest We Forget', and has since produced the *Windrush* DVD.

To balance support for immigrant communities, Rajagopalan has also organized recent celebrations of St George's Day: in 2014 a splendidly mixed gathering considered the nature of English identity. Those present were amused to realize that the person best able to define 'Englishness' was a black woman minister, because she had in youth taken a conscious decision to 'become English'. As Charmaine Howard defined what that had meant, the white English nodded as they recognized their own characteristics.



Revd Sivakumar
Rajagopalan

As more ethnic congregations were gathered, they needed places to meet. The Regional Ministers tried to help. Some older churches arranged to share premises but others were disappointingly reluctant. New churches used whatever spaces they could rent. LBA attempts to obtain vacant Baptist premises at Shepherd's Bush and Newington Court failed, so attention turned towards redevelopment at Borough Road. The traditional Baptist Home Mission methods do not fit well with cross-cultural mission. Serving the world's most multi-cultural city, the Regional Ministers began to consider the possibility of raising a Fund for London.

Structures

Association structures were renewed in 1992, as few of the old groups still functioned well. There were eleven new 'Regions': A Hillingdon, Ealing, Hounslow; B Harrow, Brent; C Barnet, Enfield, Haringey; D Waltham Forest, Redbridge, Barking; E Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets; F Camden, Islington, Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea, City, Hammersmith & Fulham; G Greenwich, Bexley; H Southwark,

Lewisham, Bromley; I Lambeth, Wandsworth, Merton; J Richmond, Kingston; K Sutton, Croydon.

A 'regional minister' would take responsibility for each area, assisting the Superintendent in 'pastoring the pastors'. As this would take time from their own churches, the LBA paid for a half-day each week. With a growing number of churches in the capital, far more than in any other Association, pressure on the Superintendent increased. Other mainstream denominations did not treat the whole of London as a single entity, but Baptists were reluctant to divide and the BU could not finance a second Superintendent. The LBA decided to appoint its own 'Deputy Superintendent' to assist and chose Tony Mason. This did not really work as intended, not Mason's fault, because without attending the BU's monthly Superintendents' Board his help with ministerial settlement was restricted. He did much, however, to encourage churches, running training days, like 'Help, I'm a deacon!'

The new millennium was a time for new structures. From 2000 London came under the Greater London Authority with a London Mayor (the Greater London Council had been abolished in 1986). Baptists too had a major reorganisation of structures, national and regional. The BU would from 2002 no longer employ Area Superintendents but fund an Association post instead. For London, where Area and Association had been co-terminus, this involved less change than elsewhere, although the London regions needed renaming as 'Districts', each with a 'District Minister'. By now these experienced ministers had come to see their district role as so useful that they were graciously happy to continue although the LBA could no longer pay for their time. Instead their number was increased so that each District now has two or three District Ministers.

The current Districts are: A Western (Hillingdon, Ealing, Hammersmith, Kensington and Chelsea); B North Western (Harrow, Brent, Camden, Westminster); C Northern (Enfield, Barnet, Haringey); D North Eastern (Waltham Forest, Redbridge, Barking and Dagenham); E Eastern (Islington, Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Newham); F Central (churches clustered in and around central London); G South Eastern (Southwark, Lewisham, Bromley); H South East Thames (Greenwich,

Bexley, Kent); I South Western (Wandsworth, Lambeth, Merton); J Thames Valley (Hounslow, Richmond, Kingston); K East Surrey (Sutton, Croydon, Surrey).

The new Regional Ministers were Pat Took (team leader), Paul Martin (administration), and Tony Mason (church life). Also appointed part-time were three Co-ordinators: Rosemarie Davidson-Gotobed (Racial Justice), Pete Leveson (Youth Work), and Carol McCarthy (Home Mission). Reg Craig was elected President for 2002 but his term was curtailed as the LBA decided to give up that office. The LBA Council was replaced with a much smaller Board of Directors, the trustees of the newly formed Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee. Churches had to formally choose to be members. The Finance Committee replaced the annual President's Fund with the Annual Association Appeal Fund. Thus reorganized, London Baptists filled Westminster Central Hall to celebrate being 'Together in One Place'.

Mason was called to Bromley in 2002, and the next year David Shosanya was appointed Regional Minister for Mission and Kumar Rajagopalan Regional Minister for Racial Justice. As BMS Co-ordinator, Simon Jones was followed by Chris Andre-Watson, previously minister of Kenyon, Brixton (1994-2005), who worked closely with the LBA team. Another black minister from London, Wale Hudson-Roberts (Stroud Green 1993-2002), now led racial justice for the BU.

Meanwhile, the Board was deeply concerned about pressures on the Regional Ministers, especially Pat Took, with nearly 300 churches and their ministers in her care. The Property Board helpfully eased the load on Paul Martin in 2006 when Mrs Jackie Penistone was appointed Trust Officer, dealing with much of the day-to-day work. Careful consideration convinced the Directors that there was work for a team of six – but not the money. When Took retired in 2010, prior to serving as BU President, and Leveson went to Norwood as minister, there was unfortunate delay in appointing a new team leader; the three remaining Regional Ministers rearranged roles to cover essential work. Geoff Andrews, previously minister at Perry Rise, was appointed team leader in 2011. Soon after, Paul Martin had a lengthy illness so the team remained under strength, although helped by the appointment of Norman Kincaid as office

manager, a new administrative role. London's needs and financial limitations continue to make unreasonable demands on LBA staff: only devotion to Christ and the city keeps them serving!

Home Mission

Alas, the earlier fund-raising success was not maintained. In 1981 London struggled to raise £163,082 (target £170,750). The following year the ever-rising target was passed with £182,111, but by 1985 giving was below target, although up on the previous year. London continued to struggle, to the disgust of other Associations who saw the capital as the centre of wealth, although the LBA has no church in the City of London and many in poorer districts. In 1998 there was a formal BU visitation because London's giving was 'a national disgrace'.

Since then there has been a slight increase in fundraising for Home Mission. Judged on a *per capita* basis it remains low but, given the nature of London, that is not the fairest measure. The London contribution is around 17% of the total Home Mission budget, making London a nett giver to the scheme.

Ministry

As Superintendent faced with the care of 250 ministers, Arthur Thompson encouraged ministers to form local groups for mutual support. He arranged Area Lunches for ministers and some evening meals for ministers and their wives to encourage such grouping. Thompson felt the BU did not care for retired ministers and their spouses as well as some other denominations and some secular employers, so he arranged for two meals a year at Bloomsbury at LBA expense. These lunches continued until 2014, but were then discontinued because so few could afford to retire in the London area.

Baptists always see ministry as primarily relating to the local church, but have gradually recognized other areas as also valid. The LBA has supported the work of various chaplains, including Thornton Elwyn in the South London Industrial Mission (this was replaced in 2006 by the Pan-London Mission in London's Economy – MILE), and Stephen Heap for ten years chaplain to London universities. In 2006, having failed to

replace Heap, money earmarked for university chaplaincy was diverted to King's Cross, where the church could house Pete James, appointed in 2007 to work with students. The LBA has maintained part-time chaplaincy at Heathrow after other Free Churches pulled out. Accommodation is always a problem in expensive London unless the church owns residential property.

In 1987 Arthur Thompson noted that London had four black Baptist ministers, with two more training at Spurgeon's College. Since then increasing numbers of black and other ethnic ministers have pastored churches within the LBA, including many new plants, bringing fresh approaches and vigour to London Baptist witness. Black congregations are not necessarily monocultural: at Faith Baptist Church, for example, the Caribbean 25% happily works and worships with the African 75% in marked contrast to much that is seen on surrounding streets. Many churches rejoice in multi-racial congregations, although that does not always mean they are fully multi-cultural.

Recent decades have seen increasing interest in new ways of doing church. In 1989 Spurgeon's College and the Oasis Trust began a course in Church Planting, led by Stuart Christine. The first graduates emerged in 1993. Recognizing more variety in ministry, in 2001 the BU allowed three categories – pastors, youth specialists, and evangelists. Partly in response to financial constraints, bi-vocational ministry was practised more than for many years. Sadly the Association also saw the need to train ministers for conflict resolution.

The Ministerial Recognition Committee directs most successful candidates to a Baptist college for training, and some to the BU Residential Selection Conference, but Took and Martin were concerned that one in three London ministers were not accredited. Not all who were providing effective pastoral leadership were well suited to either normal route. London sought approval for an experimental portfolio route, with the Association offering in-service training and assessment. By 2014 six had been accredited, including Sylvia Salazar de Espin of the Spanish-speaking church in Norwood, and Thwang Khua Kai and Aung Aung Shwe who have gathered a church of people, mostly quite young, from Myanmar.

Inner London

The Church of England's *Faith in the City* report (1985) was welcomed by urban workers across the other denominations as an encouragement to fresh efforts. The Inner London Committee talked to Spurgeon's College about training for urban mission, which led to Urban Expression and church planting in the East End in the later 1990s. Developed with the College and Oasis Trust, Urban Expression became independent in 2001.

The London, Kent and Essex Associations formed a Consultative Group and launched the Thames Gateway Appeal for work in new developments along the river. Developers appreciated the community cohesion work done by Baptists in Docklands, and the LBA had the opportunity to acquire a house for a church planter in the new Britannia Village. The Association employed Penny Marsh to begin work there in 1998. Her community work was quickly welcomed and, with a few helpers, the Royal Docks Community Church was formed, but growth was slow, dependent on personnel from further afield. When Penny moved down river, Dave Mann took over in Britannia Village early in 2008, focusing initially on community work. He reported in March 2015: 'Building on the foundation laid by Penny Marsh, the church now has a regular weekly congregation of around 60 adults and children. Thirteen people have been baptised in the last few years, some in the dock and the River Thames! We run an extensive programme of community services and have helped set up a secondary free school – Oasis Academy Silvertown.' The church is working in close partnership with Bonny Downs in East Ham, where Dave and his wife Sally share the pastorate.

In 2004 Urban Expression approached the LBA about a church plant in Kidbrooke, where there was as yet no calling body for Charlie Ingram, a final-year student. With a 100% HM grant and the backing of the Southeast Thames ministers, the LBA agreed to be the employer, but the Kidbrooke experiment ended in 2007 because the regeneration scheme had in effect depopulated the area and changed its demographic make-up.

Small Churches

During the 1980s the BU, increasingly concerned about small churches, produced the report *Half the Denomination*. Many member churches had

less than fifty members and most of these lacked full-time ministerial oversight. The LBA reckoned that eighty-four London churches, 35% of the Association, were small, many in the inner city although some, like Sipson and Harmondsworth, were described as 'rural'. The LBA invited representatives from thirty of the smallest to a Small Churches Conference at Sunbury Court, the Salvation Army International Centre, 14-16 September 1984. Ten of the nineteen who attended were from inner London. It was a time of mutual encouragement. Arthur Thompson was amazed to discover how live and active these churches were, even in difficult situations, with much to teach larger churches about commitment. This commanded respect and a new appreciation. The LBA arranged further Small Church Conferences in 1987 and 1988.

That first conference showed cautious interest in twinning with larger churches, for help with money and personnel. Leadership was the main concern, especially the need for home-grown elders. Many looked to lay pastors, retired ministers and help from the Preachers' Association. They lamented the limitation of HM grants to churches of at least forty members, but valued grant support for initial pastorates in new or resurrected churches.

In 1994, as part of the National Mission Strategy, the LBA was asked to report again on small churches. London statistics that December showed 114 out of London's 280 churches had less than fifty members, and a further nineteen less than sixty. Penning the reply, Brenda Forward observed that smallness has its own advantages. Since January 2007 Hilary Taylor has been the LBA's Small Churches Enabler.

Evangelism

1981 was a peak year for Partnership Missions, the final service drawing a thousand, 'one of the most memorable Association occasions for many years'. The Evangelism Committee decided to focus mainly on Baptist churches, after frustrating attempts to co-operate with New Way London and the plans for the 1983 Luis Palau Campaign. They felt the need for another Association Evangelism Commissioner, but failed to convince the LBA Council at that time. Concern was expressed about Mormon 'Family Evenings', but their practice of attracting people first, with

teaching postponed till later, might be worth copying! They kept watch on plans for a major festival of Islam.

At last in 1991 Geoff Shattock was appointed Director of Evangelism. One of his initiatives was *Breakthrough*, a School of Evangelism, which proved very successful and was repeated several times. Attendees from London churches signed up for several Saturdays at the Latymer Christian Centre. The course was conducted to a high standard with a professionalism not previously seen in the LBA. This evoked some criticism but fees covered the cost. The LBA was resourcing and training enthusiastic lay people in wide-ranging Christian mission and witness.

The Westbourne Park church embraced opportunities afforded by the Notting Hill Carnival. In 1995, for example, the church joined with Vis-a-Vis and the Africa-Caribbean Evangelical Alliance to send out 150 gospel communicators. 'The Party never stops. Drama, mime, farce, face painting, balloons, clowns, puppets, refreshments, toilets – street entertainment, steel band, etc.', reported *Capital Vision*.

When the Olympic Games came to London in 2012, the Revd David Pile was employed by the LBA as Olympic Co-ordinator, working closely with Victoria Park, the church nearest to the Olympic Park.

Education

With distinguished head teacher, John Westbury, in the chair, the Committee in 1983 took note that, although the Inner London Education Authority and Borough Education Committees should each have a Free Church representative, ILEA and eight London boroughs did not. This was taken up with the Free Church Federal Council. In 1986 the committee considered the RE syllabus for secondary schools, adult education in churches, chaplaincies in colleges of further education, and teachers' retreats because of current stresses in schools. With reduced school focus on Christianity, more was left to home and church, but sadly Sunday schools were drawing less children than in the past.

Youth

Of all areas of church life, youth work probably demands most frequent changes of style and fresh initiatives. The LBA has tried to keep up with

this. In 1990 it took the form of *Capital Radiate*, led first by Heather Evans in conjunction with Oasis, and from 1995 by Dave Steel. Activities included Concept Cafes with live music but no alcohol. Steve Chalke and his Oasis colleagues appealed strongly to younger people in their fresh approach to both worship and social engagement. The Christchurch and Upton premises in Lambeth became the Oasis home base.

From 2001 Pete Leveson was LBA Youth Coordinator, encouraging and resourcing church youth workers, both professional and voluntary. Such work is valuable but too easily sidelined when resources are scarce. Latterly it has been led by Pete James at the King's Cross church.

Social Responsibility

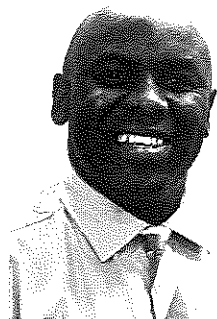
In the 1980s the Committee hardly knew where to begin to tackle the immense problems. Unemployment, family stress with divorce rising and more unmarried families, police and community relations, Sunday Trading, nuclear power, disability and community care ... the list ran on. In 1981 the LBA President met with Sir David McNee, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and subsequently visited New Scotland Yard for further discussions. A day conference on 'Social Work as a Christian Vocation' drew eighty participants. 1982 saw the Churches Action on Poverty group, and 1985 Evangelicals for Racial Justice. In 1983 Baptist industrial chaplain, Thornton Elwyn, was asked to prepare a study document on work in a rapidly changing society.

Local churches developed various initiatives. John Bunyan in Kingston upon Thames pioneered drug rehabilitation work, with its Kaleidoscope Project. Emmanuel, Thamesmead, sponsored 'Helping Hands', originally about job creation, with local people giving all kinds of help – tools, furniture, ladders, money, transport. In 1995 Thamesmead Town took this over, providing premises and employing a former volunteer as trainer and coordinator. In 1987 David Rushworth Smith, minister of Westbury Avenue, went on a 59-day hunger strike in protest at Haringey's positive approach to homosexuality. Meanwhile some churches began work relating to HIV/AIDS and many Baptists supported the Mildmay Hospital, a Christian foundation which in 1988 opened the first AIDS hospice in Europe.

By 2000 the needs of refugees and asylum seekers loomed large for some churches. Memorial, Plaistow, had befriended ten families seeking asylum over the previous decade: ten were now church members and one a deacon. The Downs Chapel, Hackney, for several years provided sanctuary for Sunday Oganwobi and his family; well-established asylum work there focused especially on Turkish refugees. West Croydon Tabernacle, close to the Home Office centre for immigrant registration, set up a Refugee Day Centre in 1995. In Kingston the John Bunyan Church and Kaleidoscope provided supportive housing for twenty-seven

asylum seekers from Kosovo and elsewhere. Other churches supported individual applications. Groups from many churches, Baptists among them, joined the great march against the Iraq War in 2003.

David Shosanya, a Regional Minister since 2003, had earlier been involved in setting up the first Street Pastors. He has promoted involvement in civic affairs, criminal justice matters, and efforts to check gun and knife crime, seeing these as all properly relating to mission, alongside parish nursing and directly evangelistic activities.



Revd David Shosanya

* * * * *

Looking back over fifty years of LBA history we might well repeat Peter Wortley's closing words of the report for 1981:

We cannot see far ahead. Changes occur constantly. It is not the unchangeableness of God that now strikes us most forcibly but the ever-fresh initiatives of His Spirit for human salvation. We sense God at work in our midst and rejoice at the privilege that we live and serve at such a time as this.

MIGRATION MATTERS

Sivakumar Rajagopalan

'Therefore go [migrate], and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.' Matthew 28: 19-20

The biblical narrative is full of stories of migration. The Lord commanded his disciples to migrate to spread the gospel, which would not have come to these shores if Christians had not migrated here. Migration has been a feature of this nation for many, many centuries. Winder states, 'we are all immigrants: it simply depends on how far back you go.'¹

Immigration has had and will continue to have profound effects on the LBA. This essay will explore:

1. Changing composition of churches
2. Planting of new churches
3. Ethnicity of ministers serving London churches
4. Immigration legislation
5. Emerging possibilities
6. Reflections
7. The road ahead

The institutional response of the LBA will be woven into each section.

Changing Composition of Churches

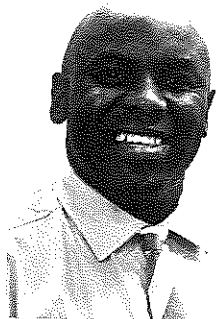
It has been noted that the arrival of Caribbean immigrants, marked a new phase in migration to Britain. These immigrants had a strong Christian faith and many belonged to mainstream denominations, including Baptist.

¹ Robert Winder, *Bloody Foreigners: The Story of Immigration into Britain*, 2005, p.x.

By 2000 the needs of refugees and asylum seekers loomed large for some churches. Memorial, Plaistow, had befriended ten families seeking asylum over the previous decade: ten were now church members and one a deacon. The Downs Chapel, Hackney, for several years provided sanctuary for Sunday Oganwobi and his family; well-established asylum work there focused especially on Turkish refugees. West Croydon Tabernacle, close to the Home Office centre for immigrant registration, set up a Refugee Day Centre in 1995. In Kingston the John Bunyan Church and Kaleidoscope provided supportive housing for twenty-seven

asylum seekers from Kosovo and elsewhere. Other churches supported individual applications. Groups from many churches, Baptists among them, joined the great march against the Iraq War in 2003.

David Shosanya, a Regional Minister since 2003, had earlier been involved in setting up the first Street Pastors. He has promoted involvement in civic affairs, criminal justice matters, and efforts to check gun and knife crime, seeing these as all properly relating to mission, alongside parish nursing and directly evangelistic activities.



Revd David Shosanya

* * * * *

Looking back over fifty years of LBA history we might well repeat Peter Wortley's closing words of the report for 1981:

We cannot see far ahead. Changes occur constantly. It is not the unchangeableness of God that now strikes us most forcibly but the ever-fresh initiatives of His Spirit for human salvation. We sense God at work in our midst and rejoice at the privilege that we live and serve at such a time as this.

MIGRATION MATTERS

Sivakumar Rajagopalan

'Therefore go [migrate], and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.' Matthew 28: 19-20

The biblical narrative is full of stories of migration. The Lord commanded his disciples to migrate to spread the gospel, which would not have come to these shores if Christians had not migrated here. Migration has been a feature of this nation for many, many centuries. Winder states, 'we are all immigrants: it simply depends on how far back you go.'¹

Immigration has had and will continue to have profound effects on the LBA. This essay will explore:

1. Changing composition of churches
2. Planting of new churches
3. Ethnicity of ministers serving London churches
4. Immigration legislation
5. Emerging possibilities
6. Reflections
7. The road ahead

The institutional response of the LBA will be woven into each section.

Changing Composition of Churches

It has been noted that the arrival of Caribbean immigrants, marked a new phase in migration to Britain. These immigrants had a strong Christian faith and many belonged to mainstream denominations, including Baptist.

¹ Robert Winder, *Bloody Foreigners: The Story of Immigration into Britain*, 2005, p.x.

The Windrush Legacy: Faith in Migration, DVD resource,² records the experience of those attending Baptist churches from the late 1940s to early 1970s. Below are some pertinent comments:

I remember the first time I went to Albany Park Baptist Church, a woman said, 'Yes, you coloured people can come here'; the second sister ... said, 'Welcome, brother'.³

Minister explained to us if we could come in the evening, because the people in the morning service wasn't happy ... there was a little segregation.⁴

... from conversations you got the impression, 'We wish they'd stayed where they came from'.⁵

This lack of welcome and at times outright rejection led some to start their own churches. The Revd Colin Marchant states, '[By] 1965, the first black churches were beginning: Miracle Ministry ... they would form their own church because they were not welcome in English churches.'⁶

At times the LBA has recognised the need to respond. Writing in January 1964, the Revd Rodney Collins, whilst encouraging ministers to read *The West Indian Migrants and the London Churches*, by the Revd Clifford Hill, also lamented: 'the tragedy is that for many of us the challenge and even some of the information has come too late. We have already failed in our duty to these sensitive, independent people.'⁷

² *The Windrush Legacy: Faith in Migration*, DVD Resource, A London Baptist Association Production in collaboration with Tooting Junction Baptist Church: London 2014, available from the LBA Office: 020 7692 5592.

³ Mr Sam King MBE, *The Windrush Legacy*, Chapter 3.

⁴ Mr Gordon Trout, *The Windrush Legacy*, Chapter 3.

⁵ Revd Peter Wortley, *The Windrush Legacy*, Chapter 3.

⁶ Revd Colin Marchant, *The Windrush Legacy*, Chapter 3.

⁷ Revd Rodney Collins, 'Tuppence Coloured: Our Responsibility to the West Indians in London', *London Baptist*, January 1964.

A decade later, at an LBA Council meeting, a question was raised as to whether, 'any close and effective relationship had been established with all-black communities', to which a fellow Council member replied that there was not because, 'Most of the reluctance had come from the immigrant communities who preferred their own fellowship.'⁸

The demographic changes taking place within society in this era are best illustrated by Mrs Adina Dian Payne's experience:

When we come to this country first, and we buy a house into an area or something like that and when you move into the area, whole of them would just come to the front or the window and they're staring at you, and they would throw words at you and call you names and things like that, and poor us, we didn't stay long, we just sell up and go. But then when we find out that these people were like this and they're jealous, we come to the understanding, that no, this is it we're not going to move again, so we don't go anywhere. And to the end they move, because they don't want to live among us.⁹

Despite the ungodly and unchristian treatment, many stayed within Baptist and other mainstream denominations. They did so out of long-held loyalty and sense of identity.¹⁰

White British Baptists moved out of areas, selling their homes to Caribbeans, Asian and other immigrant communities. Consequently once white-majority churches have become black-majority. The table below has been compiled on the basis of personal knowledge of churches, the December 2003 Ethnicity Survey of LBA churches, and telephone survey of ministers undertaken for this paper. This data is conservative and, since I have not been able to cover all the churches, I suspect the actual

⁸ LBA Council Minutes, 10 October 1974.

⁹ Mrs Adina Dian Payne, *The Windrush Legacy*, Chapter 2.

¹⁰ Mark Sturge, *Look What the Lord Has Done: An Exploration of Black Christian Faith in Britain*, p.86.

number of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) majority churches is higher.¹¹

ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF LBA CHURCHES BY DISTRICT

District	Total Number of Churches	%age of BME Majority Churches	%age of White Majority Churches which are Now BME Majority
Western	29	53.45	43.10
N Western	28	57.14	35.71
Northern	32	62.50	53.13
N Eastern	35	42.86	22.86
Eastern	26	73.08	53.85
SE Thames	23	26.09	17.39
S Eastern	36	56.94	43.06
S Western	36	63.89	36.11
Thames Valley	18	0.00	0.00
East Surrey	32	34.38	15.63
Central	14	71.43	64.29
Total for London	309	50.49	34.95

¹¹ For the purposes of this essay Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) is inclusive of everyone other than those whose origins are white British, white North American and white Australians and New Zealanders. Whilst there are many nationalities present within our churches, it is important to note that the majority of BMEs are black Caribbean and African.

Planting of Churches by Immigrants

The founders of the LBA were committed to the erection of at least one new chapel every year.¹² This has always been a feature of LBA churches and continues to be so, for which we can be thankful. Whilst the Caribbean community either remained within existing Baptist churches or left to join black-led churches, later migrants have planted churches.

At the Inner London Committee meeting of 3 February 1994, the Revd Colin Marchant led a discussion on the different ways in which church planting was taking place, including that by ethnic groups. Conclusions reached included, 'we must allow the "independents" to get on!' and that the LBA's progress in the past decade must be celebrated.

During 1993 the LBA offered different forms of support to La Philadelphie, a West-African, French-speaking church, including arrangements to meet in different locations.¹³

The International Committee meeting of 4 February 1994 was informed of 'Lingala/French speaking Africans who were forming congregations in London'. These congregations were baptistic, growing rapidly and primarily comprised of refugees. The committee noted that, 'sadly often our churches were unresponsive to those congregations seeking accommodation for their meeting'. At the same meeting the Revd Kingsley Appiagyei said there were 300,000 Ghanaians in the UK and 'that we see African Christians now "not as refugees but as missionaries"'. He stated that Trinity Baptist met at Chatsworth Baptist, had another congregation in Stratford, other churches had emerged from Trinity and that he had planted a church in Amsterdam.

Churches planted by Trinity are now independent members of the LBA and they have released people who now serve as accredited Baptist ministers within various LBA churches. Furthermore, these independent churches have themselves planted churches.

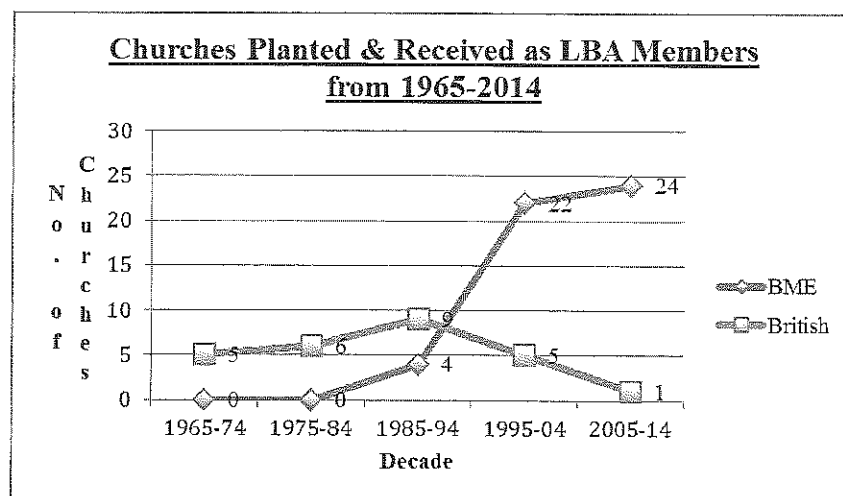
Then as now the LBA has admitted new congregations into the Association, following the Revd Peter Wortley's wisdom to recognise

¹² Charles Johnson, *Encounter in London*, p.25.

¹³ General Purpose and Finance Committee meetings on 1 September and 6 October 1993.

'that African [and other] Baptists in London were not the same as indigenous Baptists in London and we had to make allowances for these cultural differences'.¹⁴

This approach, combined with evangelistic and pioneering zeal of immigrants from Africa, Latin America, Eastern Europe and Asia, has led to a good number of churches being accepted as members of the Association. This is illustrated by the graph below; it does not include replants and churches planted and closed in this period.

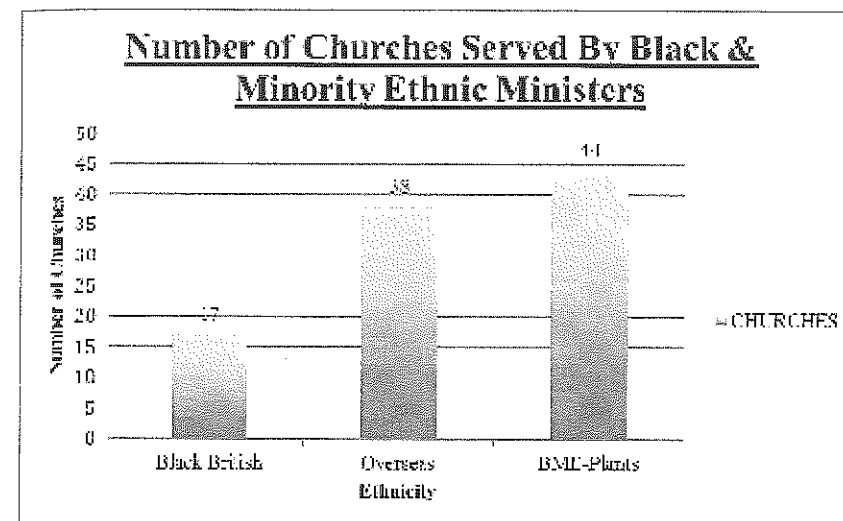


Ethnicity of Ministers serving London Churches

The Revd Desmond Gordon formed the Black Ministers' Forum in the context of a small number of BME ministers who felt lonely and isolated. Now that picture has radically changed. This has not occurred through any strategic effort but through God's providential provision. At the LBA Directors' Meeting on 25 February 2003 the Revd Dr Pat Took reported, 'It is very difficult at present to find people to come to London to take up pastorates.' She also said, 'There are a number of people from other parts

¹⁴ General Purpose and Finance Committee meeting on 5 April 1995.

of the world who are offering to serve churches in London'. Indeed there were, and many serve churches, particularly in the inner city, that others did not want to serve.



Fifty-five BME ministers, seventeen Black British and thirty-eight from overseas serve churches planted by white British Baptists. Within the fifty-five British plants and forty-eight BME plants,¹⁵ some are served by more than one BME minister, which is not reflected above. The total number of BME ministers serving in different capacities is just over 120.

Comment on Immigration Legislation

Immigration legislation is continually changing and it has become increasingly draconian. The recession and rise of UKIP has led to changes that make it very difficult for a church to call an overseas minister. Given the complex nature of legislation, one must be trained and qualified to offer advice.

¹⁵ There are fifty BME plants, but currently two churches are in pastoral vacancy.

The LBA and numerous ministers owe a debt of gratitude to Mr Stan Platt from the Methodists who has assisted many with applications for visa renewal, change of status, indefinite leave to remain, appeals and related matters. The Association and ministers have also benefited from the advice of Mr Nosa Dag and experience gained by Southall Baptist Church as it has supported ministers from overseas.

Emerging Possibilities

Immigrant ministers and churches are also contributing to the life of established but struggling Baptist churches. Three examples illustrate future possibilities.

The Revd Andre de Oliveira is an accredited Brazilian Baptist minister. He planted the Link Church, a Brazilian congregation in Northwest London. A few years later he offered his service on a part-time basis to English-speaking congregations. Through the BU settlement process he was called by Barking Baptist Church. In his seven-years tenure, ministry and mission have flourished and growth has necessitated their move back into the main sanctuary. They hope to call a full-time minister to take them forward.

Custom House Baptist Church was regularly discussed during the 1990s as it struggled and dwindled. Mr Tade Agbesanwa, one of the leaders, was left holding the keys as people left the church and he found himself leading the church. He encountered serious difficulties, but by God's grace and his persistence it is now a vibrant multiethnic congregation, committed to being a church for all people. He is now a fully accredited Baptist minister through the LBA Portfolio Route to Accreditation.

The Revd Neemias Antonio is an accredited Brazilian minister who led a Brazilian congregation meeting in West London. He entered discussion with the minister of Hayes and Harlington Baptist Church and over the course of time, aided by the Revds David Beazley and Paul Martin, the two congregations merged to form Harlington Baptist Church which he pastors.

There are other situations where such joint ventures could revitalize the life of struggling congregations.

Reflections

The statistical information shows that the LBA is a BME-majority Association with respect to church attendance, and this is set to grow. Just over 120 BMEs serve in ministerial leadership and the BME community accounts for 62% of church plants in the past fifty years. How should we respond to these changes?

We can rejoice that Christian presence and witness in many inner-city churches continues today because of immigrant communities. Without them many Baptist churches would have been turned into flats, pubs, etc. Their resilient willingness to remain within Baptist churches in the midst of lukewarm welcome and outright rejection is worthy of our gratitude, admiration and respect.

In the midst of such rejection there were also notable examples of welcome and embrace. The Revd Rodney and Mrs Elizabeth Collins at Willesden Green Baptist made a wholehearted effort to welcome and embrace Caribbean migrants into the life of the church. He wrote in 1964, 'Whatever success we may have had was due ... under God, to the concerted and loyal work of an unassuming man, our first Jamaican deacon'¹⁶ (whom Mrs Collins names as Ira Bogle).¹⁷ He continued, 'A number of our churches are electing West Indians to their diaconate and other offices. At least nine per cent of immigrant church members are holding office in London Baptist churches.'¹⁸ At this point some churches were ahead of the Association by several decades.

Within association life there has been an openness and willingness to encourage and embrace new congregations and assist in their establishment and acceptance as members of the Association. The above graph bears testimony to this and it is likely that more BME churches will join. Also, in conjunction with the Black Ministers' Forum, steps were taken to help refugee congregations, particularly when financial help was required.¹⁹

¹⁶ Revd Rodney Collins, 'Tuppence Coloured'.

¹⁷ Mrs Elizabeth Collins, *The Windrush Legacy*.

¹⁸ Revd Rodney Collins, 'Tuppence Coloured'.

¹⁹ General Purpose and Finance Committee, 4 June 1997.

The Lord has provided overseas ministers to serve many of our inner-city churches. Some of the new churches are raising and releasing leaders to serve the Baptist family.

All this calls for praise and thanksgiving to God. However, there are uncomfortable truths that require prayerful reflection, repentance and a willingness to change.

An unavoidable issue to be addressed is white flight to the suburbs and beyond. Sadly this is not a past phenomenon. A few years ago a minister informed me that white British Baptists were leaving their churches, which were becoming too black, for the church he pastored which had a larger white constituent. However, a cursory study of migration will reveal that when such communities grow in affluence they too move to the suburbs. Through telephone interviews I have learnt that suburban churches I assumed would be white British majority have either become or are on the way to becoming BME majority.

Some BME ministers also report that, on taking up their pastorate, they have witnessed working-age white British people move out of the area and church. Of course, these ministers recognize that people move for a variety of reasons, but there is clear evidence that the white community is not comfortable with black leadership. 'In terms of leadership ... I've yet to see a multicultural church being led by a black leader, fifty/fifty or even a black leader leading an all white church'.²⁰

The Association has not always understood what is taking place within the BME community. The comment at the LBA Council meeting in 1974 that 'immigrant communities ... preferred their own fellowship' appears to blame BME communities and fails to acknowledge the rejection that had led them to form their own fellowship. Twenty years later, when deciding to commend the acceptance of the Christian Baptist Church, now called Calvary Charismatic, as a member of the LBA, the comment was made that the Association did not want to 'encourage a black or African "section" of the LBA but were looking for integration'.²¹ Again this comment suggests that the various congregations being planted did

²⁰ Mr Daniel Shillingford, *The Windrush Legacy*, Chapter 6.

²¹ General Purpose and Finance Committee, 13 April 1994.

not want to integrate, when in fact they were committing themselves to the life of the Association.

The Road Ahead

In October 1986 the Revd Philip Mohabir of the West Indian Evangelical Alliance met the LBA Evangelism Committee. He 'longed for the day when ... black and white Christians together would be seen in the streets of London as a prophetic statement'.²² It is likely that this has been realized, but it is yet to be within Baptist churches in London. Is it possible?

During the [Azusa Street] revival, barriers came down between black and white and Hispanics, clergy and laity, male and female, because baptism in the Holy Spirit was available to all who believed.²³

This occurred in Los Angeles in 1906 under the leadership of William Seymour, an African-American son of former slaves. So we can cite evidence that it is possible. The painful story is that Pentecostalism has segregated along race lines.

Yet if we truly seek the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, then I believe that London Baptists can become a credible community of reconciled believers, who can preach the gospel of reconciliation with confidence and conviction, because we will be seen to practise what we preach. I suggest the following arenas in which we must seek the Spirit:

1. In reflections above it has been noted that both White British and BME communities move to the suburbs for a variety of reasons. That said, there is clear evidence of white flight when BME presence within church and community rises, and there are indications that this may even be occurring in the suburbs. Therefore, white British Baptists must seek the Spirit to stay where

²² Evangelism Committee, 28 October 1986.

²³ Clifford Clarke, *The Reason Why We Sing: Introducing Black Pentecostal Spirituality*, 1997, p.5.

they worship as more from the BME community attend, and they must seek the Spirit to sit under BME leadership.

2. Sections of Black and Minority Ethnic Baptists must seek the Spirit to stop apologizing for who they are: their spirituality, evangelical zeal, and their entrepreneurial, strategic and organizational acumen are gifts to the body of Christ in Britain, which must be affirmed and celebrated as such.
3. White British and BME Baptists must seek the Spirit to have difficult but necessary conversations. 'Reconciliation may produce handshakes and hugs ... but without confrontation and corrective action it is empty.'²⁴
4. White and BME Baptists must together challenge government and society regarding the ungodly and unholy rhetoric and behaviour towards immigrants. Joining the campaign to recognize 22 June as Windrush Day in celebration of the contribution of immigrants to Britain is one such step.

At the end of the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1956, the Revd Dr Martin Luther King said, 'The end is reconciliation, the end is redemption, the end is the creation of the beloved community'.²⁵ As individuals and communities we must seek the Spirit that we may play our respective part to create the Lord's beloved community, so that we are better placed to realize the LBA vision:

We are a Spirit empowered community of churches, growing in holiness and unity, working to be at ease with our diversity and aiming to reach London for Christ.

²⁴ C. Marsh and J. Perkins, *Welcoming Justice: God's Movement Toward Beloved Community*, 2009, p.30, quoting from Alan Boesak, *Black and Reformed*, Johannesburg, South Africa: Skotaville, 1984, p.32.

²⁵ Marsh and Perkins, *Welcoming Justice*, p.16, quoting Martin Luther King Jr, *The Papers of Martin Luther King Jr*, ed. Stewart Burns, Susan Carson, Peter Hollaran and Dana L.H. Powell, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996, 3: 136.

THEOLOGY IN BAPTIST LIFE

Ruth Gouldbourne

The place of theology in Baptist life is always a tricky one to outline – and outline it is all I will do in this short piece. We are, after all, a people who have historically deliberately – and for theological reasons – rejected the use of the creeds, because of our concern over coercion, and our commitment to biblical words. Historically, among Baptists, that has led to questions about the Trinity, that centrepiece of Christian orthodoxy. We are, historically and probably also in this generation, one of the more 'conservative' groupings theologically – and yet, because of our theological commitment to the autonomy of the local church under the headship of Christ, among us we have a very wide range of theological convictions. We have a high commitment to the church as a place for nurturing faith, making disciples in the most expansive sense, and to the role of all within a local congregation exercising their gift and ministry – and yet we have been historically rather resistant to the training and theological education of those who take on the role of ministers, regarding things through our faith, and understanding our place in the wide spectrum of theology and practice within the whole Christian church as at best unnecessary and at worst highly dangerous. How then, to reflect on the theological patterns of the last fifty years among Baptists in London?

This paper could identify different areas of controversy, or of change, or even of agreement – but much of that has been done in more detail and with more clarity elsewhere in this volume. What I want to do in this short piece is identify some of the shapes of discussion, challenge and even conflict among us, and then to suggest tentatively that actually there is a common theme underlying them all.

London churches have, like all the churches in the land, been affected by and have taken part in the theological discussion of the last generation. London ministers and churches have often played a leading role in addressing these issues. Overarching all the changes of the last fifty years has been the radical and apparently ever increasing decline in people attending churches, or identifying as Christian. There have been various

periods when this has been particularly marked, and the 1960s was one of those times – a step-change in the place of the church in society, and a crash in the numbers who called themselves Christian. Theologically, this coincided with new ways of speaking about faith, and about doctrine in particular – John Robinson's book, *Honest to God*, appeared to challenge normative language and understanding around who God is and how we relate to God – though in many ways it was a summary of much that had gone before in academic discussions. His role as a Bishop and the accessibility of the language, as well as the media coverage, meant that it had a significant impact in public discourse – and particularly among ministers opened up areas for discussion that were not easily closed down again. The place of a radical theology and its impact on preaching, together with its questioning of apparently previously accepted norms, caused some tensions among Baptists – churches where preaching was influenced by this new thinking were regarded with some suspicion by those where it was not, and those where older forms of language and approach were maintained were regarded with some superior smugness by those who found Robinson a breath of fresh air. London ministers contributed actively to this debate, on all sides.

Similarly, suspicion between congregations – with the consequent tensions within an association – was generated by changing understandings of the relationship between evangelism and social action. Although the big shifts that came in the late 1960s and early 1970s were led by evangelicals – and indeed Baptists, such as Rene Padilla and Samuel Escobar – there yet remained those who argued that to spend time on such work for the sake of the work alone as the service of the Kingdom was not to be true to the call of the gospel. Once more, congregations with different emphases – indeed, different convictions on this – found themselves suspicious or dismissive of one another. But for many churches, this new emphasis brought a much-needed way of engaging in wider work, and being more present in their context. The production of *Action in Mission* by the BUGB, launched in 1988, was a useful tool for this, helping churches in the early 1990s to learn to understand their immediate context better, and to develop ways of engaging that had focus and were effective. *Five Core Values for a*

Gospel People produced towards the end of the 1990s, following the Denominational Consultation (1996), took this process a step further and has continued to provide an important resource for Baptist churches thinking about how to shape their life and ministry. The undergirding of Five Core Values has helped us to stay, or indeed, to develop a theological rootedness, and the openness that the document encourages keeps us from trying to be 'one-size-fits-all'.

The impact of the charismatic movement in the 1980s and early 1990s repeated this pattern of challenge and possible discord. The place of London churches in this debate has been explored in more detail elsewhere in this book, so here it is only necessary to note that, as with the *Honest to God* debate and the Christology debate mentioned below, London churches and ministers took a particular lead in these discussions. The challenges of exploring new – or, rather, 'different' – patterns of being the church, particularly in the movement currently referred to as 'emerging church', appear to be our current area for concern, together with ongoing controversies about sexuality and our relationship to the nation's laws on marriage. Within congregations, these moves – the impact of charismatic practice and the exploration of doing things differently – have moved the emphasis away from what used to be termed 'one-man-ministry' towards congregations in which many people take part in leading, praying, preaching and ministering. London Baptists have also been at the forefront of responses to movements for mission and evangelical expression, for example in support of Operation Mobilisation (OM), Spring Harvest, Evangelism Explosion, Campus Crusade for Christ, Global Day of Prayer.

All of these are discussions that, although experienced in particular ways among Baptists, are controversies that affected at least all the evangelical denominations, and usually, albeit in different forms, the whole of the church in the UK.

There have also been particular issues that Baptists have reflected on together – sometimes well, and sometimes with difficulty. The most notable controversy among UK Baptists of this period is perhaps the one around Christology, provoked by a paper at the BU assembly in 1971. On a more day-to-day level of change to our practice driven by theology are

two, possibly less articulated, issues. The first is the change around ecumenical thinking and practice: not always easy for Baptists, and yet there have always been Baptists deep in the heart of the ecumenical movement. Indeed, it has been argued that because there were (and indeed, there remain) those Baptists who are very wary of ecumenical involvement, those who do get involved tend to get very involved. And the impact of this has been not just at a national or even regional level, with the commitment of BUGB to what is now Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, but also the involvement of the LBA at ecumenical equivalent levels and, even more, the connections and shared worship and mission between local churches across denominational divides. This is in part driven by a sense of a lessening presence which requires being together rather than being apart, but more positively, in the last fifty years, the breaking down of suspicion across denominational boundaries and, indeed, the lessening of denominational loyalties, which resulted in keeping one's distance, has enabled us to meet and worship and serve with brothers and sisters from a whole variety of contexts.

Together with this has been an on-going debate through this period about what it means to be Baptist. In the LBA, this has a particular resonance as, with the ever-widening geographical backgrounds of members in our churches, and indeed the increasing number of churches from different parts of the world becoming part of the LBA, the question of what we have in common, and how to recognise, affirm and celebrate that is very real. There have been times when we have got it badly wrong among us, but there are also times when we get it right, and our multi-cultural congregations and the variety of national congregations that are part of the LBA is a proper cause of celebration as well as a source for further reflection on Baptist identity and practice.

It is possible to look at our whole history, and certainly at the areas of tensions and debate over the last fifty years, and bemoan the fact that we have moved from issues of gospel doctrine – the person of Christ or the nature of God, through to 'simply' ones of morality or worship style. But I want to end by suggesting that this is to misread Baptists and theology.

There are times when Baptists appear to be wary of theological abstraction, and as a result to be intuitively pragmatic and involved in

doing, rather than thinking about what and why they are doing. And it is true that, if we are not careful, we can just do what is in front of us without thinking through why and how this fits with the faith we profess. But there is, I suggest, a theology in this, if we can hold on to it, and I suggest it is based on a conviction about Incarnation. In the particularity of Christ, God has involved himself in what is, as it were, in front of him, responding to the moment, encountering the concrete, and living love and salvation. Baptists, at our best, responding as gathered people to the leading of Christ in our own particular situations with our own realities as congregations, have a lightness and a flexibility to respond incarnationally to the places where we are called to be. Of course there are dangers, and we need one another to deepen our reflections and our insight. But where we do it well, as in the wide varieties of practice and activity among the churches of the LBA, we are truly Kingdom people. It would be good to own this not as a weakness but as one of our gifts, and so to develop and explore it further.

The other theme that is very clear throughout Baptist life, and certainly during the last fifty years, is that when we struggle with one another, when there are theological tensions and, indeed, tensions over practice, it is because we read Scripture differently. It has always been so among Baptists, and we see it played out in many ways over the last fifty years. Early in this period we were discussing the nature of God or of Christology. Currently, we are struggling to find ways to talk healthily about sexuality. These look as if they are debates of a different order. But in reality, they are all debates about how we read Scripture, and how we learn to read Scripture together. What we can at times struggle to hold on to is the willingness to trust that, although our readings may be different, we are all trying to read with honesty and integrity. When we are able to accept that, as we have been at all sorts of points, then although we may disagree yet still we can be together, reflecting to one another, and to a wider community, the faithfulness of God in working in and among the people of God, in both their strength and their confusion, for the coming of the Kingdom.

CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

Geoff Andrews

This article charts, in general terms, the charismatic renewal and its effect on churches in the London Baptist Association. It is not a detailed history and includes my own reflections as one deeply influenced by this movement in the last fifty years. I am grateful for the work of a previous London Area Superintendent, Douglas McBain, and his book *Fire Over the Water*,¹ which charts the renewal among Baptists from the 1960s to the 1990s. As an Association we have much to be thankful for in Douglas' ministry among us.

Beginnings

In 1965 the charismatic movement, as distinct from Pentecostalism, was relatively new. My first encounter took place at a prayer meeting in Gillingham Baptist Church. I was in my mid teens. In that meeting I heard, for the first time, someone speaking in tongues. The experience unnerved me, but also caused me to ask questions of my own spirituality. I remember distinctly being touched by the Holy Spirit and beginning to speak in tongues myself. This experience was nurtured both in my home church and at meetings of the Fountain Trust in London.

While a number of other factors influenced the charismatic movement, the Fountain Trust was a key to its growth in the UK. The Fountain Trust was founded in September 1964 and its first General Secretary was Michael Harper, previously a curate at All Souls, Langham Place, working alongside John Stott. Harper was influenced by a number of figures, among them Dennis Bennett whose later book, *Nine O'clock in the Morning*,² was so influential in introducing many to charismatic experience. Harper in turn influenced others, among them David Pawson, a Baptist minister, who was to have a significant impact in the movement.

¹ Douglas McBain, *Fire Over the Water*, Darton Longmann and Todd, 1997, pp.7-15.

² Dennis Bennett, *Nine O'Clock in the Morning*, Bridge Publishing Inc, 1994.

McBain comments, 'the leadership of the Baptist denomination was apparently indifferent to what was happening in their midst'.³ The influence was largely at the grass roots.

The Fountain Trust's aims were:

1. To encourage Christians of all Churches to receive the power of the Holy Spirit and to glorify Christ by manifesting in their lives the fruit and gifts of the same Spirit so that they may enrich their worship, strengthen their witness and deepen their fellowship.
2. To encourage local churches to experience renewal in the Holy Spirit and to recover the full ministry of the Holy Spirit, including that of healing.
3. To encourage Christians to expect and pray for worldwide revival.⁴

With Harper's key role, it was clear that Anglicans would be attracted and, because of this, other denominations would be interested too. McBain comments:

Since it was born in the mecca of evangelical Anglicanism, was led by a wise and cultivated pioneer in Michael Harper whose evangelical credentials were impeccable, and its sympathies were broadly ecumenical, it was certain to have a considerable impact among Baptists as among others.⁵

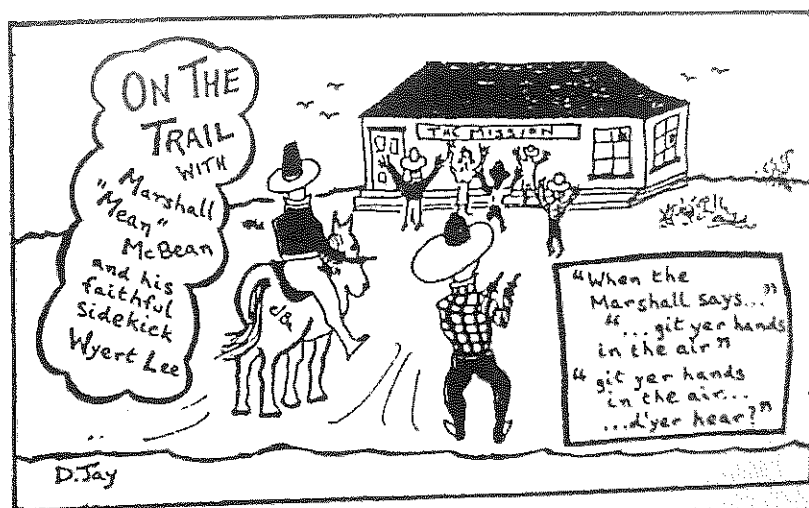
A significant feature of the Fountain Trust was its ecumenical embrace. Others, though embracing the Trust's emphases, were less enthusiastic about its ecumenical stance.

A momentum was gaining ground in the churches. A grass-roots movement was bringing about significant changes. The charismatic

³ *Fire Over the Water*, p.32.

⁴ As quoted in *Fire Over the Water*, p.36.

⁵ *Fire Over the Water*, p.36.



This cartoon from *London Baptist* 1975 reflects tension over new worship practice

renewal brought new songs and new ways of worship. There was a deepening of the prayer life of the churches and a significant openness to the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Alongside this there was conflict. Some will testify that the charismatic movement brought heartache and division to churches. I was pastor of a church in London where a significant number of members had joined following charismatic renewal at their previous church. My own experience, however, was not like this. Renewal at Gillingham Baptist Church promoted strong feelings but did not create division. This was down to the wise and godly leadership of the Revd Tom Rogers.

Mainstream

The Baptist Union was facing challenges in the 1970s. Following a report to the Assembly in 1977 that seemed somewhat dismissive of decline within the denomination,⁶ a number of senior figures gathered together

⁶ *Fire Over the Water*, p.82.

Baptist evangelicals to address this. This was a coalition of charismatics and non-charismatics: individuals committed to bringing life and growth to the denomination. It had defused some of the conflict arising from differences over charismatic renewal.

Even this was not without its difficulties. In 1982 it was noted that many attending Mainstream conferences were clearly charismatic in theology and practice. McBain quotes Paul Beasley-Murray:

One did not need to be a 'card-carrying charismatic' in order to be a member of Mainstream but, since the number of hands raised in the air in the worship sessions was greater than had ever been seen in all the Baptist Assemblies put together, this suspicion about Mainstream being a front behind which the charismatics were planning a takeover was understandable.⁷

There were inevitable conflicts between those evangelicals who were seeking to move forward radically on charismatic lines and those other evangelicals who wanted a more traditional approach. As time has gone on Mainstream has become very much the home of the charismatics within the denomination. The change of name to Fresh Streams in 2011 signalled a change of emphasis, but at its heart is the need for a church energised by the Spirit of God.⁸

John Wimber

While this article cannot go into detail on every facet of the movement, it would be remiss not to mention John Wimber. Nigel Wright records a visit of John Wimber to the church of which he was minister in 1982.⁹ David Watson had invited Wimber with a group from California to the UK and it was suggested that they might come to Wright's church. After

⁷ *Fire Over the Water*, p.110.

⁸ <http://freshstreams.net/about-us/fresh-streams-is-launched/>

⁹ Tom Smail, Andrew Walker and Nigel Wright, *Charismatic Renewal: The Search for a Theology*, SPCK, 1993, p.27.

some teaching one of the group uttered the words 'Come, Holy Spirit'. Wright comments:

What happened next is exceedingly difficult to describe. Within seconds the Spirit of God had fallen upon a large proportion of the congregation, many of whom were trembling and shaking, speaking in tongues, calling on the Lord, prophesying, and some of whom (hard though it might seem to believe) were flapping up and down like fish upon the floor. Some of this I was able to see, but most of it passed me by since I was doing the same.¹⁰

Manna Ministries of which Douglas McBain was director, organised a conference led by Wimber and his team at Westminster in 1984. I attended and witnessed the same things that Wright describes. I was profoundly touched, had a significant experience of the Holy Spirit and found a new energy for ministry.

McBain evaluates Wimber, pointing out significant failings.¹¹ These include an exaggeration of the number of miracles, a naivety around prophecy and prophets, and a concentration on the spectacular that is not mirrored in scripture. While awakened and touched during the conference I have to echo McBain's conclusions. From the positive point of view, I, with many other ministers, found that my experience of Wimber enhanced my charismatic experience. Following Wimber, many of us sought to recover the healing ministry within the church. Local churches encouraged people to receive prayer for their concerns and many testified to knowing some touch from God, even in the absence of the spectacular. There was no doubt that prayer offered in this way was key to some embracing faith for themselves.

There was a resurgence of signs and wonders with what became known as the 'Toronto Blessing'. This touched a number of churches. However, it was received in the same way as the Wimber experience earlier and raised the same questions.

¹⁰ *Charismatic Renewal*, p.27.

¹¹ *Fire Over the Water*, pp.102-107.

Spring Harvest and Other Conferences

In the early 1980s a Christian Conference took place at a holiday village in Prestatyn, North Wales. It was called Spring Harvest and enjoyed unprecedented success. Many thousands of Christians have since attended and continue to attend these conferences at Minehead and Skegness over the Easter period. Spring Harvest followed other conferences like Keswick and has in turn led to other similar events. Among those who attend are many with a Baptist background. The event is a mixture of vibrant worship and teaching. Themes relevant to everyday life are explored and many people have been touched. From its beginning Spring Harvest embraced charismatic renewal, but also wished to embrace others. Peter Meadows, one of its founders said:

From the beginning Spring Harvest took a committed charismatic stance but worked hard to help people keep within their comfort zone. By including both charismatics and non-charismatics on the speaking team together, friendships were formed and fragmentation resisted.¹²

Spring Harvest has influenced many of our churches. Along with other conferences like New Wine, it has enthused and encouraged many. Charismatic renewal has become mainstream through these events.

Key Features and Lessons

Having briefly described the key features of charismatic renewal over the last fifty years, it is time to consider how this has impacted the churches.

1. Worship Styles

Styles of worship within our churches have been dramatically changed by charismatic renewal. Whether they consider themselves charismatic or not, most of our churches use contemporary worship songs. When I began training for ministry, worship in Baptist churches consisted of four or five hymns, prayers, readings from scripture and a sermon. It was rather formal, lasted one hour, and was rather irreverently called the 'hymn

¹² *Fire Over the Water*, p.138.

sandwich'. Things were changing in the late seventies. I remember my year group at college requesting that Douglas McBain come and speak to us about leading worship in a charismatic context.

The vast majority of Baptist churches today have a mixture of contemporary worship songs with traditional hymns. The mix varies, but a mix is the norm. Many churches sing a number of songs interspersed with times of open prayer. Worship is not always led by the minister. Often churches have a designated worship leader and, rather than the organ, a small ensemble including guitar, keyboard and drums.

Contemporary worship songs tend to be simple expressions of love and do not have the depth of poetry and theology of older hymns, although recent songs have caught up a bit. There is a depth of emotion in singing these and, with modern tunes, many find they are able to express a depth of feeling in worship that both encourages and blesses. Others mourn this change, but with a balance of old and new there can be something wonderfully enriching about worship influenced by charismatic renewal.

Clearly, there are dangers. Some worry about an over-emphasis on emotion that tends to be 'me' centred. This can lead to worship times that go on too long and can push out engagement with the scriptures and prayers for the wider world. There needs to be awareness of the dangers.

The 'hymn sandwich' was criticised in the past: modern worship can fall into the same trap. There is a different order, but it can become lifeless. At the heart of worship must be the presence of the Holy Spirit who makes Christ known to us as we gather and inspires our worship.

2. *Spiritual Gifts*

Charismatic renewal placed a renewed emphasis on spiritual gifts. In its early days there was an over-emphasis on speaking in tongues, which for some became the benchmark of whether a person was truly a Christian or not. This was not only divisive but has no basis in the Bible. However, my own experience of speaking in tongues has been a blessing to me and a real resource in my ministry. Like all gifts, it is for the building up of the church and therefore needs the kind of regulation that Paul indicates in 1 Corinthians 14. This was lacking in the early days of the movement.

There are, however, other spiritual gifts. Some have an obvious 'supernatural' quality, others seem more ordinary. Charismatic renewal sought to emphasise that the gifts of the Holy Spirit spoken of in the New Testament were available for today. The work and witness of the church was not down to us, but was enabled by God.

There are many stories that give cause for concern where there was a lack of maturity in the use of gifts. Sadly, these stories often take the headlines. Yet many churches tell positive stories of enabling, often in small ways, that has led to blessing in the church. I have already expressed my appreciation of the wisdom of Tom Rogers and Gillingham. This wisdom, coupled with that other spiritual gift of discernment, led to growth and blessing in the church without the trauma of division.

3. *Prayer Ministry*

John Wimber encouraged people to minister to one another. In post-Wimber enthusiasm people were laying hands on one another with a damaging lack of maturity and ignorance. However, praying for one another and seeking God's healing was a positive step forward. We had to learn that not everybody was healed. We also needed to learn that healing was not always physical. Our prayers for one another often enabled us to find strength in the midst of suffering; to know the very presence of God in our traumas.

I am so glad that I learned this lesson. I am always ready to pray with those who ask me and believe it is right to create physical space and opportunity for people to be prayed for in our churches.

* * * * *

The last fifty years have seen enormous changes in the way we do church. Charismatic renewal has encouraged people to look for and expect the touch of God on their lives. Christian belief is not simply assent to a set of dogmas, but a living relationship with God. I am grateful for the impact charismatic renewal has made on my life and continues to make on the life of the church.

THEOLOGY AND CULTURE

An African Perspective

Joe M. Kapolyo

I can still see in my mind's eye the figure of Archbishop Desmond Tutu in the midst of a massive rally in Johannesburg, complete with his clerical garments, plunging into the crowd to rescue a man wearing a necklace – a rubber tyre hung on a victim's neck – the symbol of death for anyone accused of betraying the cause of the black people in pre-independence South Africa. Tutu's theology came straight from the heart, perhaps even ignoring the head (reason). He acted courageously to deliver a man sentenced to death by an illegitimate court! His theology touched on practical daily matters of justice and fairness.

Development of theology

Strictly speaking, theology, a word derived from two Greek words, *theos* and *logos*, means a study of ideas about God, more particularly, the Christian God. Sometimes we use the expression the doctrine of God. This is certainly the sense in which the term was used by the early North African Church fathers, who coined the phrase in the City of Alexandria in the second century AD. These included Clement, Cyprian and Origen. But even Tertullian, the second century writer/lawyer from North Africa, spoke of Theology as the study of the God of the Christians (McGrath 2007:6-7, 102). Systematic theology as a discipline in fact originated from Alexandria in Egypt.

Theology as an academic discipline was born with the founding of universities in the European cities of Paris, Bologna and Oxford. Originally the universities offered only four subjects: these included the arts, the entry programme for scholars. Then they would graduate to do medicine, law and theology. By the thirteenth century theology was increasingly used to refer to the systematic study of Christian beliefs in general, not just the articulation of beliefs about God. The establishment of the discipline in universities drew a distinction between the much favoured and more academic theoretical and speculative study of theology, over against the practical subjects to do with the practice of

Churchmanship. Perhaps this was the beginning of the distinction between the head and the heart in regards to the study of theology. Until relatively recently, Practical Theology, the practice in ministry arising out of theology, was seen as a very poor relation within the faculties of theology.

With the onset of secularism arising from the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century in Europe and America, academic study of theology, it was argued, needed to be free from any external authorities such as the Church or even the creeds. This led directly to the dropping of theology from the faculties of universities in those countries, like France and Australia, with a strong secularist ideology. In them it has taken a long time before universities would admit theology as a bona fide academic discipline. The more secular the countries became, the more likely that theology was looked upon with suspicion and excluded from public education at every level (McGrath 2007:105). In this country it is relatively recently, in the final quarter of the twentieth century, that university authorities have allowed Bible Colleges to offer degree programmes for their courses (CNAAB or direct accreditation with established universities).

Objective theology, as taught in the universities, has several basic components: bible, systematization, philosophy, history, pastoral and spirituality.

From my point of view, western theology as outlined above is founded on biblical ideas, filtered through Greek philosophical methods, married to rationalism and the enlightenment ideology, focused almost solely on an objective discussion of ideas (cognitive and informative), even if these ideas are about God. As a result two major weaknesses in the western theological enterprise have become apparent. These are silence and collusion;: silence in the face of gross injustices suffered at the hands of the west by many colonised people and collusion with the whole western cultural, economic and political imperialistic agenda.

Theology and the imperialistic agenda

The western theological enterprise was not just silent but positively encouraged the triangular slave trade in which upwards of sixty million

Africans were displaced from their homelands and sold into chattel slavery or perished during the long voyage from Africa to the Caribbean and the Americas. It was a Roman Catholic nation, Portugal, which first took slaves from the Congo in 1444 AD. The protestant nations which eventually overtook Portugal in colonial expansion were no more concerned for the freedom and salvation of the Africans. They allowed economic interests to blind their sense of justice and mercy, righteousness and godliness. There were significant western voices of dissent (most notably John Newton, William Wilberforce, Thomas Fowell Buxton, etc) but by and large the whole theological establishment had little to say to counter the injustices against black people and other people of colour, both African and Indian. The BUGB Apology of 2007 was a recognition of the Union's complicity (even if by silence) in the slave trade. It was also an acknowledgement of the economic benefits derived from such an inhumane business.

The 2007 BUGB Apology was significant, not because the sins of the fathers were unfairly visited on the children as so many seem to understand; that was not the issue. This generation of white Christians is not to be held directly responsible for the transatlantic slave trade. However, the tragedy of the connection with Africa made by the Iberian powers back in the middle of the fifteen century when they first exported a few slaves from the Congo has come to dominate and haunt relations between black and white people for centuries. In those relationships white people have proved dominant and powerful in every way. This is a result of the slave trade and has serious continuing consequences (Walls 1998:5-6) for the way white and black people relate to each other. This is the crucial point.

J.H. Cone makes the point clear by saying, 'While I had not lived during the time of the legal slavery, its impact upon black life is still visibly present in the contemporary economic, social, and political [and I would add theological] structures of the United States'. Lynching is the most dramatic manifestation of the legacy of black slavery. Incidentally, lynching, a verb derived from the surname of Mr William Lynch, is not just the physical brutality connected with summary executions of black people at the hands of white racists, it is especially a way of sowing

distrust among black people so that they can never trust each other but wholly trust their slave masters.

The debilitating effects of the slave trade on Africa are easy to identify. Not only were the most able-bodied men, women and children taken, leaving older, less able people, but the coastal lands and their hinterlands were turned into war zones as tribe fought tribe to capture slaves for sale to Europeans whose cruelty had become and remains legendary. Theology was silent; it did not seem to influence either Catholic or Protestant powers in their quest for more and more slaves to satisfy the seemingly insatiable appetite for labour of the burgeoning plantations and their slave traders, which in turn fed the ever growing appetites of the nations' coffers back in Europe. The slave trade created untold wealth for the trading nations while despoiling the continent of Africa.

Again with a few exceptions the western theological establishment in Germany was silent or irrelevant over the massacre of six million Jews in the Third Reich during the Second World War. With the exception of people like Dietrich Bonhoeffer who was martyred for his opposition to the Nazi regime and Karl Barth, the majority of German theologians remained silent when this gross miscarriage of justice was committed by the Nazis.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, theology was too easily the handmaiden of the European colonial enterprise and all the problems of land acquisition and the wholesale dehumanisation of non-white peoples all over the world.

During the pre-colonial period white missionaries in places like Calabar, Zululand, Basutoland, Buluwayo in Zimbabwe, were strictly controlled by the local tribal political figures; Moshoeshoe, Lobengula, Mzilikazi, etc. But during the high water mark of colonialism (1880 – 1930) missionaries were part of the governing system. Undoubtedly there were many individuals who bucked the trend and espoused the aspirations of Africans and fought against the injustices that characterised the colonial rule (Cripps in Rhodesia, Frank Barlow in Kenya – a Scottish missionary turned land-tenure expert who fought to give back land to the Kikuyu from the government and the Mission). But in general the voice

of the missionary enterprise and the voice of their theology were silent in the face of gross miscarriages of justice!

Western cultural and therefore theological hegemony is particularly acute in certain parts of Africa, both anglophone and francophone, where during the period of colonialism the colonized were not encouraged to develop confidence in using their local languages and cultures for formal education, which tended to have been developed by Westerners for Westerners but adapted and packaged for the colonies. This Eurocentric approach to education, history, culture and intellectual development excluded the possibility of serious engagement with indigenous thought patterns, categories, idiom and indeed general concerns. This is especially true in countries in the areas ranging from East, Central and Southern Africa where white settler presence inculcated a near total abandonment of the local languages and their cultures for anything but personal and domestic use. The riches of African languages and cultures would not and did not form any serious part of educational curricula at either secondary or tertiary levels. 'Imperial western values and concepts ... were at one and the same time opening to African societies the intellectual and economic means of [modern] nationhood and also creating a universe where their traditional worldview found no place.'¹ To the detriment of the African Church, this state of affairs has been perpetrated even in the postcolonial era in life in general and especially so in the Church.

It is depressing to find many, perhaps even the majority, of educated sub-Saharan African Christian ministers preferring to preach or teach in their adopted colonial lingua franca instead of their mother tongues, even when the context of such ministry, e.g. family funerals, is totally monocultural. Kalilombe, writing from the context of Malawi, emphasizes this point when he laments the dearth of grassroots theological reflection

¹ G. Molyneux, *African Christian Theology*, San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1993, p.27.

because 'the Christian masses tend to doubt whether they can do their own reflection on their faith'.²

Cone, writing from an African-American context, makes a similar point when he says,

I think that black professors are still too captivated by structures of white thought and therefore cannot think creatively. What we think and how we organize our ideas are too much determined by our training at Union, Harvard, Yale and other white schools that imitate them. The academic structure of white seminary and university curriculums require that black students reject their heritage or at least regard it as intellectually marginal.³

In apartheid South Africa, the doctrine of separateness and the designation of black people as 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' for white people were underpinned by the Dutch Reformed Church's (DRC) interpretation of certain biblical passages from the early chapters of the Book of Genesis (Genesis 9:24-27). They misinterpreted the curse on Canaan, fulfilled in the subjugation of Palestine by Joshua, to be a universal curse on Canaan's father Ham and all his descendants, people of colour, for ever. The demise of Apartheid in South Africa was in part based on a revision of this official doctrine of the DRC.

Perhaps it is for these and other reasons that western Christianity seems to have lost its vigour and has become 'dispirited...with declining numbers' year on year. Perhaps that is why, in God's economy, the centre of gravity of the Christian Church has shifted to the southern continents (Bediako 1997:1). This shift is the third in the history of the Christian Church. The first occurred in the first and second centuries AD. The shift from Jerusalem to Rome enabled the faith to survive the demise of the Jewish State, after 70 AD and especially after 135 AD when the Romans

²P. Kalilombe, 1999, *Doing Theology at the Grassroots*, Gweru: Mambo Press, 1999, 193. I would add African professional theologians and ministers to this assertion.

³J.H. Cone, *My Soul Looks Back*, Maryknoll: Orbis, 1993, p.76.

made it illegal for Jews to live in Palestine. Similarly, the shift from the Mediterranean basin to the northern European states enabled the Church to survive the invasion of Rome by the Barbarians. The Church will again be preserved from the ravages of rapid secularisation, even in theology, and pluralism in the west as it finds a home in heartlands of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Redeeming theology – the importance of the reader and his or her context

Contextualisation is the theological movement that has caught the imagination of many people of the southern continents, leading to such theological expressions as liberation theology, black theology, feminist and womanist (black women) theologies, and many others besides. Simply put, contextualization is the abandonment by Latin Americans, black Africans, Indians, Asians, etc., of the western theological agenda; the traditional 'marriage between theology or Christian reflection and western norms of thought and life' (C.S. Song 1980:4). The contexts are varied; Latin American liberation theology has been dominated by the economics of injustice in that part of the world. Black Theology has been dominated by black people's fight against white racism and the injustices of white domination of black people, especially in the United States and South Africa. Historical, economic, political and cultural contexts have become pivotal in the theological reflections that characterise what are pejoratively called non-western theologies. There is no such thing as theology; there are only theologies! There is no such thing as non-contextualised theology – all theologies, western theology included – are contextualised!

Every one of these contexts needs to be reflected in the worldwide Church's theological expression. This has significant eschatological ramifications. In that day, when the redeemed will be drawn from every tribe, tongue, language and nation, there will be a great multicultural mosaic to glorify the Lord (Carson 1996:540). I fear that on that day a lot of us who have come under the influence of western theology will simply reflect a faded carbon copy of the imperial image of theology bequeathed to us by those whose intellectual developments took their cues from Aristotle and Plato, neglecting the wisdom that built great empires like

the Ashanti of Ghana, the Zulu of South Africa and Monomotapa of Great Zimbabwe!

Liberation theology, Black theology, Feminist and Womanist theologies, etc., are all in their contexts able to speak to each other meaningfully because of their basis – the self-disclosure of the triune God revealed in nature, the written Scriptures and supremely in the Living Word of God, Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

Black Theology – James Harvey Cone

Cone was troubled when he asked the question, 'How could I continue to allow my intellectual life to be consumed by the theological problems defined by people who had enslaved my grandparents? Since there was nothing in Euro-American theology that spoke directly to slavery, colonisation and poverty, why should I let white theologians tell me what the Gospel is?' (Cone 1993:43).

Cone found his solution, his context, in the black struggle for liberation. Black theology is the marriage between Black Power and Christianity; an enterprise created and engaged in solely by black theologians struggling alongside their brothers and sisters for freedom from political bondage and cultural imperialism. The issue for him was whether the biblical Christ was to be limited to the prejudiced interpretations of the white scholars (Cone 1993:44). At that time any attempt to speak positively with the gospel into the historic-political movements was anathema to any serious theologian who adhered to the divine revelation.

Cone was a man reborn! His theological reflections could no longer ignore the current violence against black people: the deaths of Martin Luther King Jr, Malcolm X, and the historic killings of so many blacks in the cities of the Southern United States, the slave ships, the auction blocks, and the lynchings. 'When it became clear to me that my intellectual consciousness should be defined and controlled by black history and culture and not by standards set in white seminaries and universities, I could feel in the depth of my being a liberation that began to manifest itself in the energy and passion of my writing. Writing for the first time became as natural as talking and preaching' (Cone 1993:47).

'When a person writes about something that matters to him or her existentially, and in which his or her identity is at stake, then the energy comes easily and naturally' (Cone 1993:51). This may be the reason why there are very few significant black African contributions to theology.

Black theology in Great Britain today

The two leading protagonists in the field of Black theology in Great Britain today are Robert Beckford and Anthony Reddie. The specific context that defines and calls for the black voice in theology in this country is firmly situated in the dynamics that surround migration of black people from the Caribbean, starting with the docking of the *Empire Windrush* in London in June 1948 and more latterly waves of black migrants from the African continent (Reddie 2012:234).

Beckford's major contribution, emphasised in his book, *Jesus Dub*⁴, uses a reggae musical phenomenon, Dub, a central feature borrowed from dancehall developments over the past sixty years, as a prism through which he juxtaposes theology and black culture in order to create new and fresh ways of talking about God and hearing the word of God in channels not mediated through white lenses. Working from a background of chattel slavery, revival Christianity, dancehall and other working-class Jamaican social features, Beckford creates a dialogue between the church hall (theology) and the dance hall (social culture) and thus explores the link between racialized oppression on the one hand and the response to it of both faith and music.

Reddie's work is typically protest theology, which challenges the 'normative black Christian faith that has for far too long drunk too deeply from the well of "evangelical post-reformation theology", which has largely muted Christianity's embodied radical intent' (Reddie 2012:241-242).

Theology, or white enlightenment theology, has had a history of disempowering, marginalising and disenfranchising black people. Black theology seeks to find new ways of articulating theology to release those

⁴ R. Beckford, *Jesus Dub: Theology, Music and Social Change: Faith, Culture and Social*, Routledge, Abingdon Oxfordshire UK, 2006.

bound or oppressed by historical ways of theologising. Reddie endeavours to create a 'redemptive hermeneutic' that seeks to decolonise the black mind while at the same time challenging the internalised belief structures detrimental to the flourishing of the black spirit. In order to achieve all this, Reddie engages in a process of deconstruction of covert and almost subliminal attempts by right-of-centre politicians to disguise white privilege while hiding behind the rhetoric of the Bible, the Empire and the Flag (Reddie 2014: 1).

The goal of black theology, bearing in mind its political leanings, is 'justice, freedom and liberation'. These sentiments are reminiscent of Nelson Mandela's articulation of the aims of the ANC as 'not the cry, "drive the white man into the sea" but "freedom and fulfilment for the African people ..."' (see Mandela 1994:435, 438; also Frankel 1999:229). 'During my life time I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities ...'.

African theologies

The story of contextualisation in Africa begins in the colonial period. The general stance of white people, Christian or non-Christian, was that African culture was too heathen to be a useful vehicle for the Gospel. The best thing was for it to be exterminated before the Gospel could take root. The translation work taken to put the Scriptures into the local languages was not a quest to find African cultural homes for the Gospel, but simply a process to enhance the educational enterprise that would enable the Africans to move along the cultural continuum from the most primitive (African) to the most civilised (European). A lot of the early evangelisation was at the same time an exercise in transforming Africans from what they were culturally into black Europeans. Certainly the expressive elements of black cultures were changed quickly and replaced by European ones. But the world views, beliefs and values were not worthy of the effort and so often were left untouched.

We detect three phases of development on the road to full blown contextualisation or indigenisation of theology in sub-Saharan Africa:

First, from the mid-1930s to the end of the 1970s was the period of the 'reactive and apologetic' which sought to establish African culture and religion as legitimate in themselves, even gifts of God to the peoples concerned. This period encouraged by the social sciences and especially anthropological research, concentrated on the comparative method. The process of legitimisation of African culture had begun.

Second, from the 1980 to the end of the century, we saw the rise of the inculturation-evaluative method which led to the rise of black theologies, liberation theologies and feminist theologies. Recognizing African cultures as preparation for the Gospel, the inculturation movement sought to deepen the roots of the Gospel in the cultural soils of the continent of Africa. Part of the task of the inculturation movement was to rid the continent of the negative images of African culture and African peoples as contained in some of the misinterpretations of texts like Genesis 9 regarding the cursing of Canaan the son of Ham. The bible was used by many scholars, in the Justin Martyr fashion, to evaluate cultural institutions such as circumcision, health and healing, covenants, etc (Ukpong 2001:17).

The third phase rejects the methodology that depends for interpretation of the Bible on the interface between the academic reading of the Bible and culture. This phase recognises the importance for theology of the ordinary reader of the bible who does not have any academic training at all, let alone in theology. It is too early to fully evaluate the contribution this movement will make.

Theology is situated in a people's liberation, any people; such liberation is historical, cultural, political, and economic. Theology is a matter of the head (faith seeking understanding) and the heart (cultural transformation in society). God speaks powerfully into both situations. We endanger the theological enterprise when we effectively divorce the head from the heart in our theologising.

Further Reading

- Bediako, K. 1998, 'Facing the Challenge' in *Journal of African Christian Thought*, Vol.1 No.1, June 1998
- Carson, D.A., *The Gagging of God*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1996
- Cone, J.H., *My soul looks back*, Orbis Books, Maryknoll NY, 1993
- Frankel, G., *Rivonia's Children*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London UK, 1999
- Mandela, N., *Long Walk to Freedom*, Abacus, London UK, 1994
- McGrath, A., *Christian Theology*, Blackwells, Oxford., 2007
- Molyneux, G., *African Christian Theology*, Mellen Research University Press, San Francisco, 1993
- Reddie, A., 'Black Theology in Britain', in Eds. Hopkins D N and Antonio E P, *Black Theology*, CUP, Cambridge, UK, 2012
- Reddie A 2014, "'Fiddling while Rome Burns'", The relevance of Black Theology to Contemporary Britain' (paper given at Spurgeon's College on 19 May 2014)
- Song, C.S., *Third-eye Theology*, Lutterworth, London, UK, 1980
- Ukpong, J.S., 'Developments in biblical interpretations in Africa; Historical and hermeneutical directions' in West and Dube (eds), *The Bible in Africa*, Brill Academic Publishers, Leiden, 2001
- Walls, A.F., 'African in Christian History: Retrospect and prospect', in *Journal of African Christian Thought*, Vol 1, No. 1, June 1998

WHEN CAESAR COMES KNOCKING ...

The growing impact of legislation on local church life

Paul Martin

'Give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give back to God what belongs to God.' (Mark 12.17)

These are the familiar words of Jesus in response to the trap set by the Pharisees and the Herodians, when they asked him whether or not it was right to pay the unpopular poll tax levied by the Roman emperor on all residents of Judaea.

If Baptist deacons from 1965 were to be transported in a time machine into a deacons' meeting in 2015, there is a good chance that some of the items on the agenda of our meetings would feel decidedly alien. Indeed the culture shock may be such that they might find themselves wondering who is setting the agenda of our church life today – the church or the state? Our Baptist forebears in 1615 would probably have even more of a problem, given their principled resistance to the interference of the state in the affairs of the church.

What is without question is that Baptist churches, and their leaders in particular, have to be far more clued up on the way in which legislation impacts on our life together than at any other time in the past. Government legislation and government guidance are having an ever increasing impact on the way in which our churches operate within contemporary society. It feels to many as if Caesar is demanding more and more of us as we seek to be disciples together. The critical question, of course, is whether this is justified, or whether it impinges on our ability to give back to God what belongs to God.

The significant turning point on this journey was probably the passing of the two Charities Acts in 1992 and 1993. This was the first major legislation to affect charities in the United Kingdom since the Charities Act 1960. The 1993 Act defined charity trustees as 'the persons having the general control and management of the administration of a charity'. One of the impacts of this legislation was to increase awareness within the Baptist community that deacons (or their equivalent) held

responsibilities as 'charity trustees'. It also meant that churches were not free to appoint whomever they wished to such positions. Certain persons are disqualified from acting as charity trustees, and therefore disqualified from serving as deacons in our churches.

It was this legislation that first gave rise to the publication by the Baptist Union Corporation of their extremely helpful Guideline documents. From an initial half a dozen documents dealing with the buying and selling of church property there are now 84 different Guidelines addressing a wide range of legal and property related concerns affecting the life of our churches.

Arranging events and activities now involves us in a plethora of responsibilities that would have been unthinkable for churches back in 1965 and certainly in 1865. Take the example of a church putting on a weekly event for children in which the children are provided with some hot food. It is not enough to have to think creatively about the activities that will be arranged to attract and keep the attention of children, and about how to communicate the gospel to children in the twenty-first century. The organisers also have to consider the following questions:

- Have all of the leaders been appointed in compliance with the church's safeguarding policy?
- Is there an appropriate ratio of adults to children?
- Have risk assessments been carried out for all the activities that the children will participate in?
- Does the church have the correct copyright licences to project the words of the songs?
- Are any licences needed to show the video clips that are part of the programme?
- Can we just get the ladders out and replace the spent light bulbs in the ceiling of the church hall without waiting for the property team to do it?
- Has the food been prepared in accordance with food safety standards?
- Have all the children been registered, with note taken of any food allergies?

- Do the leaders know what to do in the event that the fire alarm goes off?

It is not that the churches have been singled out for special treatment. The trend that we have experienced within the life of our churches is part of the much wider trend towards a more highly regulated society that has been taking place over the past decades. All sectors of society have found the ever increasing impact of regulation impinging on their activities.

On the whole the intention behind regulation has been good. The experience of avoidable accidents taking place in the workplace has led to the development of health and safety legislation. Employment legislation and regulation has evolved in response to unfairness in the workplace. Concerns over public health have given rise to the regulations that impact on the production and service of food to the general public. Safeguarding policies and procedures have emerged in response to the multiple stories of children being abused by those in positions of trust. The increasing regulation of the charity sector has been an attempt to ensure that charities are worthy of the trust that wider society places in them, and that the privileges they enjoy are justified by the public benefit that charities bring to the wider society.

There has been an underlying presumption at work in our country and in other Western European countries in the past decades that greater and greater regulation will lead to a safer, a fairer, and a more trustworthy society. Even when governments have committed themselves to 'reducing red tape', increasing regulation has been the response to societal ills. It is not the task of this essay to critique this development, but simply to observe that what we have experienced in the life of our churches has been part of a wider societal trend.

How have churches responded to these developments? It will perhaps be helpful to focus on one area of legislation in order to track the response of churches. I have chosen the area of safeguarding as the one with which I have had the closest involvement for the longest period of time.

It was in 1993 that the government published the document *Safe from Harm* which offered guidance to all voluntary organisations working with

children and young people, recommending a number of steps that they should take in order to ensure that they provide a safe environment for the children and young people in their care. The guidelines were offered against a background of volunteers and paid workers in some organisations abusing the trust of their position and taking the opportunity to harm children.

The legal status of the publication is perhaps of interest, because it was neither government legislation nor was it government regulation. It was simply guidance. It was not backed by statute, so it was not possible to say to churches, 'You are legally obliged to do this'. And yet, as guidance issued by the Department of Health, there was a considerable weight of expectation and obligation placed upon voluntary organisations to comply with its recommendations.

In response to *Safe from Harm* the Baptist Union published the first edition of *Safe to Grow* (now in its sixth edition) and took the decision to circulate a copy free of charge to all member churches. As a member of the (then) Children's Working Group of the Baptist Union I was involved in this initial publication, and so began providing some of the early training in the Association to which I then belonged (the Hertfordshire Baptist Association). I have been providing training ever since, and it is fascinating to reflect on how the response to training has changed over the years.

In the early years there was considerable resistance from some to the need for introducing the measures that were being recommended.

1. Some simply could not believe that child abuse could possibly happen within a church situation and thought the whole thing an over-reaction.
2. Some took the view that to ask volunteers to make a declaration of any criminal convictions (Disclosure and Barring Service – DBS – checks were not available at that time) was an infringement of their civil liberties. 'Do we not trust one another any more?' was a regular question.
3. Some believed that when suspicions arose within the church about the conduct of one of its members, those concerns should be

handled by the church through its own internal processes, and that the secular authorities of Social Services or Police should not be involved. There was a greater concern for the reputation of the church than for the safety of the child.

4. Genuine fears were expressed that the measures would lead to the end of volunteering in the church.

A large part of early training sessions involved convincing people of the need for such measures and breaking down resistance.

The change in the two decades since then has been quite remarkable. With all the high profile cases of child abuse (the tragic deaths of individual children let down by institutions and professionals, celebrities abusing their status to take advantage of children and young people, and the publicity given to a series of failings in other church traditions), the public mood has turned, and there is a general acceptance of the need for safeguarding measures in organisations working with children and young people. Training sessions today seldom involve having to convince trainees of the need for safeguarding policies and procedures. Although many are still not aware of the prevalence of child abuse in our society, on the whole they understand the need for robust policies, clear procedures and stringent boundaries of good practice.

Even in the past five years there has been a noticeable change in the pattern of training needs. Previously most of the training offered by the London Baptist Association was through four or five central training events through the year, each attended by about forty people, with a few representatives from each church. On the whole, this meant that it was one or two leaders from each church who were receiving training (at least from the Association). More recently churches have recognised the need for all their workers to be trained, and regular requests are now received for training to be delivered locally. The policy has been to ask churches to open out such training to other local churches so that smaller churches, in particular, can still have access to training. The effect is that a larger number of people are being trained through the LBA than ever before.

In many of our churches there has been a significant culture change. Measures that were felt by some to be draconian, unnecessary and

something of an imposition are now understood to be necessary and part and parcel of our gospel responsibilities to create a safe environment for children to grow and to flourish. And volunteers are willing to give up a Saturday morning to receive training, and engage in that training enthusiastically rather than reluctantly.

There are, however, still churches that have much catching up to do. A few, sadly, have still not accepted the need for safeguarding policies and procedures, apparently adopting the attitude that 'such things would never happen in our church'. Others are simply overwhelmed with everything that has to be done. They may have adopted a policy statement at the church meeting a few years ago, but have not gone very far beyond doing that. Along with everything else that churches now have to contend with, safeguarding procedures are put on the back burner, because it all feels just too much.

I suspect that the development that I have witnessed in the area of safeguarding is replicated in other areas of church life that are impacted by legislation. In some of our churches there has been a significant culture shift, and the demands of our regulatory age are, on the whole, being taken in their stride. Others are struggling to play catch up.

On the whole it is the larger churches, and particularly the larger churches with a number of professionals in their membership and on their leadership teams, that have coped best with the growing impact of legislation. Those who are involved in the teaching, nursing or social care professions will all understand the need for good safeguarding measures, and will find the policies and procedures almost 'second nature' to them. Similarly, for other areas in which legislation impacts on the life of the church, anyone who is involved in any of the professions will be used to working within regulatory and legislative frameworks and will have transferable skills to bring to the life of the church. The demands may, at times, feel irksome, but they will not be overwhelmed by the responsibilities.

The greatest challenge is probably felt by the smaller churches, where there are fewer younger professionals in the life of the church who manage to take all of this in their stride. Some of these churches may have deacons who are of an older generation, who are struggling to learn the

'new tricks' that are now necessary for running a church. (In making this comment I would want to affirm the extraordinary capacity of many older deacons to respond willingly to the new challenges that they face!) Others may only have one or two people who have the capacity and the mindset to take on board all the demands of the highly regulated world in which we now live. All the burden for helping the church to fulfil its obligations then falls disproportionately on one or two people, who find themselves submerged and sometimes distracted from what may be their primary ministry in the church.

What is quite evident is that there is a hunger for training in our churches to help them to respond to the growing demands in this area. While, over the years, the Association has struggled to attract much interest in other training events, any training that has been offered for lay leaders in the church has been well attended. Whether it be training for deacons in their responsibility as charity trustees, training for treasurers and secretaries, training in preparation for charity registration or safeguarding training – there is always a high take-up from churches. Whenever the Association offers training in this area, it is clear that we are scratching where the churches are itching.

What are the challenges for churches and for the Association as a result of this trend in society?

1. I believe that our churches will be the poorer if leadership becomes restricted only to those with certain professional competencies in the church. There has always been a danger within Baptist practice for leadership to become the domain of the 'professional classes'. This tendency is only exacerbated by the growing impact of a regulatory society on the life of our churches. These are the people who feel relatively comfortable dealing with bureaucracy, because they are doing it all the time. However, Christian leadership is about so much more. Identifying leaders in a church is first and foremost about identifying those 'of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom'. It is first of all about character, and about one's life in God. Our churches will be badly served if we restrict the pool of potential leaders to those who fit a certain social and

intellectual profile. It also becomes disabling for churches that do not have professionals in the membership. There can be an implication that the leadership is therefore less capable.

2. Linked to this, I have observed an increasing trend for churches to call their leadership teams 'trustees'. This, I believe, is an unintended consequence of how the most recent recommended governing document for Baptist churches (published by the Baptist Union Corporation) has been worded. In one sense it is healthy that our lay leaders now fully understand that when they join the church's leadership team they are serving as trustees, with all the responsibilities that fall to charity trustees. However, I think that we lose something in no longer referring to our lay leaders as 'deacons' or 'elders'. I don't say this out of a nostalgic hankering after the 'good old days', nor because I am becoming a 'grumpy old man' as I fast approach the age of sixty.

My caution over the trend is this: that while our lay leaders are called to be charity trustees, after they have fulfilled their duties as trustees they have not yet begun to do the work of the kingdom for which they were called. Our lay leaders are called to be trustees ... but they are called to be so much more than trustees as they offer prayerful, pastoral and visionary leadership to the church in its calling to be the people of Christ in the world. While I fully understand that the biblical terminology of 'deacon' or 'elder' takes some explaining in today's world, it seems to me that the word 'trustee' is somewhat limiting. And so I would prefer to hold onto the biblical words that speak of a form of leadership that presses beyond the secular models of leadership that are on offer.

3. I share the fear of many that the growth of regulation may have an impact on the readiness of some to offer themselves for leadership within the church. For some, this may be because this is a whole new world for them. For others, they have enough of form-filling and bureaucracy in their daily professional life and they don't want the same in their involvement in church life.

This is not helped when a few ministers (and on the whole it has been ministers and not lay leaders) have so impressed on their deacons or lay leaders the heavy weight of responsibility that they carry as trustees of the church, that the deacons have been disempowered rather than empowered, and churches have found it difficult to find people to take on the role of deacon. Quite frankly, they have been scared off! It is one thing to ensure that the leaders of the church understand their responsibilities as trustees; it is quite another to fill the deacons with unreasonable fear that their homes might be at risk if things go wrong in the church.

4. There is a large piece of work to be done within the Association of 'capacity building'. Our churches have demonstrated that they are looking for help and support in this area, and there is fertile ground here for the Association to offer significant help and support to churches. I believe that, to date, we have only scratched the surface of what might be possible.
5. There may be a need for us to become much more creative in future in offering support to churches in this area. If a significant proportion of our churches continue to be small churches, we will find an increasing number of churches struggling to keep on top of all the legislation that impacts on their life. Already churches do not find it easy to identify people to take on roles such as church secretary and church treasurer. We may need to find ways to overcome our intransigent independence and discover a renewed interdependence in which gifts and gifted people are shared between churches.

Let me take the opportunity to fly a kite. Could we not learn from a model that is used by school-governing bodies? School-governing bodies need to be kept abreast of a whole wealth of legislation that impinges on their decision-making. Many governing bodies keep on top of this by 'buying in' a 'clerk to the governors'. The clerk is not a member of the governing body, but keeps the governors appraised of their responsibilities and

enables them to make good decisions. Would it be possible to establish a pool of people who would be able to offer such a service to our churches, so that 'when Caesar comes knocking' our churches are able to respond appropriately and in the spirit of the gospel?

CHANGES IN TECHNOLOGY 1965-2015

Colin Hicks and Richard Littledale

There have been remarkable changes in the technology available to the churches over the last fifty years. These changes have impacted on the *ways* we do things but have not changed the *reasons* why we do them nor, so far, changed the *nature* of what we do. However, some applications of new technologies (like social media) may be about to make significant changes in the nature of what we do.

LBA churches have often been early adopters of technology compared to society as a whole. Churches adopt available technologies at different times as best suits their fellowship, ways of working and their financial resources. Cost has often been a significant factor but, when costs fall, the rate of adoption accelerates.

Worshipping

The most obvious way in which technology has impacted our worship is in the way we sing. In 1965 heads were buried in printed hymn books. Today most churches project the words of songs and prayers on a screen using a digital video projector and we look up as we sing. This change from printed hymn books began in the 1970s with the introduction of the overhead projector followed by the move to digital video projectors in the 1990s. These developments have enabled the more rapid dissemination and adoption of new worship songs and hymns.

Projection has also enabled the use of a wider range of material as sermon illustrations, including the use of images and summaries (e.g. as bullet points on PowerPoint slides). Some of this was possible before with older projection techniques (like filmstrips and slides) but they were not widely used until the overhead projector came into use. Digital video projectors (with their output driven by computers) have enriched worship further. Illustrations during worship (whether for prayers, sermons or any other aspect of worship) can now routinely include images, animations, video clips, live material from the web, and even live video interviews with missionaries based overseas.

Sermon and worship preparation can now also be enriched by much easier access to a wider range of material. Electronic devices are now being used by worshippers during services – so far mainly to read the Bible (replacing a printed Bible) or to take notes (replacing pencil and paper). However, those using web-enabled devices during services can now not only check Bible-related resources (like a concordance) rapidly but can also do fact checking in real time. This may cause preachers some immediate embarrassment! They may also be sharing their insights on the sermon with a wider audience in real time, rather than taking notes for purely private consumption.

Indeed, the best way to use some new technologies in worship is still being explored, especially for those which can change the interaction between those leading worship or preaching and those in the congregation. This goes far beyond the audible 'Amen'. Some churches are experimenting with tweeting sermons in real time and some display tweets from worshippers on the screen during the service. Some preachers are using tweets in their sermon preparation, tapping the 'wisdom of the crowd' for illumination. This technique, known as 'crowd sourcing', is regularly used in the commercial world and is now creeping into churches. This is the one area where something more fundamental may be happening: the nature of social media may mean that the sermon will become part of a collaborative cycle, and may thereby change the nature of learning and degree of retention.

In the 1960s, live audio broadcasts from a central location to local centres using landlines were possible (apparently using WW2 vintage landlines). This was still relatively expensive and so it was rarely used except for major evangelistic rallies like the Billy Graham North-east of England rally in 1960. In 1985, a live video broadcast was used for the first time by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) for a Sheffield Rally with delivery to a number of locations around the UK (including locations in London) using satellite technology. Statistics available from the BGEA at the time indicated that the response rate in locally organised 'livelink' events was higher than in the big central rallies. Nevertheless, when Douglas McBain wanted to speak live from a central location to LBA churches gathered at District locations in the

early 1990s, he was still restricted by cost to using an audio link although a video link would have been preferred.

Since the introduction of web-streaming (e.g. Skype), the live-streaming of video from worship services to the housebound (and live-streaming of sermons from elsewhere) has become possible and affordable – although, so far, it is relatively little used, perhaps because although free it is not completely reliable. There are also problems with the copyright for music and for sermon illustrations: licences which cover the use of such material in services do not usually cover live-streaming or downloads with an audience of unknown (or at least unpredictable) size. While copyright licences can be purchased to cover such uses, they are usually too expensive for an individual church.

Nevertheless, over the next few years, we may see the use of recorded or live video sermons by well-known preachers becoming more common. The availability of free (and increasingly reliable) live-streaming video may also usher in a change in the nature of what we are doing: distant missionaries, for example, will be able to participate in worship and preaching even from overseas locations. In this way, the distance between sending church and sent missionary would be shrunk.

In 1965, services were rarely recorded except for special events and then only if a church had a reel-to-reel enthusiast. The introduction of the compact cassette tape during the 1970s (and the spreading use of amplification systems) meant that audio recordings of services became fairly routine, with cassette tapes being made available to those unable to attend for any reason. Because of their convenience, cassette tapes survived the introduction of the CD for many years, but their use is now fading from the scene as the technology itself becomes obsolete. Many churches have skipped the use of CDs and gone directly to offering mp3 sermons by download from their websites.

Working

In 1965, notices were placed on a notice board and read out during worship services with the occasional printed handbills handed to everyone. Printing of handbills would have been done by an enthusiastic member with his own printing press or by a High Street printer. At that

time, the minutes of meetings were probably handwritten in a minute book or typed on a manual typewriter with multiple carbon copies being the means of reproduction. Some churches had Gestetner-type duplicators which required master stencils to be cut by typing after which up to 100 copies could be duplicated before a new stencil had to be cut.

All that has changed since 1980 with the introduction of photocopiers, word processors, computers and multi-function printing/copying devices. Rapidly expanding capabilities and rapidly falling prices have encouraged their adoption by more and more churches with each passing year. In 1987, the LBA acquired its first photocopier and its first microcomputer for use as a word-processor with email capability through a modem. In 2003 the LBA added broadband Internet access to its facilities. A further major step forward for the LBA came in 2007 when it implemented a network of PCs with files stored on a central server and the facility for remote access.

Since 1980, church notice sheets and minutes became better produced (at least in appearance) as successive waves of new technology changed the way church offices can work. Colour printing has become more and more affordable – at least for special editions of church magazines and newsletters – and some churches now produce colour magazines which they distribute house-to-house.

The LBA and many churches have now moved from hard copy to the electronic distribution of material to members. Notices are now often projected onto a screen with electronic copies emailed out or made available for download from a website. A few printed copies are still usually made available even by the most technologically advanced churches for those who prefer them – a reminder that the availability of new technology does not always lead to its adoption by all. Modern printing technology also allows for large-print copies to be produced at the touch of a keyboard.

Fellowship information, which was limited until the 1980s to printed monochrome booklets, can now be supplemented by password-protected areas on church websites; these may include photographs and may be accessible on a smartphone.

Telephones were not universal in the 1960s, so communication with members outside regular meetings often had to be by post or hand-delivery. By the 1980s, with telephones common in homes, some churches introduced telephone cascades for communication and prayer requests. The LBA started using an Answerphone with weekly prayer requests in 1983. Telephone cascades for prayer requests became quite common, but by 2010 many churches were using email instead, with Facebook and Twitter being used by some. Since 2012, the LBA has been sending out a weekly email with news and prayer requests (before that printed newsletters were posted out in bulk, although that was limited by cost and demands on staff time after 2008). Some churches now produce a daily newspaper via Twitter where church stories, community stories, and world stories are combined into one.

Although new technology can help inclusivity, the varying rates at which it is adopted can exclude people. In the 1970s those people without phones were at risk of being left out, just as today those people not on email are similarly at risk of not being informed of what is happening. The shift to electronic communications also has less obvious challenges. A newsletter may be distributed electronically with the expectation that it be read online, printed out locally, or be forwarded to others (by a church or by an individual). That may or may not actually happen. But one of the conundrums faced by churches is that the demographic of financial givers, especially when it comes to mission, may still be weighted towards printed media. This makes it more difficult (and perhaps risky) to abandon the traditional channels of communication even as electronic media grow in importance.

In 1965, communications with missionaries in the field were effectively limited to letters by post (or the occasional emergency phone call). The reduction in costs of remote communication and air fares mean that missionaries in the field can be much better supported than before, with up-to-date prayer requests being rapidly disseminated. Now distance is no object, through the use of email and social media. Facebook and Twitter have shortened the time gap and blogging offers a step change in the nature of communication.

Witnessing

In the 1950s, invitations to events were sometimes broadcast by loudspeaker on the top of a car driven down the local High Street, with the accompanying distribution of printed handbills. The handbill still lives, but it almost certainly refers the reader to a website for more details and may have electronic copies uploaded to social media sites.

Churches were early adopters of websites in the second half of the 1990s, using them to advertise themselves to their communities. The LBA website was launched in 1997 and by 2003 about 35% of LBA member churches had websites. Now it is unusual to find a church which does not have one. The LBA has updated its own website regularly since 1997, changing its domain name, web-hosting arrangements and appearance. It was upgraded to using a content-management system in 2010, and underwent an extensive further update in 2013. But the LBA website and most church websites still operate on the principle of Web 1.0 rather than Web 2.0, in that they are more about content promotion than interaction. However, this is slowly changing.

Traditionally churches have produced leaflets or folders to explain what they are like and what they can offer. Today those may be supplemented by locally made videos, perhaps including a video of a baptism, either shown on their premises or offered for download. Some churches can now be paid virtual visits on Google Street View so the public can take a 'virtual walk' around their buildings from wherever they might be in the world.

In 1965, churches might have offered enquirers a Bible, a gospel or a free book about Jesus. By the 1990s, some had added the offer of a free copy of the Jesus video on video tape. But the pace of change is relentless. Today, video tapes are likely to be scorned – the offer of a DVD or a link to a YouTube video is more likely to be acceptable.

In 1953, some churches which were keen on using new technology offered the community the opportunity to watch the Coronation on television – the first time some people would have seen a television broadcast. In 2014, the attraction was more likely to be gathering together to watch the World Cup on a big screen using the technology installed in churches to support worship. In addition some churches now offer

computer training and free internet access to build bridges with people in their communities.

Conclusion

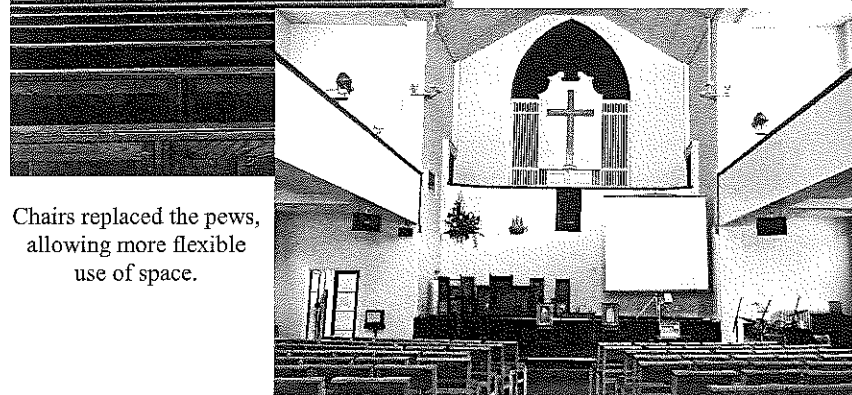
It is difficult to be sure of the way technologies will develop over the next fifty years and how they will impact upon our church life. But we will continue to use new technology to enrich our ways of worshipping, working and witnessing. We also need to be open to changes in the *nature* of what we do – enabled by new technology but always for the sake of the Gospel.

* * * * *



These pictures of Teddington show changes typical of many Baptist churches. In the 1960s, a high central pulpit signified the importance of the Ministry of the Word; organ pipes provided the backdrop. Wooden pews provided seating.

By 1997 the organ had given way to a group of musicians to one side, and the platform was dominated by the large screen for projected material.



Chairs replaced the pews, allowing more flexible use of space.

BAPTIST BUILDINGS

Brian Bowers

When Charles Johnson wrote *Encounter in London* in 1965 London Baptists were celebrating the centenary of their Association. Johnson saw the final decade of that hundred years as a period of major development in church buildings. Building restrictions, imposed during the war and for some years after because of a shortage of building materials, had been removed and London Baptists embarked on a period of rebuilding, restoration and extension of church buildings. Initially it was a matter of restoring what had been lost, but in the later twentieth century they were developing new ideas about their buildings and how they should be used.

In the nineteenth century and for more than half the twentieth century Baptist chapels and associated buildings were used mainly by their own congregations for worship and related 'church' activities. Often the buildings were on minor roads, away from town centres, but even those on main roads were enclosed spaces. People passing by could not see what was happening inside the chapel, and the people at worship could forget about the outside world. From the later twentieth century there were changes in the design of new church buildings, and the way in which older buildings were developed. Worshippers were no longer so cut off from the world and could not forget what was happening outside. Glass doors, and sometimes large windows, allowed people in the street to look into the buildings, often seeing God's people at worship or sharing fellowship over coffee; some were attracted in.

Reasons for the change were both theological and practical. Theologically Baptists still felt that as Christian people they were a distinct group in society, but they were no longer a disadvantaged group as earlier generations of Dissenters had been: they no longer felt a need to be insulated from others. Furthermore, the mission imperative made them want to encourage people to come in and feel welcome, so they wanted bright and cheerful buildings with comfortable furnishing, good catering facilities and decent toilets.

As well as changes in design there were developments in the way in which church buildings were used during the week. Previously they were mainly closed from Monday to Saturday except for 'church' gatherings such as prayer meetings and young people's work. Now they began to host other groups or organizations needing a meeting place, bringing in people who would never otherwise see inside a church building. In 1967 John Wilmshurst, the Association's Surveyor, wrote a guide, *Letting Church Premises*, in which he pointed out that allowing outside organizations to use church premises was a service to the local community, while any rent received was a valuable addition to tight church budgets. He expected most lettings to be to local authorities for nursery schools, education, clinics, school meals, old people's welfare, etc.

Increasingly there have been legal requirements for buildings open to the public, covering matters such as ease of access for the disabled, safety in the event of fire and hygiene in serving food. Consequently churches have had to think more carefully about their buildings. Developments in building technology have also opened up new possibilities and influenced building design. One development very noticeable in modern or modernized buildings is the use of large sheets of strong glass, made possible by the development of the float-glass process in the 1950s.

As part of its centenary celebrations the LBA launched the New Century Fund, for which £75,000 was raised to restore churches in inner London. A filmstrip prepared for the LBA in about 1970 has fifty-two pictures taken around their buildings. It was intended to be shown in churches, and there was an accompanying script to be read as the pictures were shown. The filmstrip is lost, but the script survives in the LBA archives and illustrates the Association's thinking at that time. It describes work at several different London churches, including East Street, Walworth, and Victoria Park. First mentioned was the rapidly growing church at Arnott Road, Peckham, where new halls were opened in 1968 with help from the New Century Fund.

The script describes developments at Bloomsbury where a 'typical 19th century Baptist basement' had been transformed into 'the attractive Bloomsbury Friendship Centre' with a lounge area and well-equipped

kitchen. In May 1999 the LBA moved into offices at the top of the building and they and a number of other organizations use the premises for committee meetings, conferences and lectures. Several theatre groups also use the premises regularly for auditions and rehearsals. The original aspiration of the church and the LBA was that a daily programme of activities including lunch-time meetings, discussion groups and films could be arranged. That was never fully achieved, though one activity which continues at Bloomsbury is an open lunch and social activities on Tuesdays, now drawing in a number of retired and lonely people.

Soon a number of other churches were adapting their premises and trying similar activities, often limited only by the number of available volunteers. Changes to the building were not always required. An article in the *London Baptist* in 1969 featured East Barnet Baptist Church, which after conducting a survey of the needs of people in the area went through a period of dramatic change. They opened a range of community activities including a daily pre-school play group and a day-care centre for the elderly who were collected, enjoyed lunch in company, and were later taken back home. This did not require new buildings, but the church had to acquire four mini-buses and volunteer drivers. The work continues through a separate charity based at the church called 'Friend in Need'.

A number of older Baptist churches had separate church and Sunday school buildings. In some of these the space between the buildings has been enclosed to give additional accommodation and a circulation area so that people can move around the premises more easily. In 1983 Teddington Baptist Church considered how its premises might be developed into a modern Church Centre. They had two buildings, Sunday school halls built in 1907 and an adjacent chapel opened in 1956 after an earlier building was destroyed in the war. Their solution was a glazed structure linking the two buildings, including a new entrance to the whole premises and a place for a receptionist. Now the church has a number of rooms available for its own activities and for hire and is a hive of activity all week.

Ilford High Road Church also had two buildings with an unused space in between. They wanted more space and considered dividing the chapel building horizontally, but decided instead to link the two buildings with

a glazed structure which has become the main entrance and reception area. This concourse, as they call the area, is used for some meetings and for lunches. Activities include language classes and meetings for different age groups, with an emphasis on mothers and children. As the concourse is open and visible from outside, passers-by can see that there are always people in the building. The pastor comments that occasionally people come in just to ask about what they do, or to seek prayer.

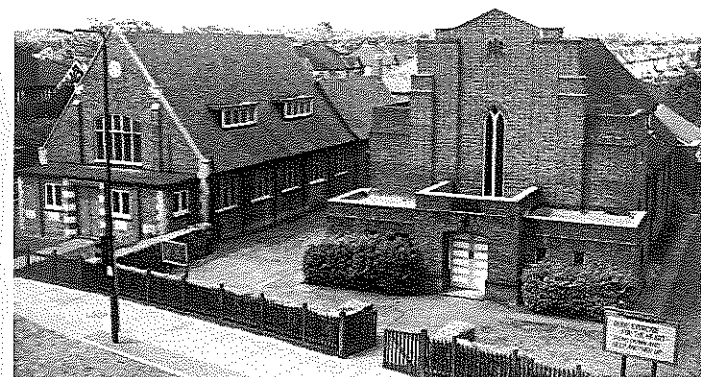
Morden also built an 'infill' hall, and added a two-storey frontage across the site, with an attractive foyer, good kitchen, and offices. An aerial view shows how the old and new have been combined.

Older church buildings may be 'listed' as having special historic or architectural interest. In such cases the building cannot be altered without 'listed building consent' which for most Baptist churches is obtained from the Baptist Listed Buildings Advisory Committee. This may seem a procedural nuisance when churches are considering making changes, but the Committee can sometimes give helpful advice from its knowledge of other churches. Baptists have only one Grade I Listed Building (Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church, designed by Lutyens and in trust with the Baptist Union Corporation), though quite a number of Grade II. Shoreditch Tabernacle's Tab Centre makes the point on its website that it has 'two fabulous Grade II listed halls' available for corporate events and community use.

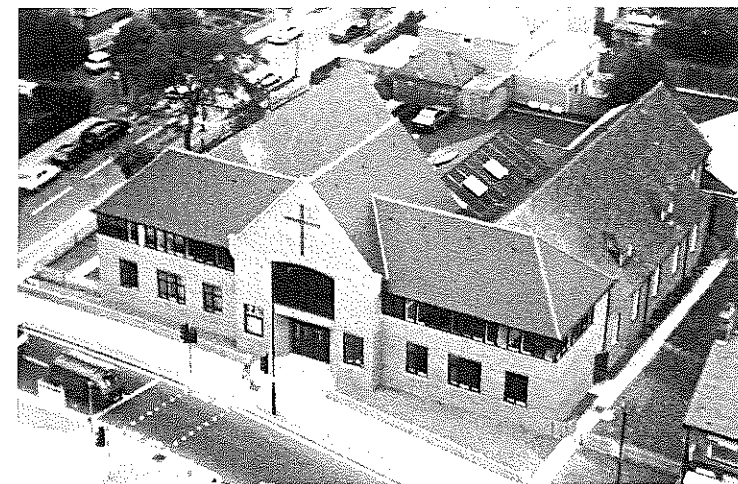
Occasionally a church was not constrained by existing buildings and could make a completely fresh start. The Grove Centre Church at Sydenham in South London was formed by merging two existing churches, Baptist and URC. Both old buildings were demolished and the united church opened a new multi-purpose building on one of the sites in January 1975. The largest room is a worship area on Sundays but from Monday to Friday it is a dining room in the middle of the day where up to forty elderly local people are served lunch for a modest charge. A grant from the local Council pays for a caterer and they have a team of volunteer helpers. As well as running its own activities the church lets out rooms to local organizations.

As new churches are planted, they need premises and will use whatever suitable spaces they can find – community centres, public

houses, warehouses (the saga of one church plant in its search for premises is told later in this book). Trinity Baptist Church is taking an industrial complex at Croydon to accommodate its very large congregation.

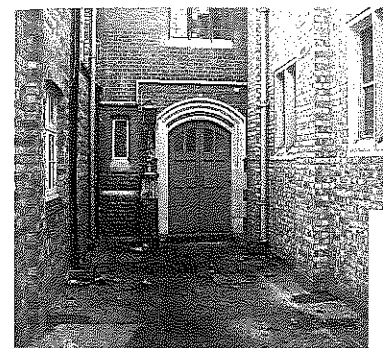


Morden Baptist Church had two separate buildings which are now linked by a large hall in the middle. A new two-storey frontage on the main street provides a reception area, kitchen and other rooms.



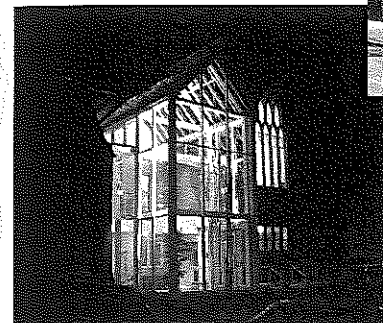


The Grove Centre building at Sydenham, opened in 1975, deliberately did not look like a conventional church. Its large, multi-purpose main room is used for worship on Sundays and other activities through the week.



Teddington Baptist Church had two older buildings on a main street with a space between them. A glazed 'infill' joins the two, providing extra accommodation and a single entrance and reception area.

It is particularly striking at night



Shoreditch Tabernacle's Grade II Listed Victorian galleried chapel doubles as the Tab Centre's hall for dinners and other events

2

MINISTRY AND LEADERSHIP

This section focuses on ministry and on how the Association serves the member churches. The regional Associations have a leading responsibility in the recognition of ministers by the Baptist Union. In London over the past fifty years that has increasingly included women ministers and ministers from black and ethnic minorities, so there is a particular focus on these. Some of the newer church plants have been led by Africans with a Black pentecostal background, so an account of that is included as part of the background to reverse mission. The aim is to help Baptists to understand one another better, respecting cultural differences while rejoicing in the gospel we all share and proclaim.

The experimental new portfolio route to ministerial accreditation, pioneered by London, is also considered.

Another aspect of the Association's leading role is the help and guidance available to the member churches. Many church members will be largely unaware of this quietly valuable service. In the previous section Paul Martin wrote on helping churches to keep abreast of legislation. Baptist churches treasure their freedom to 'seek the mind of Christ' for their particular situation, but many church officers know the benefits of belonging to the wider Baptist family of Association and Union: here two reflect on their experience and appreciation of the Association's support 'behind the scenes'.

MEMORIES OF AN LBA SECRETARY

1977-2001

Peter Wortley

During my almost twenty-four years as Association Secretary the most significant change was the arrival of Baptists from Ghana and other African countries. At the end of my time, Kingsley Appiagyei kindly said, 'All over the world people are looking for acceptance; you have provided that for us in the LBA'. I hope I would have done that anyway but happily I had begun my ministry in Willesden Green where the church was much strengthened by Christians from the Caribbean. So I was well prepared to see the church in black and white!

A change in my time was also centred on the inner city. In the late seventies Baptists there seemed to be in the doldrums. The inner city committee consisted of very committed people like Colin Marchant, Peter Purkiss and a remarkable lawyer, Roger Dowley. The atmosphere changed almost to one of thinking that any Christian worth his salt lived in inner London. Eventually, helped I think by the Ghanaian brethren, we moved to a more level-headed view.

A major failure was any attempt to bring London Baptists regularly together for any kind of conferring. There were exceptions. Brenda Forward, chair of the Evangelism Committee, set up a residential conference for leaders of small churches which was well attended and much appreciated. For some it was an eye-opener. One woman said that before then she had thought the LBA consisted of a little grey-haired old man in a corner of Baptist Church House! Location apart, by the time of my retirement I fitted the bill!

Not coming to umpteen meetings in central London was fair enough. People did not have the time, energy and inclination to come to events that were at best pale imitations of a Sunday service or, worse, a formal business necessity. When we picked a subject that struck a chord there could still be a response, as with an excellent seminar on Witnessing to Muslims.

A much bigger exception were the two events in the Royal Albert Hall that were the brainchild of Area Superintendent, Douglas McBain. Douglas was one of four Baptist Union Superintendents with whom I served. LBA is still twice the size of any other Baptist association. Pastoral care of the ministers is difficult to impossible at any continual level. It is made harder because it is almost impossible to have a leader living in the centre. Douglas Sparkes, whom I have to thank for nominating me as secretary (and I do thank him!) lived in Beckenham, his successor, Arthur Thompson, in Ruislip. They were tireless in service but the difficulty is clear. Arthur addressed this by suggesting that the LBA should operate in five sections with one of the pastors assisting him one day a week. Douglas McBain was glad to have this pattern in place. I think it worked at its best when Patricia Took became the Superintendent (later known more clumsily as 'Regional Minister (Team Leader)'. Patricia was an outstanding team player. In her time, too, the LBA asked the BU if perhaps we could have a second superintendent. When shortage of Home Mission money ruled this out, the LBA appointed its own 'Association Superintendent', Tony Mason. This partnership worked well.

When I succeeded Gordon Fitch at Easter 1978 there was plenty to do but the pace was not too fast. By the time I retired in June 2001 this had altered. Computerisation had come in – but where was the promised 'paperless office'? The two office staff I had inherited were both shorthand typists and book-keepers. They were not keen on change or modern devices. The auditors told us that we would never find their like again and introduced us to a one-man computer firm. At first the computer was with the firm: we had in the office a modem to connect us to it. Later in-house computers were installed. By the time I retired we were not, I think, involved in emails but computerisation had taken over the accounting of both the LBA and London Baptist Property Board.

During the earlier part of my time in office our surveyor and solicitor, Barrie Wilmshurst and John Beaumont, were available to attend monthly afternoon meetings of the LBA's General Purposes and Finance Committee. That ended as pressures on all professionals grew to be always profitable for the firm all the time. These two men, both before

my time and all through it, were invaluable to the Association and Property Board, and to me. Their fathers had preceded them in their firms and in relation to London Baptists. To them, both Baptists themselves, and to their colleagues and successors, our churches and ministers owe a great debt. It is hard to imagine how a Secretary, coming straight from the pastorate and with no relevant work experience for the job, could have coped without them!

During the later period of my service changes were made in charity law. The Charities Act (1993) made looking after church finances require much more knowledge and skill. It also frightened many deacons as they found themselves called 'trustees'. Ministers would call me and say that it was hard to find deacons now that they were responsible for the church's affairs. John Beaumont's memorable advice to me was, 'Ask them who they thought were responsible before the Charities Act!' The Property Board asked the auditors to run a Saturday morning seminar on the Charities Act – another of our better attended and much appreciated events.

For many years the LBA rented rooms from BUGB in Baptist Church House, Holborn. They were adequate and there was an advantage of meeting rooms available for committees, conferences, etc. There were deficiencies, however. One winter the heating oil had not been delivered. I asked my secretary whether we had electric heaters for such an eventuality. An ancient bowl heater was produced. I dismissed this and said we should buy a modern convector heater. Doris Harris gently invited me to examine the power points – which were of the ancient two-pin variety! The whole place was only rewired when someone noticed smoke coming in one of the BU areas. The Union decided to redecorate the interior of the building, probably in the early eighties. Clifford Colvin, Manager of Baptist Insurance, told me that he had worked there since 1946 and this was the first time such a thing had happened. Finally, on this line, one day the local district surveyor came in to inspect the place and in particular the pavement lights from the basement. It was a wet day and he had brought his umbrella, which he used to poke at the metal surround. It gave way. It cost many thousands

of pounds to put it right and the BU General Secretary, Dr David Russell, bemoaned to me that 'there goes my pension!'

When BUGB and BMS bit the bullet to sell up and moved to Didcot, I reported to an LBA Assembly that 'we had always known the BU might move from the middle of London to the middle of Birmingham but we never thought they would move from the middle of Birmingham to the middle of nowhere!' This went down very well – except with successive BU general secretaries. It was a typical London joke!

The LBA then moved with the Baptist Housing Association and Baptist Insurance to modest offices above a Methodist church in Bow. But times they were a-changing. The Housing Association amalgamated with Church Housing, while Baptist Insurance, though maintaining its identity, entered into a partnership with Ecclesiastical Insurance. Happily for the LBA and LBPB, the Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church was redeveloping its premises in Shaftesbury Avenue, and the LBA and Board took rooms on the fourth floor. New office furniture was purchased so in that respect, if no other, the Association was in better nick when I left it than when I started.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY IN LONDON

Faith Bowers and Ruth Gouldbourne

London Baptists have sometimes been seen as one of the more conservative Associations but when it comes to women's ministry London has often been a pioneer.

Some women were active beyond the immediate pastoral care of church members even before the LBA was formed. Bloomsbury, for example, from the 1860s had Female Missionaries and Mission Nurses working with sick-poor women as part of the church's Domestic Mission in the grim slums of St Giles and found the first Biblewoman for Mrs Ranyard's Mission, which led into the development of district nursing. Such work lay behind the LBA setting up a training community of deaconesses in 1890. From 1896 the Bloomsbury Mission was run by Sisters from the LBA's Deaconess Home and Mission. Churches open to women's ministry at home were quick to support their work overseas with the Baptist Missionary Society. From 1855 Bloomsbury and the neighbouring John Street church jointly supported a teacher at the new Native Female Boarding School at Calcutta. Two Bloomsbury women served with the BMS's associate female Zenana Mission, and Martha Spearing, baptized at Bloomsbury in 1863, was the first single woman BMS missionary to go to Congo.

Once the LBA had established the Deaconess Mission, initially from successive bases between King's Cross and High Holborn, churches quickly called on their services across London and beyond. By 1918 a hundred women had been deployed for pastoral and nursing work. Meanwhile, the suffrage movement and women's work on the home front during the 1914-18 war forced a re-appraisal of their role, with women over thirty getting the vote in 1918 and Nancy Astor elected to the House of Commons the following year. In that year too the Baptist Union took over responsibility for the deaconesses, with Havelock Hall in Hampstead as the base for the renamed Baptist Women's Training College and Sisterhood. Further moves took the college to Camden Town, to Putney, and in 1945 to 'Struan' in Wimbledon. It was not until 1955 that deaconess training left London.

While pastoral work remained central to their role, some deaconesses began to preach and even took pastoral charge of small churches. Struggling churches might afford a deaconess who came cheaper than a male minister. In 1935 Dr J.W. Ewing, London Superintendent after his pastorate at Rye Lane, Peckham, observed in the *Baptist Times*, 'it is in the poor districts where no pastor can be sustained that the Deaconess finds her most fruitful service'. As London was redeveloped in the 1950s, the BU wanted pioneers to work on new housing estates: some deaconesses were directed to this. Once a church was up and running, and generating some income, the deaconess was often replaced by a male minister.

When Nicola Morris made her study, *Sisters of the People: The Order of Baptist Deaconesses 1890-1975*,¹ she found that by then deaconesses within the LBA sometimes administered communion, but not baptism, and some conducted weddings and funerals. In the Home Counties they functioned more fully as ministers, including baptizing. In London most deaconesses did not attend ministers' fraternal, though more did in the provinces. London's conservatism showed, in spite of many years of active ministry from such women. Ministers in churches working with the urban poor, like King's Cross and West Ham, had long been enthusiastic about the ministry of deaconess colleagues, but wealthier suburbs saw things differently.

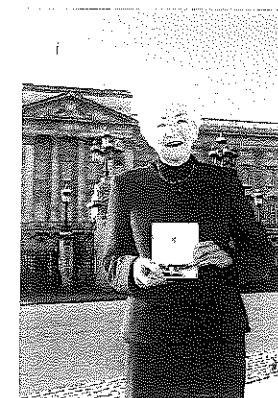
One of the three women recognized as Baptist ministers in the 1920s, Maria Living-Taylor, had a London ministry jointly with her husband at Barking Tabernacle. As the LBA entered its second century, however, there were no women ministers in London, although five deaconesses were in effective pastoral charge of LBA churches.

In the 1960s more women felt called to train as Baptist ministers rather than as deaconesses. The first was Marie Isaacs, who studied at King's College London and Regent's Park College, and was ordained in 1962. Most of her ministry has been in London, teaching at Heythrop College for thirty years where she served as vice principal, her academic specialism the books of Hebrews and James. She joined Heath Street

¹ CCSRG Research Paper 2, University of Bristol 2002.

Baptist Church in Hampstead, became Associate Minister in 1987, and full-time minister 2001-2011.

In 1970 London Ministerial Recognition Committee commended seven men and one woman for college training: Judith Reece was commended to Bristol Baptist College. LBA Council minutes imply that one deaconess was transferred to the ministerial list in 1972: Ministerial Recognition minutes show that this was Sylvia Owen, a probationer deaconess at West Ham, who was approved for full accreditation but made it clear that she was happy to continue in her current role. In that year London had three women ministers: Elizabeth Payne at Regent's Park, Edna Black at Kingston, Hampton Wick, and Margaret Jarman at Dalston and Salters Hall (1969-77). They were still at those churches in 1975, though Regent's Park was struggling and by the next year Payne had moved to Aldersbrook, an estate in East London. Jarman was an active member of the LBA Council. Sister Margaret Smith, in pastoral charge of Bevan Park, was among the serving deaconesses whom the Baptist Union recognized as Baptist ministers in 1975. So in 1976 others appear: Daphne Pearce and Sylvia Owen at West Ham, Muriel Westcott as Rodney Collins' assistant at West Croydon, Barbara Stanford working with Howard Williams at Bloomsbury. The next year Miss J. Hopkins became Associate Minister at John Bunyan, Kingston, and in 1978 Paul and Lyn Henstock took a joint pastorate covering Shoreditch and Dalston and Salters Hall, after Jarman moved to Coventry. In that year Myra Findlay became Assistant Minister at Sutton, while in 1983 the LBA commended Anne Wilkinson to Spurgeon's College. Both Myra [now] Blyth and Anne Wilkinson-Hayes later held senior positions in the Baptist Union, before Wilkinson-Hayes went to Australia as a Superintendent Minister and Blyth joined the staff of Regent's Park College, Oxford.



Revd Barbara Stanford MBE
— recognition for a lifetime of
pastoral ministry in Central
London

Although BU accredited, pioneering women ministers faced ongoing reluctance to recognize them, both from churches and from some male ministers. When Douglas Sparkes became Metropolitan Superintendent he was sad to find that for a few years 'there were certain churches with small memberships who had accepted the thought that if they were to have leadership, it would have to be a deaconess, but as soon as these were discontinued and the alternative would have to be a fully accredited minister, together with all that implied re stipend &c., they were pressing that they should have a male'.² Even when accepted and affirmed by a local congregation, women were not always made welcome by neighbouring ministers.

Some churches continued to have theological objections to women in leadership, which George Beasley-Murray, Principal of Spurgeon's College and evangelical New Testament scholar, tried to counteract, writing for the BUGB Ministry Department in 1983: 'Man and Woman, created for partnership, have been redeemed for partnership in service. It is high time to make that partnership truly effective in the service of God in His church and His world.' Nevertheless, some churches even now will not call a woman, believing that Scripture bans them from preaching. Most attacks on women ministers continue to focus primarily on gender and the idea that they must have 'got God wrong'. The independent nature of Baptist churches makes it difficult to deal with such dissent within the wider family, although various strategies have evolved to cope with disagreement.

Struggling inner-city churches were prepared to call women. It is tempting to see women as more willing to respond to the Holy Spirit's call to difficult situations than were men, for whom the options were wider, but there were practical considerations. Women ministers were often single, without a family to support, or else had husbands helping to support their families. Some women feel they gain readier access into homes whereas tough, working men may be more suspicious of male ministers. What is clear is that the work of these women in unpromising situations convinced many that their calling was indeed of God. London

² E-mail to Faith Bowers, 22 September 2014.

Superintendent, Arthur Thompson, admitted to being persuaded by what he saw. Among these London ministries have been those of Carol McCarthy at Upper Holloway 1980-2001, Sarah Parry at Shoreditch 2001-10, both overseeing major redevelopment programmes, and the remarkably long pastorate of Jane Thorington-Hassell at Victoria Park, Bow, since 1985. She has declined to be tempted elsewhere because of a commitment to pursue the work there, which has included involvement in several strategic community projects in partnership with other churches and community groups.

Women, breaking taboos to be in ministry at all, have often been among those prepared to experiment, to think 'outside the box'. Some have undertaken pioneering ministries, like Juliet Kilpin with Urban Expression from 1998-2009, and Penny Marsh, sent by the LBA in 1998 to plant a church in the new Britannia Village in the Docklands redevelopment. Another pioneer, in a different context, was Silvia Salazar de Espin as the first woman to be accredited as a Baptist minister through the new portfolio route in 2009. She worked with her husband gathering a Spanish-speaking congregation based at the Chatsworth church in West Norwood, and took over the leadership when he died.

The first pastorate of Kate Owusua Coleman, President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain in 2006, was in London at Chalk Farm 1996-2000. Pat Took, President of the Baptist Union in 2011, was minister of Cann Hall and Harrow Green, Leytonstone 1985-98, until appointed Metropolitan Area Superintendent, the first woman in such a role; after the structural reorganisation she continued as LBA Regional Minister and Team Leader. In 2006 Ruth Gouldbourne became minister of Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, where she now models a co-pastorate with Simon Woodman. Women's ministry is increasingly recognized and acceptable beyond those churches grateful to get any leadership at all.

Serving women ministers noticed a marked change in their apparent social status when the Church of England priested women in 1994. With the large number made priests at the same time, the media took note, and Free Church women felt the difference. With more public visibility their occupation no longer caused such surprise. It became possible to buy

clerical shirts in women's sizes! Even the TV comedy, *The Vicar of Dibley*, helped the public accept women's ministry as 'normal'.

Wider acceptance makes it easier for women ministers to 'be themselves'. The pioneers had to carry the burden for all, making it hard to develop a personal style. At first they often had to adapt to the 'system', acting more like men: although many women really preferred negotiation to confrontation, they found themselves forced to fight their corner, especially in Association and Union life. They could not allow themselves the luxury of showing vulnerability. Some were strident in their feminism in those wider councils: strident men tend to be seen as 'assertive', but women as 'aggressive'! Now a wider range of styles is acceptable, making it easier to work in ways that suit the individual – liberating also for those men whose nature does not really suit the expected norm. Women called to be Regional Ministers have handled the role in various ways, proving that different approaches can earn respect. Women called to wider leadership have brought a certain vulnerability, an 'unprotectedness' to the role. Perhaps they find it easier to admit that they cannot do it all alone yet also affirm that that is fine: no-one has to be perfect. They are not feeble, just honest, and bring their gifts and dedication while inviting help from others.

Although it is easier now to get most churches to accept women ministers, the proportion of Baptist women coming forward for ministry is much smaller than for Anglicans. Older women ministers would like to see more younger ones follow in their footsteps. After the efforts to gain recognition, they want to see growth sustained!

Pat Took, ever a visionary leader, looks to a future with a wider and mutually liberating collaboration between men and women, both made in God's image, affirming that 'If the church is to present to the world the true image of God it will have to demonstrate in its gender relationships that self-emptying mutuality which lies at the heart of the Trinity.'

London has shown that women ministers can do fine work in tough situations. Ministry in the capital city needs both women and men committed to such service if our churches are to go forward in mission.

BLACK WOMEN MINISTERS IN THE LBA

Michele Mahon

Black women called to ministry face the double challenge of attitudes to both gender and race. This section is based on research for a dissertation by Michele Mahon, investigating 'the experiences of women, especially Black women, mainly of African and Caribbean heritage, in London Baptist church ministry contexts connected with the London Baptist Association'. She notes that 'Between 2001 and 2011, 14 per cent of White British residents moved out of London while simultaneously a large percentage of people from various other ethnicities took up residence in the capital.' Drawing on principles discovered in Liberation, Black, Feminist and Womanist theology, she presents a perspective from women ministers' experiences, 'firmly rooted in their context and spirituality'.

Introducing her subject, Mahon quotes Kate Coleman's experience, as one that resonates with other women: 'My church didn't believe in women in leadership. And neither did I ... within two years I was leading the same church. In a sense that became the tone of my life in terms of pioneering, breaking barriers and making shifts'.³

Across the many church traditions there are two main understandings of women's role in ministry, Complementarian versus Egalitarian. The first and traditional view asserts male headship and female submission, insisting this is the biblical perspective and that other viewpoints undermine the scriptures. The intention is not to denigrate women but to affirm that God has created male and female as equals but not interchangeable, so a woman's call to ministry cannot include the pastorate but may apply to women's work, children's and youth work, one-to-one or small group ministry. As women's abilities have been recognized and valued in other professions, the egalitarian approach has

³ '60 seconds with ... Kate Coleman', *Idea*, Evangelical Alliance, 29 April 2013 (available on-line).

emerged in the church too, believing that women can properly function in any role.

These opposing views affect all women with a calling to ministry, but Black women face even more challenges than White women or Black men, due to ethnicity, gender, and deeply held biblical and cultural views. Nevertheless, women have been very creative in using their God-given talents and gifts within the church. Some even count the obstacles as a blessing, allowing for greater creativity. 'The head-scratching perplexity of finding identity while swinging on a pendulum between power and powerlessness ... is where God meets people'.⁴

Mahon sent an on-line questionnaire to the forty-two women listed as ministers by the LBA. Nine responded: three Africans, three White British, one Caribbean, one White/Caribbean, plus one other. They serve in thriving multi-ethnic communities affected by immigration and connected by location and proximity, common interests and a pervading missiological motivation undergirded by love for God and neighbour. No single ethnic identity has an overwhelming influence on this community life. The rich ethnic diversity agrees with recent Census data: these church communities reflect the London population. This growing diversity is not a new phenomenon, and attitudes towards influxes of diverse cultural groups seem to have changed from hostility to tolerance and even welcome.

Asked about ministry formation, most had experienced a gradual awakening of dormant gifts and talents. Mahon found evidence similar to that described by K.R. Henderson, 'When I scanned the horizon for people doing the work of progressive faith-based leadership, women were most in evidence. There are men doing this work to be sure, but fundamentally it is women who are there at the grassroots level making the difference. It is time for us to see and celebrate that ... Momentum is

⁴ Richard Springer, writing about urban ministry in a black culture, in M. Eastman and S. Latham, *Urban Church: A Practitioner's Resource Book*, SPCK: London, 2004.

building'.⁵ Varying roles of creative service, building community, combined with theological training, have served as 'training on the job' for these women. Seven had engaged in institutional theological training, seen both as a way into church ministry and as enhancing the individual's skills and abilities. After initial theological training they have embarked on little more. The concept of lifelong learning is yet to be pervasive in ministerial life, and women are not dissimilar to other ministers in this respect. Some level of theological reflection is required for any oppressed community to identify what constitutes liberation for them, but ongoing training does not seem to be a priority: most are busy getting on with the task at hand. Some see training opportunities as important, but are put off by barriers of time, location of training venues, and lack of information on what is available.

Most identified their high points as around ministry formation and having their God-given gifts recognised and affirmed. Positive responses from church communities and senior leaders to their ministries understandably boosted these women's self-esteem and confirmed their fruitfulness in ministry. Mentors especially provide much needed encouragement during ministry formation. Low points on the leadership journey include the judgementalism of church communities, especially during the settlement process where gender and ethnicity, rather than prayerful discernment, seem to have a disproportionate bearing on choice of leader.

None specifically mention racism or sexism as a barrier to effective ministry, yet both cause difficulties and pain. Parental expectation to engage in certain professions, such as teaching or medicine, are a common source of conflict in African families: one mentions this as a low point on her journey. It is important to express and come to grips with the pain and suffering the Black woman endures. 'The notion of

⁵ K.R. Henderson, *God's Troublemakers: How Women of Faith are Changing the World*, Continuum: New York, 2006.

lament and critical hopefulness is the most honest response to the presence of evil in the life experiences of Black people'.⁶

There is considerable emphasis on the potential of community gathering or relationship building to nurture and encourage Black women in ministry. Respondents feel the key to progress lies in community – nurturing friendships and mentoring arrangements, recognition of input and achievements, training in how to help others discover and use their gifts.

Key Findings

Women ministers of all ethnicities work out their callings and use their gifts in various ways and circumstances. These women mostly enjoy their roles, but they have had to find their own way of recognising and nurturing their gifts. Often women's ministries in the local church prove an avenue for discovery, nurture and strengthening of women's leadership skills and gifts.

Within the London Baptist Association there is no community of women to encourage, support and equip budding female ministers. In the past an annual national conference enabled ordained women to learn together and encourage one another; when this ceased, local and regional groups were meant to take over but this has yet to happen in London.

Prejudices in churches hinder women's service. There are few Black women ministers in London, and they hold relatively minor positions in local churches and at regional level. Centuries of patriarchy and of White dominance in the church linger on. Unfortunately the church is a place where such negative views seem to thrive.

There is some confusion about what qualifies someone to be a minister: a ministerial position, a theological qualification, a title, or ordination? Mahon deliberately left it to respondents to define. Some sought clarification, questioning their eligibility, although all are listed by the LBA as current, serving ministers. One wrote, 'I work full time for the church but I am not a Rev. I am part of a team and my role is

⁶ A. Reddie, *Cross Cultural Theologies: Working against the grain: Re-imagining Black Theology in the 21st Century*, Acumen: London 2008.

caring for people and overseeing the 30 small groups that are part of our church. I don't do any preaching and haven't had theological training so I don't think I should be filling in your survey.' They were reassured that partly what makes them ministers is that they have dedicated themselves to serving within the church context, participating in God's mission in multiple ways.

Recommendations

As a result of her study, Mahon calls for

- Forums and community groups where female ministers, including those of common ethnicity, can gather to decipher cultural codes (mutually valued principles and norms that characterise a particular group of people), share knowledge, experiences and learning, and facilitate positive change through mutual support and activism within churches and communities. Such networking would reduce the sense of isolation and would encourage.
- These forums should interact – a group of Black women could interact with a group of White women, in dialogue with a similar Latin American group, etc., sharing one another's cultural codes around theology and identity.
- Repentance: the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the London Baptist Association and local churches need to repent for ignoring suffering, for declining to bear another's burden in favour of seemingly more pressing needs at national, regional and local level.
- Steps to present the 'naked gospel' to marginalised people – a stripped-down account of the life of Jesus and other major biblical characters – and allow the gospel to be 'played back' by individuals and groups. As the Holy Spirit brings fresh insights, greater depths of meaning enable a more authentic application of our Christian heritage and principles, making faith come alive.

- Ongoing theological training and development, both within and outside colleges, to be more accessible to Black female ministers. They may need targeted support if they are to thrive in academic environments, not underperform in theological studies. Education has emancipatory benefits: this group could both contribute massively and profit greatly from such training opportunities.
- Mentoring relationships for women, especially Black women ministers which enable accountability and the theological reflection that leads to more authentic praxis.
- Collective theological reflection within congregations on the role of women in the church.
- A body similar to the Black Clergywomen of the United Methodist Church, supported by the Baptist Union of Great Britain and promoted at regional and local levels as a matter of justice.
- Support for initiatives which celebrate and showcase Black women who are community and business leaders, affirming their contribution to British society. Feminist activism builds confidence, the seed-bed of creativity.
- Black female ministers should be invited to share their gifts with the wider body of Christ. They have a unique story to tell, one of courage and perseverance; hearing this will enable the church to confront prevalent sins, including racism and sexism.
- More research with in-depth interviews to help these women's voices to be heard.
- More writing by British Black women of all ages – biographies, poetry, songs, fiction, non-fiction, plays, books, films, testimonies and academic are all dynamic expressions of cultural identity and invaluable tools in telling a story of a people and way of life.

- Courageous activism leading to greater freedom for all people, stemming from the freedom that Christ has provided for all and yearns to see fully manifest.

A YOUNG MINISTER IN SUBURBIA

Lucy Wright

My experience of ministry is shaped not only by being a woman but also by being a younger woman in ministry; both of which have a bearing on who I am as a minister. I started at Worcester Park Baptist in 2009 straight from Bristol Baptist College as their associate minister. I sensed from a small section of the church some initial scepticism due to a number of reasons. Partly this was due to interpretation of scripture, the church identifies itself as a traditional Evangelical church; but mostly the uncertainty arose because they had no experience of having a full-time woman minister. The only experience the church had of women was the occasional pulpit supply, and a retired woman minister in the membership who did occasional preaching; back then a few of the members would stay away when she preached because they did not like women in the pulpit. The church certainly did not have experience of someone in their early to mid-twenties as a minister. This came into sharper focus when in 2010, after the sudden departure of the senior minister, I found myself in pastoral charge of the church. The church, like many churches, had a familiarity of experienced male ministers who had a wife and children. I was the antithesis of this as a young, single woman and so I had to gain their trust.

As time went by slowly mindsets changed; although I am different, there were similarities in my ministry to previous ministers. I was now perceived as being able to preach faithfully, and lead people in such a way that others were joining the church and coming to faith. I also think that the regional team's affirmation of who I was helped to change perceptions, particularly the diaconate, to see that although it is unusual for women to be ministers of medium-sized churches it was not unheard of. This led the church meeting to drop the prefix of associate in 2012, and I was known from then on as the minister of the church. Surprisingly, for me, it is the young retired and older generations that have been more accepting. The pockets of concern have come, on the whole, from the younger generations that are closer to my age. There

was a ready acceptance within the ecumenical community, due no doubt to their previous experiences of women in ministry; however, within our Baptist cluster there has been some adjustment needed by myself and my colleagues. Both the minister cluster and my own church have now become a place of encouragement.

BAPTIST ECCLESIOLOGY AND LEADERSHIP

An African and Caribbean Perspective

Philip Lutterodt

Introduction

A rainbow is made up of a diversity of colours, notably: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. It is the colour diversity of a rainbow that contributes to its uniqueness. The London Baptist Association, like a rainbow, is made up of a diversity of ethnicities/cultures. The LBA has Baptists from the six regions of the world – Europe, Latin America, Africa, Asia, Oceania and North America. This diversity of ethnicities/cultures contributes to the uniqueness of the LBA. Just as the history and development of British Baptists is shaping Baptists from other parts of the world in the LBA, in like manner the history and development of Baptists from other parts of the world is shaping British Baptists in the LBA. This essay is a reflection, based on my personal observation, of several key features of Baptist ecclesiology (the nature and purpose of the church) and Baptist church leadership from an African and Caribbean perspective. It asserts that the autonomy of the local church with co-operation, congregational church government with pastoral prerogative and authoritative church leadership style are common features of African and Caribbean Baptist ecclesiology and leadership. It must be pointed out from the outset that this observation is a *generalisation* since there are a variety of expressions of Baptist ecclesiology and leadership in Africa and the Caribbean.

Baptist Distinctive

Baptists often show unity with regard to their principles and diversity with respect to the expression of those principles in various ethnic/cultural contexts. Scholars note that Baptist churches are distinctive in seven important ways as designated by the acrostic 'Baptists':

- B = Biblical authority
- A = Autonomy of the local church
- P = Priesthood of the believer
- T = Two ordinances: believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper
- I = Individual soul competency
- S = Salvation by grace through faith alone
- T = Two offices: Pastor and Deacon
- S = Separation of church and state

For the purposes of this essay, the position of Baptists in Africa and the Caribbean in relation to the practice of the principles of the autonomy of the local church, the priesthood of the believer/individual soul competency, and two offices (Pastor and Deacon) will be examined. These principles will be applied respectively to the ecclesiological and leadership concepts of external church relations, internal church government and church leadership styles in order to delineate several important marks of Baptist ecclesiology and leadership in the African and Caribbean context.

The Autonomy of the Local Church with Co-operation

There are, broadly speaking, three types of external church relations – dependent, interdependent and independent. A dependent external church relationship is one in which a local church needs the support of its national denomination for its governance. An interdependent external church relationship is where a local church and its national denomination mutually rely on each other in governance matters. An independent external church relationship is either when a local church is part of a national denomination but is not controlled by the national denomination or when a local church is not part of a national denomination.

Baptists exercise an independent external church relationship which makes each local Baptist church autonomous. The autonomy of the local church indicates that each local Baptist church is independent from other local Baptist churches in its governance. As such Baptist churches are self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating churches. They are

churches which have the power to make their own decisions, finance themselves and plant new churches.

Community is integral to life in Africa and the Caribbean. Community life has the elements of neighbourliness, caring, sharing, common interests, common values, cohesion and solidarity. The concept of community is inspired by Bible texts such as Acts 2:44-46 and 2 Corinthians 8:13-15.

The Jerusalem church in Acts chapter 2 was a caring and sharing church community. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that it was not a perfect church. In Acts 6:1-7 reality sets in and there is a church conflict in connection with racism/ethnocentrism which the church leaders had to resolve. In 2 Corinthians 8 the Macedonian churches provide financial help to the Jerusalem church.

In light of the practice of community, for African and Caribbean Baptists, the Baptist distinctive of the autonomy of the local church is usually not absolutised. The concept of community modifies the Baptist distinctive of the autonomy of the local church. It is reconfigured to the autonomy of the local church with co-operation. Most Baptist churches co-operate through Associations and Unions (or Conventions) so as to help each other to carry out ministries which a single Baptist church will not be able to perform.

Community life in the African and Caribbean church is manifested in practical ways such as through a church's pastoral care ministry. The congregation participates in the joys and sorrows of one another. There is a celebration and thanksgiving in connection with the following issues: special birthdays, special wedding anniversaries, traditional marriages, weddings, childbirth, child-naming ceremonies, child dedication/christening, baptisms, school graduation, new employment, job promotions, retirement and other issues of joy. There is also an expression of concern through intercession prayers with regard to illness, hospitalisation, bereavement, travel, relocation, membership transfer, inactive members and other matters of challenge.

A practical way by which community life in the church is demonstrated is through a church's welfare ministry. As part of the church's care ministry for its members, gifts in cash or kind are usually

presented by a church to congregation members during special life events such as special birthdays, special wedding anniversaries, birth of a child, marriage, hospitalisation, bereavement (with regard to father/mother/husband/wife/brother/sister/child) and to the immediate family on the death of a church member.

Co-operation at the national level may take place in the areas of evangelism and missions, Christian/church education, theological education, educational institutions (primary schools, secondary schools, colleges and universities), social action/community development, a national children's work organisation, a national youth fellowship, a national Baptist college/university students ministry, a national women's fellowship, a national men's fellowship and national ministers' fellowship and a national ministerial recognition committee. These national bodies sometimes have executive powers and are not merely co-ordinating organisations. They are able to override the rights of the equivalent body at the local church level in order to maintain co-operation and community.

A good number of African and Caribbean Baptist Unions/Conventions make it compulsory for all local churches to contribute a percentage of their church income to both the Association and the Union/Convention. This is done in the spirit of community which entails the sharing of rights, responsibilities and resources and in order to expand the kingdom of God. Local churches that fail to send their financial contributions to the Association and Union/Convention are sanctioned by these bodies.

A strength of the autonomy of the local church with co-operation is that it generates synergy in Baptist church life. The collective endeavour of autonomous churches working together in worship, discipleship and evangelism creates results that far outweigh that of the churches working in absolute autonomy. A weakness is that it may lead to coercion of churches to comply with Associational and Union/Convention decisions with which they disagree. This may cause a local church to be apathetic towards the Association and Union/Convention. It ought to be remembered that as much as community may be valuable to social

relationships, the individuality of people in a community also needs to be affirmed without descending into individualism.

Congregational Church Government with Pastoral Prerogative

There are in general three types of church government – Hierarchical or Episcopal church government, Federal or Presbyterian church government, and Congregational or Baptist church government. In Hierarchical or Episcopal church government one leader (e.g. the bishop) has final authority in decision-making with regard to church matters (Matthew 16:18, Titus 1:5, 1 Timothy 3:1). Federal or Presbyterian church government gives a group of leaders (e.g. the pastors, elders, deacons) final authority in decision-making with regard to church matters (Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5, Acts 15:1-4, 1 Timothy 4:14, 1 Timothy 5:17). In Congregational or Baptist church government the church members at the Church Meeting have final authority in decision-making with regard to church matters (Acts 1:15, 23-26, Acts 6:1-6, Acts 14:23, Acts 15:6).

The Baptist principles of the priesthood of the believer and individual soul competency provide a foundation for Baptist congregational church polity. The priesthood of the believer denotes that every Christian is a priest of Christ and is competent to talk directly to God in prayer and hear directly from God through the Bible without having to pass through an intermediary such as a Pastor (1 Peter 2:9). Pastors help Christians to be better priests of Christ.

Individual soul competency refers to the liberty or freedom of choice every human being has to know and respond to God's will (Joshua 24:15). God created humanity with the ability to make choices: as such human beings are not robots. Individual soul competency provides a basis for the Baptist distinctive of religious freedom whereby every person has the right to choose the religious faith she/he will believe in and live by.

Since every Christian is a priest and a competent soul, she/he can hear directly from God and share her/his understanding of the mind of God on matters for deliberation at church meetings. Church governance in Baptist churches takes place at the congregational level where the

church members, as priests of Christ and as individual competent souls, have the freedom to share their views and take decisions on church matters. Under the Lordship of Jesus Christ each Baptist church congregation may decide on church matters without reference to an outside organisation.

Congregational church government is sometimes termed 'pneumatocracy', the rule of the Holy Spirit through the church meeting. The Holy Spirit speaks to the individual church members regarding the will of God on an issue. If the majority of the congregation listens to the voice of the Holy Spirit, then decision of the majority at the church meeting may be in line with God's will (Rom. 8:26-27).

Some African and Caribbean Baptist churches follow the usual Baptist decentralised congregational church-government approach whereby the church members make the final decision at the church meeting on church matters. Church meetings may be held four times or three times or twice a year. The Pastor in this situation is accountable to the congregation.

Other churches have a centralised Baptist congregational church-government approach whereby only the most important issues are brought to the congregation. The Pastor initially receives authority from the church meeting, but subsequently has the prerogative to act on behalf of the congregation on most issues without consulting the congregation. Issues such as major church programmes, the church budget and major church projects are usually discussed at the church meeting. It is a 'top to bottom' form of congregational church leadership.

The notion of congregational church government with pastoral prerogative may have its roots in the hierarchical nature of some African and Caribbean societies. This hierarchical society clearly defines each person's status according to their rank, influence and importance in society. People at the top of the hierarchy manage those at the bottom.

Advocates of congregational church government with pastoral prerogative are of the view that it is a more efficient method of church governance which enables a Baptist church to be more effective in getting results. They claim it does not require time to be spent in building a consensus on issues among the congregation and it does not

stifle the Pastor's leadership. In addition, they note that in Acts 15:1-35 the church leaders decided on important matters (such as doctrinal matters) and that it was only routine matters in Acts 6:1-6 (such as the distribution of food) that the congregation took part in decision-making.

However, its critics point out that it is a hierarchical mode of congregational church governance which is at odds with the very understanding of congregational, and not pastoral, church government. Furthermore, subsidiarity is the appropriate method of governance in a Baptist church and not hierarchy. Baptist church subsidiarity gives the final decision-making power in the church to the congregation since they constitute the body of Christ and as a group they can hear the voice of God on an issue more clearly than an individual Pastor.

Authoritative Church Leadership Style

Four broad forms of leadership styles are autocratic leadership, authoritative leadership, collaborative leadership and free-rein leadership. The autocratic or authoritarian Pastor demands obedience from the congregation, exercises power without checks and balances from the deacons and the congregation, does not take into consideration the views of followers and is domineering in relating to people. The authoritative Pastor is a confident leader who is in control of the affairs of the church and expects to be respected and obeyed by church members. The collaborative Pastor is a team player, seeks the views of others and works with others in carrying out ministry activities. The free-rein Pastor gives the congregation the freedom of expression to say what they think and feel, as well as the freedom of action to do what they judge is right in the eyes of God.

The Baptist principle of two offices suggests that there are two church offices that are to lead the church in serving God and people; these offices are pastors (or overseers or elders) and deacons. Pastors are to take care of the spiritual needs of people and deacons are to help Pastors do their work effectively (Phil 1:1, 1 Timothy 3:1 and 8). Each local Baptist church selects its own Pastor and deacons without an external organisation being involved in the appointment. The Pastor is an Elder (*presbuteros*) with regard to ministry title or status of respect

(1 Pet 5:1). The Pastor is a Shepherd (*poimen*) concerning the functions of ministry (1 Pet 5:1-4). The Pastor is a Bishop/Overseer (*episkopos*) as regards the Pastor's position of authority in administrative duties (1 Tim 3:1).

The two offices (pastor and deacon) principle is normally practised by African and Caribbean Baptist churches. It seems a good number of African and Caribbean Baptist Pastors prefer the authoritative leadership style. This may be due to the nature of authority figures in African and Caribbean culture. In this context the father is an authority figure in a home, the teacher is an authority figure in a school and the employer is an authority figure in a workplace. Consequently, the Pastor becomes an authority figure in church. Authority figures have status, power, privilege and rights which are not enjoyed by other people in the same social setting.

Another contributing factor to authoritative leadership style in African and Caribbean culture is illustrated by an African proverb on leadership which says: 'An army of sheep led by a lion can defeat an army of lions led by a sheep'. This proverb points to the necessity of authoritative leadership in African and Caribbean society. It contends that for an institution (the family, school, workplace, church, state) to be effective it needs bold, courageous and competent leadership. The proverb notes that it is the quality of leadership, and not the quality of followership, that enables an institution to succeed in its endeavours.

Owing to this, in African and Caribbean church leadership, the Pastor is generally seen as a leader first and as a servant second. The Pastor is a leader-servant rather than a servant-leader. The prevalent church leadership style is usually authoritative leadership. Occasionally, authoritative leadership may be mixed with a collaborative leadership style or free-rein leadership style when a situation requires this.

As authoritative leaders, African and Caribbean church leaders are perceived by the congregation to be God's 'anointed leaders'. They are affectionately called 'man of God' or 'woman of God'. They are men and women of God who have a special anointing of God's Spirit upon their lives. They are God's Spirit-empowered ministers. God's anointing on church leaders is assumed to be greater than his anointing on church

members. This anointing explains the ability of church leaders to perform ministries that church members cannot perform. Bible texts such as Acts 13-1-3 are used to give credence to the special anointing that church leaders have in comparison to church members. The leaders in the Antioch church were called, appointed and anointed by the Holy Spirit for their missionary work. God's Spirit anointed Barnabas and Saul for their missionary journey; likewise, it is God's Spirit who anoints pastors for ministry. The impression is that this anointing places pastors in an authoritative leadership position.

In Baptist churches with an authoritative church-leadership style, decision making is under the direction of God's anointed Pastor. The Pastor is seen as God's anointed servant who is God's representative to lead the church. Only very important issues are usually brought to church meetings. Some church members expect the church leadership to make all decisions on their behalf and do not see the need for frequent church meetings. The Pastor's stance on an issue is often accepted as the right one since she/he is God's anointed leader-servant.

Authoritative Pastors take charge and insist on steering the church in the direction they believe it should head towards. A danger of authoritative leadership is that it can sometimes become autocratic leadership in which the congregation is used to advance the personal interests of the Pastor. But authoritative leaders also point out that collaborative leadership and free-rein leadership may become leadership styles in which the sheep (congregation) end up leading the shepherd (pastor) – a scenario which is seen to be unbiblical by authoritative leaders.

Conclusion

Baptist distinctive embeds itself in culture to produce a particular pattern of Baptist thought and life. This essay claims that the autonomy of the local church with co-operation, congregational church government with pastoral prerogative and authoritative church-leadership style are common features of African and Caribbean Baptist ecclesiology and leadership. Since the LBA is a rainbow of Baptist churches, it is imperative that both Baptists from other parts of the world and British

Baptists live by the concept of unity and diversity in Baptist life so as to grow and develop God's kingdom through Baptist churches in Britain.

The quest for unity and diversity in the LBA has its obstacles and opportunities for individual Baptists and its problems and possibilities for Baptist churches. Questions arise as to 'what are we to express unity on?' and 'what are we to express diversity on?' Nevertheless, these should be seen as growing pains in being and living as a 'rainbow of churches' in the London Baptist Association.

References

- Grenz, Stanley. *The Baptist Congregation: a guide to Baptist belief and practice*. Vancouver: Regent College Publications, 2002.
- Northouse, Peter. *Leadership: theory and practice*. London: Sage, 2007.
- Toon Peter, et al., *Who runs the Church?: four views on church government*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF BLACK PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES IN BRITAIN

Israel Olofinjana

One of the relatively new phenomena in British Christianity and religious landscape is the emergence and development of Black Pentecostal churches. A century ago the face of British Christianity could be labelled white in terms of colour, but now it is increasingly becoming multi-coloured if one can call it that. This change in British Christianity is part of a larger shift taking place in World Christianity. An expression of Christianity that is growing all over the world is Pentecostalism. David Barrett estimated that, according to the current data, Pentecostalism is likely to rise to 1,140 million or 44% of the total number of Christians by 2025.¹ Alan Anderson observed that, Pentecostalism is fast becoming the dominant expression of Christianity and one of the most extraordinary religious phenomena in the world today.²

Pentecostalism as a global movement has large adherence from the Majority World and, it could be argued, is the expression of Christianity that is growing fastest in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and South America. Britain, which used to have white classic Pentecostals and later the Charismatic Movements of the 1960s as the major players within that expression, now has black Pentecostals adding to the diversity, to the extent that the history of British Pentecostals will not be complete without black Pentecostals. What then is the beginning of black Pentecostalism in Britain? Is black Pentecostalism a homogeneous group? What are their contributions? These are some of the questions this essay seeks to address.

Some clarifications of terms are needed before proceeding. What is

¹ David Barrett, Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission 1997, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 21 January 1997, pp. 24-25.

² Alan Anderson and Walter Hollenweger (eds), *Pentecostals After a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*, Sheffield, Sheffield Academic Press, 1999, p. 19.

meant by Pentecostals? There is no general agreement among Pentecostal theologians as to a definitive definition of Pentecostals because it depends on who is defining the word and their theological persuasions. For example, as an African who was born and raised in an African Initiated Church (AIC), from my experience, I will define some of the AICs as Pentecostals because of their emphasis on prayers, use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, prophetic visions, healing, miracles, Spirit-led experiences and Spirit-filled experiences.³ But I am equally aware of the scholarly debate that questions whether some of the AICs can be regarded as Pentecostals due to their syncretistic nature which makes some of them appear more as a cult than a church.⁴ In this chapter, I have classified AICs as Pentecostals. For the purposes of a working definition, Pentecostals are an expression of Christianity that has its origin in Acts 2:1-13 when the disciples of our Lord were filled with the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. It is a modern church movement that is characterised by *glossolalia* (speaking in tongues), use of the gifts of the Spirit, Spirit-filled experiences, belief in miracles, healing and free and ecstatic worship.

Origins of the Pentecostal Movement in Britain

The year 1906 is very significant in modern Pentecostal history because it was the year that the Pentecostal revival of Azusa Street in Los Angeles started, led by William J. Seymour. Some scholars and commentators see this event as the beginning of the Pentecostal Movement, while others will argue that it was in 1900/1901 at Topeka Kansas with Charles Parham that modern Pentecostalism originated.⁵ A further debate associated with the history of Pentecostalism is whether Charles Parham (1873-1929) or William J. Seymour (1870-1922) is the

³ Israel Olofinjana, *20 Pentecostal Pioneers in Nigeria*, Milton Keynes, Xlibris Publishers, 2011, see Introduction.

⁴ See Mark Sturge, *Look What the Lord has done: An Exploration of Black Christian Faith in Britain*, England, Scripture Union Publishing, 2005, pp. 57-58 and Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008, pp. 68-69.

⁵ Anderson and Hollenweger (eds), *Pentecostals*, pp. 41-42.

founder of the movement. Those who prefer Parham, do so on the basis that he formulated the Pentecostal theology of speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. However, others prefer Seymour on the understanding that the Pentecostal missionary movement and ecumenical vision which transcends race started with Seymour's movement in Azusa Street in 1906.

A historical error to clarify at this stage is the assumption that modern Pentecostalism originated in the United States with the events of 1906. The Azusa Street Revival is very significant in the history of modern Pentecostalism partly because it later gave birth to Classic Pentecostal churches such as Church of God in Christ (COGIC), Church of God Cleveland, TN, Apostolic Faith Church, Pentecostal Holiness Church, Assemblies of God, Foursquare Gospel Church and many more.⁶ However, there were other streams of Pentecostals that emerged separately from this history in other parts of the world, such as the Jamaican Revival of 1860-1861, the Mukti Mission in India from 1905-1907, the Korean renewal movement from 1903 (Pyongyang 1907) and the AICs at the beginning of the twentieth century.⁷ Some of the AICs developed as a result of praying for healing during the influenza epidemic after the First World War and reacting against Colonial Christianity that the Mission Churches introduced into Africa. Whatever views of Pentecostal history we hold, the origins of Pentecostalism in Britain is very much linked to the events in Azusa Street.

The Welsh Revival led by Evan Roberts in 1904 was the catalyst of the Pentecostal Movement in Britain as it sowed the seeds and laid the foundation for the emergence of classic Pentecostal Churches in Britain such as Elim Pentecostal Church, The Apostolic Church Great Britain and Assemblies of God Great Britain. The Welsh Revival also inspired what later followed at Azusa Street as Frank Bartleman, the official

⁶ Some of the history of these churches started before 1906 but the events of the revival shaped their theology, ecclesiology and mission.

⁷ Roswith Gerloff, *Churches of the Spirit: The Pentecostal/Charismatic Movement and Africa's Contribution to Renewal of Christianity* in A. Adogame, R. Gerloff and K. Hock (eds), *Christianity in Africa and the African Diaspora*, London, Continuum International Publishing Group, 2008, p. 209.

historian of the Los Angeles Revival, corresponded with Evan Roberts inquiring about the principles of revival and also asked Roberts to pray for revival in California;⁸ however it was the influence of the Azusa Street Revival on the likes of T.B. Barratt from Norway, Cecil Polhill and Alexander A. Boddy that led to the start of Pentecostalism in Britain. Boddy (1854-1930), an Anglican priest at All Saints in Monkwearmouth, Sunderland, has been considered the father of Pentecostalism in Britain,⁹ because his church from 1907 became a meeting point where different people came to experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit. One of those baptised in the Spirit through Alexander Boddy's ministry was Smith Wigglesworth (1859-1947), a pioneer of faith.¹⁰

Another person who was baptised in the Spirit at one of the revival meetings in Sunderland was the Revd Kwame Brem-Wilson who was a Ghanaian business man and schoolmaster at a missionary school in Ghana.¹¹ He was born in Dixcove, Ghana in 1855 and came to Britain in 1901. In 1906 Brem-Wilson started Sumner Road Chapel in Peckham, South East London. As a result of his attendance and contribution at the revival meetings in Sunderland in 1907, Brem-Wilson developed relationships with Alexander Boddy and Cecil Polhill who were founders of the first Pentecostal missionary movement in Britain, the Pentecostal Missionary Union. He was also friends with the founders of

⁸ Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street*, Plainfield, NJ, Logos International, 1980, pp. 13-15 and Robert Liardon, *God's General*, California, Roberts Liardon Publishing, 1998, pp. 89-93.

⁹ Peter Hocken, *Streams of Renewal: The Origins and Early Development of the Charismatic Movement in Great Britain*, Australia, Paternoster Press, 1986, p. 145.

¹⁰ Lester Sumrall, *Pioneers of Faith*, Sumrall Publishing, 1995, p. 171.

¹¹ Babatunde Adedibu, *Coat of Many Colours*, UK, Wisdom Summit, 2012, p.26; Israel Olofinjana, *Turning the Tables on Mission: Stories of Christians from the Global South in the UK*, London, Instant Apostle/Lion Publishing, 2013, p. 119; <http://israelolofinjana.wordpress.com/2012/05/06/the-first-african-pentecostal-church-in-europe-1906-present/> Accessed on 14 September 2014.

the Apostolic Church Great Britain, D.P. Williams and W.J. Williams, as he hosted an Apostolic Church conference in London in 1923. These relationships were very important at that particular time when it was not acceptable to associate with black people, and they reveal the Pentecostal significance of breaking down church traditions and racial barriers. In addition, they also demonstrate the ecumenical dynamics of early Pentecostals in Britain. It is important to note the relationship between Alexander Boddy, an Anglican minister, and Kwame Brem-Wilson, a black Pentecostal. This early relationship is significant and foreshadows some of the Anglican-Pentecostal relationships that are currently emerging. Examples of these are the relationship between Jesus House and Holy Trinity Brompton, the Anglican Pentecostal Theological consultations and the instalment of Bishop Eric Brown of New Testament Church of God (NTGC) as the first Pentecostal president of Churches Together in England (CTE).

Origins and Diversity of Black Pentecostals in Britain

The Revd Kwame Brem-Wilson can be regarded as a pioneer of black Pentecostalism in Britain, but the development of the movement did not occur until the arrival of the Caribbean migrants from 1948. In tracing the next phase in the development of black Pentecostal churches in Britain, it is worth highlighting that black Pentecostal churches in Britain are not a homogeneous movement but rather one that is heterogeneous in culture, ethnicity, ecclesiology, mission and theology. Some are Unitarians (Oneness Pentecostals) while others are Trinitarians.¹² Some have embraced Black Liberation Theology while others preach Prosperity Gospel. Some have grown to become church denominations such as the New Testament Church of God, the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) and Church of Pentecost, while others are still independent churches such as New Wine Church in Woolwich. Some are church plants from their denominational churches back in the Caribbean or Africa such as The Church of the Lord *Aladura*, International Central Gospel Church and Forward in Faith Ministries International, while others are churches that have started here

¹² This is becoming less of an issue now than in the past.

in Britain and have planted churches in other parts of the world such as Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC).

The second thing to note is that black Pentecostal Churches in Britain are part of what is usually regarded as Black Majority Churches (BMCs), a term that many black church leaders are growing wary of. BMCs are independent Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches that have originated within the Black community and have a Black majority as congregation and leadership. These are Churches that have emerged from the African and Caribbean Diaspora.¹³ This definition does not include BMCs that have emerged within Historic Churches such as Catholics, Baptists, Anglicans, URC and Methodists. The problem with the above definition is that not all BMCs or black Pentecostal churches fit into such descriptions as the issues of identity of any group of people are complex. This is also increasingly becoming difficult because some BMC or black Pentecostal churches are actually multicultural, multi-ethnic intergenerational churches so that while they appear black to an outsider, to an insider, they are truly many nations!

Caribbean Pentecostal Churches

The 1940s and 1950s saw the influx of Caribbean families into the UK due to the invitation of the British government asking them to come and help rebuild the country after the devastations of the Second World War. Many people from the Caribbean responded to this call but to their surprise and dismay they were rejected by both society and the Church. Most of the people from the Caribbean regarded themselves as British citizens and as part of the Commonwealth and therefore expected to be treated equally. But they soon realised, with posters saying 'No Irish, No Blacks and No Dogs', that the wealth was not common and that they were regarded as second-class citizens. Walter Hollenweger in an introduction to a seminal book on the black church in Britain commented that, 'Christians in Britain prayed for many years for revival, and when

¹³ Israel Olofinjana, "Nigerian Pentecostals in Britain: Towards Prosperity or Consumerism?" Afe Adogame (eds), *The Public Face of African New Religious Movements in Diaspora*, England, Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2014, p. 234.

it came they did not recognise it because it was black'.¹⁴ This rejection, with other factors such as loyalty to church brands, coldness of British Christianity and mission to the UK, led to the formation of Caribbean Pentecostal and Holiness Churches. This period is usually referred to as the Windrush Generation as the ship, *SS Empire Windrush*, brought about 493 people from the Caribbean on 22 June 1948 to Tilbury London. The first of the Caribbean Pentecostal Churches founded in the UK was Calvary Church of God in Christ which started in London in 1948. The Church became affiliated with Church of God in Christ, USA, in 1952 and they now have about twenty-one church plants in the UK. Others soon followed such as the New Testament Church of God (1953), Church of God of Prophecy (1953), Wesleyan Holiness Church (1958) and New Testament Assembly founded in London in 1961 which now has about eighteen churches in Britain.¹⁵

Since around the 1990s there have emerged New Generation Caribbean Pentecostal churches. I refer to these churches as new generation, because they have a wider appeal to Caribbean British Christians who are second and third generation. Many of its leaders are second or third generation Caribbean British Christians. These churches are Pentecostals having dynamic worship and worship teams, use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and creative preaching styles. They are very proactive in terms of community and social engagement, providing services such as food banks, debt counselling, soup kitchens, prison ministries and homeless shelters. Examples of these churches are Ruach Ministries led by Bishop John Francis (1994);¹⁶ Rhema Christian Ministries (1996), formerly known as Croydon Rhema Fellowship (1990) founded by Pastor Mark Goodridge now led by Marva Scott; Christian Life City (1996) led by Bishop Wayne Malcolm; Micah Christian Ministries (1998) led by Pastor Denis Wade; the Tabernacle Church led by Pastor

¹⁴ Roswith Gerloff, *A Plea for British Black Theology* Vol 1, Eugene, Oregon, Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2010, see the Foreword.

¹⁵ <http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/religion-in-london/resource-guides/black-majority-church.htm> Accessed 12 September 2014

¹⁶ Bishop John Francis' father, Bishop Tesley Francis founded the First Born Church of the Living God in the 1960s.

Michael W. White.¹⁷; Greater Faith Ministries led by Bishop Lennox Hamilton.¹⁸

African Pentecostal Churches

The independence of African countries from around 1957 onwards led to African diplomats, students and tourists coming to Britain. When they discovered, like the Caribbeans before them, that they were rejected by the British Churches and society at large, this led to the founding of African Initiated Churches (AICs) in London. The first such church to be planted was the Church of the Lord (Aladura) in 1964 by the late Apostle Oluwale Adejobi in South London. This Church has its headquarters (HQ hereafter) in Nigeria. Others soon followed, such as the Cherubim and Seraphim Church in 1965 (HQ in Nigeria), the Celestial Church of Christ in 1967 (HQ also in Nigeria), Aladura International Church founded by the Revd Father Olu Abiola in 1970. Others include Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) Mount Bethel founded by Apostle Ayo Omideyi in 1974 (HQ in Lagos Nigeria), Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) of Great Britain in 1976 (HQ in Ibadan Nigeria) and Born Again Christ Healing Church founded by Bishop Fidelia Onyuku-Opukiri in 1979. Musama Disco Christo Church (MDCC), a Ghanaian church was founded in London in 1980.¹⁹

The 1980s and 1990s witnessed the rise of New Pentecostal Churches (NPC) from West Africa. For example, one of the largest churches in Western Europe is Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC) founded in 1992 by Pastor Matthew Ashimolowo (a Nigerian). Also one of the fastest growing churches in the UK is the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) which was started in Nigeria in 1952 by an illiterate prophet, Josiah Akindayomi. They began in the UK in 1988/89 and through the efforts of David Okunade and Ade Okerende they now have about 700 churches in the UK. They also have churches in Germany, Norway, Spain, Holland, Italy, France, Belgium, Switzerland,

¹⁷ Michael White's father founded this church in the 1950s with the name The Bible Way Church of the Lord Jesus Christ Apostolic.

¹⁸ Olofinjana, *Reverse*, p. 41.

¹⁹ Olofinjana, *Reverse*, p. 37.

Poland, Austria, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Greece, Portugal, Luxemburg and the Czech Republic. The current General Overseer is Pastor Enoch Adeboye and the UK National leader is Pastor Agu Irukwe of Jesus House in North London. Jesus House is one of the largest black churches in the UK with a membership of about 3,000 people. RCGG London also organises a Christian 'Festival of Life' at the Docklands Excel Centre which attracts around 40,000 people every year.²⁰

Pentecostals within the London Baptist Association (LBA)

As we celebrate 150 years of the LBA there are ministers within the Association whose background and spiritual formation is rooted in Black Pentecostalism, most of which can be identified as African Pentecostals. Some African and Caribbean members of LBA churches also share this heritage and this is reflected in their ecstatic and lively worship, speaking in tongues, passion for prayers, watch-night services, prayer and fasting, and Spirit-led experiences. Some have left Pentecostal churches because of excessive preaching of Prosperity Gospel, lack of cultural diversity and autocratic leadership akin to some African Pentecostal Churches.

There are some LBA ministers whose ministerial and spiritual formation is shaped by Black Pentecostalism. Some continue to network and minister within Pentecostal circles: these include David Shosanya, LBA regional minister for mission, Datha Blackwood, Spurgeon's College, Kofi Manful, senior pastor of Faith Baptist Church, Kingsley Appiagyeyi, senior pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, Francis Sarpong, senior pastor of Calvary Charismatic Baptist Church, Dave Mahon, minister of Brockley Baptist Church, Michele Mahon, Brockley Baptist Church, and Yaw Adjem, Faith Baptist Church. I fall into this category as well because my ministerial formation and background is rooted within African Pentecostalism. While some of us have left Pentecostal churches, we have not left behind our Pentecostal experience but have rather brought that into our Baptist context. This is enriching our ministries and contributing to renewed spirituality and church growth in some of our LBA churches.

²⁰ *Keep the Faith*, Issue 47, 2009, p. 12.

In conclusion, black Pentecostalism in Britain has its origin at the very beginning of Pentecostalism in Britain. Its growth accelerated in the 1940s through the founding of Caribbean Pentecostal churches. Black Pentecostalism in Britain is not a homogenous movement, but is diverse in terms of ethnicity, culture, theology, ecclesiology and mission. These churches have contributed to renewal, social and community projects and church growth in Britain. The LBA has been impacted by Pentecostalism as there are church members and ministers whose spiritual formation is rooted in black Pentecostalism.

THE PORTFOLIO ROUTE

A prophetic experiment?

Pat Took

Dr Johnson famously said that if you're tired of London you're tired of life. Like every capital city it is a place of vitality, of constant and rapid change, with all the stimulus and challenge that brings. The church in London has registered that change, welcoming and struggling with it more than most institutions. As an essentially conservative community, rooted in faithful and life-long service and witness, and committed to passing on the ancient wisdom of Christ and his people, church always finds change difficult. And yet in London the arrival of Christians from around the world has been a source of much needed new vitality, bringing renewed theologies and fresh engagement with the society in which we are set. As Christians we are committed to welcoming the stranger in our midst, and some have been angels, though quite often in disguise.

But institutions change slowly. We found ourselves a decade ago facing a situation in which a number of gifted ministers were leading congregations in the London Baptist Association without accreditation from the Baptist Union. Indeed, it was almost impossible for them to gain accreditation. Many were working full-time in secular employment, some were responsible for family members in other parts of the world, and most were leading congregations which they themselves had founded and which were still dependent upon their energy and commitment. And yet for these pastors the only way to gain accreditation was either to leave their churches and their jobs to attend College full-time or to try to squeeze into lives already grossly overloaded sufficient extra theological training to make them eligible for the Residential Selection Committee. Some faced the added difficulty of having very little English – certainly nothing like enough to cope with a College course. At the same time, some of the women who were exercising a variety of ministries in London were taking the best part of

a decade gaining the qualifications required for accreditation because of family responsibilities.

What were we to do? Were we serious about the welcome we offered to brothers and sisters who had really come to our rescue, and who were proving their ministry in the most demanding of settings? If so, how could we extend accreditation to them in ways that took account of the situations they were in, honouring their ministries and the various theological qualifications they brought with them from Bible Colleges and Seminaries in different parts of the world? In 2005 the issue formed the main agenda for a meeting of the Regional Team and the London District Ministers; they came up with the idea that we might develop a path into accreditation that would be based, not solely upon academic qualification, but upon a Portfolio of the candidate's experience, both here and overseas, and the evidence of their call and competence in their current congregations. It all seemed rather daring, but Paul Martin put together a thought-through proposal and we sent it to Paul Goodliff, then Head of Ministry at the Union, for his consideration. Paul responded positively and joined us in London to talk about how to move the idea forward. Out of this discussion, and the pattern that we subsequently developed, a new stream emerged that has seen a number of gifted ministers gaining accreditation, and that also provoked some creative discussion about what we are looking for in accredited ministry. From the beginning we wanted to work in collaboration with Spurgeon's College, and John Colwell from the College proved a very encouraging friend and colleague in the enterprise. Others who joined us in the work included Faith Bowers, Joe Kapolyo and Mike Wood.

We started at the beginning, drawing up a list of those gifts and skills that seemed to us to be central to the exercise of good ministry, with suggestions as to how these were to be tested and nurtured. But what is the defining quality of good ministry? Is it success, faithfulness, exhaustion, or the exercise of an influence for good? What does a good minister look like? What would we be trying to recognise and to encourage? Should we look for spiritual athletes? – for prayer warriors? – for skilled and nimble apologists? – by the capacity to articulate? – by theological understanding? Or are they marked by particular qualities of

character – compassion and patience and a capacity of self-forgetting? Perhaps, in these days of leader-worship, we should focus on managerial skills, especially, for Baptists, the necessary charm to get people to do what you want without bullying or manipulation? For myself, I always hope for sheer, dogged persistence. And yet Jesus used no such criteria when he called Matthew or Martha. And all of us know people who have exercised ministries that have been full of the redeeming presence of God despite their evident inadequacy, the flaws in their character and their general lack of any of the above. The whole exercise of recognising and accrediting some disciples to be ministers is fraught with theological and practical uncertainty.

And yet, churches continue to call people into positions of trust, and the Union continues to offer suggestions to churches about who they think can be trusted. So inevitably we are driven to decide what exactly we are looking for in those folk we feel we can honourably recommend.

Out of the fascinating discussion that resulted from our efforts to find a new pathway we drew up our list of desiderata and explored how those qualities might be recognised and nurtured. On 6 May 2005 we came up with a list of eight 'Requirements for Durable and Fruitful Ministry'.¹ In abbreviated form they covered:

1. *Call and Character*: inner and external verification of a call, willingness to be in a covenant and accountable relationship with the church and the denomination, a Baptist understanding of the nature of ministry and leadership, a positive attitude to the inclusivity of church life among British Baptists, and evidence that the person's family understands and supports their vocation to ministry.
2. *Spirituality*: an unfolding journey of faith and a commitment to continue that journey, the development of forms of spirituality that are true to the candidate, an understanding of spiritual

¹ I have consulted three documents which are available from the LBA: 'The Requirements for Fruitful Ministry', 'Outline of the Portfolio Pattern of Ministerial Accreditation' and 'A Portfolio Pattern of Preparation and Accreditation for Ministry: Governing Document'.

disciplines and an awareness of the broader Christian tradition. This heading includes the minister's relationships with friends and family. We would be looking to ensure that every minister has sufficient bread for the journey.

3. *Communication*: the ability to articulate the gospel, to preach effectively, to understand a contemporary expression of gospel truth and to engage in apologetic into a secular or multi-faith society. Also communication in a teaching setting through Bible study and discipleship courses, helping people grow in their faith. This should include an ability to speak from personal experience of the love of God, and to model truthfulness and grace.
4. *Leadership*: all those skills which enable a minister to be a pilgrim among pilgrims, an inspirational influence, able to articulate vision and to liberate others to serve, the skill to apply the priorities of Christ to all aspects of church life. We would look for self-awareness and the ability to cope with the group dynamics of church. Some skills in conflict resolution would be valuable.
5. *Theological and Biblical Competence*: a good knowledge and understanding of the Bible and Church History, an understanding of Theology as a conversation about God in which all of us are engaged, contextual awareness of Scripture and an understanding of how our biblical standpoint affects ethical decisions. This would not be entirely book and essay driven – there would be an emphasis on doing gospel theology in the church setting.
6. *Pastoral Skills*: skills, and perhaps training, in pastoral counselling, listening skills, pastoral prayer, helping people in times of crises and enabling them to flourish. Here too an understanding about boundaries, and the pastor's own limits and needs, an ethical sensitivity.
7. *Mission*: the capacity to keep the church focused on the mission of God, identifying the mission of a particular church, keeping that mission fresh and re-imagining it to serve its community and to be a transformative presence; ecumenical co-operation and an

awareness of the wider world and how the gospel addresses its needs.

8. *Practical skills*: self-organisation, willingness and ability to continue to learn, ability to delegate; orderliness and dependability; an awareness of legal matters such as Child Protection, Finance and Trusts.

How splendid it would be to have such a pastor! How I wish I were like this! And yet, this list does seem to encompass the range of skills that a church looks for in their pastor, and that are necessary if a ministry is to be durable and honourable. So we set about trying to find ways of testing out the candidates on each of these attributes, and helping them develop any areas where they fell short. As these pastors were already exercising ministry, there was here an opportunity to draw once again on an historic aspect of affirmation, involving other churches and ministers in their locality. So we looked for involvement in local Baptist life and local ministerial groups beyond the individual congregation. At the heart of this engagement we appointed an Accompanier for each candidate, who would offer a form of mentoring that would include meeting regularly with the candidate, and observing the conduct of worship, preaching and the leading of Church Meeting. The accompanier would also get to know the candidate's family. This again gave a local focus to the scheme, as the accompanier would need to live fairly close to the candidate.

Alongside this personal encouragement and discernment, we developed an annual Summer School, taking all the candidates away to the country for two days. These were very valuable occasions, and enabled us to share any current issues in each ministry in one-to-one conversations, to explore the candidates' personal spiritual journeys with them, and to give them encouragement in any difficulties they were facing. The help of the College, in the form of John Colwell and later Roger Standing, also gave us the chance to test the theological awareness of the candidates, who were invited to prepare by reading a set book or reflecting on a particular theme. John also gave some very stimulating theological input in the form of a seminar on a theme of his

choice. It was at the summer school that the candidates were given information about the requirements of trustees, child protection and other issues of legal compliance. These meetings were valuable occasions for everyone involved, and helped to develop strong and lasting friendships.

Out of all these strands, the candidates put together a portfolio of experience and reflection, including reports from the church, from the accompaniers and from the advisors who helped us at the Summer Schools. Sometimes we discerned that a particular aspect of someone's ministry needed further work, and tried to point them in the direction of supportive training. But over the period of three years, which was the minimum requirement, we saw a natural growth and maturing in each of the candidates which gave us great encouragement. At the end of three years some candidates were ready to proceed through the MRC for acceptance onto the list of Newly Accredited Ministers. Others needed longer to reach this point. One of the values of the experiment was the flexibility it gave for folk to develop within their individual circumstances.

Throughout our work on this experiment we were concerned to ensure that ministers accredited along this path would be as fully prepared and as professionally equipped as all our accredited ministers. But we were deliberately going beyond a purely academic model, and looking to celebrate and affirm a wide range of ministerial skills. At a time when the church is singularly failing to connect with the working population it might be argued that a proven capacity to relate lovingly and helpfully with all kinds of people is of more significance as a measure of suitability for ministry than an academic qualification. I hope that the tenor and range of our conversation will be carried forward in the deliberations of the Union about the shape and preparation of future ministry among us.

The scheme I have outlined above was a London response to a London challenge. It is interesting to note that other Associations have shown an interest in it, and maybe it will continue to attract new candidates. There were some problems with our model. It required considerable commitment from the accompanier, and was heavy on

administration. Not all the things we set out to do got done, and some were not done as well as they should have been. But good ministry was affirmed and encouraged, a sense of belonging fostered, and much radical thinking about the nature of ministry took place. In a helpful critique of the programme Ivan King, one of the first ministers to go down this path, concludes, 'I remain a strong advocate of the Portfolio Route to accreditation and I hope very much that it will be taken up and developed in the right situations by the Union and other Associations.'²

² Ivan King, 'A brief account of my journey to Baptist ministerial accreditation by the Portfolio route and some observations arising from this', unpublished report, 17 April 2012.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Brian Bowers

A good church notice board gives times of services and other meetings. It lists activities for children and other groups. It announces special events and speakers who may attract new people. It conveys the message that here is a live church, active in its mission to make Christ known.

Some things are not mentioned on the notice board. It does not say who got that broken window mended, that blocked drain cleared, or Sunday's offering paid into the bank and used to pay the minister, the church's electricity bill and many other church expenses.

Such 'behind the scenes' matters are dealt with by the church officers, usually secretary and treasurer, or others assisting them. These things are a vital part of running the church but for most members it is sufficient to know that such matters are dealt with. They do not have to bother about the details, but the officers must be concerned. If they need advice, where can it be found?

For more than a century the London Baptist Association and the London Baptist Property Board have been a ready source of advice much appreciated by church officers, and if they do not know the answer they can find an advisor who does and who is sympathetic to Baptists. Asked about the help received, one church secretary, appointed just as a long-serving minister was retiring, highlighted the help given by the LBA in the search for a new minister. He had long experience in university administration but that did not tell him how to set about finding a minister for a church. At the same time that church needed to acquire a new manse and the treasurer was guided through the business of selling one property and buying another. The Property Board arranged building surveys and provided bridging finance and legal advice about manse trusts.

There are things we hope will never happen, but somebody has to consider the possibilities. What happens if the church building is burnt down or, probably worse, so badly damaged that it has to be demolished and rebuilt? Has the treasurer arranged sufficient insurance cover to

meet the cost – and the cost of new furniture? What about the cost of hiring other premises during the rebuilding? Or church property might be stolen and have to be replaced. What if someone has an accident on church premises, or on an outing arranged by the church or the Sunday school, and seeks compensation? Is there insurance to cover the responsibilities of the officers and deacons as managing trustees of the church? Legal expenses may be high, even if it is ultimately decided that the church was not to blame. The point is made elsewhere in this book that people are sometimes reluctant to accept office because of the responsibilities involved, but the financial liabilities can be covered and the Baptist Insurance Company will advise church officers appropriately.

Other business that falls largely to the church treasurer includes income tax, national insurance and pension arrangements for the minister (and any other employees), gift aid claims, agreements when a church lets out part of its premises to other bodies, contracts for any work, such as repairs to the building or church equipment, and payment when the work is done. In all such matters the help and experience of the Association and Board is available. From time to time the Association has arranged 'training days' for church officers, especially when new legislation has come into force, and these have been greatly appreciated.

The following Personal Reflection by a Church Secretary illustrates how one particular church has been helped over many years.

LOCAL CHURCH AND LBA

A Personal reflection from a Church Secretary

Geraldine Alliston

I started attending Albany Park Baptist Church (APBC) in 1988 and became a Deacon in 1992. By the time I became Church Secretary in 1998 I was already aware of some of the ways that the London Baptist Association (LBA) and London Baptist Property Board (LBPB) had helped the church. My predecessor told me that one of the Church Secretary's roles was to be the corporate memory of the church, and so I set out to read back through the church archives to familiarise myself with the church's journey.

Albany Park Baptist Church began life as a church plant from Days Lane Baptist Church in 1941. It first met in a house but, as numbers grew, it rented a former W.H. Smith shop near Albany Park Station. Continued growth and the housing development in the area meant a more permanent home was needed and both the LBA and LBPB played a key role in providing advice and encouragement to this fledgling congregation. In this post-war period, priority was naturally being given to housing. Land and materials for church building were in short supply. All denominations were keen to have a presence on new and growing estates. When eventually we came to the top of the waiting list, the LBPB provided both funding and helpful advice on the pros and cons of each possible site such that, today, we are located in the heart of the community and not on the edge as we might have been. They also advised on how we could furnish the multi-functional building economically and for maximum flexibility. Even so, we needed temporary accommodation in the form of a hut for the Sunday School and when that became the target of an arson attack the LBPB came to the rescue with a loan towards the building of the Church Hall. In 1964 APBC became independent from Day's Lane and had to go through all the legal processes of a Trust Deed and Rules, where again the LBPB and LBA were key players.

The church, however, is not the building or a set of rules, but the people of God seeking to know Jesus and make Him known. For that we needed good leadership and, from our first lay pastor to our current Minister, the LBA has played a key role in supporting and encouraging the church and especially in those challenging times of pastoral vacancy. When I first came to the church it was one such time. Following a painful schism the membership was depleted, the church was still heavily in debt from the costs of the Hall and the economic situation was such that few of the congregation were in employment. Even if we could find a minister it was doubtful whether the church could afford to pay for one. The records show that the deacons had a candidate in mind but that the LBA Superintendent, Douglas McBain, patiently and gently discouraged them from that individual. Time was to reveal how wise that advice was! Instead the church was steered to a more affordable solution – Home Mission funding and a Student Pastor for a year from Spurgeon's College. This began the journey of rebuilding the congregation. At the end of that year we were blessed with a second Student Pastor and this time for three years. The church grew rapidly and we repaid our debts. Douglas took a close interest in the progress of the church, even writing encouraging letters to comment on articles he had read in our Newsletter. As we approached the end of the three-year period it was clear that everyone wanted this pastorate to continue. I recall a most joyful meeting between Douglas and the deacons where he explained the process we would need to go through and how we ended the meeting with spontaneous singing of songs of praise.

Eleven years later we faced another pastoral vacancy by which time Pat Took was Regional Minister. It was a difficult time with more ministers wanting to leave London than come to it. Pat took a close interest in the settlement process and clearly tried hard to suggest candidates who met our profile. Her parting words from one meeting were not to forget that it might be possible to get a waiver from the requirement to call a BU Accredited Minister if we found a suitable candidate via another route. Though being far from our minds at the time, in 2004 we eventually decided to call a former BMS missionary. A waiver was organised until such time as he became accredited. This

also involved a heavy involvement from LBA Secretary, Paul Martin, not only with the waiver process and routine but necessary things ranging from pension scheme transfers, CRB checks etc.

Even the best run churches run into difficulties at times and, in 2011, there was a parting of the ways when our minister decided to leave and plant another church. Paul Martin provided excellent advice on due process and pastoral support to the deacons at that time. The whole team of Regional Ministers – Geoff Andrews, Paul Martin, David Shosanya and Kumar Rajagopalan – came out to meet the deacons and help us to find a way forward. Paul and District Minister, Paul Rochester, steered us towards an excellent Moderator, who helped the church through the long healing process and back to a focus on mission. David encouraged us to undertake a re-focus exercise and that helped to confirm the direction that the Lord was calling us and to shape our profile. For six months Geoff sent us lists of potential candidates and in July 2013 we were able to issue a unanimous call to our current minister – another meeting which ended in shouts of joy!

In 1996 we needed to revise our rules in order to better reflect the way we wanted to do church. Although the redrafting was fairly straightforward we decided to run them past Douglas McBain, just to be on the safe side. He said we had done a good job but pointed out a couple of deviations from our Trust Deed. Getting the changes agreed by the church meeting proved more problematic with a member challenging the process that the diaconate was proposing. Again Douglas came to the rescue by providing a letter of assurance and encouragement.

As well as pastoral support, we have enjoyed financial support through Home Mission and BU Mission funds administered by the LBA. It can be tempting for churches to become dependent on such funding and I recall the time in the mid '90s when our grant was unexpectedly reduced. It was just the nudge we needed. Instead, the LBA gave us a £500 grant from the Barnabas Fund and we resolved to become self-funding as soon as possible. Within a year we were able to donate £500 back and became self-funding until 2013. Since then, and because of some major maintenance problems, we have needed BU Mission support to help to pay for our Minister. We are though being encouraged by the

LBA, through a 5-year Mission Plan, to see the church become self-funding once again. A recent £5,000 loan from the LBPB has enabled us to replace our leaking church roof. With a £3,000 Green Shoots grant last year we were able to revamp our Hall, run a Community Festival and launch Messy Church which, in turn, has led to a substantial increase in attendance and community engagement.

From time to time various issues arose relating to the church premises, such as which fences belonged to the church and who was responsible for their maintenance? Sadly, they all did but, with advice from LBPB, we were able to persuade the local Council to vary the terms of our conveyance so that we could erect a more vandal-proof alternative to the type they had specified. Church mythology was such that we believed there was a restriction preventing us from hiring out the church premises. Here again the LBPB came to the rescue and, armed with legal advice, we now have a small but growing income stream from hiring. More recently LBPB provided a surveyor to advise us on technical risks from a neighbouring development.

The main change I have seen as Church Secretary over the past twenty-seven years has been the volume of legislation impacting on church activities. As a former Civil Servant, and used to dealing with administrative law, much of this has been fairly straightforward, especially with the backing of many of the excellent BU guidelines. But there have been times when church members have wanted to ignore or even challenge some of these legal obligations. The diaconate itself has had to come to terms with the personal liability deacons carry as Managing Trustees and recognise that many of the ways we have traditionally done things are no longer legally acceptable. The help and training from the LBA over the years has been invaluable including such courses as that started by Tony Mason on what it means to be a deacon, the leadership training from Kumar Rajagopalan on better understanding diversity in the church, the courses on safeguarding run by Paul Martin and the supporting role played by Norman Kincaid in dealing with awkward safeguarding issues.

Our journey is only half of that of the LBA but in nearly seventy-five years we can look back with gratitude at the way in which the LBA and

LBPB team have journeyed with us, supported and encouraged us. I am sure that many ordinary church members remain oblivious to most of this activity and am equally sure that our experience is not unique. Many LBA Church Secretaries, like me, have reason to praise God for having such faithful and willing support at hand.



The Albany Park church outside the shop where they used to meet and, on next page, outside their church building



Albany Park Baptist Church

3

MISSION TO A WORLD CITY

Mission is the life blood of the London Baptist Association. How it is best done varies down the years and there is a constant need for fresh ideas and approaches. This section illustrates some of the multi-faceted aspects of Baptist mission in London today. It includes both evangelism and social action, church planting, work with people from many countries and cultures, the contribution of churches large and small, and the role of sector ministries.



Albany Park Baptist Church

3

MISSION TO A WORLD CITY

Mission is the life blood of the London Baptist Association. How it is best done varies down the years and there is a constant need for fresh ideas and approaches. This section illustrates some of the multi-faceted aspects of Baptist mission in London today. It includes both evangelism and social action, church planting, work with people from many countries and cultures, the contribution of churches large and small, and the role of sector ministries.

AN ASSOCIATION WITH A PASSION FOR MISSION

Cornelius Mereweather-Thompson

If I were asked, as LBA President in 2001, to summarize the work of the London Baptist Association in the United Kingdom, this is how I would describe it: 'An association with a passion for mission'.

Happy felicitations to the London Baptist Association for her meritorious services through the years, serving the member churches and ably assisting them in carrying out their mission objectives!

This year is not just a historical moment that is quintessential for our churches, but also a kairos moment for the London Baptist Association. It should be earmarked as a time of prayer, meditation and reflection. The year beckons us to look back into the formative years of the Association. Such a retrospective view of the Association would avail us of the benefits of history behind its formation, by helping us immensely to appreciate the vision of the founding fathers that spearheaded its formation. So, yes indeed, it is a kairos moment not just for the London Baptist Association but also for the churches within the Association.

'Where there is no vision, the people perish' (Prov.29:18). What a true statement! We should receive the London Baptist Association as a gift from God to us. We express our gratitude to God for such a vision and inspiration which brought C.H. Spurgeon, Dr William Landels and Dr William Brock together to promote evangelism and bring the churches in the capital together in the formation of the London Baptist Association.

What coincidence that the London Baptist Association is celebrating her 150th anniversary in the same year as other notable organisations and remarkable events are also remembered! This year also marks the 150th anniversary of the Salvation Army, the movement started by pioneers William and Catherine Booth in the East End of London in 1865. We cannot allow this year to elapse without recognizing the 70th anniversary of the Christian Aid organisation, which was formed at the end of the Second World War in 1945. On the political level there is the celebration of the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta, sealed by King John at

Runnymede Meadow, near Egham, on 15 June 1215. This event shaped the future of the world and marked the road to individual freedom, parliamentary democracy and the supremacy of the law.

One characteristic feature is almost similar in all these: that is responding to the needs of the people by addressing issues of justice, poverty and equality. These are some of the issues that the London Baptist Association is committed to address in her strategy for mission. I thank God that 'the London Baptist Association is a spirit-empowered community of churches growing in holiness and unity, working to be at ease with our diversity, aiming to reach London for Christ'.

What has kept this regional association within the Baptist Union of Great Britain steadfast and unflinching in her mission mandate for a hundred and fifty years? We may wish to attribute that to many factors. I am sure without an iota of doubt that you will concur with me that its formation and continued existence is due to the glory of God and the faithful commitment and support from the member churches and the Baptist Union of Great Britain. Clear vision, understandably stated goals and objectives are contributory factors to the success of the London Baptist Association. In my view, one of the main reasons why the LBA continues to exist today is as a result of the foundation on which it was built. Any structure that is built on a fragile foundation will not be able to withstand the sands of time. Christ is the bedrock of the London Baptist Association: *'built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the Chief Corner Stone'* (Eph.2:20).

The London Baptist Association deserves our gratitude and praise in this moment of her 150th anniversary. We thank the Holy Spirit for granting the LBA the unction to function in our rapidly changing society.

London Baptist Association: Mission for London

Evangelism is the *raison d'être* for the mission of the LBA. Its mission is to win London through Evangelism and other creative and imaginative initiatives for Christ. London presents such a fantastic opportunity for the presentation of the gospel. We cannot overemphasise enough the importance of London for evangelism. As far as the London Baptist is concerned, London is the *sitz im Leben* for spearheading the message of

the gospel. The city of London is like a field that has the potential for the harvesting of souls: the *'field that is ripe for harvest'* (John 4:35). The opportunities that London presents for reaching many nationalities across the globe that visit the metropolis is just tremendous. Nationals from some countries that are resistant to gospel proclamation could easily be encountered in London.

As president of the LBA I had the opportunity to visit many churches within the Association. I am originally from Sierra Leone, West Africa. I never fully understood the workings of the London Baptist Association until I became the LBA President in 2001. There are many ministers who are unaware that the LBA used to have presidents who reigned for a year. I happen to be the last President of the Association.

Before becoming the LBA President, I felt the importance and input that most churches need when they seek to support a candidate for ministerial training. At Custom House, Canning Town, where I started my preparation for training for the ministry, I realized the importance of the LBA for accreditation and acceptance for training for the Baptist ministry. The blessing and guidance of the LBA is as important now as it was in years gone by. Through the vetting and grilling of the LBA I was accepted as Pastor for Custom House Baptist Church and then moved later on to my present position as Senior Pastor for Harlesden Baptist Church. The churches within the Association depend so much on the recommendation from the LBA to fill any pastoral vacancy.

Changes within the London Baptist Association

In life the only thing that is constant is change. I have seen the LBA going through many changes. These changes are for the good of the kingdom. They are not just changes for change sake.

Do you remember at the helm of the LBA was the leader with the appellation, 'The Metropolitan Area Superintendent'? We have dropped that title to 'Team Leader and Regional Minister'. In a very practical way the LBA has been true to its Mission Statement as fully inclusive and recognizing one another's gifts and ministries. That inclusive nature was quite apparent in the appointment of Dr Pat Took as team leader of the LBA.

As LBA President, I was ex-officio a member of the Board of Directors and other committee meetings. It was during my presidency that I recognized the vast amount of work and duties and responsibilities of the Association. The work of the staff, especially the responsibility of the LBA Secretary, was quite enormous. I sometimes wondered how they coped with responding to the many demands of the three hundred churches in the Association.

I thank God for His grace for empowering the staff and the LBA to have fared so well in her ministry in London.

- Recognizing new ministries and accepting them as member churches in the London Baptist Association.
- Because of the inclusive nature of the LBA, we now have many churches from Africa, Asia, and South America in London that are now fully fledged members of the LBA.

The various churches from different cultural backgrounds that are now part of the LBA are a bonus to the ministry of the Association. The mission would no longer be hindered by the barrier of language or ethnicity as the variety of churches within the Association is equipped and capable enough to meet those needs.

- Mission is about shared learning and the willingness to learn together and grow together.

Coming from Sierra Leone, there was a lot I needed to learn while serving in a cross-cultural context in London. I was a joint-pastor before becoming a fully-fledged pastor at Custom House which then had 60% white population. I needed to learn from white pastors how to minister in a terrain that was alien to my culture. Through working with an English white pastor, I was able to learn and work better in a cross-cultural setting.

It is true to say that it is a blessing that many nationalities from Europe, Africa, Latin America and Asia are spicing up the spiritual life here in Britain. We must also recognize that we are learning to hear God speak to us and equip us in an enlightened way for mission effectiveness. Learning is a two-way process. We learn from each other and improve by applying the shared experiences and knowledge we gain from each

other. I do not just see 'Reverse in Mission', I see in our shared experiences and working together in a cross-cultural context what I would term as 'a cross-fertilisation of ideas' for the development of our ministry within the LBA. As we mission together, let us understand that one cannot stay in reverse. We reverse to move forward. Cross-fertilisation of ideas and joint-working in ministry brings our ministries together and makes our ministries more energised and more resourceful. When we are able to embrace each other's culture, learn from each other, and inject into the bloodstream of our churches and ministries what we have learnt from churches within the Association of the London Baptists, then our churches will be successful in reaching out to the lost and reaping a bumper harvest of souls.

What does the future hold for the LBA?

- The future is going to be brighter for the London Baptist Association.
- I foresee the London Baptist Association undergoing more changes in the near future.
- Challenges are bound to come. I have no doubt that the Spirit of God will enable the LBA to surmount every challenge.

I wish to congratulate the London Baptist Association once more on the 150th Anniversary!

Long live the vision for Mission!
Long Live the London Baptist Association!

INTEGRAL MISSION AND EVANGELICAL CHURCHES

Geoff Andrews

Much of my experience as a Baptist Minister has been working with a questionable divide between social action and evangelism. Evangelicals have been caught in a theological approach that has stopped them considering how the gospel might impinge on the whole of life. Integral mission seeks to remove this distinction between body and soul. Traditional evangelical mission focused on saving souls: what is important is the life to come, so the needs of the poor and marginalised in this life and the systems that keep them poor are not the church's concern. Evangelicals did not distance themselves from people's physical needs but the aim was to create a pool to fish in to make Christians. They asked not whether social action should be part of their ministry but rather how effective this was in drawing people to church. The underlying thinking remained dualistic.

This divide is a twentieth-century phenomenon. Evangelicals engaged with society from the 1730s, especially in the nineteenth century, when three-quarters of charitable organisations 'were evangelical in character and control'.¹ *Evangelical Faith and Public Zeal*² shows evangelical activity in business, education and gender issues. How did evangelicalism journey away from this?

British evangelical leaders, F.B. Meyer, John H. Jowett and Charles H. Spurgeon played a 'significant part in the establishment of gospel missions, employment bureaus, orphanages, and agencies to meet the needs of the poor'.³ But around 1910-1930 evangelicals changed. 'By the beginning of the twentieth century biblical criticism and the challenge to traditional orthodoxy had led to polarization of the church in the USA

¹ David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 1989, pp.1, 120.

² Ed. John Wolffe, Brian Dickey, *Evangelical Faith and Public Zeal*, 1995, pp.38-58.

³ David O. Moberg, *The Great Reversal*, London: Scripture Union, 1972, pp.30-44.

and, to lesser extent, Europe between liberalism (modernism) and fundamentalism'.⁴ Dwight Moody rejected the postmillennialists' idea of progress, that as we worked for a better world things would improve until Christ's return, preferring the premillennialists who believed the world would get worse until Christ returned so Christians must rescue as many as possible; it was a matter of personal repentance and faith. 'Moody knew little about the scholarly and technical aspects of alcoholism, labor relations, and similar subjects', and 'received much of his financial support from wealthy businessmen and became exposed to their viewpoints on such issues as strikes... [not] those of poorer laborers.' Conservative evangelicals often support conservative political values. Moberg comments, 'We focus upon personal vices and individual problems, failing to see that the great sweeping social problems of our time are also personal problems for all their victims.'

Carl Henry, a leader of emerging 'new evangelicals', asked in 1947 'How is it that a world changing message narrowed its scope to the changing of isolated individuals? . . . Whereas once the redemptive gospel was a world changing message, now it has narrowed to a world resisting message.'⁵ Chester indicates that Billy Graham embraced this change, but Sugden and Padilla record him curtailing discussion: 'If the church went back to its main task of proclaiming the gospel and people converted to Christ, it would have a far greater impact on the social, moral, and psychological needs of men than it would achieve through any other thing it would do.'⁶ 'Graham voiced a basic premise of congress organisers and no advance was made towards a comprehensive concept of mission.'⁷

⁴ Timothy Chester, *Awakening to a World of Need*, Leicester: IVP, 1993, esp. pp.18,19.

⁵ Carl F.H. Henry, *The Uneasy Conscience of Fundamentalism*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1947, pp.26, 30

⁶ Rene Padilla and Chris Sugden, *How Evangelicals endorsed Social Responsibility*, Grove Booklet 59, Nottingham: Grove Books, 1985 p.6.

⁷ Rene Padilla, 'Integral Mission and its Historical Development' in Timothy Chester (ed.) *Justice, Mercy and Humility*, Paternoster, 2002, p.44.

However, progress was made, thanks not least to Rene Padilla and Samuel Escobar from South America. In 1973 a Chicago congress issued a declaration of Evangelical Social Concern, 'an affirmation of God's total claim on the lives of his people, a confession of failure in demonstrating God's justice in society, and a call for evangelicals "to demonstrate repentance in a Christian discipleship that confronts the social and political injustice of our nation".' The International Congress on World Evangelisation (Lausanne, July 1974) made a definitive step.⁸ Clause 5 in the Lausanne Covenant reads:

We affirm that God is both the Creator and the Judge of all men. We therefore should share his concern for justice and reconciliation throughout human society and for the liberation of men from every kind of oppression. Because mankind is made in the image of God, every person, regardless of race, religion, color, culture, class, sex or age, has intrinsic dignity because of which he should be respected and served, not exploited. Here too we express penitence both for our neglect and for having sometimes regarded evangelism and social concern as mutually exclusive. Although reconciliation with man is not reconciliation with God, nor is social action evangelism, nor is political liberation salvation, nevertheless we affirm that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty. For both are necessary expressions of our doctrines of God and man, our love for our neighbor and our obedience to Jesus Christ. The message of salvation implies also a message of judgement upon every form of alienation, oppression and discrimination, and we should not be afraid to denounce evil and injustice wherever they exist. When people receive Christ they are born again into his kingdom and must seek not only to exhibit but also to spread righteousness in the midst of an unrighteous world. The salvation we claim should be transforming us in the totality of our personal and social responsibilities. Faith without works is dead.⁹

Some were delighted, others feared 'a dangerous departure from biblical truth and a tragic compromise with "ecumenical theology".' John

⁸ Padilla and Sugden, pp.9, 10.

⁹ Stott John, No.3 *The Lausanne Covenant – An Exposition and Commentary*, Lausanne Occasional Papers, Minneapolis, 1975, p.9.

Stott, chairing the congress, came under fire for 'defining social action as a "partner of evangelism"'.¹⁰

There was opposition from North America but enthusiasm from the Two-Thirds World. Of the Lausanne Committee's conference in Pattaya in 1980, Padilla and Sugden note, 'It would not be difficult to prove that the organisers ... made a special effort to ensure that the task of world evangelism was dealt with in isolation from social responsibility.' Long, painful discussions resulted in a statement that evangelism and social responsibility 'while distinct from one another, are integrally related in our proclamation of obedience to the Gospel.'

The Wheaton Consultation on 'The Church in Response to Human Need' (1983)¹¹ confirmed this. Neither utopian nor pessimistic, it noted biblical injunctions on the rights of the poor and practice of justice and love (Ps 82:3, Mic 6:8). 'Christ's followers, therefore, are called ... not to conform to the values of society but to transform them (Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 5:8-14).'¹² This report sought to advance thinking from development to transformation, 'the change of a condition of human existence contrary to God's purposes to one in which people are able to enjoy the fullness of life in harmony with God (John 10:10, Col. 3:8-15, Eph. 4:13)'. The report addresses stewardship of creation and issues of culture, social justice and mercy. The dilemma lies between performing acts of mercy or challenging structures of injustice. The local church, a community of transformed individuals is a vehicle for transformative mission. So by 1983 evangelicals affirmed both evangelism and social responsibility.

Although Padilla still found in 2002, 'the importance of integral mission is not unanimously accepted by evangelicals',¹³ social action was no longer seen as outside the church's remit. A new mentality spawned

¹⁰ Padilla and Sugden, pp.11-13.

¹¹ 'Transformation: The Church in Response to Human Need Wheaton Consultation June 1983', in Samuel, Vinay and Sugden, Chris (eds.), *Mission as Transformation*, Oxford: Regnum Books, 1999, p.263.

¹² Samuel, Vinay and Sugden, pp.263-269.

¹³ Chester (ed.), *Justice, Mercy and Humility*, p.42.

more reflection on the relationship of the gospel and scripture to areas previously off limits to evangelicals.

The polarisation between evangelism and social action in the UK is no longer so great, yet social action is often measured in terms of people becoming Christians. Much social involvement has focused on moral issues, broadcasting standards, abortion, pornography, sexual orientation. Sadly evangelicals are often known for defending a moral stance on the basis of inherited traditional values, rather than biblical analysis.

Evangelicals always want to base understanding on the Bible, so integral mission must be justified biblically. The danger is the use of proof texts to substantiate positions rather than the whole sweep of the Bible's message. Bosch and Wright¹⁴ argue for something more. Wright asks how this fits with the New Testament. He offers hermeneutical, historical and theological answers.¹⁵

The hermeneutical considers holistic mission. We should not ditch all the Old Testament. Jesus fulfils its message as Messiah, but does not cancel the obligation to do justice. The ubiquitous OT message about social and economic justice, personal and political integrity, and practical compassion for the needy is not provisional and dispensable.' If we take the whole Bible seriously, we cannot be reduced to evangelistic proclamation alone.

Historically the early church presented a political challenge. Some argue that Jesus was not involved in politics, but that presupposes a radical disjunction of the spiritual from the empirical. That dichotomy comes from the Enlightenment, not the Bible. Jesus' non-violence did not mean he was non-political. Jesus was crucified for being a political threat to Roman and Jewish authorities. He needed to be removed. 'The charge against Jesus was manifestly political.'

Jesus speaks of the kingdom of God: he did not invent the term. We often think of it as a synonym for heaven, but it was to bring many good

¹⁴ David J. Bosch, 'Hermeneutical Principles in the Biblical Foundations of Mission', in *Evangelical Review of Theology*, 17, 1993, pp.437-451; Christopher J.H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*, Nottingham: IVP, 2006, pp.303-308.

¹⁵ Wright, pp.305-311.

things (Luke 4:18-19): justice for the oppressed, overthrow of the wicked, peace to the nations, abolition of war and poverty, economic viability for all, safety for children, and fulfilment for the elderly, all within a renewed creation.

Wright says of Jesus' political significance: 'many of his actions crossed boundaries and broke taboos or cut through established protocol in a way that subverted the way society was ordered and stratified ... in all societies, political power depends on conventional acceptance of "the ways things are and always should be".' Jesus rejected boundaries between clean and unclean, touchable or untouchable, righteous or unrighteous, Sabbath-keeping, and with whom you ate or did not eat. At the Bible's heart is a theology of integral mission: God deals with whole people, physically and spiritually. Following Jesus has a political price. The first disciples got in trouble with the religious authorities (Acts 3,4), and soon others refused to acknowledge Caesar as Lord. A radically prophetic community, 'they sought to live out within the present old order of the world the truths and values of the in-breaking new order of the kingdom of God.'

The journal of the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, *Transformation*, is sub-titled 'The International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies'. Evangelicals require biblical bases for holistic mission. One is the kingdom of God/kingdom of heaven. What did Jesus mean by this? The kingdom was dynamic rule rather than realm: 'the future rule of God was in some sense present now.'¹⁶ 'Good news to the poor' (Luke 4:18ff) 'becomes Good News to the poor now'. 'In the anointing of the Spirit upon Jesus, we see the inauguration of an era ... characterised by forgiveness of sin, physical healing, deliverance from demonic oppression, restoration of liberty, the end of oppression, the initiation of major social and economic reform'. The Spirit enables Christians to be vehicles of God's intervening kingdom. 'Mission is not a matter of putting in order of priority evangelism, social action or signs and

¹⁶ Graham Cray, 'A Theology of the Kingdom', in *Mission as Transformation*, Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden (eds.), Oxford: Regnum Books, 1999, pp.28, 38, 40.

wonders, but of an openness to the whole agenda of the kingdom, including its priority concern for the poor.'

This kingdom is key to Jesus' ministry, transferred in turn to the church. It should be a core theological concept. In Mark 1:14-15, 'at hand' emphasises the present and future reality. 'The ethics of Jesus can and will only be practised if it is a behavioural expression of God's overarching rule in the believer and the community of faith.'¹⁷ Beasley-Murray dealt in great depth with Jesus' relationship to the kingdom of God.¹⁸ The implications for holistic mission are clear.

Vinay Samuel¹⁹ argues that the kingdom is both future promise and present reality. History should not be separated into sacred and secular. God 'by his sovereignty, grace and perfection, takes and uses our human imperfections and ambiguities to fulfil his purpose.' Moreover, 'One need not submit personally to the lordship of Christ to be able to experience this grace and this transformation in one's life.' Wherever we see kingdom values in persons, movements and structures, God is at work. This applies to human dignity, freedom of conscience, participation in decision-making, hope, respect for others, the struggle against evil and injustice, and the sense of God's presence. Kingdom values are already present in the world. Christians are instruments in answering the prayer 'thy kingdom come'.²⁰

Confronted with globalisation, the poor, and need for advocacy, leaders of 'evangelical relief and development agencies', meeting in Malaysia in 1999, formed the Micah Network:

¹⁷ Murray Dempster, 'A Theology of the Kingdom – A Pentecostal Contribution', in *Mission as Transformation*, Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden (eds), Oxford: Regnum Books, 1999, p.49.

¹⁸ G.R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom of God*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986.

¹⁹ Vinay Samuel, 'God's Intention for the world' in, *Mission as Transformation*, Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden (eds.), Oxford: Regnum Books, 1999, pp.166, 171-2, 178, 180, 184, 193.

²⁰ Raymond Fung, *The Isaiah Vision: An Ecumenical Strategy for Congregation Evangelism*, WCC Publications, 1993, p.19.

to create a dynamic process that facilitates collaborative action in:

- Strengthening the capacity of participating agencies to make a biblically shaped response to the needs of the poor and oppressed.
- Speaking strongly and effectively regarding the nature of the mission of the church to proclaim and demonstrate the love of Christ to a world of need.
- Prophetically calling upon, and influencing, the leaders and decision-makers of societies to 'maintain the right of the poor and oppressed [and] rescue the weak and needy' (Ps. 82:3-4).²¹

The Micah Declaration (2001) includes this definition of integral mission:

Integral mission or holistic transformation is the proclamation and demonstration of the gospel. It is not simply that evangelism and social involvement are to be done alongside each other. Rather, in integral mission our proclamation has social consequences as we bear witness to the transforming grace of Jesus Christ. If we ignore the world we betray the word of God which sends us out to serve the world. If we ignore the word of God we have nothing to bring to the world. Justice and justification by faith, worship and political action, the spiritual and the material, personal change and structural change belong together. As in the life of Jesus, being, doing and saying are at the heart of the integral task.

Discipleship is not about a set of beliefs but a way of life. Disciples were called the followers of 'the Way' before they were called Christians (Acts 9:2). Local churches embracing such discipleship make an impact on the community they serve, becoming agents of transformation.

²¹ Steve Bradbury, 'Introducing the Micah Network' in Chester (ed.), *Justice, Mercy and Humility*, pp.13,14. Micah Declaration p.19.

In *The Local Church, Agent of Transformation*,²² integral mission begins with commitment to Christ. Padilla states, 'The integral church is one which recognises that all spheres of life are "mission fields" and looks for ways of asserting the sovereignty of Jesus in all of them'. 'If Jesus Christ is Lord of everything and everyone, the church is not an agent of "individual salvation" which brings into people's grasp the benefits of Christ's work, but rather a community of faith called to incarnate the testimony to his lordship over the whole of life.' The disciples watched and learned as Jesus communicated kingdom values. Majoring on Jesus' death, the church tends to forget his death was the culmination of his life. Whilst the cross redeems humanity, it also 'represents the cost of discipleship and of faithfulness to God's call to take part in bringing to fruition his redemptive purposes.' To this end some – but not enough – churches partner with others to solve common community problems.

Jesus' resurrection is a source of hope and power, his exaltation lets the Holy Spirit equip the church to become 'a community in which all members, equally, encourage each other to discover and develop their gifts in the countless areas of human existence which need transformation by the power of the gospel.' Rather than escaping from the world into the church, integral mission engages with the world because we bring good news.

It is the West that has problems over integral mission. Joe Kapolyo observes, 'This theological concern is understandable from a distinctly western context. Most ... who argue over this question of evangelism verses social action have never really had to deal with personal hunger and material need on a daily basis ... As an African, it seems strange to me that any one should ever have to justify alleviating people's hunger or other ... deprivation.'²³ Joel Edwards reflects on the negative history

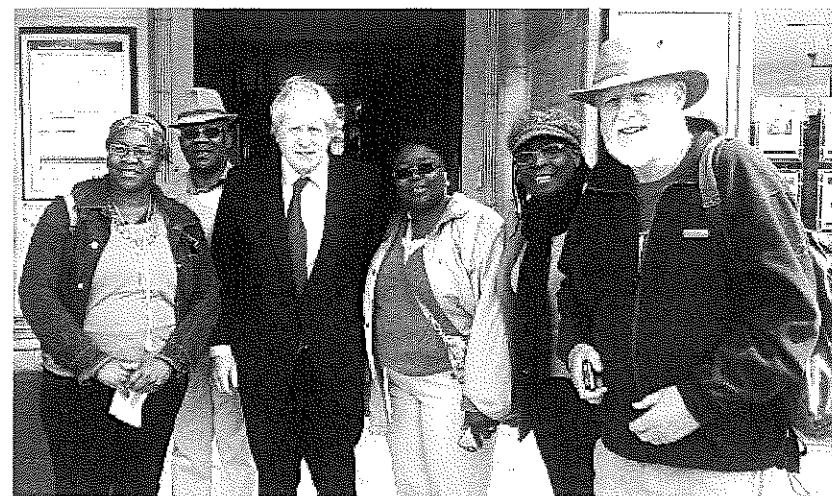
²² Tetsunao Yamamiri & C. Rene Padilla (eds.), *The Local Church, agents of transformation: an ecclesiology of integral mission*. (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Kairos), 2004, pp.27-8, 37, 46.

²³ Joe Kapolyo, 'Social Transformation as a Missional Imperative: Evangelicals and Development since Lausanne' in David Hilborn (ed.), *Movement for Change*, (Carlisle: Paternoster Press), p.135.

of evangelicalism's preoccupation with moralistic questions: 'we end up head butting our world in the name of love ... our credibility rests on social action becoming a hallmark of the Christian faith.'²⁴

In the 1970s Bebbington found little social involvement: 'Out of a sample of 160 largely evangelical churches in the Baptist Union ... over a period of five years there was discussion or action on world poverty by five, on race relations by eight, on religious education by ten ... but on pornography by as many as forty-seven.'²⁵ He judges much evangelical campaigning counterproductive: evangelicals often strain at gnats while swallowing camels.

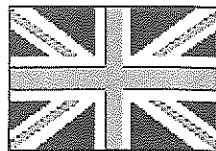
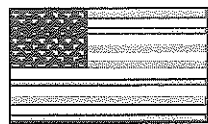
Yet we pray 'Your kingdom come on earth ... '



Agents of transformation?
London Baptists meet the Mayor during the Easter Prayer Walk in 2015

²⁴ Joel Edwards, *An Agenda for Change*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan) 2008, pp.44, 54.

²⁵ David Bebbington, 'Evangelicals, Theology and Social Transformation' in Hilborn, p.7.



PARTNERSHIP MISSION

Brenda Forward

An evangelism initiative by the Association Evangelism Committee that made an impact on participating churches from the late 1970s to the beginning of the new millennium was the linking of teams from churches in America, mostly from Nashville, Tennessee, with LBA churches for eight days of mission under the umbrella title of 'Partnership Mission'. This motivated and engaged the whole church in mission and gave church members a new confidence in witnessing.

The Americans who came were not teams of 'budding Billy Grahams' nor did they come from mega churches. They came from the same size churches as London ones. They were ordinary pastors and people who were concerned enough to be used in witnessing for the Lord to pay all their own expenses, which involved sacrifice on their part. Teams varied between four and eight people; 80% were lay. It was generally agreed that the personal testimonies in word and song of these lay people, and their ability to share Christian love, was one of the chief strengths of Partnership Mission in London.

Teams did not come with their own ready-made programme or blueprint. They simply sought to do what each church requested. Steve Woolley, pastor of Morden Baptist Church, wrote at the time, 'One of the secrets of success was that the churches designed a programme that the Americans fitted into, rather than one that they ran'. He added, 'The presence of the Americans acted as a catalyst that galvanised many church members into action'.

Some members of the Association had expressed reservations about American involvement in London churches, but churches that received

them were soon reassured. John Maile, minister of West Wycombe and Shirley, wrote at the time, 'Some of our folk were sceptical before the Mission, not seeing any value in "importing Americans", but without exception they came to realise how valuable it was ... It has inspired the church, and made an impact on the neighbourhood and even the local press'. The church at Clementswood, Ilford, reported that, 'A few church members who were a little "anti-American" changed their mind after the first day... What was most appreciated was both the spirit of partnership and the sharing in practical involvement'.

There were also some who argued that the methodology would be just as valid if LBA teams partnered for Mission with other LBA churches. This was not disputed, but it was generally agreed that there had been a special attracting power and something unique about using teams from the USA, particularly because the ease with which the American lay people so naturally shared their faith gave a new impetus and confidence in witnessing and mission-focused activity.

In Association life at that time, as well as sensitivities about American involvement, there were also sensitivities concerning the ethos of Inner London and suburban churches. Whilst most Partnership Missions were in suburban churches, it was not exclusively so. Stephen Brady, then minister of East London Tabernacle, an inner-city church, said, 'We would without hesitation encourage churches to have a Partnership Mission. We have once again been hugely blessed.'

London's first Partnership Mission was in 1978. The zenith was reached in 1981, when forty teams, that time from Atlanta, Georgia, came simultaneously for a week of meetings in churches they had been partnered with. At the close of the Mission week, a celebration service at Bloomsbury was filled to overflowing by over a thousand people. Partnership Missions continued to be co-ordinated by the Association at regular intervals until 2001, after which those churches still wanting teams were advised to negotiate their own contacts as there was not the same availability of American teams. The reason was the exciting door of opportunity that had opened up in Russia: the Americans were keen to visit new pastures.

Partnership Mission left a legacy for those churches that had participated: professions of faith, many recommitments, widened

horizons, a deepened sense of fellowship, a greater desire for witnessing. Arthur Thompson, the Metropolitan Area Superintendent who was involved in promotion from their inception, wrote: 'The continued effect on the life of the churches has been remarkable. The genius of Partnership Mission is that it enabled ordinary lay people to share their faith.' Kenneth Jarvis, minister of Rayners Lane Baptist Church, said, 'Our church will never be the same again. Partnership Mission gave ordinary people in the church new confidence in witnessing'.

Partnership Mission reinforced for the Association the fact that when the whole church, not just the leaders, is focused on mission, God does exciting things.

SMALL CHURCH IS A BIG DEAL

Hilary Taylor

Falling attendance is reshaping church

Even if our own church is growing, shrinking church attendance in the UK should be a matter of concern for all. LBA church attendance has shrunk by 36% since 1965: then the LBA had thirteen districts comprising 287 churches with a total membership of 39,338 (already down from 40,634 in 1964). In the twenty-five years between 1980 and 2005 church attendance in England went down from 5.25 million to 3.25 million (a 38% drop).¹ During that period Baptist church attendance fell from 286,900 to 254,800.² Whilst only an 11% fall, it has had a marked effect on what the average Baptist church now looks like. In 2015 the LBA has 309 churches in eleven districts, with a total membership of 25,000. 108 of these are small churches, with under 40 members, having a total membership of 2,500; they include 67 churches that had over 40 members in 1965.

The reasons for decline are well known: Sunday trading (made legal in 1994), Sunday sports fixtures and training, car boot sales and other leisure activities. A recent poll suggests as many as 40% of people still pray even though they do not go to church. It is said that people are more spiritually aware now, but they do not look for God in the church.

Other factors include a transitory population. Churches experience people moving away faster than newcomers arrive. High percentages of young people go to university towns and do not return home. This, combined with the general difficulty in retaining young people beyond early years, has meant teenagers and young adults are missing from many of our churches.

The rise of the small church

In 1985 a paper named *Half the Denomination* was written to highlight that half the Baptist Churches in the UK had below fifty members. That

¹ <http://www.brin.ac.uk/news/2011/church-attendance-in-england-1980-2005/>.



Colliers Wood – a small church ready to tackle a big challenge

is roughly 1,000 churches. In 2005, just twenty years later, the Small Churches Implementation Group revisited the question and discovered that half our churches now have fewer than forty members.

LBA small churches

The rise of the small church can be seen dramatically in the LBA figures. In 1965 there were just thirty LBA churches with a membership below forty. Today that figure stands at 108 churches. Let's have a closer look at how this breaks down:

The 108 LBA Churches with less than 40 members in 2015.

0-10 members	7
11-20 members	35
21-30 members	40
31-40 members	26

The LBA response

The Revd Tony Mason (Regional Minister 1998-2002) discovered that many of our small churches had low morale; they felt ignored and were in desperate need of encouragement. In fact the majority of invitations that he received for encouragement weekends came from small churches. When he moved on, he asked LBA Director Moira Kleissner, who had a passion for small churches, to co-ordinate a new LBA project.

Using Tony's data, and attendance/membership figures from the BU, she compiled a list of churches with an attendance of fifty or less. Moira set about making telephone contact with a number of people from small churches across the capital and about half a dozen of these contacts met together in February 2003 to discuss the possibility of a network. They became the 'steering group' of the project.

In April 2003, a conference was held at Bloomsbury Baptist Church to which *all* small churches in the LBA area were invited, in order to ascertain what small churches wanted in the way of contact, training, advice and fellowship. The day was successful in terms of networking and listening to each other's stories.

The main things requested by the churches were *training, resourcing and networking*, to help them to fulfil their mission. Thus the Small Church Connexion (SCC) was born.

Small church positives

As SCC began to address the increased numbers of small churches, it became clear that church health is the key issue. Some churches look healthy from the outside but are not. Other churches appear unhealthy from outside but in fact are full of life. As SCC members travelled around London listening to stories of small church life, they discovered these positives about small church life. They are

- Effective as a Family – friendly, supportive, caring, loving, welcoming
- Flexible – decisions made at a church meeting were actioned quickly
- Great places for mentoring, risk taking and learning – a great training ground

- No room for passengers so the majority participate in church life
- A safe place to be, an oasis in a busy week
- High percentage of members attending Bible study groups
- Openness and honesty
- Sacrificial giving
- Attract people who feel uncomfortable in a large church environment.

Small church challenges

There are just as many challenges. These are typical small church issues:

- Money is often short
- Lack of skilled people to do essential roles
- Buildings – large, cold, expensive
- Lack of people at prayer meetings
- Lack of direction/vision
- Generally few converts/baptisms, but some happy exceptions
- Resistance to change – holding on to the past
- Leadership tired
- High proportion of 'needy' people
- Lack of musicians
- Commitment lacking, time-keeping often poor.

Support for small churches

Speaking to some leaders and members of small churches, it is plain that morale is often low and leaders sometimes feel inadequate. One lay leader observed, 'Those small churches without a pastor are at the bottom of the food chain'.

Those leading small churches often manage several jobs and have to work hard to balance home, work and church life. Morale is not helped by the memory of the recent past where the church had a huge Sunday school, full attendance every week and many activities. Many have found it hard to adapt to a different way of being church. This is where the SCC can help to make a difference. Since its inception in 2003, SCC has organized a range of events aimed at supporting small churches:

- Resources Exhibitions
- Roadshows about vision & mission around the LBA Districts
- Celebrations with well-known speakers
- Workshops on :
 - Discipleship
 - Evangelism
 - Buildings
 - All-age Worship
 - Partnership
 - Fellowship
 - Children & Young People
- Preachers' Training days
- Retreats
- Leadership Training roadshows
- Small Church Newsletter
- Day Conference for small churches at the London 2012 Baptist Assembly.

Toolbox for Small Churches

Hilary Taylor, heading up the Small Church Connexion team in London and part of the BU Small Churches Implementation Group, had been asked many times to suggest good resources for small churches. There were many for small groups – not the same thing at all! Hilary was complaining to God one day about this, and felt Him say 'Stop complaining about it, and write one!'. She checked out the idea with several godly people (including Pat Took at the LBA) and after confirmation that this resource was desperately needed, she started to write. The book, *A Toolbox for Small Churches*, was published in October 2007 and distributed to each of the 1,000 small churches in the Baptist Union and wider. The 'Tools' section is available on the BU website.

In late 2006, the need had become evident for a focal point of contact in the LBA for small churches. The SCC team suggested that Hilary Taylor was the right person for the job. The LBA Directors supported this new idea wholeheartedly and Hilary began to work as the LBA Small Church Enabler in January 2007, a brand new post in the LBA.

LBA small churches today

Among the many things going well in London's small churches are:

- Foodbank involvement
- Messy Church
- Shared premises
- Parents & Tots groups
- Lunches for older people
- Prayer partners
- Homeless projects
- English as a second language classes.

These activities show that many of our small churches are actively engaged in sharing God's love in their local community. These are all encouragements, but SCC continues to look for ways to support our capital's small churches.

How we can support small churches

To promote interdependence and partnerships between churches, two initiatives have been developed.

i) *The LBA database* was set up in 2005 by SCC, complete with a database manager. This replaced the London Baptist Preachers Association which closed earlier that year. Any LBA church *of any size* was invited to recommend preachers who were available to visit other churches in their area to lead worship and/or preach. Also *any* church could call the database for names of preachers when one was needed. This list was extended to include musicians, worship leaders and help for treasurers. This runs fairly successfully but the number of volunteers varies from district to district. (The Database Manager is Neil Tresise, neiltresise@hotmail.com)

ii) In 2011, SCC began the Mission@Home project which sends people from one church to another to train someone in a skill. After the agreed time of 3, 6 or 12 months, the trainer returns to their own church and the trained person continues the activity. The scheme was

designed to be promoted through the ministers' cluster groups and local celebrations.

A pilot scheme at Cricklewood Baptist Church was a great success (thanks to our first volunteer, John Grant), but very few other volunteers have come forward. This is due partly to communication. The potential volunteers are not sure what the needs are and the smaller churches are not good at asking for help!

What is the future for small churches?

The Small Church Connexion would love to see more happening!

1. More and different opportunities for the smaller churches to network or train together
2. More partnerships locally between churches of all sizes for fellowship and support
3. More Mission@Home projects
4. More churches on fire for God, doing what He has asked them to do in their location
5. More self-confidence: churches not trying to imitate the large church up the road.
6. More churches taking part in the BU Re:Focus programme, reviewing church life and seeking the way forward in mission
7. More training courses for deacons and treasurers
8. More small churches getting involved with global concerns
9. More small churches contributing to the SCC quarterly newsletter, sharing news, ideas and prayer requests.

Small churches nationally

This year sees exciting developments as four BU Associations are running day conferences for small churches around the country. This follows a meeting of Association representatives in 2014, run by the



Waltham
Abbey
Baptist
Church

SCC. A further meeting will be held in autumn 2015 for Association representatives to meet together to promote the cause for small churches around Britain.

In addition, *Toolbox for Small Churches* now exists as a blog for small churches anywhere in Britain to sign up to.²

Conclusion

SCC's vision for London is that we are called to reach out to our hurting, broken world with the love and forgiving power of Jesus. If each small church is being effective, fulfilling this call where they are, there will be growth and health and God's kingdom will be extended across the capital for His glory. This is not an empty vision: there is clear evidence that God is at work. Each church is God's, not ours and Jesus promised to build His church (Matthew 16.18).

Small churches remain very faithful to their calling, even through great hardships. The Psalmist says in Psalm 119.141, 'I am small and despised, Yet I do not forget Your precepts' (NKJV).

Today small churches can be likened to the small boy offering his picnic to Jesus who used it to feed 5000+ people (John 6.9). Small churches offering what they have, and who they are, small as that may be, are seeing how God works to multiply their offering to great effect.

² smallchurches.wordpress.com

SECTOR MINISTRY

Stephen Heap

'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.'

So reads one of the many great Bible statements of faith which Baptists are likely to hold dear. Our faith is that God acted in Christ for the salvation of the world. We equally believe that God calls each and every one of us to respond to God's mighty, world-saving acts. As God acted in Christ, so Christ in his teaching, healing, living, dying and rising again revealed God. Jesus' message, expressed in word and deed, centred on the Kingdom of God. Founded in the ways, being and calling of God, that Kingdom was, and is, about reconciliation, healing, forgiveness, setting free the oppressed, and the peace which comes as human beings respond to the wondrous love of God.

Such reflections are a reminder that God is a big God. God's mission is to do with the world, with bringing the fruits of salvation to the whole creation. God's work is to do with establishing a Kingdom which will shape every aspect of life, individual and corporate. God's call is on and for the whole of life, for time and eternity.

Sector ministry is one response to such a God. It is about working with God's people in God's world for the things of God.

The following contributions give insights into what sector means for practitioners and 'users' in hospitals, the YMCA, universities, airport and sport. They speak of chaplains offering pastoral care, Christian teaching, space for people to explore their own faith and life journey, witnessing to Christ in the institutions where they are based. They speak of chaplains developing knowledge and understanding of those institutions, of working with colleagues in a variety of teams with people of different disciplines, including chaplaincy teams where people of different faiths and denominations work together for the good of those they have been called to serve.

The sectors mentioned here have long had chaplains. Interestingly, in an age often described as secular, where the churches are experiencing significant decline, an increasing variety of 'sectors' are appointing chaplains, and some (not all) which have long had chaplains are

appointing more. Thus there has been a growth in recent years in chaplaincy in, for example, supermarkets and shopping centres, town centres, immigration removal centres, nightclubs, sports clubs, schools, courts, even at least one casino.

For the churches, sector ministry is a response to God's action in Christ. It is ministry in the world which God loves and for which God came in Christ. Of course, all Christian ministry, whether lay or ordained, whether in and through a local church or in a casino, university or wherever, is that. Sector ministry is also a particular response to the reality of the way life is structured in the world. When someone is in hospital as a patient, they are away from the familiar, from home, family, their usual geographical location. Some of that may also be true for the staff. Whilst the hospital, with its particular culture, ways of doing things, smell, will be familiar to the staff, they are still away from home and family. In central London, they may be many miles away from home and in a very different environment from home. They may also find things at work they are not comfortable with: not because there is anything wrong at or with work (though sometimes there will be) but because work, be it in a hospital, university or elsewhere, can raise questions and issues which may be difficult and which are different from those raised at home.

Sector ministry is about Christians being in particular places, seeking to know and understand the issues those places face and raise, getting to know what it is like to work, study, be a patient, shopper or whatever in those places. It is about getting to know an institution inside out. That may involve understanding the feelings, thoughts, hopes and fears people have when they become patients in hospital. It may mean getting to grips with young adult culture in a university, or the policy framework within which an institution works, or the mission and values statement of an organisation, or why people never stay long in jobs in one particular office or department. It will involve looking at the organisation through the eyes of users and workers, unions and management, and through the eyes of faith. Sector ministry is not only about understanding the sector worked in. It is about discerning what is of God, what needs challenging in the name of God, what needs doing to serve God. Of course, if there

is a God such as we believe, any organisation or individual life will only make sense and reach fulfilment as it, he or she, relates to that God.

Part of what sector ministers do is likely to be working with Christians in their place of work, study, leisure or whatever. For some, family pressures may mean it is easier to practise their faith at work than at home. Some may find the local church does not resource them for work-place issues. Some may prefer to talk about something to someone they will not have to see around the streets where they live. Some will be excited about living out the gospel at work and want to meet with others to pray, study and act together in that, asking what God is calling them and their organisation to. Sector ministers will work with all such, in the place where they are.

Part of what sector ministers do, maybe the biggest part, is likely to be working with people who do not go to church, who may be distant from church and Christianity, who may be opposed or indifferent to Christian views. The challenge is to live out Christian faith, witnessing in a way appropriate to the circumstances and context. Being there and caring is often a significant part of that, as well as knowing when to speak and when to be quiet.

Sector ministry is being in the world God loves, for the sake of the world, in the name of God. The LBA has in various ways over the years supported that work. I am grateful for the support it gave me. Perhaps a question for today is what priority and place the Association gives to this work now and what it sees as its place in its future mission strategy.

A HOSPITAL CHAPLAIN

Barbara Stanford

My adventures in hospital chaplaincy began in the 1960s, soon after I came to Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church as a young deaconess. The Free Church Federal Council Hospital Chaplaincy Board asked me to visit a hospital for women in Soho Square. I discovered that there were eight small hospitals near to Bloomsbury and gradually they became part of my 'patch': a branch of Moorfields Eye Hospital (now the Oasis Swimming Pool), St Paul's Hospital in Endell Street which began life in earlier days as the Workhouse, the Shaftesbury Hospital, St Philip's (later part of the London School of Economics), St Peter's in Covent Garden, the Royal London Homoeopathic Hospital in Queen Square, and the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital near Euston Station which had several moves. These small hospitals gradually merged into the two major hospitals, the Middlesex and University College Hospitals.

The NHS provided funding for chaplaincy, but for many years I chose not to receive payment, for I felt I was doing this job as part of the service which Bloomsbury offered the community. When I retired from Bloomsbury I received hospital chaplaincy money and my work in Central London hospitals increased to eight sessions.

Over the years I observed many changes as hospital procedures progressed. A hysterectomy in Soho meant two weeks in hospital and two weeks in a convalescent home (now about four days after surgery and out!). A cataract removal in the 1960s involved lying flat for several days in a darkened room – now the procedure is normally day surgery.

I was invited to join the chaplaincy team at the Middlesex Hospital and appreciated the ecumenical nature of the team and the support and friendship. The nature of chaplaincy extended; so did the work load! I appreciated especially working with the children and adolescent wards.

Then another major change: the University College Hospital site was enlarged and eventually also included the Middlesex Hospital wards. The Middlesex closed. The new University College London Hospital is a sixteen-storey building at the top of Gower Street and includes a

chaplaincy complex, with a Christian chapel and a Muslim prayer room side by side, and a multi-purpose room for Jewish and other friends.

Chaplaincy has become a much more 'professional job' within the hospital community. Gone are the days when the local priest or minister could wander in and wander around. Some hospitals will not allow paid chaplains to visit unless there is a specific request from the patient to see a chaplain. At UCLH we received lists of patients with denominational affiliations (if any) recorded.

The chaplaincy team were respected within the hospital and the senior chaplain had regular meetings with senior medical staff. The chaplains had a weekly meeting and the senior chaplain would keep us informed and also share our concerns. The chaplains also had training days when we met and discussed and prayed together.

Inter-faith relations were not so relevant in early days, but in latter years our chaplaincy team expanded: Church of England, Roman Catholic, Free Church, Muslim (a male and a female Muslim chaplain), Jewish, with Hindu and Sikh also on call. We shared a chaplaincy office and I enjoyed the friendship and support of all of them.

In the 1990s Bloomsbury's major redevelopment project made it necessary for me to move from the flat on the church premises. The senior chaplain negotiated a hospital flat for me – we were very grateful.

Again, the ecumenical nature of chaplaincy was something I valued. The Muslim chaplain always insisted on making me a cup of tea and he 'waited on me'! The Roman Catholic nun and I had a pact that when we were having a 'hard day' (it is often a distressing job) we would bleep each other and meet, share and relax.

Chaplaincy involves being available and 'on call' for anyone in need – the neo-natal unit, cot death, sick child, distraught parents, elderly couples and their relatives, teenage cancer deaths, people on holiday suddenly taken ill ... one never knew what each day would bring.

I was glad throughout to have the chaplaincy team as a supportive base and also to have the support and friendship of people at the Bloomsbury church. I still hear from chaplains I worked with – and also some of the patients have found a way of keeping in touch! I am grateful for the opportunities given for pastoral ministry in central London in the name and in the strength of Christ.

HEATHROW CHAPLAINCY

Paul Barker

It really is true to say that no two days are the same as a chaplain at one of the world's busiest airports! When I set off on my 'rounds' I am never quite sure who I am going to meet. This is hardly surprising as there are nearly 80,000 workers at the airport and around 76 million passengers that travel through Heathrow every year. Thankfully I am not expected to cover the airport on my own! There are around twenty Christian chaplains from different denominations as well as six chaplains from other major faiths. Their commitment of time ranges from paid full-time to a volunteer who does a few hours a week.

The Christians have a co-ordinating chaplain who assigns individual chaplains to work in a certain area. I can usually be found in Terminals 1 and 2, although by the time you read this T1 will have closed. During my time at the airport I have built up a good relationship with a number of staff, who now feel comfortable to talk to me about anything. Topics can range from last night's TV to a crisis or death in their family.

Each terminal has a prayer room, which is used by those of all faiths and those of none. In T2 we have an 'open door' once a week, when one of the chaplains is stationed in the prayer room. This gives those who are visiting the room the opportunity to talk and pray, if they so wish.

The chaplaincy is 'on call' 24/7, 365 days a year, so that we can respond to any emergencies. The most common call-out is for a 'death on board'. We attend these with the emergency services and airline staff. We are on hand to offer comfort to the travelling companions of the deceased and to the airline crew, who find such an event traumatic.

Our call as followers of Jesus is to go into all the world and preach the gospel: well, at Heathrow I do not have to go because the world has come to me. There are many different nationalities employed at Heathrow and the passengers come from all points, North, South, East and West. It is a great privilege to serve God in this environment. I may not 'preach' as such but my aim is to be Jesus to those I meet daily.

I am often asked why I do this job. My stock answer is 'nowhere in the Gospels did Jesus say "If you want to meet me be in the Synagogue

at 10:30 on the Sabbath and I'll be there". Jesus went where the people were and if it was good enough for Him then I am going to do the same.'

I have never come across any hostility towards the chaplaincy's presence at the airport, in fact the reverse is true. Our presence is welcome among staff and passengers alike. Church attendances may be dropping, but I find a genuine desire for people to know the Truth. That is why chaplaincy has such a vital role to play in the twenty-first century.

A YMCA CHAPLAIN

Jacky Bone

During my first few weeks in Chaplaincy work at YMCA London South West I visited a large, thriving local church with a state-of-the-art building. I had just left the YMCA thronging with people: gym users, mums and children, young people doing a music programme, seniors eating lunch, finding friends, doing fitness classes, homeless people living in the centre, getting help from their support workers. The place was 'buzzing' with people.

The church I visited in contrast, although thriving on a Sunday, was completely empty ... and as I walked round this beautiful facility I thought, 'I know where Jesus would be'.

The essence of chaplaincy for me is that the church goes to where the people are, to listen and show love to our community, rather than waiting for them to come into the church. That we are simply there when people need to know that God loves them and someone cares. At YMCA London South West (and in many other YMCAs) we have chaplains, both paid and volunteers, who like Jesus walk alongside people, especially those in difficulty, who help them move forward in their spiritual journey, who simply are representatives of Jesus to those whom they meet.

I have seen many come to Christ through Chaplaincy work and yet I never 'preach the gospel' in a traditional, verbal way. I meet people in their space, in the gym, at the swimming pool, in the hostel, in the restaurant or club, on the staff team. I let them ask the questions and simply try just to show Jesus' love to them.

UNIVERSITY CHAPLAINCY

Michael Peat

It has been nearly eighteen months since I began working as Free Church Chaplain at the University of Bristol, after six years as minister of a group of churches in an ecumenical arrangement. I still have much to learn and more acclimatising to do. But I also feel assured that my current role answers a calling to chaplaincy that I have sensed since before I began training to be a Baptist minister. I say this without detracting at all from the fulfilment I found in the intervening years of church-based ministry, which I will always remember fondly as the right place to be for that time.

In fact, my sense that God was calling me to chaplaincy at some point in the future began to surface in my mind when I was an undergraduate student at King's College London during the mid-nineties, and attending Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church. As student years are for many people, this period was deeply formative for me. It brought much joy, but also challenges and uncertainties to be wrestled with. Through it, I found my calling to Christian faith, ordained ministry and chaplaincy becoming gradually consolidated in such a way that I remain unable to distinguish any one of these strands of vocation from the others: all three were tested and clarified over a number of years living in London, as a student and young professional. I had valuable companions on this voyage of discovery: family, friends, tutors, and the like. University chaplains were a vital and distinctive part of this mix for me, and I consider myself fortunate that my undergraduate years coincided with Stephen Heap's time as Baptist Chaplain to the University of London, based at Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church.

Stephen's ministry in London had considerably more aspects than those I experienced at first hand. I mainly knew him as that member of the church's ministry team who gathered students and others of a similar age, facilitated their growth into a community of supportive friends, and acted as an informative and attentive sounding-board for us. In the pub at least as much as in the church, Stephen helped us explore who we were and what difference following Jesus made to our thinking about down-to-earth issues in life. In my experience, then and now, students

are often keen to talk about social and political issues, and chaplains able to articulate connections between matters of policy and matters of faith do them a great service. Stephen had this gift, and shared it generously. The discussions at the weekly reading group he set up, after hearing that some of us were interested in doing some book-based reflection together, usually digressed from the topic of that week's chapter rather quickly. The book became more a springboard into conversations that felt relevant and valuable because Stephen could be responsive to whatever we brought, drawing on the deep well of his own reading and experience.

These qualities made Stephen well attuned to my personal needs when he helped me prepare for baptism. I had just completed a theology degree, was excited by what I had learned, and eager to talk through how it might shape my role in church and professional communities (not knowing then how intertwined these communities would become for me). Stephen introduced me to a version of the Pastoral Cycle by Laurie Green, and the conversations it provoked played an important part in reassuring me of the significance of what I had learned, as well as opening up possibilities for its use. Given his part in my journey of discernment to that point, I am glad that Stephen baptized me, and also that Barrie Hibbert, then minister at Bloomsbury, shared the service as preacher. I value the ministry I received from both of them during this time.

I am grateful for Stephen's support in other ways during my student years. Alongside other chaplains at King's College, he was a source of practical, emotional and spiritual support when a fellow student with whom I shared a house died unexpectedly. During a postgraduate year in which it proved more practical to move out of London back to my family home, periodic messages from Stephen asking how I was and whether I wanted to meet up when visiting London sustained my sense of belonging to the church community I had temporarily moved away from. These gestures played their part in showing me the value of chaplaincy and sparking my interest in later seeking a chaplaincy role. Stephen remains in touch today. He shared in my ordination service, preached at my induction as a chaplain, and continues to offer insights and resources whenever I seek advice.

In several respects, my own work as a University Chaplain offers other variations of themes I found in Stephen's. Rather than working out of a particular congregation, I am funded by a combination of Baptist, Methodist and URC resources to occupy a particular role in a multi-faith chaplaincy team, which is set in the midst of the University of Bristol community. Our base is a Chaplaincy Centre provided by the university, close to the heart of its main precinct, with kitchen, study facilities, a common room and a quiet room, used in various ways to support students and, to some extent, staff. It was encouraging to be copied into an email from one academic to another, emphasizing the value of the Chaplaincy as providing for students 'a safe space, listening ear, place for exploring spirituality and great soup, for students of all faiths and none', whilst also pointing out that, being a *university* chaplaincy and not just a student service, we are also there to support university staff. All these things are important to us as a Chaplaincy team, and it certainly helps our work if we are recognized around the university for the inclusive scope of what we can offer.

For some students, the Chaplaincy Centre becomes 'home' on campus, a place close enough to lecture rooms, laboratories and faculty offices to be used during the day for study or relaxation with a free fairtrade drink. So it becomes a supportive community that some find it easier to feel at ease in than in other university subcultures. For other students, it will be the venue of choice to be served a cheap lunch on Mondays or Fridays, and to catch up with familiar faces, including fellow students and chaplains. For some students, the Chaplaincy Centre provides a 'drop in' opportunity to find one-off or long-term support with spiritual or emotional challenges they are facing, either with a chaplain they have got to know or with one of the 'duty' chaplains who are always available whenever the Centre is open through Monday to Friday.

Our experience in this regard reflects what I have heard reported by chaplains working in other sectors, which is that chaplains are often in a position to offer more time and flexibility for pastoral support than others in their institution. For example, the university's Student Counselling Service can facilitate various support groups for students with different needs, but only has the resources to offer a small number

of one-to-one counselling sessions to particular students, which are typically booked in advance. Hence, whilst the pastoral support of Chaplains may not necessarily be the only port of call for a student seeking help, we are generally able to be the first and most frequent if that is what is needed. A dramatic increase in the number of students in British universities who are suffering mental health difficulties has been widely reported recently, so assisting over-stretched services in this way is a significant way of embodying Jesus' love within a university context.

The Chaplains are also recognized around the university as people equipped to give the kind of collective pastoral care that works through collaborating with departments in preparing and leading memorial events. I have felt a profound sense of my vocation as a minister being fulfilled through helping staff and students find healing ways to commemorate peers who have died, and annually offering a memorial event to honour those who have donated their bodies to Bristol's Medical School.

Members of various student faith societies meet at the Chaplaincy Centre, for their own meetings and to participate in events the Chaplaincy team organizes. Students wanting to engage with Christian spirituality can participate in our midweek lunchtime discussions looking at bible passages in the light of current news stories (we call it 'Reading the Times'), and with more seasonal reflections, e.g. during Lent.

Another important strand of our work involves enabling encounters between people of different faith traditions. This happens through 'Scriptural Reasoning' (a model for shared reflection on passages from the sacred texts of several different faith traditions in the same session) and our annual 'Chaplaincy Faith Crawl', a variation on a more renowned student pastime which involves visiting the places of worship of several religious faiths in the course of an afternoon, and hearing representatives of each talk about their faith and practices. In view of recent counter-terrorism measures, and the expectations of universities that are being proposed therein, the role of Chaplains as advocates and mediators drawing on strong relationships with university faith societies may prove to be especially important in the future.

This year, *Theos* (a religion and society think tank) published a major report on Chaplaincy, looking at the scope and impact of its work in all

sort of settings throughout our society. These words from the opening section of the report struck a chord with me: 'In an increasingly hyper-mobile society, where identities and communities of choice are replacing those of birth and geography, it makes sense for religious groups to go to where people are, rather than wait for them to come home.'¹ Our work as a University Chaplaincy team derives its distinctive shape and value from being enabled to happen *within* a university which is diverse and cosmopolitan, and which has correspondingly varied needs. From this valuable and, in my experience, often valued position, we are well placed to offer to many, who may have had little cause to engage with religious communities before, an encounter with people of faith which proves helpful, dependable, and sometimes a corrective to suspicious assumptions. For some, an encounter with chaplaincy may provoke an inclination to engage with faith communities elsewhere in later life. For some, it may offer the companionship they need to illuminate the next steps in discerning God's unfolding purposes for them. It has certainly played a key part in that journey for me.

¹ <http://www.theothinktank.co.uk/files/files/Modern%20Ministry%20combined.pdf> p.6.

SPORTS CHAPLAINCY UK

Paul Barker

I belong to an organisation called Sports Chaplaincy UK, which now has over 350 chaplains in a wide range of mainly team sports. Many top football, rugby (both union and league) and cricket teams have a chaplain. Top level sport has many pressures and the chaplain is there to offer pastoral and spiritual support. Sports Chaplaincy UK does not confine itself to elite teams, and over recent times there has been a growing number of chaplains at lower level teams.

I have just finished my eighth season as chaplain to Hampton & Richmond Borough Football Club, who play in the Ryman Premier League or level 5 on the football pyramid. During this time the club has been involved in promotion and relegation and I am now working with my fourth manager. As a chaplain to a lower league side, with an average attendance of around 350, I am able to serve the whole club, which includes players, management, directors, bar staff and volunteers.

As someone who has been something of a football fanatic all my life, I should not have been too surprised that God has called me to serve Him in this way. My poor wife thought that when my playing days were over I would be finished with football and be around on Saturday afternoons. Instead she decided to join me and serves in the board room on match days!

The players at this level are all part-time and most have full-time jobs, while some are university students. They have to juggle work, family and playing up to sixty matches a season. Families often attend games so they can all be together on a Saturday afternoon.

H&RBFC relies heavily on volunteers to keep it going, many giving hours of 'devotion' to their club. I also joined the ranks of volunteers and have carried out various duties. My main role on match days is PA announcer, and I also contribute an article for the match-day programme called 'Chaplain's Corner'. This will usually contain something of the Christian message. It also appears on the club's website and I know it is read by many supporters as I often receive comments. The message that I share is not just for Hampton but goes around a fair bit of the South of England as many visiting fans buy the programme or visit the website.

I try to visit one of the training sessions during the week. The players and management will then come into the bar for a drink. This gives me an opportunity to get to know them better and they find out a bit about me and my role. I am also allowed into the changing room before the kick off and can talk to the players.

Players and management come and go but supporters stick around and I think this is where my ministry is most valuable. To them I am their 'Vicar'. As a result, I have been asked to lead several funerals, which has given me the opportunity to comfort those who are grieving and show them there is a God that cares for them.

I am an elder of Hampton Baptist Church and I receive great support from the fellowship. We have regular items for prayer from the club in our weekly 'Notes & News'. The church 'sponsors' three players each season, which means the church's name will appear in the programme for the whole season. These players are then invited to attend a service and tell us a bit about themselves. We also hold an annual 'Club Service' when players, supporters, directors and staff are invited to a special service for the club, followed by lunch. Supporters are encouraged to wear their scarves or replica shirts to the service. For many it is the only time that they will go to church during the year. One thing that being a chaplain of a football club has taught me is that the church has got to learn to play away from home!

There are over 150,000 sports clubs up and down the country and Sports Chaplaincy UK get a stream of requests from clubs wanting a chaplain. The organisation does its best to find someone suitable. But it really is a case of the fields are white unto harvest but the labourers are so few.

REVERSE MISSION

Mission Contributions of Africans within the London Baptist Association

Israel Olofinjana

The phenomenon of reverse mission, that is, Africans, Asians and South Americans doing mission in Europe and North America is one that we are living through as a paradigm shift. An example is the 2014 South Koreans' mission to Britain which saw the Kwangmyung Presbyterian Church in Korea sending about 450 South Korean missionaries on a one-week, short-term mission. This intentional sending was in recognition and gratitude because South Korea traces its Christian roots to the ministry of a Welsh missionary, Robert Jermain Thomas (1839-1866). The one-week mission saw the 450 South Koreans engage in evangelism, healing, prayer walks and prayer meetings for revival in the UK at thirty different locations all over Britain.¹

The majority of churches involved in this cross-cultural mission are Independent Pentecostal and Charismatic churches from the Majority World (Africa, South America, Caribbean and Asia). Some of these churches have emerged from humble beginnings to be among the largest and fastest growing churches in Britain.² While African-initiated Pentecostal Churches are growing and their history is getting well documented,³ what is less known is that there are African pastors within

¹ Woolwich Central Baptist Church (the author's church) was involved with about twelve other churches in south-east London in hosting twenty South Koreans.

² For example, the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) which started in the UK in 1988 now boasts of having about 700 church plants within the British Isles.

³ See Richard Burgess, 'African Pentecostal Growth: The Redeemed Christian Church of God in Britain' In David Goodhew (ed.), *Church Growth in Britain. From 1980 to the Present*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012, pp. 127-44. Richard Burgess, 'African Pentecostal Churches in Britain: The Case of the Redeemed Christian Church of God' in Frieder Ludwig and Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu (eds.), *The African Christian Presence in the West. New Immigrant*

Historic Churches in Britain such as the Church of England, Baptists, Methodists and United Reformed Church. This chapter documents the story of mission of Africans within the London Baptist Association (LBA) by looking at the journey and ministry of the Revd Osoba Otagie, minister of Tooting Junction Baptist Church as a case study.

Ministry and Mission of Africans within the Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB)

It is important to consider the ministry of Africans within the Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB) as a background to their ministry within the LBA. The ministry of Africans within the Baptist Union started with the African American, Rev Peter Stanford (1860-1909).⁴ Peter was born a slave in Virginia and became an ordained Baptist minister in 1878 in Hartford, Connecticut, USA. He came to England in 1882 and was invited to be the minister of Hope Street Baptist Chapel, Highgate, Birmingham in 1889, making him the first black Baptist minister in Britain.⁵ One of the first Africans to be ordained as a Baptist minister in the 1960s was the Revd William Fransch who came from Zimbabwe

Congregations and Transnational Networks in North America and Europe, Trenton: African World Press, 2011, pp. 253-72. Richard Burgess, Kim Knibbe & Anna Quaas, 'Nigerian-initiated Pentecostal Churches as a Social Force in Europe: The Case of the Redeemed Christian Church of God', *PentecoStudies*, April, vol. 9, 2010, pp. 97-121, and Richard Burgess, 'African Pentecostal Spirituality and Civic Engagement: The Case of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in Britain', Special Issue of *Journal of Beliefs and Values on Global Pentecostalism*, vol. 30, no. 3, December, 2009, pp.255-73.

⁴ Other black Baptist ministers who were contemporaries with Peter Stanford are the Jamaican born, Joseph Jackson Fuller (1825-1908) who served as a BMS missionary to West Africa and African American, Thomas L Johnson (1836-1931), a Baptist minister who trained at Spurgeon's College and also served BMS in West Africa.

⁵ For further studies on Peter Stanford, see Paul Walker, 'The Revd Thomas Peter Stanford (1860-1909) Birmingham Coloured Preacher', unpublished PhD Thesis, Manchester University, 2004. See also David Killingray and Joel Edwards (eds), *Black Voices: The Shaping of our Christian Experience*, Nottingham, England, Inter-Varsity Press, 2007, p. 67.

(then known as Northern Rhodesia) in 1968.⁶ William studied at Cliff College (1968-1969), and later at Bristol Baptist College (1970-1973). While at Bristol, he became the student minister at Stapleton Baptist Church in 1973. His other pastorates are Frithlestock Baptist Church (a group of Baptist churches) in north Devon (1977-1982), Spurgeon Memorial Baptist Church in Guernsey (1982-1998), and finally Brockley Baptist Church in south-east London from 1998 to 2011 when he retired. Before retiring, William was part of the LBA Ministerial Recognition Committee (MRC). In 1977 William, his wife Celia and their then two children, walked with the cross from Aberdeen in Scotland to Lands End (the southern tip of England), sharing the Gospel with lots of people along the way. The walk took twenty-three days! Again in 1980, inspired by the story of Abram walking the length and breadth of the land God promised (Genesis 13:14-17), William walked across the breadth of the country from Hartland Point in Devon to Margate in the east with some people from Frithlestock Baptist Church. This walk, which took nine days, afforded William and members of his church opportunities to share the Gospel with people along the way.⁷

Africans within the LBA

While William Fransch might be regarded as one of the first African ministers within the BUGB, his ministry within the LBA was towards the end of his ministry as he only moved to London in 1998. By this time there were already an increasing number of African ministers within the LBA. Among these is the ministry of the Revd Kingsley Appiagyei, Senior Pastor of Trinity Baptist Church. His story is of particular interest because of his immense contributions to both BUGB and the LBA. He came to Britain in 1985 to study biblical Hebrew, intending to go back to Ghana to teach in a seminary. While he was studying for a BA at Spurgeon's College, he felt called to stay in the UK. His placement church was Crofton Park Baptist Church where he was well received

⁶ One of the first Caribbeans to be ordained a Baptist minister was the Revd Desmond Gordon and one of the first Asians to be ordained was the Revd Fred George, both in the 1960s. Both worked in London.

⁷ Telephone Interview with the Revd William Fransch on the 9 September 2014.

between 1987 and 1988. After completing his studies, he started Trinity Baptist Church in his house in South Norwood. In 1994 they moved to their current building on Thornlaw Road, South Norwood. Trinity Baptist Church under the leadership of the Revd Kingsley has planted about seventeen churches in Europe and an orphanage home in Ghana called Trinity Hope Centre.⁸ Apart from the extensive church planting strategy of Pastor Kingsley, he also became the first black man to become the president of the Baptist Union, 2009/2010.⁹ Pastor Kingsley's ministry and leadership have raised many ministers who have trained for the Baptist ministry either through Spurgeon's College or alternative routes, including the Revd Raphael Amoako-Atta, minister of East Plumstead Baptist Church, the Revd Kwesi Gambah, Victory Baptist Church, and the Revd Kwame Adzam, who has served as both an LBA director and on the Baptist Union Council.¹⁰

One of the significant leaders to have emerged from Pastor Kingsley's leadership is the Revd Francis Sarpong. In 1995 he founded Calvary Charismatic Baptist Church in East London, today recognised as one of the largest Baptist churches within the Union. Calvary Charismatic Baptist Church has planted about twenty churches all over the world. They have about fifty pastors and Sarpong is the president of the Progressive National Baptist Convention – International Region. Questions have arisen within the LBA as to whether churches such as Francis Sarpong's are Baptist or Pentecostal. This is because of such issues as the preaching of prosperity, the pentecostal style of conferences and conventions,¹¹ and Pentecostal type of church leadership. I have referred to Baptist churches within BUGB who have Pentecostal dynamics as 'Bapticostal', in an article titled, 'Bapticostal

⁸ Israel Olofinjana, *Reverse in Ministry and Missions: Africans in the Dark Continent of Europe*, Milton Keynes: Author House, 2010, p. 46.

⁹ He was the third non-white BUGB president, preceded by the Sri Lankan, the Revd Fred George in 1997 and the African woman, the Revd Dr Kate Coleman in 2005.

¹⁰ Kwame was one of the first group of BU Trustees after the Union's restructuring. This was a significant role.

¹¹ An example is the use of renowned Pentecostal preachers either from Africa or USA at church conferences.

Congregations: Baptist Identity in the 21st Century'.¹² In this article, I argued that the leadership style of some of these congregations is very similar to Pentecostal and Charismatic leadership as opposed to the Baptist model of congregational leadership. African-led churches within the LBA are not the only congregations with Pentecostal/Charismatic elements, because there are also other Eastern European, Asian and South American churches who have such dynamics. Some other LBA churches or affiliated churches are charismatic in leadership and style, one example is the Well Church in Camberwell led by Phil Stokes.¹³

Mission Contributions of Africans with the LBA: Case Study of the Revd Osoba Otaigbe

Osoba was born into a Christian family in 1962 in Nigeria, in the then Midwest Region of Ekpoma, now Edo State. Benin City, its capital, was a historic kingdom before the coming of the Portuguese and other Europeans. His primary education was in an Assemblies of God mission school. He attended a Roman Catholic boarding school, St John Boscos College Ubiaja and then studied Business Management in the University of Benin. After graduation and National Service, while many of his mates went into employment in the banking and oil industries, he became an entrepreneur, opening his own oil and gas service company in 1988 to supply the oil industry with drilling chemicals and environmental services.

After some years at this, he studied for a postgraduate diploma in Computer Science, which helped him start the first internet company in the oil city of Port Harcourt. Later he also invested in men's clothing. Business was good for many years, particularly within the oil industry.

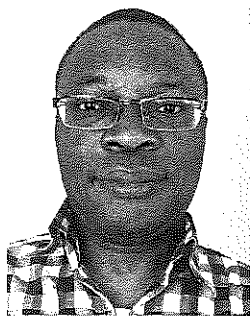
¹² Israel Olofinjana, Bapticostal Congregations, in *Baptist Ministers Journal*, Volume 318, 2013, pp. 27-28.

http://www.baptist.org.uk/Articles/380619/Bapticostal_congregations.aspx Published 3 December 2013, but accessed on 9 September 2014. I am aware that Dotha Blackwood and Nigel Wright have also used the term Bapticostal in describing Baptist Christians with Pentecostal elements.

¹³ The Well Church has its roots in the Ichthus Christian Fellowship, but is now an independent church that is part of Pioneer Network. They are also part of the LBA through a building arrangement.

Osoba had a successful business in Nigeria before relocating to the UK: challenging the assumption that all economic migrants are poor back home and desperately need to come to the UK.

Osoba, born into a Christian family, has always been familiar with church life. His father retired from work to become a Pastor. Osoba recalls, 'I grew up knowing everything about church. I specially remember the Easter period with the forty days fasting leading to Easter'¹⁴. During his University days he stopped attending church and spent most of his time organizing parties and partying with friends. He became known in Benin City for organising parties! His business was booming and growing rapidly until he experienced three robbery attacks. These experiences challenged him and led him back to God. He came to London in 1990 for a change of location but after two months he was really bored and went back to Nigeria. He relocated from Benin City to Port Harcourt. It was while he was living in Port Harcourt that he started attending a Charismatic church for a while before attending New Covenant Baptist Church in 1992. This was his Baptist conversion as he fell in love with the Baptist tradition. He got married to Madeline in 1993 and today they are blessed with three children, Lase, Ofure and Oisejie.



Revd Osoba Otaigbe

Mission Work in Nigeria

Osoba became actively involved in this Baptist church, serving as the Mission's Director and Vice President of the Men's Missionary Union for about four years. In these capacities, he was involved in three rural church plants within Nigeria. An international mission field was opened in Burkina Faso, building a nursery, primary and secondary school, as well as a worship centre. During his ministry in Nigeria, Osoba and members of his team successfully established Prison Ministries, as well as providing medical services to the community. One church was also established in Fuofuo, Ghana, with a nursery, primary and secondary

¹⁴ Interview with the Revd Osoba Otaigbe, 13 October 2014.

school as well. Currently, the church has now planted around twenty-one churches altogether in Nigeria and five in Burkina Faso. Osoba's involvement in mission work in West Africa before relocating to the UK is very important: demonstrating that he was already actively engaged in Christian ministry and mission before coming to the UK.

Missionary Call to the UK

In 2005, after about eighteen years of doing business in Nigeria, Osoba relocated to the UK to join his wife and children. This was not his first time in the UK as he had been visiting the UK since the early 1980s on holidays and later to see his wife and children. He never thought that he could live here as he found the culture very different: 'I love London for holidays but not to live permanently'. But he felt God telling him to let go of the mission work he was doing in Nigeria and his business and concentrate on building his family. God assured and encouraged him that he was not going to leave him bored and frustrated in London after the very busy time of mission work and corporate business in Nigeria. This encouragement served as his call to minister in Britain. Osoba had a strong desire to work with the locals to spread the gospel rather than join a Nigerian fellowship. Since moving to live in the UK, Osoba has been involved in pastoring two Baptist churches, working within the local ecumenical scene in Newham, serving on the Mission Strategy Forum of the LBA and as a trustee of Share Jesus International.

Serving at Memorial Baptist Church

The first church where Osoba worshipped when he arrived was Calvary Charismatic Baptist Church. There he took the Delta Courses organised by Colin Marchant of Spurgeon's College. As a result Osoba enrolled with Spurgeon's College for a Postgraduate Diploma in Theology.

In that same year Osoba felt God was leading him to join Memorial Baptist Church in Plaistow, a church that was experiencing decline and considering whether to keep or sell their big church building. He was introduced to the church by the minister, the Revd Mark Janes who was very receptive and welcoming; within a short time Osoba started preaching in the church. The church commended him to the LBA Ministerial Recognition Committee, where he was asked to come back

after one year. Pat Took, the then Regional Minister, was very helpful and encouraged Osoba's ministry.

Osoba was appointed Assistant Minister by the deacons of the church and served for about four years. While the Pastor was on three-months sabbatical leave, Osoba temporarily led the church. He found this very challenging. The first thing he did was to get the church talking about vision and teamwork. To consider the best way forward as a church, especially regarding the church building, he had a seminar for the elders and deacons and questionnaires for the church members. At the end of the three months, the church negotiated a merger with another local church, St Andrew's, which had lost its place of worship. Osoba and the church negotiated with the permission of his Senior Pastor. They set up different committees to look at the possibility and compatibility of the two churches coming together, as well as a redevelopment committee to look into a new church building. Around this time, the church also began an outreach to feed the homeless people in Canning Town and Plaistow every Saturday morning. To God's glory, that big building has been refurbished and the church is going strong under the new name, Memorial Community Church.

Work within Newham Community

In 2006/2007 there were a series of events where a number of young people in Newham lost their lives because of knife crime. This became a catalyst for Osoba's involvement with young people, families and other local churches. As a result, Osoba formed a group called Friendship Plus with members from churches in Newham.¹⁵ They resolved to meet as a prayer group for a year to seek the face of God. This intense prayer gave birth to Plus Centre and Newham Street Pastors. The main objective of the Plus Centre was to create a safe environment for young people and adults to build friendships and to access available information conveniently, using the latest Information Technology (IT) and computer systems that would enable mentoring and support relationships to develop. It was indeed an amazing transformation for young people: parents testified to seeing marked improvements in their children's

¹⁵ This group still runs till today and Osoba is still actively involved.

performances at school since they began attending the Centre. Many of the children learnt to do their school project work on their own with next-to-no assistance from the volunteer helpers at the Centre. Most rewarding and inspiring is that the Plus Centre has attracted people from different races, colour, cultures, backgrounds and faiths. They all found comfort and security in learning together under the welcoming and friendly environment that the Centre created.

Tooting Junction Baptist Church

In 2008, Osoba was called from Memorial Community Church to Tooting Junction Baptist Church. In this new ministry the challenges are very different, but intentionally building friendships across cultures has helped move the church into a new phase. Tooting Junction Baptist Church is a multi-ethnic, multi-generational fellowship with both seniors and young people. This comes with its own strengths and challenges. One strength is that the members love God. One successful mission strategy that Osoba and Tooting Junction have introduced has been a community festival. Every year the church runs this at the community park or sometimes at the church's car park. In 2011 and 2012 (Olympic year) the church had a very big festival that attracted many people:

We saw the joy, laughter and excitement in people from different cultures, religion, races and ages. We saw a growing hunger for social connection within our community.

There was something for everybody to do at the Park where the church held the Saturday family festival. Through this Festival, a few enrolled in the Alpha Course at the church. Osoba has established another Plus Centre at Tooting Junction Baptist Church for young people and adults in the community, like the one at Newham.



Tooting community festival

Mission Strategy Forum

Osoba has been the chair of the Mission Strategy Forum (MSF) of the LBA. The MSF serves as the Association's strategic mission 'think tank' and seeks to facilitate creative, innovative and pioneering approaches to mission in places and spaces where local churches may not be best placed to respond for a variety of reasons. The MSF under the leadership of the Revd David Shosanya, Regional Minister for Mission therefore aims to:

1. Offer the Association's Board of Directors a lens through which to view the mission of the LBA churches in a strategic and focused manner so as to allow decision-makers, leaders and other stakeholders to make informed and strategic decisions about the limited resources.
2. Think creatively about the various opportunities for mission across and within London that require collaboration, joined-up thinking and probably significant resources of people and/or finances to enable outreach.
3. Encourage intentional evangelism across the Association and be proactive in supporting it wherever it is manifest.

4. Collate a body of evidence that captures the various missional activities Association churches are involved with and seek to discern what, if anything, the Spirit of God might be saying to us through the data.

The MSF successfully executed the London Olympics 2012 project with many Baptist churches participating in various outreaches. The Forum has also been able to formulate a mission strategy paper for the Association and is working closely with the Regional Team Grant Committee to begin the newly established LBA Mission Partnership Funding. Osoba have also served the LBA in other capacities, such as the Ministerial Recognition Committee and in mentoring Newly Accredited Ministers (NAMs). In 2014, Osoba and Kumar produced *The Windrush Legacy: Faith in Migration*, a DVD documentary resource telling the story of the Windrush generation.¹⁶

Share Jesus International

Osoba joined the Board of Trustees of Share Jesus International in October 2010, to support the director, Andy Frost. The Trustees have planned and organised many events and projects, like Pentecost Festival, Crossing London, and have produced DVD resources and books on evangelism, how to run community festivals, and many more. Osoba continues to lead Tooting Junction Baptist Church and to serve within the LBA and beyond.

In conclusion, there are African pastors within historic churches, including those of the BUGB. The LBA have various African ministers who are making their own mission contributions. One such is the Revd Osoba Otaigbe who decided not to minister in a Nigerian church but was glad to serve other nationalities too. This is reflected in his pastoral work as well as trans-local ministry. His heart is for God's kingdom to be birthed in Britain.

¹⁶ This DVD resource is available from the LBA office.

A CHURCH PLANT SEEKS A HOME

Kwasi Gambrah

In the year 2000 I had a vision to build a church, to win people, to win the city. We set up a small church in the Tooting area. Our first meeting place was a studio hall accommodating about thirty. The rent was £600 a month. There was no heating system and most of the congregation had young children so the challenge was health and safety, and this made us move on after a year.

Our next location was a Hindu temple. The rent was £1,500 per month. The challenge was the spiritual battle as the place was being shared by two faiths, and the Hindus' god statue was at the front. We stayed there for six years.

The next place was a night club, used for clubbing on Friday and Saturday. We went in on Sunday morning to clean up after the clubbers and set the place up for Sunday service. We paid £2,500 per month. The challenge was the work involved as we had no paid church workers, and the restrictions on the use of the premises. We stayed there for a year.

Victory Baptist Church's next move was to a snooker club that was also a Mosque. The rent was £7,000 a month. We intended to use the space for other projects, such as adult education, after-school clubs, and to generate some money towards the rent while benefiting both church and local community. The challenge was financial: we had saved £60,000 towards buying our own property but we were left with no choice but to spend our savings on the rent to keep us going. This small church had no other means of support. After a year we realized we could not keep up with the rent so were forced to move out.

Next we found somewhere in Garratt Lane, South-west London, and stayed there 2009-2015. The rent was £2,750 excluding bills. This place suited us well and the congregation was happy. Towards the end of 2014 we saw a 'For Sale' sign in front of the building, without being given notice to move out. On investigation, we found the place had been put up for auction and we had four weeks to find a new home.

A member of the church told us about a Methodist church in Rose Hill. After an intensive conversation, we secured one of the halls within the church building and agreed a rent of £500 a month for which we were

grateful. After a couple of weeks the Methodists told us they had decided to reduce this to £300 inclusive. This is the only time in the fifteen years that we have worshipped in a church building.

Our repeated attempts through the years to get a mortgage have all ended in losing us money. It is only recently that the Pastor has agreed to receive some allowance from church funds.

EMERGENCE OF MULTICULTURAL CONGREGATIONS IN THE LBA

Reflections on Greenford Baptist Church 1965-2015

David Wise

Fifty years ago in 1965 the Revd E.M. Forward was the pastor of Greenford Baptist Church (GBC), having commenced his ministry in October 1958. The existing church premises had been built by the War Claims Commission in the 1950s and in 1965 a major extension was under discussion. This, built in 1969-70, is evidence that the church was healthy and growing. The membership at the end of 1965 was 150. Most of those who attended the services lived locally and were white British, reflecting the local population.

My first-hand knowledge of GBC starts from 1987. In the autumn, after a few months of conversation, I became the new pastor. In many ways the church was largely unchanged from twenty years earlier. Services followed the traditional Baptist pattern of five hymns etc. The congregation had remained almost entirely white British with just a handful of Caribbean teenagers, attracted initially by the Boys' and Girls' Brigades. Most were from the local area, but the congregation and active membership had shrunk by around half that of twenty years before. The local community had changed. There had been a substantial increase in people living locally but born in India, Pakistan, the Caribbean, and a small but growing number from West Africa. This change was not yet reflected in the congregation.

Today GBC has over 200 members with around 450 attending one of our services twice a month. The majority of the adults who attend on Sundays were born outside the UK: people from around forty-five nationalities are a regular part of our congregation, with no single nationality dominating. Our 2½-3 hour Sunday morning meetings include sung worship in a variety of languages, with songs sung in the style they would be 'back home'. A variety of styles and a mixture of languages are used for prayer, reflecting those used in the countries of origin of those present. Leaders in almost every area of church life are drawn from a mixture of nationalities (the one exception is that both the

current pastors are white British, but GBC did have a Brazilian pastor until recently).

So how did this change happen? As I look back, I think that the catalyst for the initial, very slow growth in the numbers of Caribbeans was the evangelistic activities of one of the teenagers who had been there when I arrived. Her parents, from Dominica, were the very first black people to move into the road in Greenford where I live. They told me that those already living there did not welcome their arrival. In the evening of the first day there a group gathered outside their house and smashed all their front windows. This teenager's first job was working in a hairdresser's very close to our church building. I am told that doing Caribbean hair can take all day, so she would tell this 'captive' audience about Jesus and invite them to come to the church. The second Caribbean I baptized at GBC came via the hairdresser (the first, baptized a couple of weeks earlier, was the son-in-law of a church member).

Those attending GBC were not free from the racist attitudes that were around in our wider community (this statement is deliberately ambiguous as some were on the receiving end of racism and others demonstrated racist attitudes). From those days I vividly recall Caribbeans in the course of pastoral visits telling me of the hurt and pain they felt at the way they were being treated in the UK and within GBC. In essence, they felt that their blackness was not welcome. So around twenty-three years ago I set up what was to be one of the most painful leaders' meeting I have ever attended. I asked two of the Caribbean men who were members of GBC to share with our all-white leaders how they felt as a part of the church. They bared their souls, they talked about their pain not just as recipients of conscious racial prejudice on a daily basis from non-Christian people and structures around them but also in church. Their experiences included receiving 'well meaning' but hurtful comments, like 'I don't see you as black, but just as my brother in Christ' (which they felt denied part of their identity) to feeling ignored or excluded because of their culture. During the meeting some of the church leaders were in tears, confessing their own racial prejudice – most of it previously unconscious. For example, one leader, who almost every Sunday invited some church people to her house for tea, realised that she had never invited a black person.

Following this meeting, the leadership intentionally set out to tackle racism, conscious and unconscious within the church family, using Bible teaching, testimony and, most effectively, one-to-one encounters. Sometimes this involved painfully challenging people about their attitudes and actions. One week, when a West African member was preaching, he decided to sing a song part-way through his sermon. One of our white church members stood up and walked out, making clear his disgust. Later that week I visited him and, after listening to his views, made it clear that West Africans were welcome at GBC and that I wanted them to bring their own culture with them. I gave the member two options: he could either continue to come and sometimes put up with things that he did not like or he could leave. He is still part of GBC. As time went on, I always continued to listen to our Caribbean, and later African and Asian, members' feelings and experiences.

A key point in the process of the whole church community facing up to the reality of racism (which was still often denied by white members) and its consequent impact on the church came after an Asian family in membership of the church was attacked. The family's story is long and complex but, in essence, after moving from one part of our area to another they suffered a series of racially motivated attacks that culminated in a very serious assault in the middle of the night which left three of the four family members in hospital with injuries that will scar them for life. The local authority and local police had both failed to give the family any protection, even though the various attacks had become more serious. Our collective church outrage at the way this family was treated led to us holding a public meeting, in partnership with a local action group, with speakers including Neville Lawrence and Suhkdev Reel. This meeting resulted in significant media coverage and a sudden marked change in the attitude of the police towards the family who eventually, with our strong encouragement, made a number of complaints to the Police Complaints' Authority, most of which were upheld. This process galvanised our church family, exposing all its members to the ugly realities of our racist society. Our actions were recognised by the local community, resulting in us being asked to make a submission to the second phase of the Steven Lawrence enquiry.

In parallel with this, we set about intentionally working to create a genuinely multi-ethnic church family. This process had a number of strands, developing multi-ethnic leadership and ministry, developing multi-ethnic worship and prayer, developing hermeneutics for a multi-ethnic context, and the enjoyment of food and cultural experiences from a variety of ethnicities.

Developing genuinely culturally-diverse leadership and ministry has been tough. I have invested a lot of time in leadership training and development, including public speaking. I developed a programme called the Leadership Training Group. This is an 18-month course that aims to work on character, at the same time giving opportunity to experiment and develop in all sorts of areas of ministry with a view to all assuming some sort of leadership role within the church at the end of the course. It has not been without its bitter disappointments but also it has succeeded in seeing people without any previous leadership experience or training go on to become key leaders within the church family at Greenford and elsewhere following relocation.

Developing worship that reflects different cultures has been even harder. It was very difficult to persuade people who were not white British to join our all-white British singers and musicians. A turning point here came after an international evening where some of our West Africans performed some songs from their churches back home. As a result of people's appreciation, I managed to persuade several to join our singers' team. Sadly this was unsuccessful as the leaders had a very western view of what constituted worship, good vocal practice and good musical skill. Our African brothers and sisters felt themselves devalued and marginalised and we soon ended up once again with a virtually all-white team. It was not until after the entire singers' and musicians' leadership resigned from the church that we were able again to see people from our other cultures become involved. We have now made progress, with some of our West Africans and Caribbeans regularly leading worship, increasingly using their own styles, but it has been a slow process. We now also routinely include songs from other cultures, singing them in the language and style they were originally composed in. So, for example, when we sing a song in Hindi the singers will usually sit on the floor and we will just use a tabla-style drum and bells for

accompaniment, with sometimes the addition of a sitar drone sound from a mobile phone app!

We are still early on in the journey for genuinely multi-ethnic prayer. This is not just about the use of a mixture of languages but also about the fact that prayer is done differently in different cultural contexts, and most people pray with a greater freedom and passion in their first language. So members of our prayer ministry team on Sundays are encouraged to use their first language, even if the person they are praying for does not understand a word of it. When people are asked to lead public prayer, they are given the option of using their first language. I have noticed how increasingly in small groups people will simply use their first language without any explanation or justification.

During an eight-week sabbatical visit to South Africa, where I was looking at the reality of racism and the process that some had gone through that led them to repent of racist attitudes and to accept that all human beings are equally made in the image of God, I came to realise that the way that I was teaching from the Bible at GBC was marginalising many of those from a non-European context. In essence, my Bible teaching was Euro-centric. This led to me taking a part-time MA in Biblical Interpretation at London Bible College (now London School of Theology) to help me develop tools to connect better biblically with non-Europeans. In this process my epistemology was transformed, as was my methodology for preaching. Sermons changed from monologue to genuine dialogue, with the congregation given space for people to contribute from their own cultural heritage. It has become a normal experience for me that, despite having thought deeply about the passage and having read half a dozen commentaries, comments from the congregation shed new light for me on the meaning of the text.

I am convinced that eating together food that reflects the diversity of our origins is very important, as is sharing together in entertainment that originates in a variety of cultures. This can be poetry, art, music, dance, storytelling. We regularly have events that draw on the richness of the cultures we have, with a wonderful array of food and/or entertainment.

Greenford Baptist Church is still on a journey. It is still changing so that it can effectively engage with the community that we are part of. Let's be in faith for the next fifty years!

YOUTH WORK IN LONDON

Pete Leveson

Since the early years of the London Baptist Association, the challenge of engaging the younger generations has been a key issue for many. The Sunday School movement had begun in Gloucestershire some hundred years prior to the LBA's establishment, and by 1803 the Sunday School Union was founded, with this approach to working with children becoming widespread.¹ Within the LBA, in 1878 a special conference was held entitled 'The Young People of our Churches and Congregations, our duty towards them. How shall we best discharge it?'² It seems that while Sunday Schools were booming, leading to the building of halls and classrooms, this did not always translate into the wider life of the church. By 1881 work with children and young people was again under review for the LBA. This time the question was put this way:

with a band of 4,174 teachers, instructing 58,270 scholars, may not further enquiry be urged – are the churches augmenting from this source as numerous as might be expected?³

Fast forward to 1999 and once again the issue of youth was on the agenda. It had in reality never left, with various initiatives over the years, but once again a new focus was being brought to the issue. A piece of research was commissioned and carried out, leading to a new post: 'Youthwork Coordinator'. Initially a part-time post, within a few years this role would become integrated as part of the Regional Ministry Team within the LBA, coming to a conclusion in 2010.

The challenge for churches engaging with young people was and remains twofold: how to disciple and 'keep' young people who are already within the church family, and how to reach and engage young

¹ J.D. Douglass, 'Sunday Schools' in *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI, 1978.

² W.C. Johnson, *Encounter in London*, London: Kingsgate Press, 1965, p.36.

³ Johnson, p.37.

people who are outside the faith community. Both these issues have been impacted by rapid changes in culture, and the perceived emergence of a 'generation gap' since the birth of youth culture in the 1950's post-war era. In addition, the situation with young people in London as a global city has been made even more complex with an increasing number of 'third culture kids'⁴ and young people from a diverse range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The result has been that statistically, in the UK as a whole, the church appears to be in danger of becoming an increasingly ageing community.

During the first decade of this century the response for some churches to the issue of reaching and keeping young people was to seek the employment of youth workers and youth ministers. Indeed, it was during this period that the Baptist Union introduced a new category of 'Youth Specialist' to its register of accredited ministers, alongside training initiatives such as the Oasis Youth Ministry Course (now Oasis College) and the Centre for Youth Ministry. This approach worked well in some churches, with the youth specialist able to provide a focus for energies, and devote time and resources to the task. The changing economic situation during this period, however, meant that for some churches and organisations maintaining a paid specialist proved unsustainable, and for many it was never a viable option in the first place.

The bulk of work with young people in our churches is, therefore, carried out by a band of willing volunteers. From teaching the Bible to running youth clubs, many give sacrificially to help disciple a new generation, and to seek to make an impact with those outside the church.

Alongside this, there are many 'para-church' and 'inter-church' initiatives, doing what a single church cannot do on its own. These may include working with schools, providing mentoring projects, or worship spaces for young people. One notable project has been Street Pastors,



Children of the Brockley church in 1971

⁴ <http://tckid.com/what-is-a-tck.html> (Accessed 29/06/15).

working with older young people and others out at night enjoying the 'night-time economy'. Summer camps, such as 'Soul Survivor', have also grown and provided a source of encouragement and spiritual life to many.

How should churches and the LBA respond to the challenges of engaging with and enabling the younger generations to follow Christ as we move forward together? The following are offered for reflection:



Children and youths enjoying community activities organised by Tooting Junction Baptist Church

i) *Don't Panic*

Knee-jerk reactions are rarely helpful.

Sometimes churches and institutions can be driven to act in working with younger people because they fear they will die out. 'One generation from extinction' is the cry (but is that not always true?). God is bigger.

A panic investment or a rushed programme will most likely not last the long haul. Hastily employing a youth minister without taking time and research can lead to problems both at the church and for the person concerned.

ii) *Don't assume specialised 'youth ministry' is the answer*

How real is the 'generation gap' that is often sold as a reality?

During the 1990s and early 2000s a lot of 'generational theory' was adopted by churches.⁵ While much of it was helpful and cultural change cannot be ignored, the danger is that we assume a posture of 'difference' rather than looking for connections with younger generations.

⁵ See for example W. Meller, *Youth Culture 101*, Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI, 2007.

What if rather than looking to specialists and separating out young people, the approach was inclusion or family?

While the 1960s youth culture might have seemed like a revolution, with different music, dress and subcultures, a radical departure from what had gone before, can the same be said today?

The late Mike Yaconelli put it this way:

Youth group is good.
But there's a better good.
It's called *church*.⁶

Specialist youth ministry has its place, especially in helping churches engage with young people from outside its perimeter. It may not, however, always be the answer.

iii) *Does every church need 'youth ministry'?*

As counter-intuitive as it may sound, not every church can do everything!

If a church does not have young people, perhaps it should seek to partner with another church or agency and invest that way. If a church is great at reaching people in their fifties, then go with that and see what develops from there.

Especially when it comes to reaching young people from outside the church, partnerships and being willing to start new expressions of church may be a better option than trying to set up a ministry within each local church.

iv) *Think younger and older than 'youth'*

How 'youth' is defined may vary from church to church. Often the definition is High School age (11-18).

But a more integrated approach to church life can be helpful.

There can be key points for young people, where the tendency to drop out from church life is seen most strongly. These are often transition points: moving to high school (age 11), around 13-14

⁶ Mike Yaconelli, *A better idea the youth ministry* at www.youthspecialties.com/articles/Yaconelli/idea.php?

(growing independence, being able to be left on their own), and post-youth group (16-18). Thinking wider than simply youth can be of real benefit here.

Investing in children's work that seeks to make disciples rather than just teach Bible stories is vital. So is planning how young people connect with and transition out of youth programmes and into adult church life. Focusing on young people as a separate entity may not be the best way to work and grow life-long followers of Jesus.

v) *The LBA has a key role in resourcing and enabling*

From training for volunteers to encouraging youth ministers, the LBA is well placed to support and encourage what is growing on the ground.

On a simple level, if the five young people in one church gather with young people from neighbouring churches that in itself might be a source of encouragement and support (not least for the leaders!). But beyond that, outreach youth work is costly and demanding. A 'joined up' approach might be far more fruitful. But it might mean sacrificing our Baptist 'independent' mentality.

Many volunteer youth leaders need training and support, and often just the encouragement to keep going. The LBA could be a vehicle for that.

And beyond maintaining, the courage to dream and plant new churches could open up expressions of church that young people can connect with. Yet at the same time realising that, if the generation gap is not what it once was, maybe existing churches are better placed to connect than they ever thought possible.

YOUTH WORK UPDATE

Peter James

Since 2012 the LBA has witnessed a new stage in the life of its strategy for children and youth work, through the creation and development of the 'LBA Youth Forum'. Following the great success of the 20/20 youth event held earlier in 2012 at the Baptist Assembly (hosted in the capital), the directors had a growing sense of the pressing need to reconsider what the LBA was doing to equip London's Baptist churches in their ministry to children and young people. Furthermore, there was a real opportunity to draw for this on the great resources that could be found within the Association from those already engaged in youth and children's work. It was within this discussion that the LBA Youth Forum was birthed.

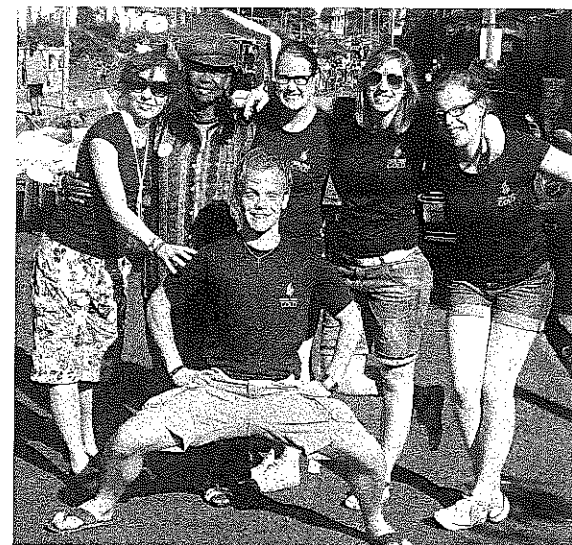
Consequently, the Youth Forum represents an attempt by the LBA to find a more participatory approach to connect, resource and enthuse churches across the capital in their delivery of youth and children's work. Given the current limited financial resource base, the Forum does not rely on any one individual but rather pulls together a core group of youth and children's workers, church leaders, parents and some LBA representatives, based in locations across London, to help develop ways to support churches and individuals in their ongoing mission to the young people of the capital.

In the first few years the Forum's core group has focused on a few key areas, including: the creation and development of a youth and children's worker database (resulting in better communication and opportunities for co-operation); responding to individual requests from churches and individuals for support, ideas and resources for their ongoing youth work; organising quarterly youth and children's worker gatherings (facilitating fellowship, networking and training); developing a greater online and social-media presence; and helping to oversee the annual 20/20 youth event.

At the time of writing, the Forum has been looking to build stronger district networks and relationships in the attempt to connect with even more churches and encourage further fellowship, resource sharing and partnership between groups and individuals. One approach to this is

through local gatherings. It is hoped that meeting at more local level will give greater opportunity for learning the specific and unique needs and opportunities within children's and youth work found in the different districts of the LBA.

In 2015 London continues to offer an exciting, challenging and unique mission field, none more so than in the area of youth and children's work. As much as ever before, the church needs to serve as a community of hope, of refuge, and of restored relationships to the young people of our capital, as well as a place in which true identity as part of God's family is found and a real and fulfilling purpose for life might be discovered. It is hoped that by working more together, through such initiatives as the Youth Forum, churches will be better equipped to face the challenges and seize the opportunities, and that in doing so the young people of our city will fully experience the truth of the Gospel, and witness the integrity of our unity and partnership in mission.



Young Christians in Tooting

BREATHE

Amie Buhari

Breathe. The water fast came over me as I sat in the hospital next to little six-year-old Kesienna's bed, her body covered in a heavy rash and her eyes red and moist from fearful crying. Breathe. The darkness of the night: almost as dark as the enormity of the situation heavy on my sixteen-year-old self tries to smother me. Breathe. Far away from the familiar support network of home I face my first challenge of youth work. I ask God to take control again and I breathe. All my mother's and sister's examples of caring flow through me, as I navigate the tricky emotional challenge of a kid being sick whilst away on camp. A month earlier my interest in children had peaked my pastor to invite – no, told – me I was going to help her take the Campaigners group away for four days. I eagerly said yes, not knowing this would be the first step into a now twenty-two year ministry-career in youth work. My Pastor threw me in at the deep end. And whilst not a very good swimmer in reality, that night taking control like I did with little sick Kesienna, getting her to hospital, providing the pastoral care she needed – I swam like a seasoned pro. God's anointing was upon me and I learnt how to breathe.

After that baptism of fire, I worked with the children in my church under the guidance of my Pastor. Throughout university I would come back during the holidays and help run the kids' club. My role, however, was clearly defined when I returned home from university for the last time. I began to lead the youth group at church and realized fully my calling from God. Kids had been fun, but the youth really excited me. Watching the light bulb come on in their minds as we explored the bible and seeing them take on the fun challenges I would set them gave me so much joy. God was breathing into me a strong passion for the youth and ways in which to develop them that we hadn't explored in our church before. My mind started bursting with ideas. Whereas most people in their late teens/early twenties were clubbing it every Friday night, my buzz came from being with the young people, sometimes not leaving church till 1 a.m. when I would finally get them to leave. Everyday I found God equipping me with skills in which to shepherd the youth;

skills that could only come from God, as I had and still don't have any formal training in youth work. The joy of seeing our young people grow in Christ and in their individual characters was priceless. Don't get me wrong: there were some difficult times. Not all the young people, as expected, were pleasant and eager to grow. Many times I had to put out fires of theft, verbal abuse towards me, verbal abuse from parents towards me, conflict, laziness, rivalry, illness, confusion and much more; but none more than the next mountain God set me to climb – the church!!!!

Breathe! That feeling had come back again, but this time I was a little bit older and much wiser. This time the situation was different, the stakes were higher and the reward much greater. My Pastor had decided that deacons should be area specific. No longer were you a deacon because you were above fifty years and served for a long time in the church; now you had to be responsible for an area of church life. The youth were a big area within the church. This group of young people was growing and had an active involvement in everyday church life. The young people were very important to the church. So when it was decided that they needed a Youth Deacon, I was the obvious choice. Now I was the obvious choice not because I was awesome but because God had a plan and nothing will prevail against it. God had a plan to raise three generations of men and women in that church, who would go on to serve Him in many different ways, and He gave me the honour of facilitating it. However, this potential position of leadership at such a young age was met with much opposition. Now I must explain that I am very much loved within my church. I'm considered as everyone's daughter, as I've grown up there from a very young age. I am very blessed to have so much love showered upon me from my church family. But when my name was put forward as a candidate for the diaconate at the age of twenty-two everything kicked off! The older generation (above sixty years) was horrified at the prospect that such a young person should be allowed onto the diaconate. There were weeks of arguments, debates, church meetings, hushed voices, and raised voices leading up to the elections. For the older generation, I became public enemy number one. I went against everything they believed that a deacon should be. I was young, radical, creative, outspoken and determined. I was young!! Never

before had there been a deacon my age in our church. To those under fifty years, and especially the youth themselves, I was the obvious choice. I had already been doing the job for the best part of two years and, thank God, doing it well. Being a youth myself gave me an edge, and the young people felt connected to me.

There was one meeting when it all got too much. Literally the young and old were shouting off in a big debate about my potential posting. It was actually quite comical. It's one of those moments when you wish this wonderful, inclusive democracy thing that we Baptists do was thrown out of the window. But alas, 'Baptist constitution states that there must be a vote'. I said nothing. The voices grew louder from every side. I said nothing. I was so proud of my young people standing up for what they believed: 'We should have a say in who gets to lead us'. I said nothing. I was right in the middle of my Timothy moment, and God told me 'breathe'.

Ok, maybe now is the time to let you know that one of my other passions is acting. So much so that I'm trying to carve out a career as an actress. I tell you this because pursuing both youth work and acting over many years has come with great compromise. But for the purpose of this story I'm telling you because I pretty much see my life as a film; and this is the Oscar-winning scene where, against all adversity, the main protagonist gives the most stirring heartfelt speech of her life, turning the hard-hearted around, bringing about victory. Can you see it? Can you feel triumph rising up inside you? Well in reality, I actually can't remember what I said because I didn't say anything, the Holy Spirit spoke through me. As the word says, 'when we don't know what to say, the Holy Spirit will speak for us'. And the words God put in my mouth were far better than any Oscar-winning scene I could have written. I do remember posing the question to the older generation, 'Are you willing to run the youth department? To spend two nights a week with them? To be accessible and accountable?'. I do remember the silence in response to my question. Breathe. From that day on I took my seat on the diaconate and our little Baptist church entered into a new era, a progressive era, the twenty-first century to be precise!

Praise is to God; my years of youth ministry have been most enjoyable. I've had my fair share of incidents – mothers cussing me

down for correcting their child when in the wrong, youth stealing, teenage pregnancy, deportation, etc. etc. They've made me cry, they've frustrated me beyond measure, but all of that is just youth work. What I still can't fathom today is how God blessed me with the ability to answer any biblical question the young people asked me. Seriously, it's like God downloads the meaning of scripture right there in the moment when talking to the young people. It's a blessing that has defined my ministry.

So it sometimes feels like I kind of fell into this whole youth work thing, but I know it's all part of the Father's plan. As the years have gone by he has revealed to me in many ways the impact that working for Him is going to make among young people. It's bigger than my three generations of young people at Clapham Baptist Church (my church), it's bigger than CBC, and it's definitely bigger than me. One of the things God did was take me beyond the church kids and get me working in various different places as a youth worker/specialist. He also used this gift to pay the bills: acting hadn't produced that big pay cheque yet! I worked in schools, for an environmental organization, on the toughest estates, in a theatre – all doing youth work. These jobs gave me a deeper insight into the young people and the support we provide for them. Sometimes it is overwhelming, thinking about some of the things I've seen. Breathe. But I had to take a deep breath, because where God was taking the ministry next came a lot sooner than I thought it would.

The birth of The Hebe Foundation happened in February 2007. Three things culminated together and brought it into existence. After years of working for various youth organizations, my hands were tired from ticking all the boxes. You know what I mean – that generic youth work that actually has no meaningful effect on young people, but merely serves to make people in higher places con everyone into thinking they are making a difference! It was painful to watch and actually be a part of babysitting teenagers, when we could be developing them. Every fibre of my body rebelled against the work I was asked to do. The second thing that happened was that we were right in the middle of the explosion that was gun and gang culture among our youth. Almost everyday there were shootings or stabbings. The gangs were rampant, and my own cousin was in the thick of it. I spent a lot of time in the police station and courts during this time. Every word we said, every prayer we prayed

seemed to have no effect on him. He got deeper and deeper until they locked him away, a couple of times. For all my years of youth work experience I couldn't help my own cousin. But that happens sometimes, doesn't it, as hard as it was to comprehend at the time. The third thing to happen was God. Well he's always happening, but he happened to happen upon me, and gave me the unction to step out in faith with a certainty I had never known before and turn ideas into reality. I got some like-minded youth-worker friends of mine and told them my God-given intention to create an organization that develops young people's talents and God-given gifts. They caught the vision and The Hebe Foundation was born, albeit under another name, 'The South London Youth Project'. I had to succumb once again to democracy, letting my esteemed youth workers choose the most rubbish, boring name ever! Anyway, our first project was for the young people, by the young people, about the young people. Our youth were really upset about the gun and gang crime issue. They felt like all of society was tarnishing every young person with the same brush, they were witnessing friends and acquaintances becoming victims or perpetrators of crimes. The young people had lost their voice, and they wanted it back. So under our facilitation the first project we undertook was a youth-led musical 'Gone too far' – about the effects of gun and gang crime. We toured it around churches in South London and The Hebe Foundation was born.

The Hebe Foundation (note the swift name change) is a registered charity. Our mandate is to enable young people to realize and utilize their gifts to further themselves and their community, whilst building the character to sustain them. Wow, it's been hard! But God never said it would be easy. I can tell you all about the long nights I've spent in the office, planning projects and filling in funding applications (I'm actually multitasking right now and creating a spreadsheet as I type this). I can tell you about spending the night in hospital with a heavily pregnant young girl in pain, because her mother sure wasn't getting out of her bed. I can tell you how after eight years I'm still voluntary at my charity, and we have only one part-time paid staff member, yet have enough work for a whole team. I could tell you that low self-esteem, lethargy, and selfishness are the biggest threat to our young people today as it spreads

like cancer within them. I can tell you that we have never had enough money to run our projects and we're on the breadline.

But instead I'm going to tell you about the amazing things our Father has done through the Hebe Foundation and forget about all the above because I know with all my heart, Hebe is from God, and what God built, no one can tear down. I'm telling you about Luke, who came to us an awkward, shy, autistic, fourteen-year-old boy and is now a confident, strong young nineteen-year-old man, who is studying catering at college, public speaking and a mentee youth worker on our projects. When his teachers told his mum that he'd not be able to function in mainstream society, we taught him how to swim and swim upstream. Through one-to-one mentoring and regular attendance in our projects, Luke has developed beyond measure. Our motto is 'I can do all things in Christ, who strengthens me'. The key to Luke's development is he never got treated differently than anyone else at Hebe. No limits were placed upon him, so he has the ability to fly like every other young person.

Let me tell you how every year God performs a miracle and manages to make the small amount of money we do have stretch beyond all understanding. You need to know about the immense joy we feel when the young people have light-bulb moments, and all understanding clicks into place. When you can actually see their character building, their gift growing and their mind expanding. I want to tell you that God has given us an amazing singer/songwriter to support, as she builds her ministry in song to His name. I want to tell you that we have been named in the top ten charities to watch in London. I want to share with you that God is constantly uploading ideas of projects for the young people into my head. That everything He has said regarding Hebe is coming to pass. That this ministry is bigger than any dream I've ever had about it. That many young people's souls will be saved through the work we do. Breathe. When God gives me glimpses of what is to come, I take a breath and breathe, knowing he's in control.

4

BETTER TOGETHER
Towards a Just Society

'Better Together' was the watchword of the Inter-Church Process in the middle of the fifty years under consideration. This section looks at ways in which, in the spirit of Luke 4, 18-19, Baptist churches work with other Christians, with local councils and community groups, and even with those of other faiths, in pursuit of justice and the greater good of society.

BAPTISTS AND ECUMENISM 1965-2015

A Personal Reflection

Faith Bowers

A recent conversation about inter-faith relations over church coffee gave me a sense of *déjà vu*. I heard similar arguments half a century ago – about relations with other Christians. Personal experience of ecumenical relations over the past fifty years is reflected in this account.

As a member of the Baptist Student Federation's John Clifford Society for London students, I had some involvement with both the pan-evangelical Christian Union and the ecumenical Student Christian Movement. In those days Free Church members were barred from eucharistic fellowship with the Church of England, but my college by episcopal dispensation opened one communion service each term to other Christians and I rose early for those. Baptists had little to do with Roman Catholics. I once went to Mass with a fellow student – curious, as a Latin scholar, to observe that language then still in use. My friend regretted that she was not allowed to visit my church.

Within trinitarian 'Old Dissent', Baptists had long co-operated with Presbyterians and Congregationalists (known earlier as Independents). From the late eighteenth century this extended to the new Methodists and evangelical Anglicans. By the twentieth century Dissent had morphed into Free Churches. Baptists participated in the Conference of British Missionary Societies (formed 1912), and were founder members of the British Council of Churches (BCC, 1942) and the World Council (WCC, 1948). They joined others in Billy Graham Crusades, while British Youth for Christ encouraged work with other young Christians. Some Baptists were influenced by the Liturgical Movement, others joined fellow-charismatics in the Fountain Trust (1964-80). Denominational boundaries were becoming more fluid.

Ernest Payne, General Secretary of the Baptist Union (1951-1967), grew up in London at the Downs Chapel; he was deeply committed to Baptist principles yet an ardent ecumenist. In 1980 his memorial service, planned for Bloomsbury, was moved to Westminster Abbey at the

Dean's request, complete with Baptist hymns.¹ It was moving, as we left, to hear Abbey bells pealing in his honour. In 1963 Payne had set up the Baptist Advisory Committee on Church Relations (ACCR, on which I served 1985-1991), drawing on a cross-section of Baptist attitudes.

Before the LBA's centenary, the Nottingham Faith and Order Conference (1964) called British churches to work for union by Easter 1980. Organic, institutional unity was envisaged, with denominations merging, as did most English and Welsh Congregationalists and Presbyterians into the United Reformed Church in 1972, later joined by the Churches of Christ, so the URC then embraced both infant and believers' baptism. A Methodist/Anglican attempt failed, but by 1971 Anglicans agreed to welcome at the table 'members in good standing' of other denominations. Meanwhile, Catholic attitudes to other Christians changed, following Vatican II's 'Decree on Ecumenism' (1964).

The call for organic unity challenged Baptists, glad to work with fellow Christians but not to abandon their distinctive understandings. Over 300 attended the LBA conference to consider the Nottingham call in 1965; a large follow-up response conveyed cautious interest. The BU, pleased with extensive 'grassroots' participation, published *Baptists and Unity* in 1967. That April the LBA secretary, Gordon Fitch, considered in *London Baptist* how Baptists might participate while remaining true to their principles. He recognized that the Greater London Council would like 'one channel' for dealings with churches, and new housing developments would often make space for a church but not for a variety of churches. He wrote again on church unity in April 1968, stressing that common life in Christ was more important than credal statements but offering a Definition of Evangelical Faith. The same paper noted a shared rota for sick visitation at Hammersmith Hospital and the ecumenical nature of Christian broadcasts there.

The BU resolved in 1969 to remain in the BCC and WCC (75% for), but could not foresee unity by 1980. Even this cautious response

¹ John Bunyan's 'Who would true valour see' and the Anabaptist hymn based on the Lord's Prayer, 'Our Father God, to thee we raise', which Payne himself had translated into English.

prompted a few churches to secede. The WCC Programme to Combat Racism prompted further disquiet in 1970, when money for South African welfare work was suspected of funding guerillas. For others, 1971's Christology controversy was the 'last straw'. Seceding London churches included the Metropolitan Tabernacle.

Baptist Evangelicals were divided, but Sir Cyril Black, then BU president, brought a motion to the LBA Council in September 1971, claiming there was no conflict between the ecumenical and evangelical; he was sure most Baptists supported the BCC but would not compromise on believer's baptism. The LBA Council supported him 43:15 (69 present). The BU joined the new Churches' Unity Commission. Many Baptists took part in the 'People Next Door' studies (1966-67), getting to know other Christians better: I remember friendly Lenten meetings led by an Anglican curate in a URC home. Where new Local Ecumenical Projects (LEPs) included Baptists, the ACCR scrutinised the constitutions.

By 1970 quarterly meetings of the Greater London Churches Consultative Group (GLCCG), chaired by the Bishop of London, encouraged useful liaison. Geoffrey Haden, Baptist Superintendent, was on the executive, Frank Cooke, minister at Purley, on the local radio group, and Barry Wilmshurst, LBA surveyor, on the professional workgroup addressing road routes and development areas of the Greater London Development Plan. Shared concerns included, for example in 1973, churches' representation on the Dockland Study, ministry to overnight reception centres, race relations, use of church premises in multiracial situations, local councils of churches' work, areas of ecumenical experiment, and changing employment patterns in London. In April 1974 *London Baptist* recommended the GLCCG leaflets to help churches participate in planning matters. Churches took local joint initiatives, like the phone ministry of the Eltham Council of Churches with a short daily message provided ecumenically and run from a Baptist home.

When Baptists published *Praise for Today* in 1975, Westminster Abbey included it in the 'Come and Sing' series. In 1976 Baptists welcomed as important the Archbishop's Commission on Evangelism; that July the LBA Inner London Committee echoed Bishop David

Sheppard's criticism of churches for identifying with the rich and powerful rather than the inarticulate and powerless. The five-year (1977-82) Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism saw churches converging around 'the Gospel we affirm together'. Changes in British society were reflected in the BCC report, *The New Black Presence in Britain* (1976), and BCC Committee for Relations with People of Other Faiths (1977). The report *Moving into Unity* (1978) offered five stages: competition, co-existence, co-operation, commitment, communion, the middle of which had been reached.

In 1976 the Churches' Unity Commission suggested 'Ten Propositions' for covenanting together. Comment first from local churches, then Associations, culminated in a BU Council debate in November 1977. 70% of the constituency responded. The reply, *Visible Unity in Life and Mission*, stated that Baptists could not accept the Propositions. There was particular concern about barring those baptized as infants from believers' baptism, which other Churches saw as the offence of 're-baptism'. Since they recognized believers' baptism as valid, they could not understand Baptist reluctance to reciprocate. Ecumenically-minded Baptists formed a Fellowship of Baptist Churches for Covenanting which fifty-four churches joined, but the whole attempt foundered at the Church of England Synod in 1982. Meanwhile, 1979 saw the birth of Spring Harvest, early support for which was respectively one-third each of Baptists, Anglicans, and other denominations.

In 1974 the WCC published *One Baptism, One Eucharist and a Mutually Recognized Ministry*, which led to *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (1982), discussed within and between member churches. My husband and I represented Bloomsbury and Baptists at central London discussions, hosted by the City Temple during March and April 1983. To formulate a Baptist response to this and other ecumenical consultations, the BU formed the Doctrine and Worship Committee (I served as Baptist historian and secretary throughout the life of this committee 1992-2003).

The 1980s saw considerable developments among Evangelicals, impacted by both Charismatic and Church Growth Movements, along with fresh recognition that societal concerns properly belong to mission. Periodic evangelistic campaigns received wide support, and many issues of social justice were promoted strongly by joint action across the

denominations. The Church of England's *Faith in the City* report (1985) spurred all churches to fresh efforts. Baptists found that they were well placed to build bridges between the older denominations and newer evangelical fellowships.

The Inter-Church Process (ICP), launched in August 1985 at a conference attended by fifteen Baptists, tried a fresh approach. Baptists welcomed working 'from the bottom up'. The Swanwick Declaration, *Not Strangers but Pilgrims*, led to replacing the BCC with a body embracing Roman Catholics and Black-led churches (as a BU representative on the BCC 1987-90, I was involved as the new 'ecumenical instruments' were planned). The ACCR provided a short paper, five principles and ten theses, to assist Baptist debate, with study and prayer, around the Associations. Evangelicals were still not of one mind. At the 1989 Baptist Assembly John Briggs, who chaired ACCR and was known for ecumenical involvement at local and WCC level, presented the case to 1,400 delegates. The seconder was Douglas McBain, London's Superintendent, a leading charismatic evangelical. Assembly voted to stay in the Process by a 74% majority, but insisted that the decision would be revisited after five years. Those still unhappy formed FAB, 'Fellowship of Anxious Baptists'.

David Coffey, now BU General Secretary, wrote in 1991 to the churches about ecumenical issues, and that December convened the Fairmile Consultation, bringing together six for and six against the ICP. Seven contributed to the booklet, *Evangelicals and Ecumenism: when Baptists disagree*, including Douglas McBain, Robert Amess and John Balchin (senior ministers respectively of Duke Street, Richmond, and Purley), and myself – considerable London input, with two from 'each side'. Disagreements were aired honestly and amicably. A memorable contribution came from an 'anti' minister who confessed to a change of heart since a new Roman priest in his town had proved a true 'brother in Christ'. That experience was often repeated elsewhere now Catholics were permitted to engage with other Christians.

When Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) and Churches Together in England (CTE) were set up, with companion bodies elsewhere in Britain, they were to be reviewed after five years. By then only Baptists felt need for real debate. In 1992-93 the BU Faith and

Unity department asked churches how the experiment was working. The Review Group, 1993-94, reported that Baptists were not of one mind, some favouring full mutual recognition, others only a loose unity on core beliefs. What did 'visible unity' really imply? Doctrine and Worship Committee felt uneasy about the equivocal response, but found that our ecumenical partners valued its honesty.

The decisive vote came at the 1995 Baptist Assembly. We went to Plymouth not knowing what to expect. Stressing the Trinitarian basis, David Coffey declared that it would still be possible to dissent from *within* but bridges to those of differing views were important. For those for whom working with Catholics remained 'a bridge too far', the Union would keep a list of churches registering dissent. The delicate task of proposing to stay in fell to Peter Wortley, the LBA secretary, seconded by Steve Gaukroger. The vote to continue was strong: 90.21% for CTE and 81.2% for CCBI. CTE issued the report, *Called to be One* (1996), setting unity in the context of mission, an emphasis attractive to Baptists.

By then I was involved in ecumenical groups concerned with disability. Some nuns in the Westminster Diocese pioneered Christian education for people with severe learning disabilities and gladly shared their insights with Baptists embarking on such work. Their priest observed, 'We have the same aim: to help them know that Jesus loves them'. Similarly in other contexts Baptists and Catholics began to find unexpected common ground.

In 1998 BU President Douglas McBain invited the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, Basil Hume, to address the Baptist Assembly. It was not the first time Hume addressed a Baptist congregation. On joining CTE, to reassure his priests that they could now join others in worship, Hume asked David Staple, Secretary to the Free Church Federal Council, if he might preach in a Free Church. Staple approached the nearest Baptists. On 9 December 1990 the Cardinal with two chaplains joined the Bloomsbury congregation in worship, preaching a biblical sermon on seeking and finding God. His successor, Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor, later also preached at Bloomsbury, but in the context of a Churches Together in Westminster service.

The new bodies emphasized fellow pilgrims doing things 'better together', sharing resources rather than all trying to cover everything.

Thus, Methodists have led Free Church work on social responsibility issues. Doing practical things together locally suited Baptists. Since differences in theology and church practice could not be ignored, CTE set up a Theology and Unity Group. For some years I represented BUGB on this. 'Legitimate Diversity' was a term much in use: in July 2002 the Catholic Ecumenical Review, *One in Christ*, devoted an issue (vol.37.3) to TUG papers on this, to which I contributed a Baptist perspective. Within that group a sense of being one in Christ developed: the Catholics found it painful at their turn to lead worship, because for them that always meant the Mass which they could not share fully with their friends.

The LBA set up a CTE Committee but this closed in 2001 having struggled to find a purpose – active ecumenism now took place locally. The possibility of sharing a Racial Justice post with CTBI was explored, before the LBA made a unilateral appointment. For an Ecumenical Prayer Initiative on the London Eye on 17 April 2004, the LBA underwrote a thirty-minute pod (£350).

As Local Ecumenical Projects developed into Partnerships certain issues recurred, especially around baptism. Baptists achieved agreements with URC and Methodists to permit believers' baptism, under certain strict conditions, for someone previously baptized as an infant. To address such sensitive issues the Church of England and BU held regular 'informal conversations', 1992-2005. The Baptist team included from London the Revd Dr Nigel Wright, Revd Dr Stephen Holmes and myself, and I contributed a chapter to *Pushing at the boundaries of unity*,² showing that past relationship had not invariably been bad. In our discussions it was fascinating to find parallel understandings underlying apparently different practices – but the issue of 're-baptism' remained unresolved.

It is good for the world to see churches working together. This shows in various chaplaincies as well as in special events. There have been high-profile campaigns around social justice issues, where the Catholic CAFOD, Protestant Christian Aid and Evangelical Tear Fund share

² Church House Publishing, 2005.

concerns with secular charities like OXFAM. It was particularly striking when identical 'Make Poverty History' banners appeared across the spectrum of churches.

Meanwhile, denominational distinctives tend to be less cherished. Baptists moving to new areas often do not transfer Baptist membership, choosing a church for worship style and friendliness rather than ecclesiological principles. Believers' baptism is often seen more as an individual act than as initiation into church. But individualism does not always lead to church unity.

How actively local ecumenism is practised depends on the enthusiasm of those involved and on personal friendships across the churches. In the first years of Churches Together there was a focus on joint effort, but with changes of personnel and pressure of other demands this has often become a lesser priority. We have come a long way in fifty years: it would be a pity to lose the achievements by neglect.

JUSTICE CAMPAIGNS

Tim Jones

In the mid-1990s many churches got involved in justice campaigns, particularly on issues with a clear impact on 'developing countries', especially in Latin America and Africa.

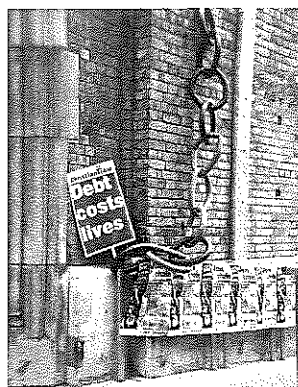
Many of those in churches who came to be involved in such campaigns first got involved through promoting fairtrade products. Through organisations such as Traidcraft, a Christian charity founded in 1979, churches began to sell 'fairtrade' products which guaranteed a minimum price and decent working conditions for those involved in producing the product.

In 1992 Cafod, Christian Aid, Traidcraft and the World Development Movement created the Fairtrade Foundation to label products as fairtrade, allowing fairly traded products to expand into larger markets. In particular, churches got involved in pressuring supermarkets to stock fairly traded goods.

The political engagement of churches increased rapidly through the Jubilee 2000 campaign. Since the early 1980s, many developing countries had been affected by debt crisis: increases in global interest rates and falls in price for commodities exported left many developing countries struggling to pay debts owed to governments, banks and institutions based in the western world.

The consequence of large debt payments leaving countries, continued low prices for commodities, and cuts in government spending (promoted by two international organisations, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank) were disastrous. In sub-Saharan Africa, 120 million more people were pushed into extreme poverty.

Relatively small groups of people in the UK in the 1980s and 1990s had been calling for many of these debts to be cancelled. In the mid-1990s, some of these had the idea of calling for a 'Jubilee' for the year 2000, cancelling the debts of fifty-two countries as a true way to celebrate the millennium. The idea of a Jubilee was inspired by Old Testament cases where debts would periodically be cancelled, slaves freed, and land returned to its original inhabitants.



Campaigning to break the chains of debt

The strong justice message and use of the Jubilee imagery from the Bible rapidly got churches from across different theological perspectives involved in the campaign. In 1998 in Birmingham, during the G8 meeting of self-appointed most important countries in the world, 70,000 people formed a human chain around the summit, calling for debt to be cancelled. The numbers mobilised were undoubtedly in large part due to the active promotion by churches, including Baptists. Other jubilee and related organisations were created in many other countries which were owed debts, including the USA, Germany,

Spain, Ireland and the Netherlands, joining those in developing countries who had been pressing for change for many years beforehand.

Seven years later, in 2005, when the G8 returned to the UK, 250,000 people marched in Edinburgh calling for more and better aid, trade justice and debt cancellation. Whilst the debts of fifty-two countries were not cancelled for the millennium, a debt relief scheme for the poorest countries was created. The Jubilee Debt Campaign, the successor to Jubilee 2000, said that by 2014 \$140 billion of debt had been cancelled for thirty-six countries.

The undoubted success of the Jubilee 2000 campaign led to attempts to replicate it. In the early 2000s, the Trade Justice Movement was created, calling for changes to international trade rules, particularly through the World Trade Organisation. In 2004 one part of the campaign was a protest in the middle of the night in Central London, which attracted around 20,000 people.

In the mid-to-late 2000s, the focus switched to climate change, and then in 2013, when the G8 once again came to the UK, to tax avoidance and evasion. However, the protest in Central London ahead of the 2013



Protesting at night

G8 summit (which was actually held in Northern Ireland) only attracted around 10,000 to 20,000 people.

None of the campaigns since the Jubilee 2000 campaign quite attracted the same energy and attention among the churches, whether because the injustice involved was harder to communicate, or there were less clear literal links with passages from the Bible.

In 2008, an economic crisis began in Europe and the United States, itself caused by excessive levels of debt created by private banks. When the debt bubble created by the banks collapsed, recessions were caused across the western world, with increases in unemployment and poverty levels. After 2010, a newly elected Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government began a programme of cuts in spending which particularly targeted council services and welfare payments to people of working age.

Church responses to the crises were often focused around helping individuals cope, through services such as food banks, debt counselling and homeless night shelters, which all grew rapidly in London churches over this time. However, there was much less engagement with challenging government policies than had been seen in justice campaigns for developing countries, even though many of the policies followed in the UK were the same as those implemented in developing countries in response to the debt crisis of the 1980s and 1990s.

Several church leaders spoke out against particular impacts of government policies on low-income people – the Baptist churches most effectively represented by the Joint Public Issues Team of the Baptist, Methodist and United Reformed Churches. However, there was less engagement in mobilising a mass of people in churches to take political action.

FOODBANKS AND STREET PASTORS

Carol Bostridge

'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people.'

Throughout the LBA's 150-year history, the Baptist churches of London have sought to live out the mission statement of Jesus expressed in Luke 4. This has led to churches taking positive, generous and bold action which has brought help and hope to their localities.

In recent years this has seen Baptist churches in London working with others at the forefront of the growth in foodbanks, night shelters and soup kitchens, as well as in the emergence of Street Pastors. Here is a snapshot of the sort of work many churches are involved in (with apologies for all the projects not mentioned).

Feeding the Hungry

In 1994 Muswell Hill Baptist Church responded to the needs of people coming on Sunday evening asking for food. They set up a Soup Kitchen which now operates five days a week, offering a three-course meal to forty people a session. Their guests include migrant workers, sofa surfers and those in need of company and support. One guest, who is now a helper, said: 'I was out on the streets. I had some shelter now and again – I wasn't totally on the streets, but it's still hard when you haven't got a place to go home to. Initially I came to try to get food and help and all that and you can find a lot of people are quite friendly here – and even when I got housed, I still came here because it's a social event.'

In South East London, Eltham Park Baptist and Blackheath and Charlton Baptist Churches are part of a project which provides a place to sleep and a meal for seven nights a week throughout the winter. The project brings together local churches, the council and charities to meet an immediate need and offer hope for the future.

The rise of foodbanks over the last fifteen years is a sad indictment of our society, but many churches across the LBA have been ready and willing to meet the need in a variety of ways. Some, like Thamesmead, Pollards Hill, Bonny Downs and Woodgrange have joined with others to set up the foodbanks in their boroughs. Churches, including Orpington, Perry Rise, Sidcup and Ruislip, provide finance, food donations and prayer support. Earlsfield has developed partnerships with groups including the local Muslim centre. The list goes on.

Many, many London Baptists are being good news to the poor, offering food parcels, signposting information and prayer; listening, caring and valuing people. The Baptist family, working in partnership with other Christians from across the board, are offering their buildings, their time, their expertise and their money to bring hope and a future to those in need.

A couple, former clients of Lewisham Foodbank, said this: 'We were desperate. My husband suffered a massive heart attack, hospitalized for 10 weeks; we could not get benefits as he didn't fit any category. We eventually had to resort, with some trepidation and humiliation, at having to "beg". But the staff were amazing and kind. Only because of the generosity of others were we able to survive. It has been two long years and, thank God, friends and the Foodbank, we are delighted now to be able to give something back.'

Street Pastors

In 2003 a meeting, held in Brixton Baptist Church, led to the formation of the first team of Street Pastors. The Revd Les Isaac, together with the Revd David Shosanya, then the minister of Chalk Farm Baptist Church, and DC Ian Critchlow saw Street Pastors as a positive response to gun and knife crime. Since then, the Street Pastor movement has grown throughout the UK and far beyond.

Christians from many different denominations work together to offer reassurance, safety and support through listening, caring and helping. This happens from 4 p.m. when school children fill the streets, through to 4 a.m. as night clubs empty out.

London Baptists continue to be at the centre of this wonderful ministry. For example, Crofton Park Baptist has trained seven Street

Pastors, supplied five prayer pastors and gives money regularly. Churches such as Croham Road, Trinity in Bexley, Orpington and Balham have helped set up Street Pastors in their area and continue to offer their premises and provide prayer and logistical support. A number of London Baptists are Borough Co-ordinators and contribute to the training of new Street Pastors.

Asked about Street Pastors, one young woman responded: 'I'd like to say that I am really grateful for the ongoing support I get from Street Pastors, and each and every one of them should be extremely proud of the work they do. I know it has had a huge impact on the crime rate and the attitude people have towards Christians. The time that they give and their dedication doesn't go unnoticed.'

* * * * *

Foodbanks and night shelters, street pastors and school pastors are just some of the work that the LBA churches, together with our sisters and brothers in the family of God, are involved in.

The Spirit of the Lord is at work, because he has chosen us to bring good news to the poor. He has sent us to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people.

NIGHT SHELTER

Dawn Savidge

I have just finished my second season of co-ordinating Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church's role in the Camden cold weather rolling shelter and I love it! This style of shelter has become quite common across the London Boroughs and is a wonderful mix of professional and charitable hospitality and help. The premise: seven churches or community groups host the shelter each for one night a week, providing shelter, food and friendship. This enables the team of case workers, statutory systems and professional organisations to work with the guests in helping them move on from the streets. This way of working has tremendous results, seeing over 80% of those who connect with the shelter engage; of that 80% nearly 90% move on into more permanent housing.

Being a part of the shelter is a wonderful experience: preconceptions of homelessness are broken down, results are seen and friends are made. A shift at the Bloomsbury Central night consists of games and conversation between guests and volunteers, then a two-course meal where everyone sits down together to eat, conversations, laughter, impromptu music and language lessons happen, and then we settle down to watch a film, picked by a vote. Whilst the film is on, the volunteers clear up the food and head home, leaving the guests and the overnight team to settle down for a good night's sleep. In the morning coffee and breakfast await us and we all go off to our prospective days. The volunteers love spending time with the guests and enjoy the feeling of doing something practical that is sensibly within our means, knowing that what we do enables the team to give full-time attention to the guests without having to worry about where they will be each night, or for their safety. The volunteers feel able to truly give in a meaningful way without patronising or encouraging rough sleeping.

It is a well-run way of engaging with homelessness that actually makes a difference and we recommend it!

DEBT COUNSELLING

Tim Jones

Through the early 2000s, there was significant increase in personal debt in the UK, increasing from 100% of average incomes to 160% by 2008, when a global financial crisis began. Many commentators linked this rise in debt levels to the lack of real wage increases amongst low and middle income people.

Some London churches began to respond to the problem of debt in their communities by setting up debt advice services. For example, many worked with Christians Against Poverty, a charity first set up in Bradford in 1996, which assists people in negotiating with creditors, bankruptcy and insolvency procedures, alongside overt evangelism. Others set up more informal budgeting advice, passing people with serious debt problems on to Christians Against Poverty or other recognised debt counselling bodies.

After 2010, as part of the programme of government cuts, the UK government reduced its support for the Citizens Advice Bureau, the largest debt advisor in the country. This led to an increase in demand for church-run services. By 2015, Christians Against Poverty had twenty-one debt advice services in London.

SACRE

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education
Duncan Struthers

SACREs have existed for twenty-seven years. Since 1988 Local Authorities have had a duty to establish a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education. It is a statutory obligation. Religious education is a statutory part of the basic curriculum for all pupils, but it is not a National Curriculum subject. Instead it is a local responsibility of the local Council through its SACRE.

The SACRE advises the Authority on matters relating to collective worship in community schools and on religious education given in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus, which is formally reviewed every five years. With the introduction of Academies, Free Schools and others, the Local Authority has less control. However, research suggests that these schools are adopting the locally agreed syllabus.

Hillingdon is not an unusual SACRE. Over the years Hillingdon SACRE has supported teacher training, using the 'Walk through the Bible' (<http://www.walkthru.org/>) facilitators, and will soon have the GSUS-Live bus (<http://www.gsuslive.co.uk/>) back in the borough. Most of the High Schools have class sets of the Bible, supplied free – an invaluable resource. Since its start, we have reviewed the syllabus regularly, thankfully having a couple of Free Church representatives present.

At Association level, the LBA officers have occasionally tried to audit the Baptist engagement with SACRE and the hope remains that this will encourage those in post and persuade others to engage.

The future of Religious Education in schools as a non-statutory part of the national curriculum is unclear. The pre-2014 documentation includes RE but the more recent curriculum currently being rolled out post-2015 does not mention the place of RE. In 2013 the Church of England warned that the Government has 'no real interest' in religious education. Baptists no longer have a voice (we decided not to have direct representation on the RE Council).

The call is to get involved before the lights are switched off!

RACIAL JUSTICE

Sivakumar Rajagopalan

For myriad reasons racial justice elicits one of the strongest emotional responses, going to the heart of who we are, how we understand ourselves, how we regard the other and how this impacts our thoughts and behaviour. Please, therefore, stop and reflect prayerfully on this before reading on.

This essay notes the key historical moments, traces prevailing mindsets and methodologies, offers my own perspective, suggests future possibilities and offers historical and biblical perspectives for pursuing racial justice.

History

Whilst migrants have been coming to the UK for centuries, the arrival of the *Empire Windrush* on 22 June 1948, carrying several hundred Caribbean migrants, marks a pivotal moment in the rise of multiethnic Britain. Asians, Africans and others have followed. Reception of migrants has always been mixed: those 'from Africa, the Caribbean, India and Asia ... attracted some furious hatred. But it is equally possible to say that in their vexed and stumbling way these islands have been more adaptable than the stereotype of stiff, unyielding John Bull Britishness usually implies.'¹ Murders, protests and the infamous window sign, 'No Irish, No Blacks, No dogs', led in 1965 to the first Race Relations Act. Further legislations followed and in 2010 the Single Equality Act came into force. Sadly white British church attendees of all the long-established denominations behaved much like wider society, offering both welcome and rejection.² London Baptists have been aware of the need to address issues raised by the arrival of different communities for over fifty years.

¹ Winder, Robert, *Bloody Foreigners: The Story of Immigration to Britain*, p.4.

² Gordon-Carter, Glynne, *An Amazing Journey: The Church of England's Response to Institutional Racism*, p.9.

In *London Baptist* (January 1964) the Revd Rodney Collins,³ minister of Willesden Green Baptist Church and LBA President, wrote, 'My intense desire is to see these folk whom I have learned to love take their place in the life of the Association as well as in the local churches – perhaps in that Council Chamber itself.'⁴ On 30 June 1964, on behalf of Kenyon Baptist in Brixton and Willesden Green Baptist, the Association issued a call to Mr M.S. Myrie to come from Jamaica to work with these two churches. By September 1964 he had arrived, been ordained, inducted and commenced work.

In the early 1970s the Baptist Union, Baptist Missionary Society, other denominations and the British Council of Churches considered setting up a Community Relations Unit. The LBA's ad hoc group was to address '... any issues peculiar to London and to maintain liaison with the BU and British Council of Churches Race Relations Unit'.⁵

During 1971 the key concern was the Immigration Bill, which removed the right of Commonwealth citizens to remain in the UK. The LBA, together with other Christian groups, opposed the Bill and encouraged others to. The focus in 1972 was General Idi Amin's expulsion of Asians from Uganda: the LBA Council condemned this and on 9 November called on Baptists 'to do their utmost to make happy reception and resettlement of these refugees'.

From the later 1970s to the early 1980s, racial tensions were palpable within London, particularly over policing. The meeting of the Christian Social Responsibility Committee (CSRC) of 27 October 1977 considered 'alleged harassment of young black people', encouraging letters to the police, the magistrates' association and others with a view to, 'Pressure being brought to bear in the hope of seeing the Suspected Persons Act

³ Throughout this paper I refer to those I personally know and a few others using titles. Whilst in academic papers titles are not used, from my cultural perspective it feels very uncomfortable to me not to use titles, particularly for those who are older than me. Given that I am writing a paper on racial justice, I kindly request that you embrace my cultural sensitivities on this matter.

⁴ Collins, Rodney, 'Tuppence Coloured, Our Responsibility to the West Indians in London', *London Baptist*, January 1964.

⁵ General Purpose and Finance Minutes, 2 September 1971.

repealed'. In 1980 Baptist churches in Harlesden participated in a 'scheme, which would bring local black people and the police together' to improve community relations.⁶

Following the Brixton uprising in April 1981, church leaders, including Mrs Brenda Forward as LBA President, held various meetings with the Metropolitan Police, including Commissioner David McNee. Views were expressed on the cause and how to address the grievances. Mrs Forward reported to Council that a greater level of understanding had been reached and the police suggested further meetings.⁷

In 1985 there were more uprisings around the country, including London, and *Faith in the City* was published. Consequently, other denominations took steps to address racial justice within the church in a systematic and organised manner. The Methodists set up Methodist Leadership in Racism Awareness Workshop (MELRAW) in 1981, appointing Ivan Weekes as Racial Justice Secretary in 1984.⁸ The Catholic Association for Racial Justice was established in 1984. In 1987 the Anglicans appointed Glynn Gordon-Carter as Secretary to the Board for Social Responsibility's Race and Community Relations and its Committee on Black Anglican Concerns. However, Baptist response was much slower.

Two key factors prompted Baptist action. In 1989 after ten years of ministry at Finchley, the Revd Desmond Gordon brought together the small number of black ministers to address their loneliness and isolation. With the Revds Kofi Manful, Rupert Lazar, Cornelius Mereweather-Thompson and others, he formed the Black Ministers' Forum in the mid 1990s. Some black ministers were initially reluctant to join but, having attended a meeting, they found the Forum supportive and helpful. In September 1995 the Revd Peter Wortley, association secretary, attended their third meeting and reported on their intention to be an integral part of the Association. The Forum played an important role lobbying for the appointment of a racial justice co-ordinator.

⁶ Christian Social Responsibility Committee, 22 April 1980.

⁷ LBA Council Meeting, 8 October 1981.

⁸ <http://www.methodist.org.uk/who-we-are/views-of-the-church/racism> (Accessed on 2nd May 2015)

In April 1995 the Revd Frederick George presented a paper and proposal from the BU Social Action Committee proposing the appointment of a racial justice co-ordinator. There was considerable to-ing and fro-ing over funding, remuneration, job description, and whether the individual needed to be a Baptist. The first efforts to appoint failed. Some opposed such an appointment. The Revd George's determined efforts and the Black Forum's consistent lobbying eventually led to the appointment of Mrs Rosemarie Davidson-Gotobed as Racial Justice Co-ordinator on 19 March 1998. She served until Autumn 2001.

The search for a successor began that June. In Summer 2002 an interview was held but no appointment made. Further changes were made: a Regional Minister with responsibility for Racial Justice was favoured, but this went on hold until Home Mission funding could be secured. The Revd Sivakumar Rajagopalan was appointed in May 2003.

Mindset and Methodology

As an institution the LBA has addressed racial justice as ministers and churches have raised issues. It has initiated new approaches in collaboration with various parties and called upon grassroots experience in trying to find ways forward. Different mindsets and methodologies have emerged and evolved.

The prevailing mindset within the LBA, still today, is the need to understand and serve the other by employing personnel, and offering courses, programmes, and conferences to equip and enable ministry and mission. Over time this has found different expressions. One was inviting Mr Myrie from Jamaica and Mr and Mrs Harry from India to serve the Caribbean and Asian communities respectively. In every decade conferences have highlighted different aspects of mission and ministry in a multicultural context. The Revd Myrie's invitation came out of a conference organised by the Revd Collins to address ministry to the Caribbean community.

The significant influx of East African Asians in the early 1970s forced white British Christians and wider society not only to grapple with ethnicity but also with different faiths, cultures and mindsets. This led to a conference in 1974 at Denmark Place Baptist, Camberwell, where both, 'problems in a racially mixed congregation' and

'opportunities in a mixed area were addressed'.⁹ Mrs Davidson-Gotobed organised a similar conference at Alperton Baptist on 1 October 1999.

From 2006-2011 four conferences, three in London and one in Sutton Coldfield, called 'The Gathering' were held in collaboration with the Baptist Union to encourage and equip people for multicultural ministry and mission.

Alongside conferences, training on racial justice matters has been delivered to individual churches, ministers and ministerial students. With churches, both inner-city and suburban, Mrs Davidson-Gotobed and the Revd Sivakumar Rajagopalan sought to deliver a series rather than one-off sessions, better to help people grasp and process the issue.

Local-church ministers have played their part. A number of white British ministers, committed to building multicultural churches, advise against addressing racism directly, saying that English people take offence at being called racist: notions of British justice and fair play make it difficult for them to see themselves as racist. So these ministers promote the missional imperative for racial justice or highlight the injustice of excluding another's God-ordained contribution. Some black ministers take a similar approach. Some white ministers in London and elsewhere have unequivocally confronted racism. Black ministers who confront racism face their own particular challenges.

Personal Perspective

I am a first-generation Indian immigrant from the privileged Hindu Brahmin caste community. My family and I have benefited from unearned caste privilege accrued through several millennia of prejudice and discrimination. Personal witness and practice of prejudice and experience of privilege led me to abandon the Hindu faith, embrace atheism and find Christ at university. This profoundly affects how I address racism, as racism within the church is a replication of the prejudice that led me to abandon Hinduism and a nullification of the gospel of reconciliation.

⁹ Evangelism Committee, 17 September 1973.

I understand and endorse, as helpful ways to embrace a godly inclusive heart towards the other, both the mission imperative for racial justice and the view that excluding others robs us of their God-given contribution. I have learnt from and promoted the work of the Revd Eric Law,¹⁰ who employs Professor Geert Hofstede's *Dimensions of Culture*¹¹ to develop culturally inclusive ways of ministering within a multicultural context. I have shown others how to apply Hofstede's model to biblical interpretation, preaching, teaching and pastoral care. Racial justice is integral to all aspects of ministry: Hofstede and Law enable one to address it from a different perspective.

However, neither when addressing caste prejudice among Hindus and Hindu-background Christians, nor when addressing racism within church and society, do I avoid the need to address these sins directly and openly, because:

- 1) Racism is a sin, the abuse of another made in the image of God, which must be challenged robustly.
- 2) Subtlety allows people to sidestep the issue.
- 3) It is innately unjust for the perpetrators of racism to set the terms on which those they have wronged can challenge them.
- 4) Both within church and society there is a need to disavow people of the idea that racism is what the far right or the murderers of Stephen Lawrence are guilty of.

The fourth point was highlighted by Mrs Davidson-Gotobed in her first report to the LBA Council in March 1999; it remains salient today. She stated, 'racism is more subtle and more institutionalized than popular stereotype and it has hindered spiritual growth, understanding and progression on all sides'. The CSRC's conclusion after the 1981 uprising underlines the church's inability to see racism in its midst: '... race

¹⁰ Law, Eric, *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb – A Spirituality for Leadership in a Multicultural Context*, 1993.

¹¹ <http://geert-hofstede.com/countries.html> (Accessed on 29th May 2015)

relationships ... were felt to be satisfactory in the church but difficult in wider society'.¹²

The title of Barbara Trepagnier's book, *Silent Racism: How Well-Meaning White People Perpetuate the Racial Divide*, hits the nail on the head. Well-meaning whites at the helm of institutions in the US and the UK vehemently eschew the charge of racism yet oversee policies and procedures in criminal justice, education and health which significantly disadvantage the Black and Minority Ethnic communities.¹³

Christians are not immune from this: racist attitudes and practices are present within church life and that of Christian institutions, because we live and absorb the attitudes and behaviour of the society in which we are raised. My parents neither taught me nor encouraged me to practice caste prejudice, yet I recognise that I do. Racism is an integral part of Western society, therefore those born and brought up in British society will absorb and live by the prevailing racist ideology. The BBC series *Child of Our Time*, hosted by Professor Robert Winston, demonstrated this truth. As toddlers, apart from one black child, all the children, black and white, preferred to have white children as their friends and thought that black children would be naughty. The Doll Test from the US makes the same point.¹⁴

London Baptists would make significant progress if we followed Trepagnier's call to abandon the false dichotomy of 'racist' versus 'not racist', and instead accepted that each of us is on a continuum from less racist to more racist. Trepagnier has demonstrated that by becoming

¹² Christian Social Responsibility Committee, 22 April 1980.

¹³ <http://www.irr.org.uk/research/statistics/criminal-justice/> (Accessed 29th May 2015)

<http://www.runnymedetrust.org/news/591/273/Black-students-must-do-better-than-white-students-to-get-into-university.html> (Accessed 29th May 2015)

<http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/Runnymede%20Ethnic%20Inequalities%20Briefing.pdf> (Accessed 29th May 2015)

¹⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkpUyB2xgTM> (Accessed 31st May 2015)

more race aware we can become less racist, and her methods resonate with Christian teaching.¹⁵

Outcomes

There are churches that have made genuine efforts to be inclusive with respect to worship, preaching and teaching, pastoral care, leadership team and mission. Whilst this is more visible in churches located in multicultural contexts, churches in the suburban commuter belt have also taken such steps and continue to do so.

At the institutional level the minutes of LBA committees reveal a much greater level of political engagement in the past than in recent years. This may be partly because overt political campaigning may contravene charity law. I was advised not to use the LBA e-mail database to mobilise LBA ministers and churches against far right parties during the 2010 General Election campaign. In the current political and social climate the LBA ought to reconsider how we can legitimately voice our views.

LBA minutes also reveal that there have always been those who oppose efforts to address the issue. Following the assassination of the Revd Dr Martin Luther King, the LBA President wrote to Mrs King expressing support and prayers. Even a motion to bring this for Council endorsement had a detractor! Working for racial justice has been and always will be difficult, because it is a 'struggle ... against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms' (Ephesians 6: 12).

Both at church and institutional level progress is very slow. It was eight years from my appointment before the annual ministers' conference in 2012 considered race and racism. There were at first divergent views regarding Racial Justice Sunday, but since 2012 an annual LBA-wide Racial Justice Sunday service has been held, and the LBA is committed to doing so until at least 2017.

Over four years ago the question was raised, 'Is the LBA institutionally racist?' Only now is this being appropriately addressed,

¹⁵ Trepagnier, p 108-128.

and hopefully the LBA will be better placed to serve the London Baptist family in a more just and equitable manner.

Future Possibilities

The key thrust has been to understand the other, the Black and Minority Ethnic community. Arising out of my own journey and self-understanding, I have repeatedly encouraged and put forward ways for the white British community to examine and understand their identity in light of their history. St George's Day celebrations in 2012 and 2014 were further steps in this direction. Redeeming and re-imagining white British identity under the Lordship of Christ is critical to racial justice in years to come.

Perspectives for the Perennial Pursuit of Racial Justice

After the November 2007 Baptist Union Council's apology for the Transatlantic Slave Trade and Barack Obama's election as US president in November 2008, intelligent able Baptists were heard saying that we had entered the post-racial era. Professor Bolt's study of Revelation 7 offers a helpful corrective: 'Racism is an endemic, intractable, pervasive and iniquitous social evil that constantly and consistently confronts and challenges the oneness of the human family. Anywhere it seems to have been defeated it reasserts itself.'¹⁶ Bolt's assertion can be substantiated.

On 12 July the Protestants of Northern Ireland celebrate William of Orange's defeat of James II in 1690. The Orange Order march often provokes confrontation with the Catholic Nationalist community. The election of fifty-six Scottish Nationalist MPs to Westminster, the renewed possibility of independence, and the possibility of English votes for English Laws reveal the tensions between the Scots and English. Similarly tensions exist between the English and Welsh. So even within the United Kingdom animosities and historical grievances influence current relationships between the parties. So how and why do we now live in a post-racial era?

¹⁶ Bolt, Cawley, 'Bible Study: Revelation Chapter 7', p 69, in Lotz, Denton (ed.), *Baptists Against Racism*, Baptist World Alliance, 1999.

In Acts 10 Peter breaks Jewish custom by entering a Gentile's home, eating with him and relating to him. It is an extraordinary event. Yet in Galatians 2 Paul had to rebuke Peter for stopping eating with Gentiles because he feared the circumcision group. For Peter it was one step forward, two steps back. Why should it be any different for us?

Human proclivity to sin means that the sin of racism will be a perennial issue. Of course, we must work in step with the Spirit to realize in increasing measure the heavenly picture of Revelation 7: 9, but always mindful of keeping a check on how readily we slip back into old racist attitudes and practices. In every era, within the LBA and wider Baptist family, we must pursue these twin goals for the honour and glory of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

DISABILITY JUSTICE

Faith Bowers

Fifty years ago relatively few people with severe disabilities were seen out and about in society. This was especially true of those with severe learning disabilities, many of whom spent their lives within the enclosed communities of subnormality wards often attached to large mental hospitals. Those with physical and sensory disabilities may in theory have had greater freedom but little was done to make places easily accessible for them. Like the paralysed man in Luke 5, they often had to depend on friends to support or guide them or to hump their wheelchairs up steps.

The Year of the Disabled, 1981, began to draw public attention to this. Since then more children with disabilities have been integrated into mainstream schooling, so others have grown up more familiar with disability than earlier generations. The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) made it illegal to discriminate or exclude on the basis of disability. This had considerable, and often expensive, impact on access to all public buildings, including those of churches. The National Disability Council was replaced in 2000 by the Disability Rights Commission, and the following year the Disability Discrimination Act was extended to the public sector. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (2007) addressed racial equality, equal opportunities and disability rights, particularly in the areas of education, employment, welfare provision and transport, and this was followed by the Equality Act of 2010. As a result of all this and the various aids that have been developed to help people get out and about more, disability is no longer hidden away much of the time.

Churches have generally wanted to respond in a good, pastoral way, doing their best to make people welcome. Aids for the hard of hearing have long been provided in many churches, usually now with a hearing loop system, though these are not always fitted to ancillary halls used for meetings with speakers, and hearing aids still have their limitations in crowded rooms.

How gladly churches have tackled expensive modifications to their premises has often depended on whether they know people in the

congregation who would clearly benefit from better access. Older chapels, especially those on hilly sites, often have a lot of steps and finding somewhere for ramps can be difficult, while lifts are very expensive. Often one has heard grouses that 'We don't have anyone disabled to need it'. Given the extent of disability in the population at large, one wants to ask *why* they do not have the need. Where churches have made their premises readily accessible, their rooms become extra-attractive to outside hirers which can help defray a little of the cost.

What counts most, however, is attitude. It is possible to have impeccable physical access and still make people feel uncomfortable – and equally people who are made to feel welcome can tolerate less than perfect provision. Those with impairments know the limitations imposed on them, but usually there are things they can do and are glad to do. They have more sense of belonging when they too have an active role in the fellowship. Good pastoral care often involves helping people find how they can use their gifts and abilities in Christ's service.

CHURCH FROM A DISABLED PERSPECTIVE

Martin Rainbow

At the age of fifteen I lost my sight and developed epilepsy following brain surgery. Whilst it may have appeared a great loss, in fact it produced a great sense of liberation for me as it enabled me to leave a lot of emotional and physical pain behind me and enabled me to start a new life after I encountered the Lord whilst in intensive care.

I believe my newly-found faith helped me through three tough but very necessary years at a school for the blind before being able to fulfil a long-held ambition of going to university at the age of nineteen. I found myself going to Lewisham, South East London, somewhere I had never heard of before.

In only my second week at college I was invited by some other students to attend a service at a local Baptist church in Crofton Park. Never having been a church-goer, I had absolutely no idea of what to expect. What struck me with most force from the beginning was the welcome I received from a group of people whom I did not know, and a real sense of acceptance. What my time at my special school had taught me was that I had no wish to be treated differently and I longed to get back to mixing with other people.

Following my graduation, I had to make the difficult decision about what to do next. By this time it had become plain to me that, mainly because of my church, Lewisham had become my home from home and so I planned to stay in London.

In due course I felt very privileged to be asked to become a deacon in the church which I did for ten years, followed by three more as a Trustee. Obviously, I could not help to redecorate the church but, as a member of a team supporting the pastor, I could make my contribution through prayer and with ideas.

Although my experience in a Baptist church has been very positive and rewarding, it cannot be denied that widespread wheelchair access and hearing loops by themselves will not draw people with disabilities to our churches. It is a more enlightened attitude among the other church members. I remain convinced that it was the spirit of acceptance and a

sense of respect which I encountered which was instrumental in causing my faith to grow and to remain in the Baptist church.

LEARNING TOGETHER

Sally Murray

One Sunday morning seventeen years ago my husband, a student at Spurgeon's College, had been asked to preach at a Baptist church in Morden, SW London. In the hundred-strong congregation were several adults who had learning difficulties. I was instantly struck by the ease with which this group of people interacted with everyone. How their banter during the service was expected, incorporated and cherished and how comfortable this church was in their mixed ability skin. After the service I made a bee line for Dawn, herself having a learning difficulty, and started quizzing her about her life as part of this church. She straightforwardly told me she enjoyed the Sundays for the singing and meeting up, but Thursdays were her favourite when she met with her peers at a group called 'Learning Together' where the bible was explained in a more accessible (my paraphrase) way...in fact I should come and join them!

Well for the last fifteen years I have done just that and I can wholeheartedly say so much of my growth has come from journeying alongside this incredible group of people. They have taught me grace. Pure, simple grace, how to live a life of simplicity with no grudges, always knowing you will be warmly welcomed. How to worship because you want to and in the way you want to, not ruled by 'what other people might think' or even what the unspoken culture dictates. I have also been challenged to find clearer, simpler, less jargony ways to explain the faith I profess and have been humbled more times than I can say when I have been prayed for by this group and seen God move hurdles out of the way in response. I thank God for those who had the vision to start this specific group and hope we can build on such great foundations and continue 'learning together.'

FIFTY YEARS OF INTERFAITH IN LONDON

A personal reflection

Duncan Struthers

Baptised over forty years ago at the church I still attend in West London, my 'snapshot' of London Baptists and Interfaith is firmly grounded in the local area. Fifty years ago, 'InterFaith' meant ecumenical relations. It took a long church meeting to agree to a formal welcome to the new Anglican minister in a neighbouring church. At that stage, relations with the Roman Catholic Church were a strict no-go.

Churches Together in the area eventually arrived, led by a joint project, presenting everyone in the area with a list of church activities and a copy of Luke. Eventually even some pulpit-exchanges began to emerge. The strap-line of working together for the community, identifying projects better done together than individually, led to limited action – prayer walks, Pentecost services, carol singing. However, signed copies of the Local Ecumenical Partnership eventually were removed from the churches as having served a season, leaving the few regular activities in the hands of those ministers willing to continue earlier traditions.

Outside and inside the church, the demography of West London was changing. In Hillingdon, while churches have been blessed by diversity of worship activities, the growth of minority ethno-based Christian communities, often struggling to find suitable premises, does – or should – leave the 'establishment' challenged. We now have a diversity of governance models within the LBA. Some have strong roots abroad, unable to comprehend that what were and continue to be appalling interfaith relations abroad is not possible in London, with its schools working with classes of over fifty languages and backgrounds. Forty years ago, the local church had at least two services and a full leadership, now no longer the case; many still do not recognise that the buildings no longer serve the majority of the community who either came with their own faith perspectives or, more often, found us exclusive and wanting. This is a hard statement and does not recognise the many ways 'churches' have continued to be centres of community, but is meant to be an honest comment: the 'normal' London Baptist church is now a small church –

thanks to Hilary and her team in helping these continue.

In this context, it is perhaps not surprising that Baptist Inter Faith action has been low key and often unable to move forward from the theological position of seeing all interfaith activity as a God-given opportunity for evangelisation. In the past twenty years, the LBA has held a couple of discussions and there has been a positive response from ministers and others to explore in dialogue, even to the point where it was accepted as an item on the LBA development plan.

Returning to my base, Hillingdon no longer has Borough Deans: the statutory services now want to relate to Inter Faith groups. Hillingdon has over 120 active Christian communities and over twenty of other faiths. Opportunities abound for Baptists to take a leading part: this month (April 2015) included Faith Hustings for the elections, joint Faith in Schools meetings, interfaith school events, induction for new police officers. These bring tensions when trying to identify a sense of purpose within an interfaith setting. Heathrow Airport Limited recognises airport chaplaincy as a given – yet the London Home Mission can only offer 0.5 of a chaplain for the 80,000 employees.

There is divergence and uncertainty, possibly as a result of a lack of leadership and opportunity to explore and learn. At the two extremes are some church leaders who would welcome multi-faith worship, on the other there are those who will not enter a mosque because they feel that, by taking their shoes off, they are worshipping Allah. I think we are a normal family, needing the LBA to be there when we want them, but rarely feeling the need to engage together over challenging issues. InterFaith is one such challenge. Should it be the new 'faith partnership'?

Back at the church – as part of this year's Faith Week – one of the Muslim leaders was invited to a Q&A session as part of our Sunday worship. He spoke about the need for understanding and respect. This was a first and, hopefully, the start of a better dialogue. The next fifty years will bring real challenges for peoples of faith. Can we learn from each other and can we acknowledge the similarities as well as grappling with the differences?

As a footnote, I have deliberately not mentioned scripture which, over the fifty years, has been used and misused in support of every take on this subject.

HOSTAGE! A Personal Memoir Bob Gardiner

On Saturday evening, 26 November 2005, Pat Kember phoned me: her husband, Norman, had been kidnapped in Baghdad. That call began an adventure which led the members of Harrow Baptist Church into uncharted territory. Some was possibly predictable: closer ties with ecumenical partners, particularly Pax Christi, the Fellowship of Reconciliation and other Christian peace pressure groups; closer ties to the Baptist Union whose General Secretary, David Coffey, generously lent us his media advisor, Amanda Allchorn; and, most important and challenging pastorally and theologically, its impact on our relationships with other faiths, especially the close links opened up with the Muslim community in both Harrow and London generally.

On 2 December the Fellowship of Reconciliation held a prayer vigil on the steps of St Martin in the Fields, Trafalgar Square. I and my family found ourselves standing among a small group from the Muslim Association of Great Britain. They soon identified me as Norman's minister. One quietly asked if I wanted one of them to look for Norman in Baghdad – an astonishingly generous and, indeed, dangerous offer. They were insistent: one of them had already arranged to go. He knew Baghdad well and still had family living there. He hoped to ascertain what group was responsible and convince the kidnappers that they had made a frightful mistake, pointing out that the hostages were certainly not lackeys of the Bush/Blair governments and nothing could be gained by Iraqis from holding them. I returned to Harrow with this astonishing news: the Muslim Association was working covertly in Iraq for the hostages' release. I later discovered that already Anas Altikriti, former president of the Muslim Association, had flown to Baghdad and the Muslim Association had published an appeal to the kidnappers.

Soon a video of the hostages was released by the kidnappers, threatening to kill them by a deadline, 9 December. Harrow Baptist Church, advised by the counterterrorism branch of the Foreign Office, published this press statement:

Professor Norman Kember has been held as a hostage in Iraq since Saturday 26/11/05 along with three other peace activists – American Tom Fox, 54, and Canadians James Loney, 41, and Harmeet Singh Sooden, 32. Mr Kember had been working with a Canadian-based organisation, Christian Peacemaker Teams. Norman Kember and Mr Fox have been shown on videos calling for the kidnappers' demands to be met. According to the Arabic TV station al Jazeera a previously unknown militant group, the Swords of Truth Brigade, have claimed the captives were undercover spies working as Christian peace activists. Pat Kember – Norman's wife – has also made moving appeals begging for his release, underlining that Norman and his friends are allies of Iraq. Since the capture of the peace makers Anas Altikriti has been sent to Iraq by the Muslim Association of Britain, Stop the War and CND as an envoy to meet with Sunni Muslim groups in a bid to secure the release of the four men. On 7/12/05 the radical cleric Abu Qatada made an unexpected appeal for the kidnappers to free the men 'in line with the principle of mercy of our religion'. (Abu Qatada, who is being held at Full Sutton jail, near York, had volunteered to be filmed). (8.12.2005).

Late on 7 December, al-Jazeera said the kidnappers had extended the deadline by forty-eight hours.

On 8 December many faiths were represented at a meeting in the Harrow Council Chamber. With leaders of the local mosque and the local rabbi, I led prayers for Norman's release. Councillor Shah told the assembled gathering that the thoughts and prayers of every section of the community were with the hostages and their families. He said:

The multi-cultural, multi-faith, peace-loving community of Harrow is united in expressing its hopes and prayers for the early and safe release of Norman Kember and other hostages. We plead to the Swords of Righteousness Brigade to release Norman Kember, James Loney, Harmeet Singh Sooden and Tom Fox. We can vouch from our experience that Norman, one of our own from Harrow, is a dedicated peace campaigner, a man of God and a man of peace. Release him and allow Norman to continue his mission for peace.

Councillor Shah signed the statement, followed by the Mayor of Harrow, Councillor Paddy Lyne, Harrow Council chief executive, Joyce

Markham, the Revd Robert Gardiner and members of Harrow Interfaith Council. Councillor Shah asked visitors to remember the family and friends of British Muslim pilgrim, Husain Mohammedali, murdered in Iraq in the week Professor Kember was kidnapped.

On 9 December, unexpectedly, the president of the radical Muslim Brotherhood called for the hostages' immediate release. Mohammed Mahdi Akef said: 'In the name of the Muslim Brotherhood worldwide I call for the Western peace activists to be released immediately'. Speaking on al-Jazeera television, Mr Akef said: 'Islam rejects the kidnapping of innocent people regardless of their aim, beliefs and opinion, and all laws locally and internationally consider kidnapping a crime'. He described Mr Kember as an 'innocent peace activist ... known for activity and solidarity for the Iraqi cause'. Mr Akef, whose Muslim Brotherhood organisation was banned in Egypt for alleged support of jihad, said the Christian Peacemaker Team had worked in solidarity with Palestinian people 'against Israeli aggression': 'Such people should be welcomed, not harmed, and their efforts should be endorsed'. Prayers were said for Mr Kember at Finsbury Park mosque in north London, as well as for Iraqi prisoners.

Daily twelve-hour prayer vigils were held in Harrow Baptist Church, many from the community joining members of the church. There were weekly vigils in Trafalgar Square. Often a member of the Muslim community was present. At such a vigil I eventually met Anas Altikriti. He remained confident through the three-month ordeal that Norman was alive. On 6 February a joint press conference was held in the Foreign Press Association, 11 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AJ, covered extensively by al-Jazeera and the world's press. Revd John Rackley (representing the Baptist Union), Bruce Kent (Pax Christi), Anas Altikriti (the Muslim Association) and I (for Pat Kember and Harrow Baptist Church) shared a platform and presented an open letter of concern for the four Christian peacemakers and the thousands of Iraqis held without charge or trial. This was signed by Christians and Muslims,¹⁷

¹⁷ Dr David Goodbourn, General Secretary of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, Revd David J Kerr, President of CTBI, former President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, Revd David Coffey, General Secretary of the

who declared they were aware of the plight of those Iraqis held unjustly

Baptist Union of Great Britain, Rt Revd Malcolm McMahon, National President of Pax Christi and Bishop of RCDiocese of Nottingham, Rt Revd Martyn Jarrett, Anglican Diocese of Beverley, Mairead Corrigan Maguire, Nobel Peace Laureate, co-founder of Peace People, Rt Revd Peter Broadbent, Anglican Bishop of Willesden, Very Revd Nicholas Frayling, The Dean, Chichester Cathedral, Dr M. Aziz Nour, Council of Oriental Orthodox Churches, Dr Daud Abdullah, Assistant Secretary General, Muslim Council of Britain, Rt Revd Edwin Regan, RCBishop of Wrexham Diocese, Anas Altikriti, former President, Muslim Association of Britain, Revd John Rackley, Past-President of Baptist Union of Great Britain, Manvers Street Baptist Church, Bath, Most Revd Bruce Cameron, Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church, Revd Peter Brain, Moderator, North Western Synod of the United Reformed Church, David G. Deeks, General Secretary, British Methodist Church, Revd Robert Gardiner, Harrow Baptist Church, John Humphreys, Moderator, Synod of Scotland, United Reformed Church, Revd Dr Keith Clements, former General Secretary, Conference of European Churches, Rt Revd Derek Rawcliffe, former Bishop of Glasgow, Rt Revd John McOwat, Bishop of the Moravian Church, Rt Revd Colin Scott, Hon. Asst. Bishop of Leicester, Bruce Kent, Vice-President of Pax Christi, Stewart Hemsley, Chair, Pax Christi, Revd Alan Betteridge, President, Baptist Peace Fellowship, Revd Dr Pat Took, London Baptist Association Regional Team Leader, Pamela McDougall on behalf of Quakers – Religious Society of Friends, Scotland, Gillian Collins, Secretary Baptist Peace Fellowship, Chris Cole, Director, Fellowship of Reconciliation England, Christoph Hellmich (Senior), German-speaking Synod of Lutheran, Reformed and United Congregations in Great Britain, Hashir Faruqin, Chief Editor, Impact International on Islamic Affairs, Mary Roe, Chair, Anglican Pacifist Fellowship, the Reverend Baroness Richardson of Calow, Very Revd Antony Lester O'Carm, Prior Provincial, British Province of Carmelites, Revd Dewi Hughes, General Secretary of the Union of Welsh Independent Churches, Most Revd Samuel Ade Abidoye Baba Aladura and Chairman, Cherubim and Seraphim Movement Church Worldwide, Sr Mary Hinde, Provincial, on behalf of the Sisters of the Society of the Sacred Heart, Revd Gethin Abraham-Williams General Secretary, Churches Together in Wales: CYTUN and (Mrs) Denise Abraham-Williams, Revd Beth Torkington, Chair, Western District Moravian Church, Norman Wood, Monifieth, Scotland, Rev Jill Clancy.

in Iraq and the need for justice and human rights to be upheld. It called for the British Government to play its role in ensuring these rights. The letter included these paragraphs:

- Since their abduction on 26th November 2005 religious leaders and religious groups throughout the world have spoken in their support – acknowledging that they are men of nonviolence and urging that they may be released to continue their work for peace and human rights on behalf of the people of Iraq. At this urgent moment in time we wish to reaffirm this support and invite those who hold them to return them to their families.
- At the same time we know that thousands of Iraqis have been held without charge and detained since the war in Iraq began almost three years ago. The practice of detention without charge, sometimes exacerbated by torture and abuse, cannot be allowed to continue as it heightens the level of fear and feeds into a terrible cycle of violence. Just as we are concerned for our brothers with Christian Peacemaker Teams we are also concerned for Iraqi detainees and for their families.
- We long for true peace to be restored to the people of Iraq and we ask our government to do all it can to secure this peace. This must include:
 - clear condemnation of detention without charge and the abuse of prisoners
 - accountability on the part of all UK military personnel for their treatment of prisoners and of the Iraqi people
 - work with the Iraqi authorities to ensure that the highest United Nations human rights standards of treatment and due process for detainees are met. With people of faith throughout the world we pray that we may be united and steadfast in our work for peace for the people of Iraq.

Anas's speech at this event contained the remarkable line that the hostages had not only united people of all faiths but had 'even achieved [the] unthinkable, and united the Muslim community itself'.

We heard that Tom Fox had been killed at the beginning of March. Yet Anas Altikriti remained upbeat at the weekly Trafalgar Square vigil. Obviously he had to be discreet about his sources but he was adamant that Norman was still alive.

News of the release of the three remaining hostages broke on 23 March. On Sunday 26th I received this letter from Shahid Akmal of the Harrow Mosque:

We are grateful to Allah for His mercy that Norman Kember has safely returned home to be re-united with his family and friends and I write to pass on our delight at this wonderful news. The past few months must have been very difficult for Norman's wife, Pat, and their family. We have watched how Pat has conducted herself so gracefully and were touched that in his welcome back speech, Norman specifically remembered the victims of the conflict now raging in Iraq and found words to still speak out against all forms of violence. We give thanks for the release of Norman's other colleagues James Loney and Harmeet Singh Sooden too. Of course we remember with much sadness the needless loss of Tom Fox and the countless other innocents who have perished in this conflict. On behalf of the Muslims of Harrow, my fellow Mosque Executive Members and our Imams, we too welcome Norman back to our community of Harrow. He is truly an example to us all and we pray that his experience, difficult and distasteful though it must have been, will have served to strengthen his resolve to continue his work for peace in the world. We are proud to stand with him in this. He epitomises the verse of the Qur'an which states: 'Closest to the Believers (Muslims) will you find those who say: "We are Christians". For among them are men of learning, men who renounce the world and men who are not arrogant or proud.'

I opened the Sunday morning service at Harrow Baptist Church with this letter and paid tribute to the leaders of other faiths and of none who had united to support a man of peace. This led to an important development: Harrow Baptist Church found itself hosting inter-faith events. I arranged a private lunch in which Anas and another Muslim Association officer met Norman and Pat for the first time. Anas Altikriti agreed to be guest speaker at the annual ecumenical supper held in November 2006 in Harrow Baptist Church, with an invitation extended to members of the local mosque. The *Harrow Observer* reported:

At an inter-faith gathering in Central Harrow Anas Altikriti of the Cordoba Foundation, a former president of the Muslim Association of Britain, spoke on 'Islam, Christianity and the impact of secularism'. His message, delivered with great passion, was that we needed to remember

our basic humanity that binds us all together, people of all faiths and no faith. However, he argued that a society that sidelines religious values of love for neighbour, respect for elders and responsibility for the whole community is in danger of breaking down as we have seen in the alienation of many young people.

After his talk Anas answered questions from the audience. In discussing the present state of Iraq he reminded us uncomfortably that whenever the Iraqi people had sought democracy in the past western powers had interfered to support dictators like Saddam Hussain. The present government in Iraq is seen largely as a puppet of the West with vast amounts of reconstruction funds diverted into private hands. Religion was not a cause of conflict but used as a tool by politicians in seeking their own ends. There was lively debate on the issue of religious schools when Anas argued that secular schools often lost the way on the teaching of moral values.

The meeting on Wednesday 8 November was arranged by the Central Harrow Churches and over 100 people attended at Harrow Baptist Church with representatives of the Central Harrow Churches and local mosques. The meeting closed as the Chair of Churches Together in Central Harrow, Revd Bob Gardiner, joined hands in prayer with Anas Altikriti.

A day conference dealt with issues of mental health and stress caused by war and dislocation, particularly among refugees from violence in the Middle East and Afghanistan. At another meeting visitors from Iraq spoke about the effects of the war on their home communities. This meeting attracted many from the Muslim community. I subsequently served as all-faiths representative on the Harrow town centre forum – not a role I envisaged when I became minister of the Baptist Church in 1998! This continued until my retirement in 2012.

Norman and Pat, Tina, my wife, and I were invited as guests of honour at the Islam Expo at Alexandra Palace in July 2006. Norman addressed a crowd of 1000 people, mostly Muslims, at lunchtime prayers and spoke again at the inaugural meeting of the Cordoba Institute. Norman and I were also invited guests at the second expo at Olympia in 2008, but chose to remain in the audience for the opening ceremony, despite invitations to sit on the platform with Ken Livingstone and others.

The Muslim community now has a very large new mosque in Harrow opposite the civic centre, so no longer needs to meet in other premises

like our church hall. After a spell in Jordan, Anas Altikriti and his family live in Harrow. I like to think that his links with Harrow Baptist Church drew him there. But eight years on from those heady days far less progress has been made in inter-faith dialogue than we hoped, though the need is even greater.

ENDPIECE

Joe M. Kapolyo

Encountering London is a collection of articles published to celebrate the formation of the London Baptist Association (LBA) one hundred and fifty years ago, and particularly to document and reflect on the life of the Association over the past fifty years, 1965-2015.

The first Baptists in Britain gathered for worship in Spitalfields in East London in 1612, some 937 years after the establishment of Christian worship in London at All Hallows by the Tower. Baptists were part of a loose group of 'dissenters' which included Presbyterians and Congregationalists: a movement that arose out of the Reformation. They sought to make religious freedom, along with the separation of Church and State, unavoidable issues for the government of the day and for the Established Church. They were courageous and, as a result, like the Early Church endured much persecution at the hands of the authorities throughout the seventeenth century. They gained a measure of toleration with limited rights from 1689, although they continued to be treated very much as 'second class' citizens through to the nineteenth century.

The London Baptist Association reflects the character of the Church at Antioch (Acts 11:19-30, 13:1-3) in many ways. First, that church was demographically diverse both in leadership and in the congregation. Syrians, North Africans, Jews and Gentiles gathered together to worship in harmony in the name of Jesus, led by a similarly diverse group of people who included an aristocrat, a Jewish Rabbi, an African and a Levite. This fact so impressed the residents of the city of Antioch that they nicknamed them 'the Christ ones', i.e. the ones in whom Christ dwells (Acts 11:26). Second, the church was sensitive to the needs of others. They responded to an urgent call to help alleviate suffering in the church in Judea owing to a widespread famine (Acts 11:29). Third, the church was prayerful. It was while they prayed and fasted that the Lord spoke to them about mission. In response to the directive of the Holy Spirit, the church released Barnabas and Saul to be the centrepiece of world mission in its western expression. Fourth, the church was missional. Not only did they release Barnabas and Saul for their mission

trips, they maintained interest in the challenges brought about by the multicultural nature of their mission. They initiated and co-ordinated the first ecumenical council of Jerusalem to iron out the theologically thorny problem of whether or not circumcision was an integral part of what it means to be people of Christ. The momentous decision arrived at in Jerusalem (Acts 15:19) led to the release of the new Gentile part of the Church from the clutches and potential theological and cultural oppression of the Gentile Church by Judaism.

The development and character of Baptist work in London as celebrated in this volume reflects these features of the early Church at Antioch and therefore sets the stage, as we look to the future, for potential exponential growth of the Church in London, multiplying its impact on the national and worldwide body of Christ.

There are three key words that emerge out of these articles: change, diversity and challenge. Charmaine Howard's poem at the very start captures this beautifully when she says, 'London ... cosmopolitan ... multi-layered and multifaceted ... searching for identity. Lost in a sea of infinite possibility'. The past fifty years have seen unprecedented change in Britain in general and in London in particular. The make-up of the population of London is almost unrecognizable from what it was at the turn of the 1960s, when Harold Macmillan was Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. The arrival of Christians from the Caribbean, Asia, Africa, Latin America and, more latterly, Eastern Europe has changed the face of London and inevitably the face of the Church. London has witnessed the growth of multicultural churches (see the article on Greenford Baptist Church), as well as BME churches both multi and mono-ethnic. A number of other articles give attention to this phenomenon and the challenges it poses, including racism and ethno-centrism (Bowers, Marchant, Rajagopalan, Olofinjana).

Decline, renewal and growth have featured almost in equal measure in Baptist churches during these tumultuous fifty years. The publication in 1965 of Bishop John Robinson's *Honest to God* and the debate that followed divided opinions among ministers within and outside Baptist churches and ultimately seemed to have compromised, in some people's views, basic Christian belief, and therefore helped to accelerate the

decline of the Church (Gouldbourne) as confidence waned in the Scriptures and church structures. Some of the megachurches of past centuries are now just shadows of what they have once been.

But there have also been signs of growth. In the traditional church the development of the Charismatic Renewal Movement (Bowers, Gouldbourne, Andrews) stimulated growth and breathed new life into moribund church structures and programmes. New songs emerged, new ways of worship surfaced, deeper prayer life became evident and, of course, openness to the gifts of the Spirit, sadly along with the inevitable conflicts and schisms where lack of harmony and congruence of ideas and theology persisted.

Another area of real growth has been migration. Immigrants have brought with them new enthusiasm and energy for church planting. Some of the largest Baptist churches in London, Trinity Baptist, West Norwood, Faith Baptist, Manor House, and Calvary Charismatic Baptist in Poplar are among the forty-two churches planted by BME churches and individuals (Rajagopalan). These churches are often led by people from the Southern continents with a real calling to mission in Europe in general and in the United Kingdom in particular (Olofinjana). Baptist numbers have held up over the past fifty years largely because of migration. Sadly, there are still many pockets of the population that are not represented in sufficient numbers within the Baptist churches, such as people from the traditional Muslim countries, the Jewish sector, white working class and marginalised and disenfranchised urban youth. The fields are ripe for harvest, but the workers are few!

Baptists have tended to be 'wary of theological abstraction ... are intuitively pragmatic and involved in doing ... rather than thinking about why and what they are doing' (Gouldbourne). Neither the Charismatic Movement nor the new immigrant sector of the Church have developed new ways of conceptualizing theology. Theology in the main is still an exclusive club (see Kapolyo), reflecting its European roots; it generally only admits those who strive to understand its presuppositions as developed in the theological heartlands of northern Europe and couched in terms that reflect those cultures and the intellectual developments they have undergone over the past five hundred years. Other ways of

conceptualizing theological thought (feminist, womanist, African or Black theology, Asian and Latin American Liberation theology) are grudgingly admitted but not as full members. They are often seen at best as exotic and at worst as deviant. In part this reflects the dearth of theological thinking in and amongst the new immigrant groups (perhaps in their pragmatism theological thinking of the abstract nature is a luxury they can ill afford at the moment). This situation is encouraged by the manner in which Baptists have a way sometimes of unwittingly shirking difficult theological issues by 'hiding' behind the safe screen of the autonomy of the local church. Thus issues of same-sex marriages, other gay and lesbian matters, racism, etc., while being tackled pragmatically, lack in-depth theological thinking that is both bold and challenging. Perhaps as the new cultures engage with the dominant Western cultures in mission there may yet emerge new ways of conceptualizing theology that will release new energies for the advancement of the Kingdom of God and the growth of the Baptist churches in London and beyond. Hope springs eternal!

There is much in this volume to stimulate, instruct, enlighten and occasionally infuriate or antagonise the reader, but always to challenge us to greater reflection on our mission and deeper service to the Lord and his people in the time-honoured tradition of our Baptist forefathers in their commitment to the headship of Christ, the autonomy of the local church under his leadership, the supremacy of the Bible for matters of faith and conduct, the priesthood of all believers, and the sanctity of the conscience of every person under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

*'How good is the God we adore! Our faithful, unchangeable friend ...
We'll praise him for all that is past and trust him for all that's to come.'*¹

¹ Joseph Hart, 1712-68.

OFFICERS

LBA Secretaries

Charles Johnson 1954-66
Gordon Fitch 1966-77
Peter Wortley 1977-2001
Paul Martin 2001-2002

Assistant Secretaries

Gordon Fitch 1962-66
Edgar T.W. Brown 1966-72
Roger Poolman 1972-78

Director for Shared Evangelism

Frank Goodwin 1969-72

Director of Evangelism

Geoff Shattock 1991-1994

Hon. Treasurers

Sir Cyril Black -1976
David Batten 1972-97
Bryan Rogers 1997-2003
Michael Parry 2003-07
Emmanuel Quarshie 2007-
Mrs Sarah King 20 -13
Ms Fola Agunyide 2014-

Chairmen of London Baptist Property Board

L.W.J. Angell 1955-1971
George W. Foss 1971-73
Keith Reader 1973-98
Bryan Rogers 1998-2014
Paul Winchester 2014-

LBPB Trust Officer

Mrs Jackie Penistone 2006-

Youth Work Coordinator

Pete Leveson 2001-10

Metropolitan Area Superintendents

Geoffrey Haden 1961-76
Douglas Sparkes 1976-80
Arthur Thompson 1982-89
Douglas McBain 1989-98
Pat Took 1998-2001

Association Superintendent

Tony Mason 1998-2002

Racial Justice Coordinator

Rosemarie Davidson-Gotobed
1998-2001

Regional Ministers

Pat Took (Team leader) 2002-10
Geoff Andrews (Team Leader)
2011-15
Paul Martin (administration)
2002-15
Tony Mason (church life) 2002
David Shosanya (mission) 2003-
Sivakumar Rajagopalan (racial
justice) 2003-

Home Mission Coordinator

Carol McCarthy 2002-2005

Small Churches Enabler

Hilary Taylor 2007-

Association Administrator and Company Secretary

Norman Kincaid 2010-

BMS Area Coordinators - London

Derek Mucklow -1997
Simon Jones 1997-2003
Chris Andre-Watson 2004-2012

LBA Presidents

1965 Sir Cyril Black
 1966 Revd N. Leslie Stokes
 1967 Revd Arthur Thompson
 1968 Revd Stanley Voke
 1969 Revd Gordon Snelling
 1970 Revd Gordon Snelling
 (Leslie Larwood died before he
 could be inducted as President)
 1971 Mr Arthur Thorn
 1972 Revd Charles W. Becket
 1973 Revd Norman J. Renshaw
 1974 Revd Christopher Steer
 1975 Revd Kenneth J. Witting
 1976 Revd Donald Crane field
 1977 Revd Roger Hayden
 1978 Revd Ken Jarvis
 1979 Revd Reginald C. Dalton
 1980 Revd Arthur Robinson
 1981 Mrs Brenda Forward
 1982 Revd Ray Whitfield
 1983 Revd Hugh Bishop

Moderators of the Board of Directors

Colin Hicks 2002-2006
 Lauraine Everett 2006-2008
 Faith Bowers 2008-2010
 Malcolm Johnston 2010-2012
 John Grant 2012-

1984 Revd Malcolm Goodspeed
 1985 Revd Trevor Davies
 1986 Revd Humphrey Vellacott
 1987 Revd Harry Young
 1988 Mr Kenneth W. Bennett
 1989 Revd Peter E. Purkiss
 1990 Revd Christopher M. Lee
 1991 Revd Douglas Hollidge
 1992 Revd David W. Doonan
 1993 Revd V. Frederick George
 1994 Revd Martin Smith
 1995 Mr John Westbury
 1996 Revd Michael Nicholls
 1997 Revd Paul Jackson
 1998 Revd Clive Doubleday
 1999 Revd Colin Sedgwick
 2000 Revd John Taylor
 2001 Revd Cornelius
 Mereweather-Thompson
 2002 Revd Reg Craig elected,
 but new structures ended the
 presidency

BUGB Presidents from London

1972 Revd J.J. Brown
 1975 Revd Stanley A. Turl
 1980 Dr Stanley G. Browne
 1984 Revd Frank Cooke
 1988 Revd Colin Marchant
 1998 Revd Douglas McBain
 2001 Revd Peter Wortley
 2002 Revd Dr Nigel Wright
 2011 Revd Dr Pat Took

INDEX

- Abbey Road Missionary School 24
 Abdelmassih, Wagih 32
 Abiola, Olu 143
 Abraham-Williams, Gethin 274
 Abraham-Williams, Denise 274
 Action in Mission (AIM) 29, 56
 Adeboye, Enoch 144
 Adejobi, Oluwole 143
 Adjem, Yaw 144
 Adzam, Kwame 206
 Africa/Africans 6, 11, 15, 31, 32, 37,
 46ff, 52f, 68ff, 105, 107, 117ff,
 126ff, 136ff, 163ff, 203ff, 216ff,
 245, 254ff
 Africa-Caribbean Evangelical Alliance
 40
 African Initiated Churches (AICs)
 137f, 143, 203
 Agbesanwa, Tade 50
 Age Action Year 26
 Agonyide, Fola 283
 AIDS 41
 Airport Revival Church 12
 Akef, Mohammed Mahdi 272
 Akindayomi, Josiah 143
 Akmal, Shahid 275
 al-Jazeera 271f
 Aladura International Church 143, 273
 Albany Park Baptist Church 44, 155ff,
 159, 160
 Aldersbrook 113
 Alliston, Geraldine vii
 All Nations College vi
 All Nations Church 13
 All Saints, Wearmouth 139
 All Souls, Langham Place 60
 All-age Sunday schools 21, 23
 Allchorn, Amanda 270
 Alperton Baptist Church 19, 258
 Alpha courses 23, 30, 211
 Altikriti, Anas 270ff
 Amess, Robert 241
 Amin, Idi 255
 Amoako-Atta, Raphael 206
 Anderson, Alan 136
 Andre-Watson, Chris 35, 283
 Andrews, Geoff vi, xv, 35, 60ff, 157,
 168ff, 283
 Angell, Leslie 283
 Anglicans (*see also* Church of England)
 61, 116, 120ff, 237ff, 256, 268
 Antonio, Neemias 50
 Apology for the Transatlantic Slave
 Trade 32f, 70, 139ff, 237ff, 262, 268
 Apostolic Church Great Britain 138,
 140
 Apostolic Faith Church 138
 Appiagyei, Kingsley 11, 31, 47, 107,
 144, 205f
 Archbishop's Commission on
 Evangelism 23, 239
 Arnott Road Baptist Church 98
 Ashurst Drive Baptist Church 21
 Asia/Asians 6, 11, 13, 32, 45, 48, 74,
 126, 136, 166, 203, 205, 207, 218,
 254, 255, 257
 Ashimolowo, Matthew 143
 Assemblies of God Great Britain 138,
 207
 Asylum 42
 Atlanta, Georgia 179
 Aung Aung Shwe 37
 Azusa Street Revival 53, 137ff
 Balchin, John 241
 Balham Baptist Church 24, 26, 250
 Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (1982)
 240
 Baptist Advisory Committee on Church
 Relations (ACCR) 238f, 241f
 Baptist Assemblies 17, 29, 62, 185,
 241f

LBA Presidents

1965 Sir Cyril Black
 1966 Revd N. Leslie Stokes
 1967 Revd Arthur Thompson
 1968 Revd Stanley Voke
 1969 Revd Gordon Snelling
 1970 Revd Gordon Snelling
 (Leslie Larwood died before he
 could be inducted as President)
 1971 Mr Arthur Thorn
 1972 Revd Charles W. Becket
 1973 Revd Norman J. Renshaw
 1974 Revd Christopher Steer
 1975 Revd Kenneth J. Witting
 1976 Revd Donald Cranefield
 1977 Revd Roger Hayden
 1978 Revd Ken Jarvis
 1979 Revd Reginald C. Dalton
 1980 Revd Arthur Robinson
 1981 Mrs Brenda Forward
 1982 Revd Ray Whitfield
 1983 Revd Hugh Bishop

Moderators of the Board of Directors

Colin Hicks 2002-2006
 Lauraine Everett 2006-2008
 Faith Bowers 2008-2010
 Malcolm Johnston 2010-2012
 John Grant 2012-

1984 Revd Malcolm Goodspeed
 1985 Revd Trevor Davies
 1986 Revd Humphrey Vellacott
 1987 Revd Harry Young
 1988 Mr Kenneth W. Bennett
 1989 Revd Peter E. Purkiss
 1990 Revd Christopher M. Lee
 1991 Revd Douglas Hollidge
 1992 Revd David W. Doonan
 1993 Revd V. Frederick George
 1994 Revd Martin Smith
 1995 Mr John Westbury
 1996 Revd Michael Nicholls
 1997 Revd Paul Jackson
 1998 Revd Clive Doubleday
 1999 Revd Colin Sedgwick
 2000 Revd John Taylor
 2001 Revd Cornelius
 Mereweather-Thompson
 2002 Revd Reg Craig elected,
 but new structures ended the
 presidency

BUGB Presidents from London

1972 Revd J.J. Brown
 1975 Revd Stanley A. Turl
 1980 Dr Stanley G. Browne
 1984 Revd Frank Cooke
 1988 Revd Colin Marchant
 1998 Revd Douglas McBain
 2001 Revd Peter Wortley
 2002 Revd Dr Nigel Wright
 2011 Revd Dr Pat Took

INDEX

Abbey Road Missionary School 24
 Abdelmassih, Wagih 32
 Abiola, Olu 143
 Abraham-Williams, Gethin 274
 Abraham-Williams, Denise 274
 Action in Mission (AIM) 29, 56
 Adeboye, Enoch 144
 Adejobi, Oluwole 143
 Adjem, Yaw 144
 Adzam, Kwame 206
 Africa/Africans 6, 11, 15, 31, 32, 37,
 46ff, 52f, 68ff, 105, 107, 117ff,
 126ff, 136ff, 163ff, 203ff, 216ff,
 245, 254ff
 Africa-Caribbean Evangelical Alliance
 40
 African Initiated Churches (AICs)
 137f, 143, 203
 Agbesanwa, Tade 50
 Age Action Year 26
 Agonyide, Fola 283
 AIDS 41
 Airport Revival Church 12
 Akef, Mohammed Mahdi 272
 Akindayomi, Josiah 143
 Akmal, Shahid 275
 al-Jazeera 271f
 Aladura International Church 143, 273
 Albany Park Baptist Church 44, 155ff,
 159, 160
 Aldersbrook 113
 Alliston, Geraldine vii
 All Nations College vi
 All Nations Church 13
 All Saints, Wearmouth 139
 All Souls, Langham Place 60
 All-age Sunday schools 21, 23
 Allchorn, Amanda 270
 Alpertown Baptist Church 19, 258
 Alpha courses 23, 30, 211
 Altikriti, Anas 270ff
 Amess, Robert 241
 Amin, Idi 255
 Amoako-Atta, Raphael 206
 Anderson, Alan 136
 Andre-Watson, Chris 35, 283
 Andrews, Geoff vi, xv, 35, 60ff, 157,
 168ff, 283
 Angell, Leslie 283
 Anglicans (*see also* Church of England)
 61, 116, 120ff, 237ff, 256, 268
 Antonio, Neemias 50
 Apology for the Transatlantic Slave
 Trade 32f, 70, 139ff, 237ff, 262, 268
 Apostolic Church Great Britain 138,
 140
 Apostolic Faith Church 138
 Appiagyei, Kingsley 11, 31, 47, 107,
 144, 205f
 Archbishop's Commission on
 Evangelism 23, 239
 Arnott Road Baptist Church 98
 Ashurst Drive Baptist Church 21
 Asia/Asians 6, 11, 13, 32, 45, 48, 74,
 126, 136, 166, 203, 205, 207, 218,
 254, 255, 257
 Ashimolowo, Matthew 143
 Assemblies of God Great Britain 138,
 207
 Asylum 42
 Atlanta, Georgia 179
 Aung Aung Shwe 37
 Azusa Street Revival 53, 137ff
 Balchin, John 241
 Balham Baptist Church 24, 26, 250
 Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (1982)
 240
 Baptist Advisory Committee on Church
 Relations (ACCR) 238f, 241f
 Baptist Assemblies 17, 29, 62, 185,
 241f

- Baptist Board 25
 Baptist Church House, Holborn 28, 107, 109
Baptist Directory 12
 Baptist Housing Association 110
 Baptist Insurance 109f, 154
 Baptist Listed Buildings Advisory Committee 100
 Baptist Men's Movement (BMM) 17
 Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) 18, 35, 110f, 156, 204, 255
 Baptist Student Federation 237
Baptist Times 9, 28, 112
 Baptist Union Corporation 81, 87, 100
 Baptist Union of Great Britain ix, 10, 15ff, 20, 23ff, 26, 28f, 31f, 34ff, 50, 56f, 62, 83, 105, 108ff, 114f, 119, 121f, 147, 156ff, 164, 177, 185, 187, 204, 206, 222, 237ff, 240, 242, 255ff, 262, 270, 272f
 Doctrine and Worship Committee 240ff
 Home Mission 19f, 32f, 35f, 39, 108, 156f, 257, 269
 Home Work Fund 19
 Baptist Women's League (BWL) 17
Baptists and Unity 238
 Barker, Paul vii
 Barking 33f
 Baptist Church 50
 Tabernacle 112
 Barlow, Frank 71
 Barnard, L.R. 24
 Barnet 33f
 Barratt, T.B. 139
 Barrett, David 136
 Barth, Karl 71
 Bartleman, Frank 138
 Batten, David 283
 Battersea Baptist Church 17
 Beasley-Murray, Paul 63
 Beasley-Murray, George R. 114, 174
 Beaumont, John 108f
 Beazley, David 50
 Bebbington, David 177
 Becket, Charles W. 284
 Beckford, Robert 76f
 Benin, Nigeria 207f
 Bennett, Dennis 60
 Bennett, Kenneth 284
 Bethel Portuguese Fellowship 12
 Betteridge, Alan 273
 Bevan Park Baptist Church 113
 Bexley 33, 35, 250
 Trinity Church 250
 Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) 91
 Birmingham 110, 204, 246
 Biserica Romana Baptista 12f
 Bishop, Hugh 284
 Black, Sir Cyril MP 15, 239, 283, 284
 Black, Don 25, 29
 Black, Edna 113
 Blackheath and Charlton Baptist Church 248
 Blackwood, Datha 144, 207
 Blades, Keith 19
 Blakeborough, Eric 8
 Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church vi, viii, 28, 30ff, 35f, 98f, 110, 111, 113, 115, 179, 183, 192f, 196f, 237, 240, 242f, 251
 Blyth, Myra, née Findlay 113
 Boddy, Alexander A. 139f
 Bogle, Ira 51
 Bolt, Cawley 262
 Bonhoeffer, Dietrich 71
 Bonny Downs Baptist Church 8, 12, 14, 38, 249
 Booth, William and Catherine 163
 Born Again Christ Healing Church 143
 Borough deans 18, 30, 269
 Borough Road 33
 Bosch, David J. 172
 Bostridge, Carol vii
 Bow 12
 Bowers, Brian vi, xv, 97ff, 153ff

- Bowers, Faith vi, xv, 15ff, 28ff, 111ff, 147, 237ff, 243, 264f, 284
 Boys' Brigade 5, 216
 Brady, Stephen 179
 Brandham, John 25
 Brandon Baptist Church, Camberwell 8f
 Breakthrough programme 40
 Brem-Wilson, Kwame 139f
 Brent 33f
 Brethren 19
 Briggs, John 241
 Bristol Baptist College 113, 124, 205
 Britannia Village, Royal Docks
 Community Church 12f, 38, 115
 British Council of Churches (BCC)
 16, 25, 237ff, 240ff, 255
 British Youth for Christ 237
 Brixton 9, 12, 18, 27, 31, 256
 Kenyon Baptist Church vi, 35, 249, 255
 Broadmead Baptist Church, Woodford 24
 Brock, William 163
 Brockley Baptist Church ix, 144, 205, 222
 Bromley 34
 Baptist Church 35
 Brown, Edgar 16, 283
 Brown, Bishop Eric 140
 Brown, J.J. 284
 Browne, Stanley G. 284
 Brownhill Road Baptist Church, Catford 24
 Buhari, Amie vii
 Buxton, Thomas Fowell 70
 CAFOD 243ff
Called to be One (1996) 242
 Calvary Charismatic Baptist Church 12, 31, 52, 144, 206, 209
 Calvary Church of God in Christ 142, 206
 Camberwell 8f, 26, 207, 257
 Camden 33f, 111, 251
 Campus Crusade for Christ 57
 Canary Wharf 12
 Cann Hall and Harrow Green Baptist Church, Leytonstone x, 32, 115
 Canning Town 210
 Canonbury Baptist Church 21
 Capital Radiate 41
Capital Vision 29ff, 40
 Carey Court, Camberwell 26
 Caribbeans 6, 11, 18, 21, 37, 40, 43, 45ff, 51, 70, 76, 107, 117f, 126ff, 136, 140ff, 203, 205, 216ff, 254, 257
 Carter, Glynn Gordon 256
 Castle, Fiona 30
 Celestial Church of Christ 143
 Cerullo, Maurice 23
 Chalk Farm Baptist Church 115, 249
 Chalke, Steve 41
 Chaplains/chaplaincy 8, 36f, 40f, 189ff, 242f, 269
 Charismatic Movement/charismatics 3, 10, 13, 19, 52, 57, 60ff, 136, 140f, 203ff, 237, 240f
 Charities Acts (1960, 1992, 1993) 80, 109
 Chatsworth Baptist Church 47, 115
 Chelsea 33f
 Manna Church 10, 12, 29
 Cherubim and Seraphim Church 143, 273
 Chester, Timothy 169
Children and Communion 24
 Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) 143
 Christchurch and Upton 41
 Christenson, Evelyn 28
 Christian Aid 163, 243ff
 Christian Life City 142
 Christian Peacemaker Teams 271ff
 Christian Unions 237
 Christians Against Poverty 252
 Christine, Stuart 37
 Christology controversy 17, 57, 59, 239
 Church Growth Movement 240

- Church of England (*see also*
Anglicans) 38, 115, 193, 204, 237ff,
243, 253
- Church of God Cleveland TN 138
- Church of God in Christ (COGIC)
138, 142
- Church of God in Christ, USA 142
- Church of Pentecost 5, 140
- Church of God of Prophecy 142
- Church of the Lord *Aladura* 140, 143
- Churches Action on Poverty 41
- Churches of Christ 238
- Churches Together in Britain and
Ireland (CTBI) 58, 241, 243, 273
- Churches Together in England (CTE)
140, 241
- Churches Together in Westminster
242
- Churches Unity Commission 239f
- Citizens Advice Bureaux 7, 252
- City Temple 240
- Clapham Baptist Church (CBC) vii,
22, 228ff
- Claremont Baptist Church,
Cricklewood 19
- Cleal, Clifford 25
- Clements, Keith 273
- Clementswood Baptist Church, Ilford
179
- Cliff College 205
- Coffey, David 241f, 270, 272
- Coleman, Kate Owusua 115, 117, 206
- Colliers Wood Baptist Church 11, 182
- Collins, Elizabeth 51
- Collins, Gillian 273
- Collins, Rodney 44, 51, 113, 255, 257
- Colvin, Clifford 109
- Colwell, John 147, 150
- Community festivals 158, 211ff, 212
- Cone, James Harvey 70, 73ff
- Conference of British Missionary
Societies 237
- Congregationalists 237f
- Conservative Baptist missionaries, USA
13
- Cook, Stuart 9, 27
- Cooke, Frank 22, 239, 284
- Cordoba Foundation 275
- Cotterell, Cliff 11
- Craig, Reg 35, 284
- Cranbrook Road Baptist Church 21
- Cricklewood Baptist Church 19, 187
- Critchlow, DC Ian 249
- Crofton Park Baptist Church vii, ix,
205, 249, 266
- Croham Road Baptist Church 250
- Crossing London ix, 213
- Croydon 34f, 42, 101, 113, 142
- Custom House Baptist Church, Canning
Town 11f, 22, 32, 50, 165f
- Czech Republic 144
- Dag, Nosa 50
- Dagenham 34
- Dalston and Salters Hall Baptist Church
13, 113
- Dalton, Reginald C. 284
- Davidson-Gotobed, Rosemarie 35,
257ff, 283
- Davies, Arthur 25
- Davies, Trevor 284
- Days Lane Baptist Church 155
- Deaconesses 16, 20, 111ff, 192
- Debt 29, 142, 245ff, 252
- Delta courses 209
- Denmark 144
- Denmark Place Baptist Church,
Camberwell 257
- Denominational Consultation (1996) 57
- Didcot 28, 110
- Disability Discrimination Acts
(1995/2001) 264
- District Ministers 13, 34, 147, 157
- Docklands 10, 12, 22, 33, 38, 115, 144,
239
- Doonan, David W. 284
- Doubleday, Clive 30, 31, 284

- Dowley, Roger 8, 107
- Dowley, Ruth 8
- Downs Chapel, Hackney 20, 42, 237
- Drummond Street 28
- Duke Street Baptist Church,
Richmond 241
- Dutch Reformed Church 73
- E1 Community Church 11
- Ealing 33f
- Earlsfield Baptist Church 245
- East Barnet Baptist Church 21, 30, 99
- East Ham 8, 11ff, 38
- East London Tabernacle 5, 8, 179
- East Plumstead Baptist Church 206
- East Street, Walworth 98
- Easter Prayer Walk 177
- Ecumenical Prayer Initiative 243
- Edinburgh 246
- Edmonton Baptist Church vi
- Edwards, Joel 176
- Eglise Baptiste Francophone de
Londres, Clapham 12
- Elim Pentecostal Church 138
- Eltham Council of Churches 239
- Eltham Park Baptist Church 9, 248
- Elwyn, Thornton 8, 36, 41
- Emmanuel Baptist Church,
Thamesmead 41
- Encounter in London* xv, 47, 97, 221
- Enfield 33f
- Equality and Human Rights
Commission (2007) 264
- Equipped to Teach* 23
- Escobar, Samuel 170
- Essex Baptist Association 38
- Europe/Europeans 13, 17, 26, 30, 41,
48, 68f, 71, 74, 77, 82, 126, 143,
166, 203f, 206f
- Evangelical Coalition for Urban
Mission (ECUM) 7f, 10
- Evangelical Urban Training Project 7f
- Evangelicals for Racial Justice 7, 41
- Evangelism Explosion* 23, 57
- Evangelism Outreach* 23
- Everett, Lauraine 284
- Evans, Heather 41
- Ewing, J.W. 112
- Excel Centre 12, 144
- FAB (Fellowship of Anxious Baptists)
241
- Facebook 94
- Fairmile Consultation 241
- Fairtrade Foundation 245
- Faith and Order Conference,
Nottingham (1964) 238
- Faith Baptist Church, Manor House 31,
37, 144
- Faith in the City* 10, 38, 241, 256
- Faith Temple 13
- Fellowship of Baptist Churches for
Covenanting 240
- Fellowship of Reconciliation 270
- Finchley Baptist Church 21, 256
- Findlay, Myra 113
- Finsbury Park Mosque 272
- Fitch, Gordon 5, 16f, 16, 20, 108, 238
- Five Core Values 56
- Foodbanks vii, xi, 13, 142, 186, 247ff
- Forest Gate 6, 7, 11
- Forward, Brenda 15, 28, 39, 107, 178,
256, 284
- Forward, Ernest M. 216
- Forward in Faith Ministries
International 140
- Foss, George 283
- Fountain Trust 60f, 237
- Foursquare Gospel Church 138
- Fox, Tom 271ff
- Frampton Park Baptist Church 8
- Francis, Bishop John 142
- Fransch, Celia 205
- Fransch, William 204f
- Free Church Federal Council 40, 192,
242
- Free Churches 21, 37, 40, 115, 193,
237, 242f

- Joint Public Issues Team 247
 Fresh Streams 63
 Frittlestock Baptist Church, Devon 205
 Frontier Youth Trust 7
 Frost, Andy 213
 Fuller, Joseph Jackson 204
 Fund for London 33
- G8 summit meetings 246f
 Gambah, Kwasi viii, 206
 Gardiner, Robert viii, 270ff
 Gathering, The 32, 258
 Gaukroger, Steve 242
 George, V. Frederick 20, 205f, 257, 284
 Ghana 11, 14, 75, 139, 205f, 208
 Ghana Christian Support Group 31
 Gillingham Baptist Church, Kent 60, 62, 67
 Girls' Brigade 5, 21, 216
 Global Day of Prayer 57
 Goodbourn, David 272
 Goodliff, Paul 147
 Goodridge, Mark 142
 Goodspeed, Malcolm 284
 Goodwin, Frank 6, 23, 283
 Gordon, Desmond 21, 48, 205, 256
 Gordon-Carter, Glynn 256
 Gouldbourne, Ruth viii, 115
 Graham, Billy 6, 23, 91, 169, 178, 237
 Grant, John xii, 187, 284
 Grantham Gospel Mission 13
 Great Banquet (1995) 30
 Greater London Authority 34
 Greater London Churches Consultative Group (GLCCG) 239
 Greater London Council (GLC) 15f, 22, 25f, 34, 238f
 Greater Faith Ministries 143
 Green, Laurie 197
 Green, Lynn xi
 Green Shoots grants 158
- Greenford Baptist Church *cover*, x, 216ff
 Greenleaf Baptist Church, Walthamstow 11
 Greenwich 33f
 Griffiths, Alan 8
 Griffiths, Terry 8
 Grove Centre Church, Sydenham 100, 102
Grow and Go 23
 Guides 5
- Hackney 33f
 Haden, Geoffrey 16f, 17, 20, 239, 283
Half the Denomination 38, 181
 Hamilton, Bishop Lennox 143
 Hammersmith & Fulham 33f
 Hammersmith Hospital 238
 Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church 100
 Hampton and Richmond Football Club 201f
 Hampton Baptist Church vii, 202
 Hampton Wick Baptist Church 113
 Haringey 33f, 41
 Harlesden Baptist Church ix, 32, 165
 Harlington Baptist Church 25, 50
 Harmondsworth 39
 Harper, Michael 60f
 Harris, Doris 109
 Harrow 33f, 270ff
 Baptist Church viii, 270ff
 Mosque 275
 Harry, Mr and Mrs (from India) 257
 Hartford, Conn., USA 204
 Harvest Rock Community Church 13
 Haven Green Baptist Church, Ealing 24, 26
 Hayden, Roger 26, 284
 Hayes and Harlington Baptist Church 50
 Heal Our Land (Sara Nossa Terra) 12
 Heap, Stephen viii, 36, 196f
 Hearn, Michael 8

- Heath Street Baptist Church, Hampstead 112f
 Heathrow Airport vii, x, 37, 194f, 269
 Hebe Foundation vii, 227ff
 Henderson, K.R. 118
 Henry, Carl 169
 Henstock, Lyn 113
 Henstock, Paul 113
 Hertfordshire Baptist Association 83
 Heythrop College 112
 Hibbert, Barrie 197
 Hicks, Colin viii, 284
 High Leigh Conference Centre 25
 High Road Baptist Church, Ilford 99
 Hill, Clifford 44
 Hill, Steve 11
 Hillingdon 33f, 268f
 Hillingdon Park Baptist Church x
 Hindus 193, 214, 258
 Hofstede, Geert 259
 Holiday Bible Clubs 24
 Hollenweger, Walter 141
 Hollidge, Douglas 11, 21, 284
 Holmes, Steve 243
 Holy Trinity Brompton 140
Honest to God 15, 56
 Hope Street Baptist Church, Highgate, Birmingham 204
 Hopkins, Miss J. 113
 Horwood, Dennis 7
 Hough, John 25
 Hounslow 33f
 Howard, Charmaine viii, 1, 33
 Hoxton Baptist Church 24
 Hudson-Roberts, Wale 32, 35
 Hume, Basil, Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster 242
- Ichthus Christian Fellowship 10f, 207
 Igreja Baptista De Londres 12
 IHOPE - International House of Prayer and Encouragement 13
 India/Indians 14, 31, 70, 74, 138, 216, 254, 257f
- Ingram, Charlie 38
 Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) 40
 Inter-Church Process (ICP) 235, 241
 International Central Gospel Church 140
 International Congress on World Evangelisation, Lausanne (1974) 170
 International Monetary Fund 245
 International Praise Centre 13
 Iraq 42, 270ff
 Irukwe, Agu 144
 Isaac, Les 249
 Isaacs, Marie 112f
 Isle of Dogs 12
 Islam 26, 40, 272, 275f
 Islington 33f
- Jackson, Paul 284
 Jamaica/Jamaicans 18, 51, 76, 138, 204, 255, 257
 James, Barbara 31
 James, Pete viii, 37, 41
 James, Stephen 31
 Janes, Mark 209
 Jarman, Margaret 113
 Jarvis, Kenneth 180, 284
 Jesus House 140, 144
 Jews 71, 73f, 172, 193, 263
 John Bunyan Baptist Church, Kingston upon Thames 41f, 113
 John Clifford Society 237
 John Street Baptist Church, Holborn 111
 Johnson, Charles xv, 16, 21, 97, 283
 Johnson, Thomas L. 204
 Johnston, Malcolm 284
 Jones, Simon 35, 283
 Jones, Tim viii
 Joslin, Roy 9
 Jowett, John H. 168
 Jubilee Campaigns 29, 245ff, 246
- Kaleidoscope Project 41f

- Kalilombe, P. 68
 Kapolyo, Joe vi, xv, 147, 176
 Karunaratna, Charles 21
 Keep Sunday Special campaign 29
 Kember, Norman 270ff
 Kember, Pat 270ff
 Kensington and Chelsea 33f
 Kent Baptist Association 38
 Kent, Bruce 272
 Kidbrooke 38
 Kilpin, Jim 11
 Kilpin, Juliette 11
 Kincaid, Norman xv, 35, 158, 283
 King, Martin Luther Jr 15, 54, 75, 261
 King, Ivan 152
 King, Sam 44
 King, Sarah 283
 King's College London 112, 196f
 King's Cross Baptist Church 21, 37, 41, 112
 Kingston upon Thames 34f
 Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC) 141, 143
 Kleissner, Moira 183
 Knight, Bryant 19
 Korea/Koreans 12, 31, 138, 203
 Kwangmyung Presbyterian Church 203
 Kosovo 42

 La Philadelphie 47
 Lambeth 11, 34f
 Landels, William 163
 Larwood, Leslie 284
 Latin America *see* South America
 Latymer Christian Centre 40
 Lausanne Covenant 170f
 Law, Eric 259
 Lawrence Hall 7
 Lawrence, Neville 218
 Lazar, Rupert 256
 Lee, Christopher M. 284
 Leveson, Pete viii, 35, 41, 283

 Lewin Road Baptist Church, Streatham 29
 Lewisham 34, 266
 Leyton 8
 Lighthouse, Bow 8
 Link Church 50
 Littledale, Richard ix
 Liturgical Movement 257
 Living-Taylor, Maria 112
 Livingstone, Ken 276
 Local Ecumenical Projects/Partnerships (LEPs) 8, 239, 243, 268
 London Arabic Evangelical Church 12
 London Baptist 17, 19, 21, 24f, 28, 62, 99, 238f
 London Baptist Association *passim*
 Aid Fund 16
 Assemblies 17, 19, 27ff, 110
 Barnabas Fund 157
 Black/Black and Asian Ministers' Forum 32, 48, 51, 256f
 Board of Directors 35, 48, 185, 212
 Children's holidays 24, 24
 Citizenship Committee 6, 26
 Community Relations Group
 Continental Liaison Representative 17
 Council 16f, 19f, 22, 29, 35, 45, 52, 113, 239, 255f
 Director of Evangelism 40
 Education Committee 16f, 23f
 Evangelism Committee 6, 23, 39, 53, 107
 General Purposes and Finance Committee (GP&F) 16
 Grants Committee 16
 Groups 16, 34f
 Inner London Committee 8, 38, 47, 239
 Metropolitan Area Committee 20
 Ministerial Recognition Committee 37, 113, 205, 209, 213
 Mission Strategy Forum 209, 212f
 Mission Partnership Funding 213

- New Century Fund 21, 98
 Shared Evangelism Project 6, 23
 Small Church Enabler 39, 185
 Social Responsibility Committee 17, 25, 41f, 255, 259
 Women's Work Committee
 Youth Council/Youth Forum ix, 25
 Youth Work Coordinator 221, 226
 London Baptist Men's Luncheon Club 17
 London Baptist Preachers' Association 17, 24, 39, 186
 London Baptist Property Board (LBPB) vi, 16, 35, 108f, 153, 155, 158
 Trust Officer 35
 London Bible College/London School of Theology 220
 London Eye 243
 London Link 28
 London City Airport 12
 London Spanish-speaking Baptist Church, Norwood 12, 37, 115
 Loney, James 271ff
 Los Angeles 53, 137, 139
 Luther, Ann 22
 Lutterodt, Philip ix
 Lutyens, Edwin 100
 Lyne, Paddy 271

 Macedonia 30f
 Mahon, Dave 144
 Mahon, Michele ix, 117ff, 144
 Maile, John 179
 Mainstream 63
 Major Road Baptist Church, Stratford 8, 13, 30
 Make Poverty History Campaign 29, 244
 Malcolm, Bishop Wayne 142
 Mandela, Nelson 77
 Manful, Kofi 31, 144, 256
 Mann, Dave 38
 Mann, Sally 38

 Manna Ministries 64
 Manor Park Baptist Church 11
 Marchant, Colin ix, 5ff, 22, 25, 43f, 47, 107, 209, 284
 Markham, Joyce 271
 Marsh, Penny 38, 115
 Martin, Paul ix, 7f, 32, 35, 37, 50, 105, 147, 157f, 283
 Mason, Rex 24
 Mason, Tony 7f, 34f, 108, 158, 183
 Mayor of London 34, 177
 McBain, Douglas 10, 29ff, 30, 60f, 63f, 91, 108, 156f, 241f, 283, 284
 McCarthy, Carol 35, 115, 283
 McNee, Sir David 41, 256
 Meadows, Peter 65
 Memorial Baptist Church/Memorial Community Church, Plaistow ix, 5, 11, 14, 42, 209ff
 Mereweather-Thompson, Cornelius ix, 32, 256, 284
 Merton 34f
 Merton Park 12
 Messy Church xii, 158, 186
 Methodists 10, 28, 50, 110, 141, 198, 204, 214f, 237f, 243, 247, 256
 Metropolitan Police 41, 256
 Metropolitan Tabernacle 16, 21, 239
 Meyer, F.B. 168
 Micah Christian Ministries 142
 Micah Declaration 174
 Micah Network 174
 Middlesex Hospital 192
 Mildmay Hospital 41
 Mile End 28
 Minibus Act (1977) 18
 Mission@Home Project 186f
 Mitcham Baptist Church ix
 Moberg, David 168f
 Mohabir, Philip 53
 Mohammedali, Husain 272
 Moody, Dwight 169
 Morden Baptist Church ix, 100, 101, 178, 267

- Mormons 39
 Morris, Nicola 112
Moving into Unity (1978) 240
 Mucklow, Derek 283
 Mukti Mission 138
 Murray, Sally ix
 Murray, Stuart 11
 Musama Disco Christo Church (MDCC) 143
 Muslim Association of Britain 270
 Muslim Brotherhood 272
 Muslims 13, 107, 193, 214, 249, 269, 270ff
 Mustard Seed Ministries 10
 Muswell Hill Baptist Church 248
 Myanmar 31, 37
 Myrie, Hubert S. 18, 255, 257
- Nashville, Tennessee 178
 National Mission Strategy 39
 National Front 6
 Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism 23, 239
 New Age 18
 New Barnet Baptist Church 21
 New Beckton 12, 22
 New Century Project for Inner London 8
 New Covenant Baptist Church, Port Harcourt, Nigeria 28
 New Hope Church 12
 New Testament Assembly 142
 New Testament Church of God (NTGC) 140, 142
 New Way London 39
 New Wine 65, 140
 Newham 5, 7, 11ff, 27, 33f, 209
 Newington Court hostel 26, 33
 Newly Accredited Ministers (NAMs) 151, 213
 Newton, John 70
 Nicholls, Michael 284
 Nigeria 11, 143, 207ff
 Night shelters 13, 247f, 250f
- North Cheam Baptist Church 22
 Northolt Park Baptist Church viii
 Norwood Baptist Church 35
 Not Strangers but Pilgrims programme 241
 Notting Hill Carnival 40
- O'Connor, Cardinal Cormac Murphy 242
 Oasis 11, 37f, 41, 222
 Obama, Barack 262
 Oganwobi, Sunday 42
 Okerende, Ade 143
 Okunade, David 143
 Oliveira, Andre de 50
 Olofinjana, Israel vi, xv
 Olympic Games 40, 213
 Omideyi, Ayo 143
One in Christ 243
 One Step Forward programme 23
 Onyuku-Opukiri, Fidelia 143
 Open University 13
 Operation Mobilisation (OM) 57
 Orpington Baptist Church 249f
 Otaigbe, Osoba 204, 207ff
 Otaigbe, Madeline 208
 Owen, Sylvia 113
 OXFAM 244
 Oxford Centre for Mission Studies 173
- Padilla, Rene 169ff, 176
 Palau, Luis 25, 39
 Pan-London Mission in London's Economy (MILE) 36
 Parham, Charles 137
 Parish Nursing 13, 42
 Parry, Michael 283
 Parry, Sarah 115
 Partnership Missions 39, 178ff
 Patterson, Eric 8
 Pawson, David 60
 Pax Christi 270, 273
 Payne, Adina Dian 45
 Payne, Elizabeth 113

- Payne, Ernest A. 237f
 Peake, Stephen 8
 Pearce, Daphne 113
 Peat, Michael ix
 Pedro, Rudi 18
 Penistone, Jackie 35, 283
 Pentecost events 30, 213
 Pentecostal Holiness Church 138
 Pentecostal Missionary Union 139
 Pentecostalism 10f, 60, 136ff, 203ff
 People Next Door programme 239
 Perry Rise Baptist Church vi, 35, 249
 Pile, David 40
 Pioneer Network 207
 Platt, Stan 50
 Plus Centres 210f
 Plymouth 242
 Polhill, Cecil 139
 Police Complaints Authority 218
 Pollards Hill Baptist Church 249
 Poolman, Roger 16, 283
 Poplar 31
 Portfolio route 37, 50, 115, 146ff
 Poverest Road Baptist Church, Petts Wood 30
Praise for Today 239
 Presbyterians 237
 Progressive National Baptist Convention, International Region 206
 Purkiss, Peter 9f, 107, 284
 Purley Baptist Church 21, 239, 241
- Qatada, Abu 271
 Quaystone 11
- Race Relations Act (1965) 254
 Racial justice 7, 10, 32, 35, 41, 243, 254ff
 Racial Justice Sunday 261
 Rackley, John 272f
 Rainbow, Martin ix, xv
 Rajagopalan, Sivakumar ix, 32f, 33, 35, 43ff, 157f, 254ff, 283
 Rayners Lane Baptist Church 180
- Reader, Keith 283
 Redbridge 33f
 Reddie, Anthony 76f
 Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) 140, 143, 203
 Reece, Judith 113
 Reel, Sukdev 218
 Refugees 32, 42, 47, 51, 255, 276
 Regent's Park Baptist Church 113
 Regent's Park College 112f
 Regional ministers 13, 32f, 35, 42, 108, 116, 147, 156f, 183, 221, 257
 Renshaw, Norman J. 284
 Residential Selection Conference (RSC) 37, 146
 Rhema Christian Ministries 142
 Richmond upon Thames 34f
 Roberts, Evan 138f
 Robertson, Edwin 26
 Robinson, Arthur 284
 Rochester, Paul 157
 Rogers, Bryan 283
 Rogers, Tom 29, 62, 67
 Roman Catholics 70, 141, 193, 207, 237f, 241ff, 256, 262, 268
 Royal Albert Hall 25, 30, 108
 Royal Docks Community Church 12f, 38
 Ruach Ministries 142
 Ruislip Baptist Church 23, 249
 Rusling, Margaret 26
 Russell, David 110
 Rye Lane Baptist Church, Peckham 112
- Safe from Harm* 82f
Safe to Grow 83
 Salazar de Espin, Silvia 37, 115
 Salvation Army 13, 39, 163
 Samuel, Vinay 174
 Sarpong, Francis 31, 144, 206
 Scarman Report 9
 Scarsbrook, Roy 8
 Scott, Marva 142
 Scouts 5

- Sedgwick, Colin 284
 Seven Sisters 13
 Seymour, William J. 53, 137
 Shah, Councillor (Harrow) 271
 Shalom Baptist Ministries 12
 Share Jesus International 209, 213
 Sharpe, Heckford 6
 Shattock, Geoff 40, 283
 Shepherd's Bush 33
 Sheppard, Bishop David 239f
 Shore, Peter 9
 Shoreditch Tabernacle Baptist Church 11, 103, 115
 Shosanya, David 35, 42, 42, 144, 157, 212, 249, 283
 Sidcup Baptist Church 249
 Sikhs 193
 Single Equality Act (2010) 254
 Sipson 12, 39
 Slater, Nicky 30
 Small Church Connexion 39, 183, 185
 Small Churches Implementation Group (BUGB) 182, 185
 SMILE 31
 Smith, David Rushworth 41
 Smith, Io 6
 Smith, Margaret 113
 Smith, Martin 284
 Snelling, Gordon 16, 284
 Soho Square 192
 Sooden, Harmeet Singh 271ff
 Soup kitchens 142, 248
 South Africa 15, 68, 73ff, 239
 South/Latin America 48, 50, 74, 121, 126, 136, 166, 170, 203, 207, 217, 245
 South Asia Concern 13
 South London Industrial Mission (SLIM) 8, 36
 South Norwood Baptist Church viii
 Southall Baptist Church 50
 Southall 12
 Southern Baptists 31
 Southwark 21, 26, 33f
 Sparkes, Douglas 15, 18f, 19, 21f, 28, 108, 114, 283
 Spearing, Martha 111
 Spitalfields 5
 Sports Chaplaincy UK 201f
 Spring Harvest 57, 65, 240
 Spurgeon, Charles Haddon 163, 168
 Spurgeon Memorial Baptist Church, Guernsey 205
 Spurgeon's College ix, 11, 17, 23f, 31, 37f, 113f, 144, 147, 150, 156, 204ff, 209, 267
 Stewardship Campaign (BUGB/LBA) 20
 St George's Day 33, 262
 St Martin in the Fields, Trafalgar Square 270
 Stallard, Karen 11
 Standford, Peter 204
 Standing, Roger 150
 Stanford, Barbara 113, 113, 192f
 Staple, David 242
 Stapleton Baptist Church, Bristol 205
 Steel, Dave 41
 Steer, Christopher 284
 Stephen Lawrence Inquiry 218
 Stephens, Alan 21
 Stevenson, Peter 31
 Stokes, N. Leslie 284
 Stokes, Phil 207
 Stott, John 60
 Stratford Central 13
 Street Pastors vii, xii, 13, 42, 210, 248ff
 Stroud Green Baptist Church 35
 Struthers, Duncan x
 Student Christian Movement 237
 Sugden, Chris 169
 Sumner Road Chapel, Peckham 139
 Sunbury Court 39
 Sunday Schools 5, 18, 221
 Sunday trading 29, 41, 181
 Superintendents 10, 16, 18ff, 28f, 32, 34, 36, 60, 108, 112ff, 156, 165, 180, 239, 241

- Sutton 34f
 Baptist Church 113
 Swanwick Declaration 241
 Tabernacle Church, The 142
 Taylor, Hilary 39, 185, 269, 283
 Taylor, John 284
 Taylor, L.C. 20
 Taylor, Michael 17
 Tear Fund 243f
 Teddington Baptist Church viii, ix, 30, 96, 99, 103
 Temple Hill Baptist Church, Dartford 17
 Ten Propositions 240
 Thames Gateway 12, 38
 Thames TV 26
 Thamesmead 22
The Child and the Church 23
The Christian 16
 The Haven 26
 Theology and Unity Group (CTE TUG) 243
Theos 199
 Thomas, Robert Jermain 203
 Thompson, Arthur 15, 22f, 28, 28, 36f, 39, 108, 115, 180, 283, 284
 Thorington-Hassell, Jane 115
 Thorn, Arthur 17, 284
 Thwang Khua Kai 37
 Took, Pat x, 11, 32, 32, 35, 37, 48, 108, 115f, 156, 165, 185, 210, 273, 283, 284
Toolbox for Small Churches 185, 188
 Tooting Junction Baptist Church 204, 211ff, 223
 Toronto Blessing 64
 Tower Hamlets 11, 33f
 Trade Justice Movement 246
 Traidcraft 245
 Trepagnier, Barbara 260
 Tresise, Neil 186
 Trinity Baptist Church, Bexley 250

- Trinity Baptist Church, West Norwood, Croydon 12, 31, 47, 101, 144, 205f
 Trinity Church, North Finchley ix
 Trinity Hope Centre, Ghana 206
 Trout, Gordon 44
 Turl, Stanley 23, 284
 Tutu, Archbishop Desmond 68
 Twitter 94
 Unification Church (Moonies) 18
 Unitarians 140
 United Methodist Church 122
 United Reformed Church (URC) 141, 198, 204, 238ff, 243, 247
 United States of America (USA) 15, 75, 168, 178f, 246f
 US Air Force Base, West Ruislip 23
 University of Benin 207
 University of Bristol 196
 University of London 196
 University College London Hospital (UCLH) 192f
 Upper Holloway Baptist Church 115
 Urban Expression 11, 13
 Vatican II 238
 Vellacott, Humphrey 8, 284
 Vicarage Road, Leyton 28
 Victoria Park Baptist Church, Bow 21, 40, 98, 115
 Victoria Park Homes 8
 Victory Baptist Church 206, 214f
 Victory Family Christian Centre 13
 Victory Life 12
 Vis-a-Vis 40
Visible Unity in Life and Mission 240
 Voke, Stanley 284
 Wade, Denis 142
 Waltham Abbey Baptist Church 188
 Waltham Forest 33f
 Walthamstow 11
 Walthamstow Baptist Church 24
 Walworth Baptist Church 9

- Wandsworth 33, 35
 Wapping 5
 Warburton, Phil 11
 Warner, Rob 11
 Watson, David 63
 Weekes, Ivan 256
 Well Church, Camberwell 207
 Welsh Revival (1904) 138
 Wesleyan Holiness Church 142
 West Croydon Tabernacle 42, 113
 West Ham Central Mission 5, 14, 112f
 West Indian Evangelical Alliance 53
 West Silvertown 12
 West Wickham & Shirley Baptist Church 179
 Westbourne Park Baptist Church 26, 40
 Westbury, John 40, 284
 Westbury Avenue, Wood Green ix, 41
 Westcott, Muriel 113
 Westminster 33, 35, 64
 Westminster Abbey 237ff
 Westminster Central Hall 25, 28, 35
 Wheaton Consultation 1983 171
 White, Michael W. 142
 White, Patricia vi, xv
 Whitfield, Ray 284
 Wigglesworth, Smith 139
 Wilberforce, William 70
 Wilkinson-Hayes, Anne 113
 Willesden Green Baptist Church 51, 107, 255
 Williams, D.P. 140
 Williams, Howard 15, 113
 Williams, W.J. 140
 Wilmshurst, Barry 108, 239
 Wilmshurst, John 98
 Wimber, John 63f
 Wimbledon and District Korean Church 12
 Winder, Robert 43
 Winchester, Paul 283
 Windrush DVD 33, 44, 213
 Windrush Generation 18, 141, 213
 Windrush, SS Empire 76, 141, 213
 Winston, Robert 260
 Wise, David x
 Witting, Kenneth J. 284
 Wood, Mike 147
 Woodgrange Baptist Church, Forest Gate 249
 Woodman, Simon 115
 Woolley, Steve 178
 Woolwich 140
 Central Baptist Church vi, 203
 Worcester Park Baptist Church x, 124
 World Bank 245
 World Council of Churches (WCC) 237ff, 240f
 World Development Movement 245
 World Trade Organisation 246
 Wortley, Peter x, 9, 11, 18, 18, 28f, 32, 42, 44, 47, 107ff, 242, 256, 283, 284
 Wright, Christopher J.H. 172f
 Wright, Lucy x
 Wright, Nigel 63f, 207, 243, 284
 Wythes Road 12
 Yaconelli, Mike 224
 YMCA vii, 195
 Young, Harry 284
 Youth work 5, 16, 21, 25, 27, 35, 37, 40f, 117, 129, 222ff