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AUSTRALIAN CALVINISM: AN IMPRESSIONISTIC SNAPSHOT ON THE 500TH ANNIVERSARY OF CALVIN'S BIRTH

By WRF Member Peter Barnes

Snapshots of history have their charms and their dangers, and perhaps snapshots of contemporary Calvinism in Australia may have more dangers than charms. For a start, Calvinism is capable of numerous definitions. To many, it is simply soteriological, and refers to the belief in the Five Points of Calvinism (TULIP: Total depravity, Unconditional election, Limited atonement, Irresistible Grace, Perseverance of the Saints). To many Sydney evangelicals, the Five Points have been reduced to four, with limited atonement being the one that misses out.

In the Stone lectures delivered at Princeton University in 1898, Abraham Kuyper portrayed Calvinism more broadly, in terms of a life-system.¹ B. B. Warfield was equally adamant: 'Calvinism is just religion in its purity. We have only, therefore, to conceive of religion in its purity, and that is Calvinism.' He saw Calvinism in terms reminiscent of Jonathan Edwards, as a way of life in which all 'thinking, feeling, willing - in which the entire compass of ... life-activities, intellectual, moral, spiritual, throughout all ... individual, social, religious relations' were animated by divine awareness.² 'It begins, it centres, it ends with the vision of God in His glory: and it sets itself before all things to render to God His rights in every sphere of life-activity.'³ One detects a similar outlook in the comment of Malcolm Prentis: 'Calvinism brought to Scotland a new sense of order in both religious and civic life, as well as promoting the usual Calvinist virtues: moral seriousness, piety, frugality, respect for learning, worldly asceticism and a high view of statesmanship and civic affairs.'⁴

So far as Calvinism in contemporary Australia is concerned, it might be best first to paint something of the backdrop. The mid-1960s were nothing short of catastrophic for all the Churches, despite the fact that Stuart Piggin views the 1959 Billy Graham Crusades as the time when 'Australia came closer than at any time before or since to a general spiritual awakening.'⁵ Later, he is more decided: 'It was a revival, all right, and a great one.'⁶ The foundations, however, were decidedly weak. For many churchmen, evangelism had little to do with theological content, and much to do with the survival of the Church as an institution. In the 1960s Sunday School numbers plummeted, and churches were forced to face the fact that so much of the population's adherence to Christianity was nominal rather than real. The age of William Barclay and Norman Vincent Peale was giving way to that of John Robinson and Peter Carnley.

Reformed bodies

In these unpromising circumstances there was some rediscovery of the Reformed faith. In the aftermath of World War II, a number of Dutch Reformed Christians emigrated to Australia, with the 100,000th Dutch immigrant arriving in October 1958, although probably over 40% of these were Roman Catholics.⁷ In September 1950 the Christian Reformed Church (GKN) sent out Rev. Jan Kremer who reported grave misgivings about the state of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, due to its theological liberalism and its connections with Freemasonry.⁸ By 1951 the first Reformed Churches of Australia were established, which are

¹ Cf. Abraham Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, Michigan: Eerdmans, reprinted 1976, especially pp.9-40.

² Cited in David N. Livingstone and Mark A. Noll, 'B. B. Warfield (1851-1921): A Biblical Inerrantist as Evolutionist' in *Journal of Presbyterian History*, vol. 80, no. 3, Fall, 2002, p.158.

³ B. B. Warfield, *Calvin and Augustine*, Phillipsburg: P & R, 1956, p.292.

⁴ Malcolm Prentis, *The Scots in Australia*, Sydney: UNSW Press, 2008, p.19.

⁵ Stuart Piggin, *Spirit of a Nation*, Sydney: Strand Publishing, 2004, p.125.

⁶ Stuart Piggin, *Spirit of a Nation*, p.171.

⁷J. W. Deenick (ed), *A Church En Route*, Geelong: Reformed Churches Publishing House, 1991, p.22.

⁸J. W. Deenick (ed), *A Church En Route*, Geelong: Reformed Churches Publishing

now known as the Christian Reformed Churches. Reformed Christians - although not the Reformed Churches as such - were major players behind the setting up of parent-controlled Christian schools, the first one being Calvin Christian School at Kingston in Tasmania which was opened on 20 January 1962 with 77 students and three teachers.

A number of Baptists were brought to embrace the doctrines of grace, particularly in Tasmania in the late 1950s and early 1960s.⁹ Rev. J. Laurie Lincolne, formerly principal of the World Evangelization Crusade College in Launceston, embraced Reformed Baptist views, but many other became paedobaptists, and this led to the formation of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in 1961. After some controversies, the EPC clarified its stand in 1964 as it rejected the notions of common grace (God's favour to the non-elect) and any well-intentioned offer of the gospel (that God wished in any way to save all people).¹⁰

Calvinistic Presbyterians came to be increasingly found in the Presbyterian Church of Australia after the formation of the Uniting Church of Australia in 1977. The new Church - or continuing Church - removed itself from the World Council of Churches, and went on in 1991 to reverse an earlier decision to allow the ordination of women into the ministry, and to accept a report which asserted that Christianity and Freemasonry were incompatible. In the following year the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales successfully prosecuted the Principal of St Andrew's College in Sydney University, Dr Peter Cameron, after his repudiation of the authority of the apostle Paul in a sermon on women ministers. Relations improved with the smaller Reformed bodies like the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia (the Psalm-singing 'Free Kirk') and the Presbyterian Reformed Church (which had split from the PCA in 1967 after the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand had exonerated Professor Lloyd Geering of heresy despite the fact that he regarded the resurrection of Christ only as 'a symbol of hope'.

Lest Calvinistic Presbyterians in the PCA become too optimistic about an antipodean version of John Knox's description of Geneva in Calvin's day as 'the most perfect school of Christ that ever was on earth since the days of the Apostles', in 1994 A. T. Stevens produced *An Appraisal of the so-called 'Five Points of Calvinism'*.¹¹ Despite being a Presbyterian minister, Stevens argued that 'most of "the five points" are simply not true' and "The tulip theory" is also a doctrine of disunity'.¹² In a similar vein and in the same year, Rev. H. A. Stamp produced *The Word of God in the Bible*, a work which claimed that the Bible is inspired in some sense, but not infallible or inerrant.¹³ Rev. Professor Douglas Milne of the Presbyterian Theological College in Melbourne ably replied to these works, but no church discipline resulted.¹⁴

Evangelical - and sometimes Calvinistic - Anglicanism continued to be strong in the Sydney diocese, under the leadership of successive bishops - Marcus Loane, Donald Robinson, Harry Goodhew, and Peter Jensen. The Anglican communion in recent times has groaned to find some form of identity for itself. In all that, the Sydney diocese - 'the whale in the Sydney evangelical bath-tub', to cite Mark Hutchinson¹⁵ - has flexed its muscles, and opened up 'independent' Anglican churches in areas outside Sydney where evangelicalism is not strong. In addition, men like Paul Barnett and John Woodhouse were prepared to take

House, 1991, p.24.

⁹ cf. Ken R. Manley, *From Woolloomooloo to 'Eternity': a History of Australian Baptists*, volume 2, Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006, pp.703-706.

¹⁰ *A History of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Australia*, from <http://www.epc.org.au/>

¹¹ A. T. Stevens, *An Appraisal of the so-called 'Five Points of Calvinism'*, The Burning Bush Society of Victoria, 1994.

¹² A. T. Stevens, *An Appraisal of the so-called 'Five Points of Calvinism'*, The Burning Bush Society of Victoria, 1994, p.v.

¹³ H. A. Stamp, *The Word of God in the Bible*, The Burning Bush Society of Victoria, 1994.

¹⁴ Douglas Milne, *The Word of God is the Bible and An Affirmation of the Five Points of Calvinism*, Box Hill North, 1994.

¹⁵ Mark Hutchinson, *Iron in Our Blood*, Sydney: Ferguson Publications and CSAC, 2001, p.400.

strong stands against Peter Carnley when he was elected as Primate of Australia in 2000 - they refused to attend his installation.

Few Australian theological colleges could be called Reformed, the main exceptions – albeit not without some problems – being the three Presbyterian colleges (in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne), Moore Theological College (Anglican, Sydney), Ridley College (Anglican, Victoria), the Reformed Theological College in Geelong, and Trinity Theological College in Perth. In addition there is the influential Sydney Missionary and Bible College, and the renowned Katoomba Conventions where thousands gather a number of times each year to hear biblical teaching.

A comparison with the USA

Sociology is neither history nor prophecy. Michael Spencer has predicted that evangelical Christianity will suffer a major collapse in the West within the next ten years,¹⁶ while David Van Biema in *Time* magazine claimed that what he termed ‘the New Calvinism’ could be the third most important world view to be embraced by modern Americans.¹⁷ Whatever the future, North America has seen the emergence of those who are ‘young, restless, and Reformed’.¹⁸ This movement seems sharper in its theology than most of the professedly Reformed bodies in Australia, but is diverse in its worship style. One might wonder what Calvin would have made of Curtis Allen who performs Reformed rap.¹⁹ John MacArthur has taken aim at what he calls ‘Grunge Christianity’, and the vulgarization of the Gospel found in Mark Driscoll from Mars Hill church in Seattle, Washington.²⁰ With less charity and far less reason, John W. Robbins has warned against the Roman Catholic tendencies of John Piper at Bethlehem Baptist Church, Minnesota,²¹ while Peter Masters at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London has complained of the merger of Calvinism with worldliness.²² In September 2008 the Sydney Anglicans brought Mark Driscoll to Sydney to speak on evangelism. The result is still difficult to evaluate - Driscoll is more Reformed than many Sydney evangelicals, more entrepreneurial, and more abrasive in his style. The central thrust of Australian Calvinism is probably equidistant from both Masters and Driscoll.

Reformed issues

The Australian Reformed scene has real signs of life, but, as in the USA, there are also tensions.²³ *The Briefing* - which is the lively and outspoken organ of Sydney Anglican evangelicalism - in its issue of October 2006 was typically open to the view that the early chapters of Genesis can be read as ‘figurative history’ and that science cannot be used to prove Intelligent Design.²⁴ There is a tendency for many Reformed and evangelical writers to speak on the subject of creation with a number of voices even in the same breath.

Another feature of the Australian Calvinistic scene concerns a distinct lack of a Reformed view of evangelism. Much evangelism which claims to be Reformed actually follows the line of what is thought to be the message of John 3:16 (God loves you, Christ died for you, receive Him) more than the outlines that we find, for example, in Acts 2 and 17 (You are accountable to God as creator and Judge, Christ is Lord, this is proved by the resurrection, flee the wrath to come through faith in the Lord who died for sinners). Often, it is claimed that the Church exists only for mission, and thus what matters is its adherence to the basic gospel (1 Cor. 15:3-4) rather than the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). This has its attractions but makes for a measure of pragmatism - perhaps more than is warranted by Paul’s concern to be ‘all things to all men’ (1 Cor. 9:19-23).

Concerning the international worship wars, Peter Jeffery has commented that ‘worship

¹⁶ <http://www.onenewsnow.com/Printer.aspx?id=447734>. Spencer writes at InternetMonk.com.

¹⁷ David Van Biema, ‘The New Calvinism’, *Time*, 23 March, 2009, p.25.

¹⁸ Collin Hansen, *Young, Restless, Reformed*, Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2008.

¹⁹ Cf. Collin Hansen, *Young, Restless, Reformed*, Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2008, pp.115-116.

²⁰ <http://www.gty.org/Resources/articles/2643>

²¹ J. W. Robbins, ‘Pied Piper’, *The Trinity Review*, June-July 2002.

²² *Sword & Trowel*, no.1, 2009.

²³ Philip Eveson, when Principal of London Theological Seminary, wrote a critique of ‘Moore Theology’ in *Foundations*, Autumn 2006.

²⁴ Sandy Grant, ‘Reading Genesis’, *The Briefing*, October 2006, issue 337, pp.10, 12.

is the most contentious issue in many of today's evangelical churches.²⁵ In some circles worship is said to be the whole of life, and is identified with obedience - a common view in Sydney Anglicanism and much of PCA Presbyterianism. Hence we are said to be worshipping when we are doing the washing up. Yet it is also often identified simply with music, and the worship leader is a synonym for 'music director'.

In some places public worship may be little more than meeting in a café, hearing some appropriate music, and listening to a Bible talk. It is said that the Church exists for mission, to bring the gospel to the world. On the other side, as John Piper puts it: 'Mission is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Mission exists because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man.'²⁶

Hesitation about the place of the law in evangelical theology has led to a soft, seeker-sensitive, approach to Christianity. The Welsh pastor, Peter Jeffery, comments that 'Evangelical Christians today tolerate what they would have rejected forty years ago. It is not that this toleration stems from a more generous spirit; it is, rather, the result of not adhering, as they once did, to the teaching of Scripture.'²⁷

Trends

Australian Calvinism is part of an international movement, and it tends to reflect some of the strengths and weaknesses of its counterparts in Britain and the USA. Evangelicals used to be known as serious people. Perhaps some were somewhat gloomy, even sour, but today they are as likely to be identified with what is frivolous and lightweight. People who profess the Reformed faith have imbibed ideas from Robert Schuller, Philip Yancey, Bill Hybels, Tony Campolo, and Rick Warren. Koorong Bookshop began as a Reformed enterprise, but it has grown in status and influence, and theological diversity. The long-term evangelical newspaper *New Life* lost its (usually Arminian) evangelical thrust for a time, but is now back in more Reformed hands as Bob Thomas has returned as editor.

So secular has Australia become - along with the rest of the Western world - that Peter Jensen could cite four distinguished Australian scholars who quoted Abraham Lincoln as saying that 'a house divided against itself cannot stand', without being aware that it goes back to Jesus.²⁸ In such a climate, Bob Thomas has written optimistically of the PCA: 'A person could enter any Presbyterian Church in Australia today in the expectation that the Word of God would be rightly handled and could go on his way rejoicing.'²⁹ So too Stewart Gill's conclusion, written just before the millennium: 'Whatever the case, as the Presbyterian Church of Australia looks forward to the year 2000 there has been a real return to Confessional orthodoxy and the church that had once lost its way has found it again.'³⁰

The smaller Reformed bodies give the impression of having too much of the seventeenth century in them to evangelise effectively, while the larger Reformed bodies may suffer from having too much of the twenty-first century in them. Thankfully, revival is, as Jonathan Edwards said it was, 'a surprising work of God'.

Reference

Peter Barnes, 'Australian Calvinism: An Impressionistic Snapshot on the 500th Anniversary of Calvin's Birth' in *Church Heritage*, vol. 16, no. 2, September 2009, pp.118-126.

²⁵ P. Jeffery, *Evangelicals - Then and Now*, Darlington: Evangelical Press, 2004, p.17.

²⁶ John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad!* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, second edition, 2003, p.17.

²⁷ P. Jeffery, *Evangelicals - Then and Now*, p.66.

²⁸ Peter Jensen, *The Future of Jesus: The Boyer Lectures 2005*, Sydney: ABC Books, 2005, pp.7-8.

²⁹ Bob Thomas, *The Crisis of '77*, PTC Media, Box Hill North, 2004, p.40.

³⁰ Stewart Gill, 'The Battle for the Westminster Confession in Australia' in J. Ligon Duncan, III (ed), *The Westminster Confession into the 21st Century*, volume 1, Fearn: Mentor, 2003, p.301.

AUSTRALIAN PRESBYTERIANISM - AN OVERVIEW

by
WRF Member Peter Barnes

Simplifications can be misleading, but they can also be useful markers on which to discern the flow of history.

Years of Struggle: 1788-1840

The planting of the Christian faith in the colony of New South Wales had a less than auspicious beginning. Stuart Piggin has quipped: 'America started with convictions; Australia with convicts.'¹ Australia did not obviously bloom as the Great Southland of the Holy Spirit. Governor Arthur Philip was no Christian, and most of the convicts had little interest in the gospel. Elizabeth Kotlowski's thesis is that 'Australia was founded as a Christian nation' - but the facts seem against such a strong assertion.²

The first Presbyterian church building - a small stone structure (now Uniting) - was erected in 1809 at Portland Head on the Hawkesbury. It was called Ebenezer - *Hitherto hath the Lord helped us*. Services were led by an elder, James Mein, as there was as yet no ordained minister. Only in the 1820s did the first Presbyterian clergymen arrive - in 1822 Rev. Archibald MacArthur of the United Secession Church to Hobart; in 1823 Rev. John Dunmore Lang of the Evangelical wing of the Church of Scotland to Sydney; and in 1826 Rev. John McGarvie (known as 'King Log' in evangelical circles) of the Moderate wing of the Church of Scotland, also to Sydney.

This was an age of Presbyterian divisions, with the established Church, the Free Church (in the 1840s), the voluntaryist secessionist churches, and Lang's own brand of Presbyterian evangelicalism being represented.

Years of Growth: 1840-1880s

During the 19th century most of the various Presbyterian churches in the colonies united - in Victoria in 1859 (the first such Presbyterian union in the world), in Queensland in 1862, in NSW and South Australia in 1865, and in Tasmania in 1896. The Presbytery of Western Australia was constituted in 1892 as part of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, but was organised separately in April 1901 as the General Assembly of Western Australia in time to join the Presbyterian Church of Australia in July 1901.

The churches generally responded well to the gold rushes and to the influx of new migrants. By the 1870s Christianity was well and truly a force in the land. In the mid-1880s something like 52% of Presbyterians in Victoria were regularly found at public worship each week. In NSW the figure was about half that. However, the 1880s saw an increasing acceptance of biblical criticism, and a decline in Protestant certitude - the old gospel certainties appeared less certain. So far as church attendance as a proportion of the general population is concerned, Presbyterianism peaked in the 1880s or early 1890s, and has been declining ever since. The whole twentieth century is, in that sense, a story against a backdrop of decline.

The Dominance of Liberal Evangelicalism: 1880s-1920s

By the 1880s a kind of liberal evangelicalism was dominant in the colonial Presbyterian Churches. On 24 July 1901 at the Sydney Town Hall the Presbyterian Church of Australia was constituted. It had 540 parishes with 2,040 preaching places, 380 settled ministers and 47,600 members - about 14,000 more than it had 100 years later. The first Moderator of the General Assembly was Rt Rev. John Meiklejohn who had laboured for the previous nine years as the Convener of the Union Committee. Meiklejohn raised the issue of a wider Protestant union in his Moderatorial Address: 'Through Union we have placed ourselves in the position in which we can consider the question of union with other Churches without the risk of further disunions among ourselves.' He went on: 'our Church looks with longing eyes towards a larger union of Protestant Christians in the noble service of God and His Christ.' Presbyterians love their Church, said Meiklejohn, 'but we do not hold all the statements of her creed of equal value, or all the principles of her polity of equal importance.' It is interesting that, however clarion the call for unity, Meiklejohn's address also warned of the insidious influence of those within the Church who had capitulated to sceptical

¹ S. Piggin, *Evangelical Christianity in Australia*, p.10.

² E. R. Kotlowski, *Southland of the Holy Spirit*, Christian History Research Institute, Orange, 1994, p.xvii.

beliefs.

The subordinate standard of the Church was to consist of the Westminster Confession of Faith read in light of the declaratory statement. This declaratory statement called for ministers to emphasise 'certain objective supernatural historic facts', notably the incarnation, the atoning life and death and the resurrection and ascension of our Lord, and His bestowment of the Holy Spirit. It reaffirmed the doctrine of election, but went on to soften the decrees somewhat by speaking of God's being not willing that any should perish and that all were freely offered eternal life. Infants who died were not necessarily lost. Unregenerate men were said to be capable of good acts, albeit without being acceptable to God. Liberty of opinion was allowed on non-essential matters in the subordinate standard, but was not to be abused. Intolerant and persecuting principles were repudiated.

In this age of liberal evangelicalism, the vast majority of ministers still held to the deity of Christ, and His physical resurrection. The doctrine of everlasting punishment was called into some question, which led to a softening of any emphasis on penal substitution. Hence the moral influence theory of the atonement was gaining in popularity. Most leaders at least had discarded the doctrine of the verbal inspiration of Scripture. Evolution was widely accepted, and predestination was not. There remained much - indeed a growing - emphasis on the temperance issue, and a weakening emphasis on the Sabbath, although it was still quite strong.

The Slide into Liberalism: 1920s-1945

The first World War did not see a neo-orthodox or Barthian reaction, as there was in Europe. Rather, Liberalism gained a greater hold on the Church. Samuel Angus arrived in Sydney in 1915, and by the mid-twenties was openly liberal. By the early thirties he was denying the deity of Christ, the virgin birth, the physical resurrection, heaven, hell, and just about everything else. His gospel was that we become Christians by trying to be Christ-like. He received support from important figures like Kenneth Edward and John Edwards.

Diversity and Weakness: 1946-1977

This saw a mixture of things in the Presbyterian pot. Liberalism continued (e.g. with E. H. Vines and Charles Boyall), but John McIntyre at St Andrews led a neo-orthodox reaction to it. J. Haultain Brown was also less likely to maul the Scriptures in the way that Angus had done, but his was not the spirit of Elijah. High church worship revived (e.g. Alan Dougan, Crawford Miller). Norman Vincent Peale and the power of positive thinking became popular during the 1950s, and remained so for some decades. The Westminster Society was formed in 1948 to promote Calvinistic orthodoxy, but it lived on the margins of the Church. Ecumenism was very strong, as was plain sentimentality. Some consider that Australia came closest to revival in the 1959 Billy Graham Crusade, but it did not change the general direction of either church or society.

Struggles after Union: 1977-the present

The union of 1977 saw the Presbyterian Church much reduced in numerical strength. It was almost decimated in South Australia and Western Australia, but was able to gather some strength in Queensland, Victoria and Tasmania. In NSW its numerical strength was greatest, but so too were its divisions. There was an anguished search for identity in many places. Evangelicalism became respectable, but its definition was broadened. Liberalism was in the minority but still strong in some circles, and an incipient liberalism remained quite influential even where liberalism was repudiated. This period witnessed the rise of an independent view of evangelicalism, and some breakdown of church structures. There was some substantial recapturing of the authority and application of Scripture, although not in the full-orbed Puritan sense.

The Reformation in the Czech Lands (Bohemia and Moravia)

by
Pavel Černý

When the Communism collapsed in 1989 we have been facing a flood of many visitors from the U.S. and Western Europe. There were many missionaries coming and trying to help us. Very often in our churches we have been asked about our church affiliation: "Are you Lutheran? Not really! Are you Calvinists? Well, yes and no! Who are you? Our reply was: We are brethren. Are you "Plymouth Brethren". Not at all! We are Brethren because of the legacy of the Czech Reformation."

By the way there are five Protestant denominations in our country that have the word "Brethren" in their names. Even the Baptist Church in our country is called: The Brethren Unity of Baptists. The same is with the Presbyterians, Free Evangelical, and Moravians.

The reformation started in Bohemia, the land of Hus and Comenius, more than 100 years before it began in the other countries of Europe. These early beginnings of the Czech Reformation are symbolized by the Bethlehem Chapel which was founded as early as 1391 in the heart of medieval Prague, then the seat of the Holy Roman Emperor – Charles IV. When the chapel was founded, its express purpose was to serve the Reformation by preaching God's word in the language of the people. The very origin of the idea of a people's sanctuary must be sought in the Christian revival movement whose spokesman was Milíč of Kroměříž (died 1374) who was convinced of the vital necessity of preaching the Word. For this he sought new and effective means and therefore founded the school for preachers and the social institution which was called, in eschatological anticipation "New Jerusalem". His pupil and Master of Paris University, Matej Janov (died 1393) developed the movement with his scholarly Biblical work. When Milíč's "Jerusalem was razed (srovnán se zemí), his followers joined in the endeavors to build a new temple of Bethlehem in which there would be sufficient room for preaching.

There has been a long-term influence of **Valdesian movement**. By 1170 Peter Valdo he had gathered a large number of followers who were referred to as *the Poor of Lyons, the Poor of Lombardy*.

Some persecuted Valdesian preachers went to the Czech kingdom continuing their mission. Some of them even settled down there. There were also Czech students coming back from their studies in Oxford and bringing along writings of significant English thinker **John Wyclif**. John Hus and some other professors at the Prague University have been influenced by Wyclif's writings. There was much contact between the Lollards and the Hussites.

It was in the sphere of **the Bethlehem Chapel**, which rapidly developed as the focal point of Reformation activity, that the first Czech translation of the Bible was made. From 1402 on, Master Jan Hus (John Huss) preached in Bethlehem Chapel. Around him, as a leading figure the popular currents of the Reformation met with those in the Prague University which strove to reform the Church. The burning of Hus at the stake in Constance 1415 (last year it was 600 years), was the signal for stormy revolt against the existing clerical and social order which had been sanctioned by the medieval papal church. The revolution made four central demands in 1419,

expressing the endeavors which had been followed from the first foundation of Bethlehem Chapel. Prof. Amedeo Molnár observes:

“The eschatological intention of the founders of the Bethlehem Chapel is clearly evident: The Word of God is not bound they proclaimed; it must spread freely in the language of the people and so prepare the way for the realization of the divine promises. Here, underlying, is the Germ of a thought which I should describe as missionary. It included in the conviction that Christian people should renew their faith listening to the Word. The reform of the Church itself must be undertaken with a view to the future conversion of the whole of humanity. The mission was to be realized not so much by a reducing and concentration movement of the eschatological remnant which the missionary Church of Christ crucified really is.”¹

Four Prague Articles

1. The Word of God shall in the Kingdom of Bohemia be freely and without impediment proclaimed and preached.
2. The sacrament of the body and blood of Christ shall in the two kinds – *sub utraque specie* (that is in bread and wine) – be freely administered to all the faithful according to the order and teaching of Christ. (It was a brave step taken after the centuries to return a cap to all laymen. 1414 in four's churches the Eucharist has been celebrated that way).
3. All worldly rule is to be taken from the priests, and the Church returned to its apostolic poverty and thus to its special mission of giving testimony to the Gospel.
4. All mortal sins, particularly those that are public, as well as loose living, are to be prosecuted and punished, whoever may be guilty, whether master or servant.

These four Prague Articles expressed the main endeavor of the Hussite movement. Fierce but victorious battles and wars were waged in the years 1420 to 1430 to defend and carry out this program, against Crusaders who tried to drown the Reformation in blood. The Crusaders did not succeed even when later the most radical wing of the Hussites – the Taborites – were defeated through diplomatic trickery. The decisive program and aim of the Reformation was revived again in the *Unitas Fratrum* (Unity of the Brethren).

In place of the harsh warriors appeared the “**people without a sword**”. *Unitas fratrum* was the most noteworthy outcome of the Czech Reformation endeavors, as the glorious echo of the Hussite Revolution, although without its position of power. As viewed from the standpoint of the history of dogma the *Unitas fratrum* is a radicalization in theology of the Taborite teaching, a radicalization which was presaged by the protest of the profound thinker from the South of Bohemia, **Peter Chelčický**, against the church's worldliness. The *Unitas fratrum* founded 1457, had even in its beginnings all the distinguishing marks of a Reformation church, even though it did not yet express the soteriological content of the Holy Scripture as clearly as did the Reformation of Luther and of Calvin. The Unity of Brethren were concerned with a radicalization of the Utraquist church by returning to the original concepts of Hussitism. From its inception, until it declined in the storms of the Thirty Years' War, the *Unitas fratrum* maintained its definite Confession of Faith but at the same time a broad ecumenical spirit. The Unity welcomed the reformation as co-

¹ MOLNÁR, Amedeo. The Czech Reformation and Missions. In: *History's Lessons for Tomorrow's Mission*. Geneva, 1960, p. 129.

fighter in other countries without, however, relinquishing the Unitas' individual character. They maintained order and discipline in congregations which were led into 16th century by the strong figure of **Lukáš of Prague** (1458-1528).

Religious conditions in Bohemia and Moravia were full of confusion in the 16th century. Besides the largest church, the Utraquist, which took a position of compromise halfway between the Hussite and Roman Catholic, there was the Unity of Brethren which was outlawed although it tried to obtain equal legal rights on the basis of its Confession of Faith formulated 1535. The Luther and Zwingli reformations aroused sympathy in some circles, and later to growing degree the Calvinist way. The Unity of Brethren and the Utraquists who had been radicalized under the influence of the European Reformation, joined in 1575 in the Bohemian Confession of Faith (Confessio Bohemica).

The course of events so developed that by the beginnings of the 17th century the Czech Protestants had achieved a certain liberty. But this hopeful development was forcibly disrupted by the Roman Catholic Party's seizure of power. After the fateful battle on the White Mountain in 1620 a ruthless and severe counter-Reformation and re-Catholicization of the Czech lands set in. The harshest oppression was focused on the Unity of Brethren, but since time the other Protestants were also hard pressed. The Last Bishop of the Unity of Brethren, the scholar **Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius, 1592-1670)** went to exile with thousands of others. This was the most difficult period of Czech Protestantism, lasting a full 160 years and almost bringing its complete destruction. Before the severe re-Catholicization there were 90 % of Protestants and 10 % of Roman-Catholics. After 150 years of executions, persecutions and people expelled into exile it has been just the opposite – 90 % Catholics and only 10 % of Protestants.

Jan Hus and Martin Luther

Martin Luther went through certain transformation of his opinions regarding Jan Hus and the Czech Reformation. He remembers his first impression: "When I was studying in Erfurt, I found in a library of the convent a book entitled Sermons of John Hus. I was seized with curiosity to know what doctrines this heretic had taught. This reading filled me with incredible surprise. I could comprehend why they should have burned so great man and one who explained Scripture with so much discernment and wisdom."²

The next big step in Luther's change would seem to be the Leipzig debate of July 1519. Here Luther was confronted by an extremely skillful adversary, dr. Eck, who succeeded in drawing the admission from him that some of Hus's views condemned by the Council of Constance had been good and Christian. He replied being accused by Eck: "The eminent Doctor has just called my attention to the articles of Wyclif and John Hus. He has also spoken of Boniface, who condemned them. I reply as before that I neither want to nor am in a position to defend that Bohemian schism." But Luther added almost immediately: "Secondly, it is also certain that many articles of John Hus and the Bohemians are plainly most Christian and evangelical."³ Eck said:

² Quoted in: GILLET, E. H.: *The Life and Times of Master John Hus*. Boston, 1863, reprinted AMS Press, New York, 1978. (2 vol.), p. 81-82.

³ HILLERBRAND, Hans J. (ed.), *The Reformation. A Narrative History related by contemporary observers and participants*. Baker, Michigan, 1978, p. 67.

“But this is the Bohemian virus, to attach more weight to one’s own interpretation of Scripture than to that of the popes and councils, the doctors and the universities. You do nothing but renew the errors of Wyclif and Hus.”

Luther goes on to clarify his position in Worms debate 1521. He argues that if there is union with the Hussites, they must not be “compelled to abandon taking the sacraments in both kinds, for that practice is neither unchristian nor heretical”.⁴ Soon Luther was to become completely clear as to his closeness to Hus. At about this time some Hussite followers sent him a copy of the book “The Church” by Hus. On the basis of that book Hus was condemned by the Council in Constance). After reading that Luther says: “Not some but all the articles of John Hus were condemned by Antichrist and his apostles in the synagogue of Satan. And to your face, most holy vicar of God, I say freely that all the condemned articles of John Hus are evangelical and Christian, and yours are downright impious and diabolical.”⁵ From this position Luther never left. In fact his enthusiasm for Hus deepened and grew. He could write to Georg Spalatin of Wittenberg University (1520): “Shamelessly I both taught and held the teaching of Hus: in short we were all Hussites without knowing it.”⁶ “Behold the horrible misery which came upon us because we did not accept the Bohemian doctor for our leader.”⁷ Similar words Luther used writing to Malanchton (1530).

In 1537 Luther supplied a preface to some letters of Hus and had opportunity not just to express doctrinal agreement but also voice the warmth of his affections. He did so powerfully: “If he, who in the agony of death, invoked Jesus, the Son of God, who suffered on our behalf, and gave himself up to the flames with such faith and constancy for Christ’s cause – if he did not to show himself a brave and worthy martyr of Christ – than may scarcely anyone be saved.”⁸ “Oh, that my name were worthy to be associated with such a man” was exclamation in one of his letters.⁹

Theology of the Unity of Brethren (*Unitas fratrum*)

The first members were peaceful followers of the Hussite movement. They established in 1457 the first church independent of Rome. In 1467 using drawing lots they selected and ordained their first priests. By doing that they showed up their spiritual understanding of the apostolic succession. The chalice shared by all participants during the Eucharist was for them a symbol of the priesthood of all believers.

The Brethren’s effort for independence were not merely a simple manifestation of a desire to preserve historically the social formation of the Unity. Rather, they were above all an obedient faithfulness to the summons of the Gospel which the Brethren heard, which could not avoid, and which they did not wish to keep quiet. In this faithfulness **the Unity introduced into the theological struggles of the classical age of Reformation the legacy of the First Reformation.**¹⁰

⁴ DILLENBERGER, John (ed.), *Martin Luther. Selections from his writings*. Anchor Books, New York, 1961, p. 266.

⁵ BAINTON, p. 128

⁶ SCHAFF, D. S. *John Huss*. London, 1915, p. 304.

⁷ BROADBENT, E. H. *The Pilgrim Church*. Pickering and Inglis, London, 1963, p. 132.

⁸ Schaff, p. 295.

⁹ Quoted in: HUS, John. *The Ecclesia. The Church*. (Translated with notes and introduction by David Schaff), Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut. 1954, p. XXXVI.

¹⁰ ŘÍČAN Rudolf and MOLNÁR, Amedeo. *Dějiny Jednoty bratrské*. Praha, Kalich 1957, p. 409-442.

The essential oneness of the Reformation was for the Brethren an article of faith but they did not close their eyes to the historical reality of its diversity. The late Prof. Amedeo Molnár who has been teaching Church history at the Charles University of Prague, one of the best experts on medieval age underlines that for simplicity we may talk of two reformations. By the First Reformation he means the rather broad current of efforts for renewal which either operated within humanly organized church or withdrew from it from the twelfth up about the end of the sixteenth century. The power of this current lent its weight to renewal of the church in head and members. It received its classical expressions and transient European influence partly from the Waldensians, partly from the Hussite revolutionary movement. And in an appreciable measure from the Czech Brethren.

If we compare this First Reformation, which in matters of form was still a medieval reformation, with the Second Reformation of the sixteenth century, even at first glance several of its distinctive features, if not its basic principles, are antithetical to the world Second Reformation, though they may be and anticipation of it. Its principle of authority has its center in the Gospel tradition, principally in the Sermon on the Mount and in a hopeful looking to the final consummation of Christ's Kingdom on earth. The conception of the Gospel as a rule of life critically intensifies a strict view towards the validity of priestly sacramental acts. However, while an impatient looking for the end of time nevertheless makes the legal site of the Gospel relative, it nourishes an inclination to prophetic vision and a readiness to accept a revelation of the Holy Spirit directly, sometimes without regard for the witness of Scripture.

In contrast to this, the Second Reformation consistently recognized the entire message of the Holy Scripture as authority over the whole church. For this the church finds strong support in Scripture in the letters of Paul. Here the legalism of the Gospel retreated before its grace and the gift of Christian freedom. Hope in final victory of Christ narrowed into a contemplation of personal eternal life lost its ethical and social import. On the other hand, it makes impossible, or at least restricts by the critical rule of Scripture, any uncontrolled growth of religious visionary fancy.

The difference between the two reformation streams is not only one of time. It is above all a difference in their social repercussions. The First Reformation was "popular" in the widest sense. It united adherents who in the great majority were from the lowest ranks of the social groups. It was socially disturbing, sometimes revolutionary. The Second Reformation received its greatest acceptance in the circle of the young middle class in a time when the disintegration of feudalism was beginning and continuing. Socially it was conservative.

If the rise of the Second Reformation falls at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the First reformation keeps its company in this time as well. The two reformations met, for a short time went hand in hand, and then separated. In the classical Reformation period (16th century) various groups of Baptists manifested, with varying degrees of clarity, the First Reformation begun so long before. A direct line of witness certainly leads from the Waldensians and Taborites (Hussites) to the left-wing streams of the sixteenth century.

The theology of the Czech Brethren, rooted in the First Reformation, refused to separate itself from the Second Reformation. The Unity of Brethren presented itself as being compatible with the Second Reformation. This was by no means, however, to be seen as ceasing to believe in or denying its own First Reformation. On the contrary, it acted thus because it gratefully recognized how this Second Reformation

could biblically purify the Unity's current confessional position. In the Brethren's theology, both reformations dialogue together and jointly desire to submit themselves to the truth, which is Christ. (It is very interesting to read letters and written conversations between leaders of the Unity of Brethren and Luther, Melancton, Zwingli, Calvin, Martin Bucer and others).

There is a very meaningful approach and work of **Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius)** – the last Bishop of the Unity of the Brethren. Komenský announced that he had set to work on the improvement of methods of human instruction and education not as an educator but as a theologian. Continuity in the Brethren's line is not sufficient, of course, to explain fully Komenský's stature. He lived in a time when Protestant orthodoxy on all sides undertook a noteworthy attempt to defend Reformation heritage in an exchange with current thought. It did so, of course, for the most part in a conservative way.

In Komenský's will for harmonious synthesis, he attempted by juxtaposition (džakstapožišn) of God's revelation in Scripture, reason, and emotion to solve the questions which addressed him. In the Unity of Brethren he saw the indirect continuation of the Waldensian reformation and the direct continuation of the reformation of Hus. The Brethren had advanced beyond the Hussites in that they undertook their work of creating a church without the aid of a worldly power base and with great emphasis on an independent order of discipline. Komenský praises the unity for this specific emphasis.

Komenský was critical of the European Second Reformation because of on theological grounds **he was unable to reconcile himself with the fragmentation of Protestantism**. His theology of history did not permit any period of church history to be made the standard for all. In Komenský's thought, **only the age of the time to come in God and Christ could have the nature of a paradigm**. Komensky wanted human society to be the society of education where everything is done "sub specie educationis".¹¹

The Brethren professed that while Scripture speaks first of all in the church, it at the same time speaks to the church. The church, although it is necessarily the interpreter and communicator of the scriptural witness, is measured by Holy Scripture and subjected to its critical form. The church must dare to interpret Scripture in obedience to the apostolic interpretation, that is, it is to make use of the Old Testament in the light of the New.

Judge of Cheb. In the Soudce Chebský (Judge of Cheb) of 1432, to whose formulation Rokycana adhered, this Reformation specified its authoritative principle, and the Unity of Brethren retained its essential elements. Under the Cheb agreements between the agents of the Hussite and the Council of Basel, the authority of Scripture is understood in its Christological dimension as a witness concerning the contents of the Confessions and rules of life of the early church. This *ecclesia primitiva* has a normative significance for the church of all ages because it is temporally and materially uniquely near to its founder. The Basel Council (1431) wanted The Hussites to accept the authority of the Holy Spirit speaking through the representatives of the Church. The Hussites said "No". The highest authority in the Church must be the Holy Scripture.

¹¹ WERNISCH, Martin. (Ed.) *Unitas Fratrum 1457-2007: Jednota bratrská jako kulturní a duchovní fenomén*. Studie a texty ETF UK, Vol. 15, 2/2009, p. 106

The Distinction of Essential, Ministrative and Incidental Things. The distinction of things essential to salvation from those things which are ministrative to salvation and those things which are merely appropriate may be called the formal principle of the Brethren's theology. The essential things of Christianity are "Faith, love and Hope and out of these good works and virtuous life. The discernment of the distinction between essential, ministrative, and incidental things, and the understanding of the theological significance of their mutual relation, as well as their inability to be mixed together, was considered by the Brethren almost throughout the whole of their theological existence as a special manifestation of God's grace which was granted to them. The delineation of these distinctions was for them a most precious principle and in its consequences, was also a most revolutionary one, even though it represented a remarkable point of departure for a more conciliatory ecumenical outlook."¹²

The Brethren had already formulated this principle clearly in their first generation as they took aim against the dogmatic and ceremonial innovations of late Catholicism. For example, in 1470 they said:

"The basic matters of salvation are set forth by the apostles by word and deed in the Holy Spirit, and all believing Christians must make use of them, preserve them for the sake of their salvation, and in no way, alter them. They must make use of ministrative things so far as time and place permit for confirmation of salvation, but in case this is impossible they can dispense with them without loss of salvation. Finally, incidental things may be amended according to contemporary convenience, and may be instituted and discontinued without diminution of saving truth."¹³

Ecumenical heritage. There is only one church (essential and ministrative), but there are many "unities", for example "The Roman Unity", "The Luther's Unity, The Czech Utraquist Unity and of course "The Unity of Brethren". The word "church" is reserved just for the universal entity of Christ's body.

Komenský has been ready to cooperate even with Jesuits (leaders of the counter-reformation) if this would be important for sake of evangelism.

Sacraments. Brother Lukáš Pražský (Luke of Prague) defines a sacrament as a visible sign of an invisible grace and truth, founded in Christ and given by him as a gift. Never, however, is the sacrament itself identical with truth, with the *res* (matter) of sacrament. Therefore, it is necessary in matters which concern the sacraments "to think things through soberly" (1493). The Brethren rejected any notion of an automatic operation of the sacraments (*per opus operatum; ex opere operato*). Nevertheless, for the Brethren a sacrament was never merely a symbol, and Lukáš wrote in this sense against Zwinglianism. A sacrament has its own particular sacramental value.¹⁴

Also, baptism does not have a magical effect. The justification and new birth worked by God himself must precede baptism, and on a person's part, then, faith and confession of faith must precede it. The administration of baptism has a twofold intention. On the one hand, it seeks to bear witness to the righteousness which comes from faith and to the certainty of salvation; on the other hand, it incorporates the one baptized into the spiritual body of the church.

¹² ŘÍČAN Rudolf and MOLNÁR, Amedeo. (1957), p. 424-5

¹³ ŘÍČAN Rudolf and MOLNÁR, Amedeo. (1957), p. 426

¹⁴ ŘÍČAN Rudolf and MOLNÁR, Amedeo. (1957), p. 438-439

We still consider the legacy of the Reformation as very important and inspiring our churches in contemporary days. We thank God for both reformations trying to apply what is biblical and cross culturally acceptable. In the time of a big decline of Christianity in Europe, some of our evangelical churches experience certain growth. We strive to develop more our public theology for this age. Our evangelism must be incarnational and we learn how to develop our social ministry. As a Czech Reformation heritage, we keep up our ecumenical cooperation with other Churches. Until now most of our Protestant Churches preserve and use something of the Czech Reformation legacy.

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Dr. Pavel Černý, Prague

PROTESTANTISM IN FRANCE AND ITS FUTURE AND RELEVANCE

by
WRF Member Pierre Berthoud

A. Some historical and philosophical markers

France has a rich historical and cultural heritage that has contributed significantly to its national and contemporary identity. It is tributary/dependent of both the Greek-Roman as well as the Judeo-Christian legacies. Up until the 16th Century Christianity in its Roman Catholic brand was dominant. But with the rise of humanism during the late medieval times (cf the debate with regards to Thomas of Aquinas), the Renaissance and especially the Enlightenment, a struggle arose between those who strove for the emancipation that autonomous reason was expected to offer, and those who considered that only the Church (RC) could contribute significantly to the salvation and freedom of both the individual and civil society. In other words one can say that the modern era was characterized by a conflict between two forms of authority, that of reason and that of the Church. Historically and culturally speaking Protestantism was caught between these two dominant currents of French society, between these two forms of authority, the authority of the Roman Catholic Church and the authority of autonomous reason which sought to emancipate itself from the religious and political domination of the Church.

In the 16th Century the Reformation had a significant impact on the French people. Historians suggest that a least 10% of the population joined the Reformed movement. I would tend to think that the number was more important. The Reformed Faith thus had a significant impact on culture, society and politics. If the Protestants had not lost the Wars of religion (which in fact should be considered as civil wars) the face of France would have been quite different. This is what François Mitterrand, a former French President, suggested in a speech he gave in La Rochelle (1983), one of the 16th Century fortified Protestant cities of France. Speaking of the tragic event of the siege of La Rochelle (1627/28-Richelieu and Louis XIII) he says: "I think the history of France hesitated on that day. It was even somewhat broken."

The 16th Century Reformation was a major event that changed the face of Europe; it was one of the most significant spiritual, theological and cultural renewals in the history of Christianity with its impact both on the Church and on society. So much so that it still has a hearing and an influence in many parts of our contemporary world (South Korea, Indonesia, Brazil, Mexico, North America... are remarkable example of this fact). The uniqueness of the Reformation with its world and life view deeply rooted in the Word of God is well illustrated by John Calvin. In the Introduction to his Commentary on the Psalms he gives an account of his conversion (Calvin rarely speaks of himself in his writings). He identifies it with a radical change of mind involving a break with the Roman Catholic mind set and superstitions; but also with the humanist philosophy inherent to the Renaissance. (cf. Calvin, Jean. *Commentaire sur le livre des Psaume*, Volume 1. Paris: Meyrueis, 1859. The Preface)

No doubts the Renaissance was a significant movement with its emphasis on the humanities and the Greek and Roman heritage which Calvin and the reformers appreciated and included in their system of education but philosophically it was breaking away from the Christian world and life view. We must not forget that Calvin's first publication was his Commentary on Seneca's *De Clementia* (1532). This

publication revealed that he was then a humanist in the tradition of Erasmus and that he fully mastered his classics.

While breaking with these two major currents of the 16th Century, the writings of Luther (and others) made him understand that the ultimate fountain of wisdom was in God and his Word, both written and incarnate, and in the living Christian tradition that remained faithful to the truth and beauty of this glorious heritage. We can understand why already during his lifetime he underwent continual criticism, was involved in a fierce spiritual warfare and experienced strong opposition which has continued even until today.

As Europe entered a new era, the modern era, the triune God was at work opening up new perspectives that would bring about change in all the spheres of life and culture. As you all know the Reformation and the revival it brought about spread like fire to the four corners of Europe and with the time far beyond. Thus I would venture to say that one of the unique contributions of the Reformation was to break away from both Roman Catholicism and the humanist philosophy already present in the Renaissance without renouncing to its positive aspects, the humanities. Thus the Academy in Geneva taught Classical Greek and Latin and its students were well versed not only in the Ecumenical councils, the Early Church Fathers and Medieval Theology but also in their classics which they studied within a Christian perspective. Within the French context the clear stand initiated by the Reformers was upheld and maintained up until roughly the middle of the 18th Century. (cf. the book first published in Basel in 1769 : *La Saine Doctrine tirée des écrits des plus célèbres Docteurs de l'Eglise réformée*. Neuchâtel: Louis Fauché-Borel, 1804. The editor's name is not mentioned.)

The persecutions and the wars between Protestants and Catholics represented a major disaster for the Kingdom of France as well as for the Protestant Churches. In spite of the Edict of Nantes signed in 1585 the Protestants were to experience harassments, second rate citizenship, persecution and the exile. In fact in the Kingdom of France, an absolute State, with its emphasis on one faith, one law and one king, there was no place for religious plurality and specifically for the descendants of the Reformation. Thus by the end of the 17th Century the Protestants had all but been eradicated. Such was the aim of Louis XIV when he signed in 1685 the Edict of Fontainebleau revoking the Edict of Nantes. Numerous were the Huguenots who left their homeland. As a consequence the Kingdom of France was impoverished and many of the Protestant States in Europe and beyond were enriched by the arrival of the waves of migrants.

During that time humanism with its emphasis on the autonomy of reason was gaining ground. Thus the Classical 17th Century was to give way to the Enlightenment of the 18th Century. The aim of this movement, which had its roots in the Renaissance, was to emancipate itself from the tyranny of the absolute State and the all-embracing Roman Catholic Church. In a way one could say that both Protestants and humanist philosophers were facing the same obstacles, were resisting and fighting the same opponents not to say the same adversaries. It is precisely at this very moment of history that some influential Protestants made a fatal mistake which was to have lasting effects. Not only were they cobelligerent with the humanists but actually they became allies with them. In other words they thought they could adopt some of the tenants of humanism while upholding the Christian faith. Considering their plight, their struggle for survival and recognition we can understand such a move. These heirs of the Reformation in France thus practiced a modern version of the syncretism that continually threatened both the people of Israel and the Church since its very beginning.

In fact it was the root, the beginning of the doctrinal, ethical and spiritual confusion and decline we are witnessing in many of the historical Churches, Christian Universities and Seminaries today. To seek such a synthesis, such a compromise, is to seek to conform to the cultural climate of the age. Such a move is suicidal for a God centered world and life view and a man centered philosophy are incompatible. Of course there are points of contact and there are some profound insights in human wisdom and we must welcome truth where ever it comes from, but their basic outlook and presuppositions cannot be brought together just like water and oil cannot be mixed. When theologians and Church leaders are tempted to give in to such a seduction it is usually the Christian faith that is eroded and absorbed. Having been emptied of its content and power all that is left is a bright but superficial and ineffective varnish (2Tim3:4-5)! Unfortunately this tendency was to be confirmed during the following centuries, right into the 21st Century illustrated by the decision of The United Protestant Church of France, including both Reformed and Lutheran communities, which adopted a motion at its National Synod in May 2015 to allow same gender couples who have been married civilly to receive the blessing of the local Church.

B. Some statistics

Let us now consider some statistics: Protestants represent roughly 3% of the French population including people who consider themselves close to this movement without adhering to it (2 million out of 67 million inhabitants). The Protestants are divided into two federations of Churches and organizations: the French Protestant Federation (FPF), representing 50 to 60% of the Protestants, and the National Council of the Evangelicals of France (CNEF/NCEF), representing 40 to 50% of the Protestants.

1. The FPF

The French Protestant Federation was founded in 1905. Twenty-two Churches or Denominations belong to the French Protestant Federation and seventy-nine communities, institutions, organizations and movements, working in a wide range of areas: children, youth, elderly people, health, social work, recreation and holidays, education, communication, arts, international relations, mission and development. That means about 500 associations. The FPF comprises a majority French protestant Churches and associations, including both liberal and evangelical sensitivities: Reformed, Lutheran, Baptist, Charismatic and Pentecostal. It is partner of the different para-Church and ecumenical instances in Europe (KEK) and in the world (WCC). The small Reformed Evangelical denomination is part of this federation. The Seminary has established a special partnership with this denomination (*Union des Eglises Protestanes Réformées Evangéliques de France*). The Seminary also has relationships with the FPF.

2. The CNEF/NCEF

Founded in 2010 the CNEF/NCEF considers itself as the heir of the Reformations of the 16th Century and the Revivals that followed. Roughly 30 Church Federations and Denominations, representing all the sensitivities of the Evangelical movement, are members of the CNEF/NCEF. To this number should be added numerous organizations and institutions. In other words 75% of the French Evangelicals (the others are in the FPF). Its members all share the same basic Evangelical convictions as expressed in

the Declaration of Faith of the Evangelical Alliance. The CNEF/NCEF also recognizes The Lausanne Covenant, The Manilla Manifesto and the Cape Town Commitment. It seeks to emphasize both the unity and the diversity of the Evangelical constituencies. It is a member of the EEA and the WEA. The CNEF/NCEF is the dynamic wing of Protestantism today. It has a strong vision for the proclamation of the Gospel and Church planting. Many of the young people who are members of Churches belonging to the CNEF/NCEF come to the *Faculté Jean Calvin* to train for the ministry. They thus get exposed to Reformed World and life view and theology. Church growth is essentially due to this Protestant wing, both Evangelical and Pentecostal. Other groups, not members of these two federations are actively involved in evangelization and Church planting. One group, *La Mission Timothée*, for example over the last 20 years has planted 20 new Churches. A number of their leaders have been trained at the Seminary.

3. Vision and Mission Of the *Faculté Jean Calvin* (FJC)

In France there are two Evangelical Seminaries: the Evangelical Seminary of Vaux-sur Seine (Interdenominational, Baptist, founded in 1965); the *Faculté Jean Calvin* of Aix-en-Provence (Reformed, non-denominational, child baptism, founded in 1974). Both Seminaries are members of the CNEF/NCEF. There are also Bible Institutes. In addition there are three pluralistic (liberal) Seminaries (Strasbourg, Paris and Montpellier) and one 7th Day Adventist Seminary, close to the Evangelicals.

It is precisely within this context that the *Faculté Jean Calvin* opened its doors in 1974. At that time the Christian reformed Faith as inherited from the French Reformation hardly had a hearing both in pluralistic and Evangelical Churches. Since the crisis and confusion existing in the historical Churches was related to a theological training that had strayed from its biblical and reformed roots the founders of the *Faculté*/Seminary in Aix-en-Provence decided to launch a thoroughly reformed institution whose teaching was based on the Reformed Confessions of Faith such as *La Confession de Foi de la Rochelle* (the Gallican Confession of Faith) and able to respond to the contemporary issues that the Churches and Christians were facing. Its aim was to contribute to the revival of Reformed Evangelical theology, the edification of the Churches both Reformed and Evangelical, and to contribute to the evangelization as well as the church planting efforts in secular France. Rapidly the Seminary drew students from both reformed and evangelical churches and its audience extended beyond the French borders especially the francophone countries both in Europe, Africa and beyond. We have also had students from the non-French speaking world both in Europe and abroad (GB, Germany, Holland, Italy, Spain, Portugal, USA, Canada, Brazil, Korea...). We offer a three cycle program, Masters of divinity, Masters of Theology and the Doctorat both on campus and at a distance. Presently more than a hundred students are registered in one of our programs in view of obtaining a degree. We are very encouraged by what the Lord is doing in our midst and we are convinced this is one of the major means to bring about reformation and revival within francophone countries who are in dire need of being exposed to the truth, the relevance and life of God's written and incarnate Word, incarnate in Jesus-Christ.

C. 2015, a year of challenges in France

Paris was the witness of two major terrorist attacks in 2015 : on the 7th of January the massacre of 14 people in the offices of the satirical newspaper, *Charlie Hebdo*, followed by the killing of 4 hostages at the

Kosher Grocery Store and a police agent in *Montrouge* ; on the 13th of November, the vicious slaughter of a 130 people, at the *Bataclan* concert hall, at the *Carrillon*, the *Petit Cambodge*, *A la Bonne Bière*, *La Belle Equipe*, *Le Comptoir Voltaire* (restaurants and cafés of the capital) and the *Stade de France*, which left the French population utterly shocked and stunned. For days the population remained confined to their homes, not daring to walk the streets of Paris. The state of emergency was declared by the President, François Hollande, and contributed significantly to the paralysis of cultural events. Theaters, concert halls, museums... were closed!

It is worthwhile comparing the reactions that followed the two terrorist attacks for they are somewhat different.

The gatherings that followed the dramatic events of **January** (January 7-9) -expressions of national unity and solidarity- were more formal and political. Thus, for example, on the 11th of January almost 4 million people protested in the streets of 265 cities of France. In Paris alone, 1.5 million people took part in the *Marche Républicaine* led by 44 heads of states. Such gatherings represent a record in modern French history. The aim of these demonstrations was to emphasize the centrality of the Republic and of freedom in our democracies, the freedom of conscience and more specifically freedom of speech, including the freedom to blasphemy. The weekly satirical newspaper, *Charlie Hebdo*, sacrilegious at times and not widely read before the events, is the symbol of absolute freedom of speech. Such a right to blaspheme is a long-standing practice going back to the Enlightenment, Voltaire being its emblematic figure. It was thus already tolerated under the *Ancien Régime*. Actually the blasphemy law ceased to exist as the Republic emancipated itself from the Catholic Church between 1789 and 1830. Such a radical concept of freedom thus became effective in 1830 with the abolition of the law on blasphemy and was confirmed in 1905 when the legislation on the separation of Church and State was adopted, giving rise to the specific French notion of *laïcité*. Total separation between Church and State implying that religion was to be confined to the private sphere

In fact when the question is considered carefully, even in our democracies, there are limits to freedom, but the point being emphasized presently is that the terrorist acts touched a very sensitive spot. It was taken as an attack on what the French cherish most, freedom of conscience and of speech even allowing the possibility to blaspheme. Thus the slogan "*je suis Charlie*" (I am Charlie) became the symbol of the spirit of resistance and rebellion to all forms of political and religious power and oppression, much as had occurred under the *Ancien Régime*, which was seen as a threat to human emancipation and freedom. Of course, as Christians we are co-belligerent, but with some reservations, for the spirit of the Age is an expression of a purely horizontal and humanist philosophy that has no interest in transcendence and in an infinite personal God who communicates truth and wisdom. Thus we militate for form and freedom recognizing that there is no such thing as absolute freedom. As responsible beings, we are accountable first to the God who exists, then to the authorities and to our fellow creatures. As we practice freedom we are bound by the love of God and of our neighbors. We are to honor the Lord and to respect the dignity of all human beings, whether in authority or not and whatever their philosophical and religious outlooks.

The terrorist attacks of **November** had a different outcome, but were just as devastating as they, in some ways, took the French by surprise. Not that the French had not been warned or were not expecting some

murderous acts! This time the terrorists aimed at the French lifestyle: enjoying a Friday evening meal with friends on a terrace of a café or in a restaurant, going to the movies or to a concert (the “Bataclan” where the famous and provocative group, “Eagle Death Metal”, were performing) or attending a football match at the *Stade de France*. In the largest stadium of the country, 70 000 fans had come to watch the French team play Germany, the World Champions since 2014! These devastating acts touched on what the French are most proud of and famous for: the quality of their individual and community lifestyles. They were deeply wounded and distressed by these outrageous, cold-blooded killings of ordinary people who after a week’s labor were enjoying entertainment, friendship and the mundane pleasures of life. They needed an understanding presence, compassion and healing even if this wasn’t openly acknowledged.

With this in mind, it is most interesting to note that the first tweet with the hashtag “Pray for Paris” appeared on Friday night at 10.20 pm exactly one hour after the first explosion at the *Stade de France*! This slogan was repeated 6.7 million times and within 10 hours the messages on social media were far more numerous than the slogan “*Je suis Charlie*” had been in 5 days. A few days later, when I went to the ophthalmologist in Aix-en-Provence I was surprised to see on the front door of the shop a poster carrying the hashtag “Pray for Paris”. At the same time an amazing patriotic fervor symbolized by the presence of the French flag everywhere spread through the country and beyond. There were no big gatherings because of the state of emergency, but many built shrines depositing flowers and candles in the horror-stricken places in memory of those who had experienced such a dramatic death. Such sympathy was actually worldwide and the French population was moved by such an expression of solidarity. As the new slogan spread, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) immediately sent a team, specially equipped to handle such traumatic events, to Paris and they worked hand in hand with French teams (Protestant, Evangelical and even Roman Catholic). This discreet and compassionate presence of Christians was appreciated by many as they gathered and mourned at the different “shrines”. One person having miraculously avoided the worst said he would have to reconsider his agnostic mindset. An elderly woman wished to pray but didn’t know how to do so since she had forgotten The Lord’s Prayer she had learned when a child! In the midst of a secularized cultural environment, within this most dramatic situation, and notwithstanding the skepticism and despair of many, the triune God in his goodness, kindness and justice was ministering and healing bewildered minds and broken hearts! It is difficult to evaluate the impact these teams had but many were touched by such a significant presence but to be sure the seeds sown will bear fruit in due time. Today the French people are much more open to this type of Christian witness!

Such disastrous events, whatever one’s stance and outlook, are an invitation to reflection. As Ecclesiastes says: “When times are good be happy, but when times are bad, consider” (lit. “look” Ecc. 7.14a). When times are evil then is the time to observe, to consider, to ponder and to reflect on what is actually happening and on the dignity, the fragility and wickedness of heart found in every human being. We are in the midst of a major cultural crisis. Secularized France and Europe, not to mention the West, are confronted with the unexpected challenge of the Islamic Faith with its coherent political and religious world-and-life view.

The French government after being far too lenient before the tragic events has now taken a strong and decisive political stand both in its military action against ISIS as well as in taking some crucial measures

to combat the terrorists within France and protecting the population. It has also emphasized the importance of both education and social care, especially in the neglected neighborhoods of many large cities. The French are also aware of the cultural challenge, but they totally underestimate the impact religions have on the mindset and the fabric of societies. In fact, this is not surprising, for humanism (in considering religious faith, including Christianity) at best as unreal, as a speech event and as fiction, neglects an important aspect of reality. It is thus ill-equipped not only to understand Islam, but also to respond to it appropriately. The cultural challenge also has a spiritual dimension to it. That is why it is of paramount importance for Christians to get involved in this spiritual warfare which includes the question of truth, of personal divine truth and how it enlightens and bears on all aspects of life in society, both private and public.

This dynamic, the Chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel, understood very well when she gave a lecture early September 2015 at the University of Bern in Switzerland. To a "middle-aged woman who rose from the audience to ask what the Chancellor intended to do to prevent 'Islamization' with so many Muslims entering the country" Merkel's response was most interesting. She rightly emphasized that "fear has never been a good advisor, neither in our personal lives nor in our societies". She went a step further by saying that "cultures and societies that are shaped by fear will without doubt not get a grip on the future". She also added, and this was both unexpected and amazing, that the answer really is in our "courage to be Christians, to be able to create dialogue (with Muslims), to return to Church and to read and study the Bible." Thus the arrival of many refugees on the European soil and the debates it provokes are the occasion "to reconsider our own roots" If we want to dialogue and speak of ourselves this requires that we know and understand ourselves. The answer to the challenge that represents "Islamization" is indeed related to the renaissance of the Christian Faith both in France and in Europe, without which there will be no significant and lasting revival and reformation. As we conclude these thoughts, let us remember the Apostle Paul's exhortation:

"I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving be made for all people - kings and all those in authority- that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1Ti 2.1-4).

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Two documents from the websites

A. **La Fédération protestante de France The French Protestant Federation.**(English version)



The French Protestant Federation was founded in 1905 (nineteen hundred five).

Twenty-two Churches or Union of Churches are belonging to the French Protestant Federation and seventy-nine communities, institutions, organizations and movements, working in a wide range of areas : children, youth, elderly people, health, social work, recreation and holidays, education, communication, arts, international relations, mission and development. That means about 500 (five hundred) associations.

The FPF is an association but too an administration and services (undertaking).

Twenty-five persons are working in seven services : Communication, Radio, TV, Ecumenism, Biblical Service, *Aumony* of jails, military *Aumony*.

The FPF join together the most French protestant Churches and associations, in the diversity of the various protestant and evangelical sensibilities since the Reformation : Lutheran, Baptist, Reformed, Charismatic and Pentecostal one.

The FPF contribute to the dialog of those sensibilities in order to bring them closer, represent them near the state and ministries, publics powers and medias.

The FPF is directed by a Council and his president. Claude Baty, actual president, is member of the Union of the free evangelical Church, a Calvinist one. He is one of the important voices of the Protestantism in the French society.

He is telling publically in name of the FPF on such topics than "religious freedom, "laïcité / relationship between the Church and the State", "Ethics", "Faith and Science" and so on...

The FPF is member of the Christian Council of Churches in France, with the Roman Catholic Church and The Orthodox Church.

The Council designate several commissions, to light his analysis and to make proposals. For exemple, two commissions take charge of the dialog with Muslims and Jews. One another gather the different french protestant schools. A commission is studying the actual themes under the title "Church and Society", like "ethics and biology", Europ and migrants", "Ecology and preservation of the creation"...

The member bodies of the French Protestant Federation adhere to a chart, which states their conviction that they are called and bound together by the gospel as expressed in the scriptures, and recognize the centrality of the proclamation of salvation by grace, received by faith alone.

The preaching of the Reformation, the spiritual movements entailed by the Reformation, and the ecumenical approach, affirm this conviction. In the fraternal love and Freedom given by the gospel, they practice mutual Eucharistic hospitality in response to the invitation of the Lord and a sign of their communion in Christ.

The French Protestant Federation represent nowadays a spiritual community of about nine hundred thousand christian persons, the protestant and evangelical people in France being a small minority, of 2,3 (two or three) per cent of the global population. That means that the FPF represents the two-third of the French protestantism.

The FPF is partner of the different evangelical and ecumenical instances in Europe and in the world.

At the end of this year 2009 (two thousand nine), we will organize a big meeting in Strasbourg, - we hope something like a big feast to testify that Jesus Christ is a hope for everyone in our world. We are waiting for more than ten thousand people of the different sensibilities of the French Protestantism.

This year is, too, the jubilee of the birth of John Calvin, the French Reformer and the author of the "Christian Institution". That's to say that the French protestantism now restate his theological basis and think over his presence in the French society. The FPF is associated at these different official moments.

Document rédigé par Yves Parrend - mai 2009

B. Conseil national des Évangéliques de France (CNEF- NCEF). English version not available.

Introduction

Cette charte a été rédigée pour présenter, de façon succincte mais aussi clairement que possible, les intentions des fondateurs du CNEF. Plus générale que les statuts, elle précise les raisons qui ont conduit à cette création et l'esprit dans lequel la nouvelle entité fonctionnera.

Histoire et contexte

En réponse à l'invitation du Conseil National de l'Alliance Évangélique Française (AEF) et du Comité National de la Fédération Évangélique de France (FEF), la majorité des responsables des Unions d'Églises et des Institutions de formation biblique de France s'est rencontrée une première fois le 6 janvier 2001, dans la chapelle de l'Institut Biblique de Nogent-sur-Marne. Cette assemblée a pris conscience de l'éparpillement des évangéliques et a déploré le préjudice que cela entraîne pour une parole et un témoignage clairs. Elle a donc décidé de se retrouver le 18 juin 2001, dans le même lieu, pour une journée de jeûne et de prière. A cette occasion, plusieurs responsables ont exprimé, au nom de leur Fédération et de leur Union, une demande de pardon pour les distances entretenues par le passé et ont manifesté une volonté de reconnaissance réciproque et de développement de liens fraternels.

Il a été décidé alors de transmettre aux unions, associations et fédérations respectives ce qui venait d'être vécu et de confier à un groupe de travail le soin de réfléchir au contour que pourrait avoir une plate-forme regroupant si possible l'ensemble du monde évangélique.

Le 7 janvier 2002, une première ébauche est proposée. Le 6 janvier 2003, les représentants du mouvement évangélique français créent le Conseil National des Évangéliques de France (CNEF) et adoptent, à l'unanimité, un premier texte où le CNEF est défini comme « un lieu d'échange, de réflexion, de concertation et de prière, une plate-forme en vue de renforcer les liens et la visibilité du protestantisme évangélique français, dans le respect de ses diversités ». Cinq pôles composent alors cette plate-forme : AEF, FEF, Assemblées de Dieu (ADD), Pentecôtistes et Charismatiques, Évangéliques membres de la Fédération Protestante de France (FPF).

Le CNEF choisit en son sein un comité représentatif issu de ces cinq familles. Le comité est chargé, entre autres, d'organiser la vie du CNEF et de réfléchir à son évolution possible et souhaitable. De leur côté, les bureaux de l'AEF et de la FEF renforcent leurs relations et se retrouvent régulièrement pour affiner le projet.

De 2003 à 2007, le CNEF se réunit deux fois par an ; il met en place des groupes de travail sur les questions d'éthique et d'implantation d'églises. Il consacre aussi du temps au jeûne, à la prière, à l'étude des caractéristiques de chaque famille qui le compose et à la poursuite de la réflexion sur l'avenir.

Le 12 septembre 2006, le CNEF se dote de principes déontologiques par lesquels ses membres expriment leur volonté « par leur comportement et leurs relations (de) favoriser l'avancement du royaume de Dieu et accomplir leur vocation qui est de servir et de rendre témoignage au même Sauveur et Seigneur Jésus-Christ, en comptant sur sa seule grâce. »

Le 7 septembre 2007, les bureaux de l'AEF et de la FEF se rencontrent et sont convaincus d'être arrivés à une étape décisive. Ils ont chacun pris conscience que la multiplicité d'instances constitue non seulement un handicap dans leur rapport avec les autorités et les médias mais aussi un gaspillage de forces humaines et matérielles, voire un contre-témoignage. Ils décident donc de soumettre au comité représentatif du CNEF un projet d'évolution qui lui permettrait de jouer pleinement et efficacement son rôle de représentation et d'animation ainsi que de positionner les évangéliques comme une composante, non négligeable, du protestantisme.

Le 11 septembre 2007, les représentants du mouvement évangélique français présents décident, à l'unanimité, de soumettre à leurs instances respectives ce projet d'évolution qui se caractérise principalement par un transfert à la nouvelle entité, d'une part des activités et de la mission de l'AEF et d'autre part de celles qui, parmi les missions de la FEF, contribuent au bien commun des évangéliques, notamment en terme de représentation auprès des autorités et de relation avec les médias.

Le 29 janvier 2008, l'assemblée plénière du CNEF demande au comité représentatif de poursuivre l'élaboration du projet. Au cours des mois qui suivent, il fixe le calendrier des opérations et s'attache particulièrement à la rédaction des textes statutaires. Dans le même temps, le CNEF décide d'accueillir les œuvres en son sein.

Les 19 et 20 janvier 2009 l'ensemble du projet est validé. Il est présenté aux Églises et aux œuvres, dans sa globalité, au cours de cette même année. Les textes (Statuts, Règlement intérieur, etc.) structurant le CNEF sont finalisés.

Le 19 janvier 2010, l'assemblée plénière adopte ces textes. Ceux-ci sont communiqués aux unions d'Églises et aux œuvres pour qu'elles puissent formaliser, en toute connaissance de cause, leur demande d'adhésion au CNEF.

Le 15 juin 2010, se tient l'assemblée générale constitutive du CNEF au cours de laquelle plus d'une centaine de délégués du mouvement protestant évangélique français créent officiellement le CNEF, adoptent les textes statutaires qui en régissent la vie et nomment son organe directeur.

Identité

Le CNEF se réclame de l'héritage des Réformes protestantes et des mouvements de Réveils qui ont suivi. Ses membres partagent tous une même conviction évangélique fondamentale telle qu'elle est exprimée par la Déclaration de foi de l'Alliance Évangélique. Ils peuvent avoir des sensibilités théologiques diverses sur des points jugés non séparateurs. Ils se reconnaissent aussi dans les affirmations de la Déclaration de Lausanne et du Manifeste de Manille. Par ailleurs, le CNEF reprend à son compte, parmi les missions de la FEF, celles qui contribuent au bien commun des Évangéliques, ainsi que la vision et les engagements de l'AEF. Enfin, il s'inscrit dans les réseaux européen et mondial du mouvement évangélique (Alliance Évangélique Européenne et Alliance Évangélique Mondiale).

Vision

L'ensemble des croyants du monde entier, rachetés par le Fils de Dieu et revêtus de son Esprit, sont un en Jésus-Christ. Ils sont appelés à adorer le Seigneur et à proclamer l'Évangile jusqu'aux extrémités de la terre. Ce témoignage universel rendu à l'Évangile par tous les chrétiens répond au besoin le plus essentiel de notre monde. Les membres du CNEF déclarent donc, avec tous ceux qui voudront se joindre à eux, qu'ils veulent unir leurs cœurs et leurs volontés afin d'honorer Dieu et d'obéir à sa Parole pour le progrès de l'Évangile.

Ainsi, le CNEF est une plate-forme commune à tous ses adhérents, une base pour renforcer les liens entre ses membres et amener les chrétiens évangéliques à mieux se connaître. Il cherche aussi à exprimer l'unité donnée par Jésus-Christ, aux plans national, régional ou local. Il veut favoriser diverses actions, notamment sur le plan de la prière, de l'évangélisation, de la formation, de l'entraide et du témoignage chrétien. Il souhaite ainsi rendre plus sensible la présence des évangéliques, développer leur action dans la société et être la voix des protestants évangéliques pour faire entendre, lorsque cela est jugé nécessaire, une parole appropriée.

Mission

Organe représentatif du protestantisme évangélique français, le CNEF est habilité à exercer parmi ses membres ou en leur nom, un rôle de concertation, d'information, de représentation et d'animation de projets. Il cherche à renforcer la communion et la concertation entre ses membres ainsi que la collaboration et la mutualisation de leurs ressources communes. Dans le respect des initiatives plus particulières de ses membres, il lui appartient de mettre en place des actions qui vont dans ce sens et qui contribuent au progrès de l'Évangile.

Il veut favoriser une meilleure visibilité et lisibilité du protestantisme évangélique français, tant vis-à-vis de l'opinion publique que des médias, des autorités politiques, de l'administration, des autres confessions chrétiennes ou de diverses instances représentatives. Compte tenu des racines historiques communes et des défis posés à l'ensemble du protestantisme, le CNEF veillera à développer une concertation utile avec la Fédération Protestante de France.

De manière générale, il met tout en œuvre pour aider ses membres à être « le sel de la terre et la lumière du monde ».

Valeurs

Au cœur de leur engagement et de leur pratique, les membres du CNEF veulent vivre en accord avec les principes de déontologie qu'ils se sont donnés et conformément aux valeurs qui l'inspirent.

Ils sont fermement attachés à la liberté religieuse, telle que, en particulier, la Convention européenne des droits de l'homme le stipule. Ils se savent solidaires du monde créé par Dieu et soucieux de lui annoncer l'Évangile dans toutes ses dimensions.

Ils veulent être particulièrement attentifs au développement de relations de qualité, respectueuses de l'identité de chacun, sans forcément souscrire aux particularismes de l'un ou l'autre. Ils gardent une attitude de respect et d'ouverture à l'égard de chacun. Ils veillent à éviter la polémique sur des points de divergence et s'appliquent à manifester positivement toute la communion possible.

Ils privilégient la concertation et la collaboration, encouragent les projets et actions élaborés par le CNEF tout en reconnaissant à chacun la liberté de ne pas participer à tout ce qui est proposé. L'unité n'est pas synonyme d'uniformité et fait droit à la diversité.

Ils s'efforcent de se conduire d'une manière digne de l'Évangile du Christ et d'avoir un comportement cohérent. C'est pourquoi ils chercheront toujours à agir avec honnêteté, humilité, amour et vérité, et à conformer leur enseignement et leur pratique, tant privée que publique, à la révélation biblique.

Charte de fondation adoptée le 19 janvier 2009 par les membres du CNEF à Nogent sur Marne et validée par l'assemblée constitutive du CNEF du 15 juin 2010

Une trentaine de fédérations et unions d'Eglises qui font partie du CNEF. Cad 75% des Évangéliques de France et un peu moins de 50% des protestants de France sachant que le Protestantisme représente environ (inclus les personnes se disant proche du Protestantisme) 3% de la population française (environ 67 000 000). Les Évangéliques sont nettement plus pratiquants que les Réformés et les Luthériens (cf exemple de Marseille-plus de 40 lieux de culte évangéliques, moins de 10 lieux de cultes réformés et luthériens. Il s'ensuit un rapport de 4000/800 maximum)

The Legacy and Present State of the Reformed Movement in Germany

by
WRF Member Jurgen B. Klautke

This article has three points:

- A. The legacy and present state of the Reformed movement in Germany in general**
- B. The legacy and present state of the Reformed movement in Germany with regard to the evangelical world**
- C. The Confessing [Evangelical] Reformed Church (BERG)**

A. The legacy and present state of the Reformed movement in Germany in general

As everybody knows, in Germany we are preparing the 500 anniversary of the Reformation. In 1517 Martin Luther hung up his 90 thesis's. Many Christians and groups that are interested in the Reformation are expected to come to Germany - even from the USA. They want to visit places that were of great importance to the reformation. For instance:

- Wittenberg, where Luther mainly worked
- Eisenach with the Wartburg, where Luther translated the Bible into the German language
- Worms, where he had to justify himself in front of the Emperor and in front of the delegation of the pope in 1520. So far so good.

But only to mention one example: The state church in Germany, to which both - the Lutheran and Reformed church belong – already declared that they aren't interested in any events concerning the reformational (Reformed) truths. They want to keep everything – as they call it – ecumenical. In reality it all becomes syncretistic. This declaration can probably already give an impression of what the state of the legacy and state if the Reformed movement in Germany in general is like. If you look for an authentic confessional reformed position or even an authentic Lutheran confessional position my answer is: There is (nearly) none.

Let me explain what I mean. If you told a German that you are reformed, he would generally not understand what you mean. Should you meet someone who says, he understands you, please be careful. My experience has shown me that he would understand you be saying: "I am a follower of Karl Barth."

There is a group of independent reformed churches near the border between the Netherlands and Germany which calls itself *old reformed*. These old reformed churches have approximately 7000 members. Several years ago I was invited to speak at a young people's meeting of these churches. Outwardly everything appeared to be respectable. But I discovered that inwardly many young people had drifted away from the faith that is supposed to shape their lives I also noticed that many parents and even elders of these churches did not see it or want to see it.

Two years ago I was asked by a few people from those churches to give a speech there. Some of them were so concerned about the preaching in their churches that they thought about departing from their so-called "old reformed" church. I gave a speech there one night. There were roughly 20 to 25 people in a living room. But till this day nothing considerable has changed there.

Some of them now attend conservative reformed churches in Holland (The Netherlands). But even in those regions of Germany close to the Dutch border not one really confessional reformed church emerged.

What is the situation of the church in Germany? As I mentioned, unlike the United States of America we still have an official protestant so called "State" church (better but not really translatable:

Landeskirche) which consists of so-called Lutheran and Reformed churches. Please notice: In Germany the church members pay church taxes to the state, who in turn gives it to the church pays.

But sadly, humanism and syncretism effectively have the rule. So in effect it doesn't matter whether the tradition is Lutheran or Reformed. As these churches are financed through taxes they are relatively rich, but few people attend services there. Today a little more than fifty percent of all Germans belong to one of these official churches (Roman Catholic or Protestant), but only about 2 to 3 per cent of these people attend church regularly.

In all of Europe church attendance decreases year by year. The attitude of an average European is: "The time of Christendom has passed. People have got over it."

Let me illustrate this to you by means of a city in Switzerland. I'll pick Geneva as an example, the city where the reformer John Calvin lived and preached. In 2000 only 17% of the Genevans belonged to a protestant church. And those, who still belong to the ("State") church, do not feel connected with it. For the vast majority, affiliation with a church is a mere tradition.

Today Europe is in the middle of a far reaching break with tradition. This post-Christian Europe is not simply a heathen or pagan Europe in the conventional sense of the terms. For at least there were gods in paganism, but now a spiritual vacuum reigns. A sociologist once formulated it in the following way: The final authority is *the* individual person. The normal European lives without any committed relationships. Answering the question: Why are you in the world? 53 per cent of the Germans say: "I want to enjoy life."

Actually in this moment hundreds of thousands of Muslims are arriving in Europe, especially in Germany.

What is the situation at the theological faculties of the German-speaking universities? For this I will describe the theological faculty in Marburg. The university of Marburg was founded in 1527 by count Philipp the Magnanimous [of Hesse]. It is regarded as the oldest protestant university in the world. Two years after its foundation in 1529 this university was the scene of the "religious conversations of Marburg" which took place between Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, Martin Butzer and Philipp Melanchthon. Here the topic of the Lord's Supper was debated. As you know this issue led to the breach between Luther and Zwingli.

Today the essential message of the theological faculty of the University of Marburg is as follows: The three so-called Abrahamic religions, Christendom, Judaism and Islam, actually teach the same ideas. These three religions are merely different ways to the same God. This syncretism taught at the university of Marburg is nothing exceptional, but corresponds to what is taught at most German theological faculties at the moment.

Effectively we are experiencing the disintegration, the self-destruction of Christianity to an extent which has presumably never been observed before. In the "State" church church-workers enter today into dialogue with all possible groups, with homosexuals, with lesbians or with pastors living in homosexual partnerships, but they don't dialogue with people who hold fast to the Holy Scripture to the best of their knowledge and belief. Christians who hold fast to the Holy Scripture, the dogmas of the old church and the confessions of the reformation are called fundamentalist sectarians. One does not shrink from lumping them together with the Taliban or other Islamists.

Above all a feminist theology prevails in the "State" church, and today it comes in a sort of transgender thinking. (You call that LGBT). The transgender thinking dominates the whole educational system in Germany. Unfortunately this ideology has a great impact on these churches.

For instance to the question: "Who was Jesus Christ actually?" one hears the answer: "A human brother who wanted to set up a new kingdom of liberal brotherliness and sisterliness in the world. A female theologian in Germany claims: "Jesus was the first man of the human race who broke through the insanity of manhood." As you know, homosexuality is condemned in the Old and in the New Testament. It is judged as a destruction of the order which God has assigned for this creation (Rom. 1:26-27).

Today in the synods in Germany it is no longer even discussed whether homosexuality is acceptable or not, instead it is said that people in Biblical times did not know about the possibility or ability of love

between man and man or woman and woman respectively. Homosexual couples are blessed in church meetings which cannot be distinguished from conventional weddings between a man and a woman.

The Holy Scripture as the infallible, inerrant word of God has been abolished. That is exactly the opposite of the thoughts and confessions of the reformers like Luther and Calvin. For the reformers the teaching about Jesus' work of salvation was doubtless the very heart of the gospel.

Already around the end of the 19th century German theologian Adolf von Harnack wrote his widely known book "What Is Christianity?". In this book he taught that not Jesus Christ, the Son, and his work of salvation but God, the loving Father, is the center of the gospel. For this theologian it was a myth that the Son of God had to die the death on the cross for the atonement. - That was the old liberal theology.

Meanwhile we are living in the postmodern era. Here likewise Christ's work of reconciliation is denied and Christianity is adapted to the spirit of the age. That means: Today this rejection of the reconciliation work of Christ is feministically orientated.

In Germany we witness today a matrifaction of God: "God as mother". This is combined with a deification of the earth as "our great mother". In this context one speaks also of a gaia-centric theology. This word includes the Greek noun "gaia" (= earth). The earth is shifted in a naturalistic sense into the center of theological thinking. This gaia-theology wants to annual the distinction between God, the creator, and his creation. It wants instead to establish a universal naturalism.

Here liberation does not mean to be free from the bondage of sin but it means harmony and consciousness of solidarity between all people, animals, plants, the air, the oceans, the deserts, the mountains and the valleys. Today an all-reconciling universalism is propagated. For this postmodern theology the divine is immanent in this world. It is the task of the Spirit to renew the world. Nevertheless this "spirit" does not come from God, but it is the maternal force working in the creation. Therefore this so-called "holy spirit" does not come from God but from the depths of the earth. One is informed that the effectiveness of this so-called "spirit of God" is hindered primarily by the understanding of God as a god who exists outside of this world and rules this world in a free and sovereign way.

Man should no longer understand himself as created in the image of God but as a part of the earth. In the gaia theology the place of the Saviour is the redeemer *mother earth* with its host of spirits and demons. People learn to identify themselves with this mother earth in Christian workshops. It is no longer all about reconciliation with God, the Almighty, the Holy One, but about reconciliation with the circles (circulation) of nature. Instead of attempting to overcome this world through the hope for a new heaven and a new earth they try to dip into nature.

It is from this position that these people criticize Holy Scripture. Thus a theologian writes: "Egypt, Babylonia and India have still experienced the divine in the unity of man and animal. But the election- and covenant-theology of the Old Testament is just an expression of human arrogance. ... Whereas the contemporary myths of the Indians or Egyptians tried to capture the natural history of the world in huge spaces of time, the cosmos and its history shrink into a few thousands of years in the Old Testament shrink into a history of a few thousand years." So these theologians criticize that in Scripture the world is measured according to human measures of time too.

In other words, the statement on the first page of the Bible that God created the world in six days is rejected in this "theology" but not because it contradicts a Darwinistic orientated world view. (Darwinism – with its struggle for life and its linear development of time – is thought to be a male orientated philosophy.) The statement that God created this world in six days contradicts the view in which nature is regarded as a gigantic circulation (circle) of life and death. In this gaia-theology / philosophy it is not all about a hope which transcends death, but its highest value is the finding of a balance between life and death. Death is no longer understood as the wage of sin, but rather it is seen as an eternal circulation viewed as a pre-requisite (condition) for life.

Let me point out in this context that approximately a quarter of the Europeans believe in reincarnation, that is, in a rebirth within the eternal cycle of nature. This so called gaia-centric theology is rooted in an animistic naturalism and a Chinese universalism. It is the negation of biblical Christianity.

As everybody knows the prophets of the Old Testament stood up against naturalism. For example, the prophets Amos and Hosea resisted to this mixture between God, who had delivered his people from slavery, and the gods of the Baals and the Asherahs. This gaia-centric theology denies the understanding (comprehension) of God, of man, of salvation as the reformers treasured it.

As this theology is proclaimed today in Germany more or less openly from the lecterns and the pulpits, perhaps you can estimate roughly what *the state of the Reformed Theology in Germany* is: It does not exist!

B. The legacy and present state of the Reformed movement in Germany with regard to the evangelical world

However, I still want to give a second answer to the question about the *state of Reformed Faith in Germany*. So far one might argue that what I am saying here is true for the theology at the liberal and postmodern faculties. But you might wonder: Are there really no Christians in Germany, that is people who know Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord and who read their Bibles daily? Is there not something of a *Reformed Faith* there? Isn't anything of the Reformed faith available in these Christian communities?

First of all there are considerably less of these "free" churches in Germany than in the US. The number of the Christians is substantially lower. But unfortunately even there I must inform you of a disillusioning picture. In the so called free churches (congregations) (free from the state-taxes) confrontation with the world is no longer wanted. Instead, the search for compromises is ... more or less the norm.

Yes, it is true: gaia-theology is not propagated. (Presumably many haven't heard the word yet.) Actually, feminist theology isn't wanted either. But instead of these the gospel is put across as "seeker-friendly", "seeker-orientated" and emerging churches are coming up. This means that Christianity is popularized.

This popularization of Christianity looks quite different than the thoroughly liberalized version. But at the core it is always all about putting the gospel across "softly" to people.

On the one hand plenty of activities are offered in these free churches. There are groups for all possible interests: children, teenagers, elderly people, women, men, addicts, foreigners. People gather in order to do handcrafts, to play and to talk about all possible issues. All this is not at all about preaching the gospel to the people who gather there, but the emphasis is on making them feel comfortable. The proclamation of the gospel happens at best implicitly.

A specific postmodern form of this method is as follows: The emotions of the people are stimulated in order to make them forget the stress of everyday life and make them feel well. Events which usually include loud music are organized. While the apostle Paul demanded: "Brethren, be not children in understanding." (1Corinthians 14:20), here we see a [virtual] re-infantilization of man.

Adult people in these so-called services behave like little children who give way to an apparently big urge for movement. Every attempt at being a responsible Christian is largely suffocated with emotional tenderness. I point out that this form of Christianity is absolutely connected to the matriarchal religiousness already mentioned.

Here also God is pictured, so to speak, as the great mother-of-all who forgives everything and above all understands everything. If one actually wants to announce the gospel in this framework, it is stated as a rule according to the formula: "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life!"

The omnipotent, righteous, holy God who demands repentance isn't proclaimed any more. I remind you of the apostle Paul, who announced at the Mars Hill: "but now (God) commandeth all men everywhere to repent." (Acts 17:30)

Instead of proclaiming this God one begins to exert emotional pressure on the listener. One presses the emotionally struck one to repeat a prayer and describes this as "conversion". This so-called conversion is then reflected in testimonies such as: Jesus has adopted (accepted) me, because [!] I gave my life to Jesus. Man is in the center here. As a rule there is no talking about God's covenant of grace or about his election.

But one can say: "emotions are a part of being human". It isn't a bad thing at all to appeal to man via the emotions. To this I respond: The manner of the proclamation gives the impression that truth is not an important matter. (After such a sermon: the person doesn't expect any more that there is truth.)

One no longer wants to hear sermons aimed at repentance. Instead one desires a dialogue, that is free of any claim that there is *the truth* but which appeals more to feelings and experiences of one's own soul.

The evangelical preaching is filled with *psychology*. The problems of man aren't seen any more as stemming from his separation from God but as psychological. The proclamation of the gospel is subordinated into a therapeutic process. It is presupposed implicitly that the unhurt (emotionally healthy) person described by psychology is the same as the one who is saved by the gospel of reconciliation.

So the gospel and its fruit are infiltrated by psychology, its contents, aims and methods. This happens when the preacher treats the person in the following way: Man is not considered primarily as a person separated from God, a sinner, but as a victim either of his environment, his education or his genes.

Or one thinks man can reorient himself with the instrumental help of biblical imperatives and psychological insights. Through this way (method) man can reach "inner healing" and also cure his broken relations. This form of the "gospel" primarily tries to heal wounds and the broken relations so that one feels well again.

If the expectation of an "inner healing" is carried into the gospel, then a wrong gospel is preached. If one takes into consideration psychological categories in order to diagnose a person's problem and determine the target-setting of the "counselling" and if one expects to find the solution in psychotherapeutic steps, then one no longer preaches Scripture and the gospel but a Christian lacquered psychotherapy. Here one takes on the psychological thinking and expectations of the listener. Far too many times the problem is misjudged as a question of feelings, when the real problem of the listener in God's eyes is his separation from God and his neighbor, not the question of whether he feels well or not. This is a man-centered approach and therefore a wrong gospel. David says in Psalm 51:13-17:

"Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee. Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem. Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar."

This is anything but "man centered" or human "self-representation". The psalmist explicitly wants to exalt *God's justice* and teach the sinners *God's ways* so that they turn back to him. Or let's look at Paul. The apostle Paul points to himself as an example of God's free grace. He doesn't expect his self-representation to bring people to faith but he expects explicitly the preaching of the cross to accomplish this. This word causes the faith of his listeners, a faith which is not based on human wisdom but on God's power (1Corinthians 1).

Furthermore the proclamation of God's word take place by a variety of other entire forms today. One claims that the gospel is also announced through these. These include show elements like theatre, pantomime, film, art and most of all music. But especially the music, so popular today, shows again that it is not so much about content but rather about human emotion.

Within the last few years this emotional stimulation has become virtually an industry in itself. Here one falls back upon the marketing strategies of sales and advertising experts. All this is stimulated by the question: Which methods, which avenues need to be taken so that the church gets more members? The gospel propagated here becomes an article of consumption, whose primary concern is success in life.

We don't hear anything about heaven and hell, eternal salvation and eternal damnation. Instead, people who supposedly have been healed hop across the stage and radiant converts present their

newly found "life with Jesus". In fact, these forms of emotional "Jesus experiences" are based on a feminization and reinfantilization of Christianity. Here the word of the apostle Paul: "When I became a man, I put away childish things." (1Corinthians 13:11) is flushed away with a lot of manipulative music and marketing strategies. This is my second answer to the question what is the issue: **The legacy and present state of the Reformed movement in Germany** My last point is:

C. The Confessing [Evangelical] Reformed Church (BERG)

When *deism* arose in the 17th century God was separated from the world. God only acted as a kind of watchmaker who had set this world in motion and then, however, left it to its fate. In the 18th and primarily in the 19th century, after this process had taken place, the inevitable questions about the historical development process became the focus of attention. The *philosophies of Hegel or Darwin* were merely different forms of this way of thinking. Finally, then, *historicism* arose at the end of the 19th century and claimed that there was never a fixed truth and there had never been one. Everything is in flux. However, if there isn't any truth outside of man, then – according to the people's demand – the truth can be found only in man himself, that is, in the existence of man. Thus *existentialism* arose, the predominant philosophy in the 20th century. Existentialism was still convinced that the single human being could find the truth in himself – in whatever way. But at the end of the 20th and in the beginning of the 21st century man has given up asking for truth. Instead he flees into a state of intoxication.

Beginning with deism and then increasingly in the following centuries man has had difficulties believing that the all-powerful God gave his word as a truthful, life-creating word. It is this Word of God which as "the seed of rebirth" procreates man into life (1Peter 1:23).

Therefore it must be the task of Christ's church – including our small church – to confess that God's Word is the means by which he saves people. In the center of the service stands the Word of the sovereign God. Here the gospel is the main message: God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself (2Corinthians 5:19).

Such a proclamation is only possible via confrontation, not in a kind of conformity or even retreat into a religious idyll. The prophets in the Old Testament never saw themselves as assistants for the fulfilling of a need-orientated religiousness striving after quietness. They didn't sell any wrong dreams and illusions but they protested against a false religiousness.

The Confessing [Evangelical] Reformed Church wants to do the same. We want to keep to the Holy Scriptures as the inerrant and infallible word of God which is inspired and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness (2Timothy 3:16). We do not want to be conformed to the world, but we want to be transformed by the renewing of our mind (Romans 12:2).

Therefore we have called ourselves "confessing" and adopted several creeds.

First of all the Heidelberg Catechism of 1563. We appreciate it for teaching us the marvelous reformed doctrine.

In Germany we have quite a lot of „popular“ Arminian heresies, for example the Pentecostal movement and the charismatic movement. Because of this we adopted the Berlin Declaration of 1909 which refutes the errors of Pentecostalism.

In addition to this, due to the theological situation in Germany, we have adopted the Chicago-Declaration of 1978 which confesses the inerrancy of Holy Scripture.

We belong to small group of churches, called Council of Confessing Churches. So far this is not a denomination. At the moment we are in the process of deciding whether to form a denomination with one of these churches. I was appointed to make proposals how this could be arranged.

This is – in short - what our churches stands for.

In view of an increasing Baalization of Christianity we must confront people with the sovereign God and his work of salvation in Christ on the basis of the inerrant Word of God. This confrontation means that the gospel is: "to the one the savior of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life." (2. Corinthians 2:16).

A "renewal" of the church, a reformation, cannot be organized. It is not "feasible", especially not through spectacular events or entertainment. On the contrary: The more spectacular events are organized in order to get the "church life" going, the faster one approaches intellectual and spiritual bankruptcy. But this situation does not mean resignation, but the opposite. The gospel of Jesus Christ and his work of salvation are being proclaimed by all the wounds one suffers in life. This gospel is preached in the knowledge that faith in God is the victory which has overcome the world.

The Contribution of Presbyterian and Reformed Denominations in India in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries: A Brief Exploration

Matthew Ebenezer

Over fifteen different Reformed and Presbyterian denominations from America, Scotland, England, Wales, Ireland, New Zealand, and Australia were represented in India in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Their contribution in establishing churches, founding schools, colleges and theological institutions, their pioneering medical work, setting up of training and research in agriculture and livestock is immense. I wish to give a bird's-eye view of their contributions in India.

Presbyterian and Reformed Agencies that worked in India

The following are the missionary agencies that worked in India in the period under consideration.

- ABCFM = American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Bombay (1813), Madras Presidency (1834), Mysore (-)
- UFCSFMC = United Free Church of Scotland, Foreign Missions Committee, Bombay (1823), Bengal (1830), Madras Presidency (1837), Central Provinces and Berar (1846), Ajmer-Merwara (1860), Hyderabad (1862), Rajputana (1863), Bihar & Orissa (1870), Assam (1890).
- CSFMC = Church of Scotland, Foreign Missions Committee, Bengal (1830), Madras Presidency (1836), Punjab & Kashmir (1857).
- PCUSABFM = Presbyterian Church in the USA, Board of Foreign Missions, Punjab & Kashmir (1833/4), United Provinces (1836), Bombay (1853), Central India (1874), Assam (1905).
- CSWAFM = Church of Scotland Women's Association for Foreign Missions, Bengal (1840), Madras Presidency (1843), Punjab & Kashmir (1861).
- PCIFM = Presbyterian Church of Ireland Foreign Missions, Bombay (1840).
- WCMFM = Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, Foreign Missions (Welsh Presbyterian), Assam (1841).
- PCEFCM = Presbyterian Church of England, Foreign Missions Committee, Bengal (1862).
- PCCBFM = Presbyterian Church in Canada Board of Foreign Missions, Central India (1876), Rajputana (1914), United Provinces (1904).
- PCNSWFCM = Presbyterian Church of New South Wales, Foreign Missions Committee, Madras Presidency (-)
- RCABFM = Reformed Church in America, Board of Foreign Missions, Madras Presidency (1853).
- UPCBFM = United Presbyterian Church, Board of Foreign Missions, Punjab & Kashmir (1855), North West Frontier (1921).
- UPCWGMS = United Presbyterian Church Womens' General Missionary Society, Punjab & Kashmir (1855), North West Frontier (1921).
- ARPCBFM = Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, Board of Foreign Missions, Punjab & Kashmir (1906).
- PCNZFMC = Presbyterian Church, New Zealand, Foreign Missions Committee, Punjab & Kashmir (1910).
- RPCGSBFM = Reformed Presbyterian Church, General Synod, Board of Foreign Missions, United Provinces (1914).¹

¹Beach and Fahs, *Atlas*, 17,20,25,26,29,32,34,36,37, & 62ff. Some of the missions had more extensive work in India, than that reported in the atlas. For example, the missionaries of the Irish Presbyterian Church arrived in India in 1841, and worked in Gujarat and Kathiawar in Western India, although the reported field is only Bombay in the Atlas. See, Robert Jeffrey, *The India Mission of the Irish Presbyterian Church: A History of the Fifty Years of Work in Kathiawar and Gujarat*. (London; Belfast and Dublin: Nisbet & Co.; Eason & Son, Ltd., 1890), 40, 42 ff. Also, R. F. G. Holmes, *Our Irish Presbyterian Heritage* (-----Publications Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, 1985), 119 ff.

Revision of the British East India Company Charter 1813, 1833

The British did not encourage missionary work in India. They did have their British East India Company (BEIC) chaplains to minister to the Company's personnel in India. At times committed Christian officers in the BEIC would take an interest in evangelism and would assist missionaries in a personal capacity. In 1793, William Carey was encouraged and given moral support by Charles Grant, a Board member of the BEIC.

Much depended on the Charter of the BEIC which stipulated the terms and conditions of their operations and policies in India. The Charter was renewed every twenty years and each time it came up for renewal evangelicals in Parliament, such as William Wilberforce, argued for British involvement in the spiritual needs of the people in India. Up to 1813, missionaries always worked under the threat of impending deportation. For example, in 1800, when Carey asked for more missionaries from England, they were not allowed permission to land in India. Fortunately, the Danish Governor of Serampore, near Calcutta, offered Carey a place in his colony to establish his work.

In the revision of the Charter in 1813 a small concession was made by the BEIC and *British* missionaries were allowed to come to India. However, it was only in 1833 at the next renewal of the Charter that permission was granted for missionaries from other countries to work in India. Thus 1833 marks the beginning of officially sanctioned missionary activity in India.

Ministries of Reformed and Presbyterian Missions

Schools for Children

One of the first Reformed missionary societies to work in India was the American Board of Commissioners For Foreign Missions (ABCFM), a Congregational venture. The ABCFM, established in 1810, cooperated in sending Congregational, Presbyterian, and Reformed missionaries to India. In 1812, six ABCFM missionaries arrived in Calcutta, but were arrested for deportation by the British.² Two of the six, Samuel Nott and Gordon Hall, escaped from custody and reached Bombay in 1813. Protected by changes in the new charter of the BEIC that year they established successful mission stations at Bombay, Mahim, and Thana. Their activities included street preaching, operating schools (one school instructed Jewish children in Hebrew and Marathi), translating Scripture, and publishing Christian evangelistic literature.³

In 1823 D. Mitchell, of the Scottish Missionary Society (SMS), established several schools at Fort Victoria, 60 miles south of Bombay. Mitchell died within a year of arrival having established 10 schools with nearly 500 pupils.⁴ Four more missionaries arrived in Bombay, two continued Mitchell's work, and the other two established another mission a few miles further south. By 1826, the SMS had a total of 42 schools with 1826 pupils.⁵ In 1828 the SMS started a third mission in Bombay under the care

²M. A. Sherring, *The History of Protestant Missions in India* rev.ed. (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1884), 231.

³Sherring, *History*, 231-233.

⁴*Ibid.*, 235-236.

⁵*Ibid.*, 236.

of J. Stevenson. Dr. John Wilson, the well-known educator missionary, founder of Wilson College, Bombay, joined the mission in Bombay in 1829, and served for 46 years.

Evangelism and Social Action

The American Presbyterian pioneer John C Lowrie arrived in 1833 in Kolkotta (Calcutta) and, on the advice of William Carey moved westward to found a flourishing church in the Punjab area. Evangelization of any country is contingent on several factors; one of which is the existing socio-economic condition of the country. In India, missionaries were quick to identify the needs of the masses. They developed strategies to provide expertise in various fields, which would encourage and assist in the flowering of independence and nationhood,⁶ provide humanitarian assistance, and, above all, be tools for evangelism. In many respects their goals and intentions were at cross-purposes with the initial British policy of trade *per se*.⁷ Some of the areas in which missionaries engaged are as follows: direct evangelism (street preaching, and distribution of Christian literature), apologetics (debating with non-Christians on religion), education (establishing schools and colleges, and encouraging female education), medicine (operating mobile clinics and dispensaries, establishing hospitals, and medical colleges for training women nurses and doctors, agriculture (pioneering in scientific farming methods), animal husbandry, and developing technical and vocational training institutions.⁸ Presbyterian and Reformed missions made a significant contribution in many of the above-mentioned areas.

Education

Perhaps the greatest contribution of the Presbyterian missionaries to India was in the field of education. Although ancient vernacular languages and learning were present in India, there was no exposure to Western thought and science. Furthermore, there was an initial belief that the evangelization of India must take place not only through direct evangelization, but also through “indirect methods” such as the establishment of schools⁹ and colleges.¹⁰ The Scottish Presbyterian missionary Alexander Duff, however, saw Western learning as a powerful force to demolish non-Christian superstitions and function as a preparation for the gospel. Addressing the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland he said,

Do then let me again grave the special attention of this Venerable Court to the grand *peculiarity, that if in India you only impart ordinary useful knowledge, you thereby demolish what by its people is regarded as sacred*. A course of instruction that professes to convey *truth of any kind* thus becomes a species of *religious education* in such a land - *all* education being there regarded as religious or theological. Every branch of sound general knowledge which you inculcate becomes the destroyer of some corresponding part in the Hindu systems.¹¹

⁶Education itself was a stimulus to awaken Indians to the need for independence. This does not mean that the missionaries engaged in anti-British activities, although the British themselves were vary about the role of missionaries in India. They even thought that the missionaries were responsible for the Vellore Mutiny (in South India), by their attacks on Hinduism. Sherring, *History*, 69,70, Ingham, *Reformers*, 7.

⁷The British strongly discouraged missionary activity, believing that tampering with the religious sentiments of the Indians was unhealthy for their trade relations.

⁸Firth, *Introduction*, 197-214.

⁹H. Goloknath, “An Open Letter to Missionaries,” in *The Indian Standard* Vol.14:5, New Series (July, 1903), 186-188. Note his appreciation of Rev. W. Miller's paper on “The Place of Education as a Missionary Agency,” at the General Missionary Conference, Allahabad, 1873. p.186. From the beginning of Protestant missions in India, when Lutheran missionaries Bartholomeu Ziegenbalg and Henry Pleutshau came to South India in 1706, schools were an integral part of their missionary activity. Joshua Marshman, colleague of Baptist missionary William Carey, established a network of schools for boys and girls, and one college.

¹⁰Serampore College, has the status of a Government recognized ‘University’ today, the only Christian institution of its kind in India. E. Daniel Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India, 1793 -1837: The History of Serampore and Its Missions* (Cambridge: University Press, 1967), 114-136.

¹¹Alexander Duff, *The Church of Scotland's India Mission; or A Brief Exposition of the Principles on which that Mission has been*

His institution in Calcutta, the present Scottish Church College, did in fact create a furor in some respects.¹² Although Duff's experiment of conversion through education was not sustained in the long term, his lead was taken by other Scots such as John Wilson (in Bombay), John Anderson (in Madras), and Stephen Hislop (in Nagpur) who established significant institutions. Among the colleges founded by Presbyterian and Reformed missions are:

Madras Christian College, Madras (mainly Church of Scotland), Voorhees College, Vellore (Dutch Reformed Church of America, presently Reformed Church of America), Scottish Church College, Calcutta (Church of Scotland), Ewing Christian College, Allahabad (American Presbyterian), Forman Christian College, Lahore (American Presbyterian, after the partition of India in 1947, Lahore became part of present Pakistan) Murray College, Sialkot (Church of Scotland), Gordon College, Rawalpindi (American United Presbyterian, after the Partition of India in 1947, Rawalpindi became part of present Pakistan), Hislop College, Nagpur (Church of Scotland), and Wilson College, Bombay (Church of Scotland).¹³

Women's Education

Presbyterian missions also furthered the emancipation of women in India, chiefly through education. Education among women in India before the nineteenth century, was extremely rare. The first record of women being admitted to school comes from Serampore, in 1817. Later, Robert May of the London Missionary Society, Mrs. John Wilson in Bombay, and Mrs. Wilson (nee, Cooke, wife of an Anglican missionary) in Calcutta, involved themselves in female education, about the same time.¹⁴ Soon Presbyterian missionaries ventured into this field. The Scottish missionary educator Duff opened a Christian day school for girls in 1857. In 1859, the American Presbyterians founded a girl's boarding school in Dehra Dun, which produced the first female matriculate of Calcutta University.¹⁵ Another means of education was *zenana* visitation with the dual purpose of evangelism and education.¹⁶ American Presbyterian missionaries were also instrumental in founding several hospitals for women.¹⁷

Medical Missions

Presbyterian medical missions have played a significant role in the founding of hospitals and medical colleges. Here again, the ABCFM took the lead in being the first mission "to adopt a regular policy of sending medical missionaries to India."¹⁸ It was through the auspices of the ABCFM that Dr.

Conducted in Calcutta, being the substance of an Address Delivered before the General Assembly of the Church, On Monday, 25th May 1835. (Edinburgh: John Waugh, ----), 7. Perhaps Duff was influenced by John Inglis, a Moderate Scottish minister who believed education to be a *praeparatio evangelica* for the gospel. See, M. A. Laird, *Missionaries and Education in Bengal, 1793 - 1837*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 200. Inglis also promoted the idea of missions to India, Hetherington writes, "To Dr. Inglis is especial honour due, as the man by whom was first proposed, matured, and carried into effect, that measure on which so much of the Divine blessing has conspicuously rested, the Church of Scotland's Mission to India." W. H. Hetherington, *History of the Church of Scotland: From the Introduction of Christianity to the Period of the Disruption in 1843* Vol. 2 (New York: Robert Carter, 1844), 375.

¹²Duff's students, created a crisis when they questioned traditional Hindu socio-cultural and religious ideas, such as, women's education and eating of beef. Firth, *Introduction*, 183,184.

¹³*The Christian College in India: The Report of the Commission on Christian Higher Education in India* (London: Oxford University Press, Humphrey Milford, 1931), 375,376.

¹⁴Potts, *British*, 123-125.

¹⁵Firth, *Introduction*, 192.

¹⁶Glendora B Paul, "Presbyterian Missionaries and the Women of India During the Nineteenth Century, in *Journal of Presbyterian History*, 62:3 (Fall, 1984), 234.

¹⁷Paul, "Women," 235.

¹⁸Firth, *Introduction*, 204.

John Scudder, a qualified medical doctor and ordained missionary of the Reformed Church, arrived in Madras with his wife, Harriet, in 1836. By 1853, their sons Henry and William, established the Arcot Mission. They were the first of the many Scudders, a distinguished family of missionaries, who were members of American Arcot Mission.¹⁹ The (Scottish) United Presbyterian Mission, the Church of Scotland Mission²⁰, and the American Presbyterians, established several hospitals and dispensaries at their mission centers throughout India.²¹ An effective mission to children of leper patients was begun in the United Provinces, by the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and continues today.²²

Several Christian medical colleges and hospitals in India trace their roots to Reformed and Presbyterian missions. The United Presbyterians began the Agra Medical Mission Training Institute in 1881. Dr. William Wanless of the American Presbyterian mission founded a hospital and training institution in Miraj, in 1889. The Presbyterians have cooperated in the work of The North India School of Medicine for Christian Women, founded in Ludhiana, Punjab, by Dr. Edith Brown and Miss Greenfield in 1894. Dr. Ida S. Scudder, associated with the American Arcot Mission of the Dutch Reformed Church of America, founded the Christian Medical College and Hospital, Vellore, the youngest of the missionary medical schools. Today, it is the largest institution of its kind in Asia.²³

The medical work begun by the missionaries did not cease with their departure from India. The work continues to bring healing of body, mind, and spirit through the selfless labours by many dedicated Indian doctors and health workers. The Emanuel Hospital Association (EHA) founded in 1969 has a network of hospitals and projects throughout India almost totally staffed by local personnel.

Agriculture and Livestock Promotion

Apart from education and medicine, Presbyterians were also active in founding institutions aimed at developing better agricultural and stock farming. John Barthgate writes, "Sam Higginbottom was among the first of the Presbyterian missionaries to see the urgency of a Christian response to the needs of India's farmers."²⁴ Higginbottom's institution, the Allahabad Agriculture Institute, grew into a 500 acre farm and campus, recognized by the Indian government.²⁵ There were others who saw agricultural efforts as vital to Indian missions. Barthgate observes, "Agricultural missions gained in stature and support during the 1920s not only as a result of the work at Allahabad but also in response to the efforts of other Presbyterian missionaries like Arthur Slater at his poultry farm in Etah and John Goheen in western India."²⁶ The American Arcot Mission of the Dutch Reformed Church of America, founded an "Agricultural Institute" in Katpadi, South India.²⁷ The commitment, sacrifice, and achievements of these

¹⁹The Scudders represented the Dutch Reformed Church of America which, initially, was cooperating with the Congregationalist ABCFM in sending foreign missionaries. In 1857, the DRCA formed its own Missions Board, and took over responsibility for the Arcot mission. Firth, *Introduction*, 205. For a detailed account of the beginnings and history of the American Arcot Mission, See, Charlotte C. Wyckoff, *A Hundred Years with Christ in Arcot: A Brief History of the Arcot Mission in India of the Reformed Church in America or American Arcot Mission of the Reformed Church in America, Centenary Souvenir, 1853-1953* (-----, 1953?).

²⁰John F. W. Youngson, *Forty Years of the Panjab Mission of the Church of Scotland 1855-1895* (Edinburgh: R. R. Clark, Limited, 1896), 176-181, 273-279.

²¹Firth, *Introduction*, 205-210.

²²John C. Taylor, *India: Dr. John C. Taylor Remembers: The Period From 1914-1967* (Wilmington, DE: World Presbyterian Missions, Inc., 1973), 118 ff.

²³Firth, *Introduction*, 205-208.

²⁴John Barthgate "Presbyterians and Rural Development in India," in *Journal of Presbyterian History*, 62:3 (Fall, 1984), 238.

²⁵*Ibid.*, 239.

²⁶*Ibid.*

²⁷Firth, *Introduction*, 213.

missionaries, pioneers in their respective fields, are commendable. It is unfortunate, however, that socio-economic considerations eclipsed the burden of evangelization. With the rise of the “social gospel” theology in America, the perception of missions changed from a myopic and constricted view of salvation as being individualistic and personal to a holistic view that included the social and material liberation. Increasingly, broad-minded missionaries turned their attention towards economic and social freedom.

Conclusion The worldwide ecumenical movement, which began in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, certainly impacted the church in India.²⁸ Various levels of co-operation were sought in the mission field.²⁹ Some within the PCI were now desirous of wider trans-denominational union. The Synod of South India (comprising of the Free church of Scotland, and the Reformed Churches in America in Madras Presidency), at the Assembly of 1905, requested separation from the PCI, in order to unite with the Congregationalists in the south.³⁰ This union came to be known as the South India United Church (SIUC).

With the formation of the SIUC an undeniably fuller ecumenical agenda developed. The PCI and SIUC now sought a federal relationship with other denominations. Although some interest was shown, and conferences held, they were insufficient to result in the expected goal. By 1924, however, eleven churches, most of them Presbyterian, joined to form the United Church of Northern India (UCNI).³¹ Of these churches, the Welsh Presbyterian Church in Assam, for geographical distance and other reasons, has shown only a limited interest in the actual functioning of the UCNI. Both the SIUC and the UCNI eventually became union denominations by becoming the Church of South India (CSI) in 1948, and the Church of North India (CNI) in 1971 (and the Church of Pakistan in 1971), respectively. They adopted the guidelines of the Lambeth Quadrilateral, which included Episcopal type of church government.³² . The Welsh Presbyterians stayed out of the UCNI and also the CNI. Among other Presbyterian who

²⁸The most prominent of all the Conferences was the World Missionary Conference held at Edinburgh in 1910. Latourette writes, “Edinburgh 1910 was the outgrowth and climax of earlier gatherings through which Protestants had been drawing together in their purpose to give the Gospel to the world it was in a succession which began with meetings held in New York and London in 1854, continued in Liverpool in 1860, in London in 1878, in London again in 1888, and especially in New York in 1900.” Kenneth Scott Latourette, “Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Council,” in Ruth Rose and Stephen Charles Neill (eds.) *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1954), 355. It should also be noted that the last of the eight commissions of the Edinburgh Conference was “Cooperation and the Promotion of Unity.” In retrospect there is no doubt that this commission eclipsed all the rest, which dealt with missions and evangelism. See, *Ibid.* 358.

²⁹Some of the steps leading in the direction of church union are: 1. Comity: mutual courtesy between denominations. 2. Cooperation: mutual working together for the same ends. 3. Alliance: a “bringing together for consultation the members of the same family of churches.” 4. Federation: does not involve organic union of denominations, but is “an attempt to unite denominations upon a closer basis than contemplated in either Comity or Cooperation.” 5. Union: this is the final step, it is organic union across denominations. See William P. Pugh, “Church Unity: Presbyterian,” in *The General Magazine and Historical Chronicle* XLI: 1 (October, 1938), 45-47.

³⁰Parker, “Development,” 165.

³¹The Churches are: i. The American Evangelical Mission of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, ii. The American Marathi Mission of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, iii. The American Presbyterian Mission, iv. The Canadian Presbyterian Mission, v. The Church of Scotland Mission, v. The Irish Presbyterian Mission, vii. The London Missionary Society, viii. The English Presbyterian Mission, ix. The New Zealand Presbyterian Mission, x. The United Church of Canada Mission, and xi. The Welsh Presbyterian Mission. Stephen Charles Neill, “Plans of Union and Reunion, 1910 - 1948,” in Rouse and Neill, *History*, 498. The Lambeth Quadrilateral, or the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral, is a set of four points that are deemed required for church union viz. 1) The Holy Scriptures, 2) the Nicene Creed, 3) The Two Sacraments and 4) “The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of His Church.” *Journal of the General Convention [of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States], 1886, 80.* Quoted in Henry Renaud Turner Brandreth “Approaches of the Churches Towards Each Other in the Nineteenth Century” in Rouse and Neill, *History*, 264-265.

³²Ecumenical excitement often obscures basic issues. For instance, What is the purpose of church union? Although evangelical terminology is used in ecumenical endeavors, the meaning of those words do not always possess their common significance. Thus, the word “mission” itself broadens its meaning, and increasingly becomes a reference to “unity.” *Forward to Union: The Church of North India: A Handbook* (Delhi: I. S. P. C. K.; Lucknow: Lucknow Publishing House, 1968), 46 ff. It should also be noted that union was not without disagreement. Neill refers to the reluctance of a segment in the SIUC to agree to the “terms of union.” Neill, “Plans of Union” in Rouse and Neill, *History*, 475.

stayed out of the CNI were the smaller denominations, the Saharanpur Presbytery of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, and the North India Presbytery of the Bible Presbyterian Church of India.³³ After the formation of the CNI some churches have either opted to remain as the UCNI or reassume their former identity before the union.³⁴ Thus, the churches of Presbyterian background finally gave up their ecclesiastical distinction to adopt an Episcopalian form of church government. Today, the Presbyterian Church in India is generally latent except in the North East. However, there has been a revival of Presbyterian and Reformed witness in the late twentieth and the first decade of the current century. Presbyterian churches are once again appearing with evangelical fervor and a commitment to the Word of God.

³³These two churches met in 1969 to establish the Presbyterian Theological Seminary, presently located at Dehra Dun in North India. (This institution, with over 500 graduates to date, is committed to train men and women in the Word for the growing Indian church.) *Minutes of A Joint Meeting of the Saharanpur Presbytery of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod and the North India Presbytery of the Bible Presbyterian Church of India, Roorkee, U. P. India.* January 31 and February 1, 1969. Prior deliberations in the Bible Presbyterian Church of India were moving towards establishing a "Bible College" in New Delhi in association with the recently formed Christian Educational Society. See *Minutes of the North India Presbytery of the Bible Presbyterian Church of India, Kanpur, U.P.* December 28, 1968.

³⁴Several UCNI churches in Maharashtra and West Bengal retain a separate identity and some have taken the name Presbyterian. In parts of Uttar Pradesh, large territories that were part of the UCNI Presbyterian tradition prior to the formation of the CNI are reverting back to form Presbyterian churches. There are also certain Anglican Churches that are not part of the CNI.

The Rise of Reformed Christianity in the World's Largest Muslim Country (Indonesia)

by

Sarah Eekhoff Zylstra

Submitted by WRF Member Ric Cannada

With more than 16,000 students, **Universitas Pelita Harapan** is one of the largest Reformed Christian universities in the world. Started just 22 years ago, the university offers a law school, medical school, engineering school, and **teachers college**—all from a distinctly Reformed worldview.

“We don’t even have that in the United States or Europe,” said Ric Cannada, chancellor emeritus for Reformed Theological Seminary. “Here it is in Indonesia. Isn’t it just like the Lord to do something like this in the least likely place—the country with the largest Muslim population in the world?”

Though Christians compose only 10 percent of Indonesia’s population, the nation is so populous that roughly 25 million Christians live there. About one-third are Catholic, while the Protestants are typically either Pentecostal or Reformed—as in, *really* Reformed.

“Over here in the States we talk about the Reformed world- and life-view, but they’re doing it,” Cannada said. “Doing it on steroids.”

Bankrolled by an enormously successful Indonesian businessman with a love for God and Reformed theology, the Pelita Harapan Foundation—where Cannada is a senior adviser—has opened **55 Christian K–12 schools** in the last 25 years.

No Reformed Balance Sheets

Pelita Harapan is the **mission side** of businessman James Riady’s domain. But of course he also has a business side—and it’s enormous: **30 hospitals**, 64 malls, 125 **department stores**, and the country’s **largest media group**.

Both are informed by the Reformed tradition, said Niel Nielson, the former president of Covenant College who now leads the foundation’s education wing and sits on the board of directors for the hospitals and department stores.

“[The Riady family] is passionately Reformed in their theological perspective, and they link all that together in terms of how they understand the corporation,” he said. “There is energy and focus on integration unlike anything I’ve seen anywhere in the world.”

Nielson says the “thick-walled silos” between faith and education or vocation that often exist in the United States “do not exist there, in terms of the driving mission and vision.”

“We’re passionate about business—about economic sustainability—but also about a biblically informed vision of common grace that leads to saving grace for the country,” Nielson said.

Though “there’s no such thing as a Reformed balance sheet—you either show profits or you don’t,” the board “talks a lot about the creation mandate and the fact that we’re called to steward the gifts God has given us.”

That means building quality hospitals in low-income areas. It means Christian doctors talking with their Muslim patients not just about the health of their bodies, but also the health of their family relationships, communities, and souls.

“We tell them we believe they’ve been uniquely created in the image of God, and he has a purpose for every human being,” Nielson said.

These Christian convictions don’t stay behind-the-scenes, even if they’re rarely center stage. For example, Riady’s 60 coffee shops don’t serve tracts with their beverages, but they do play Christian music, and employees go out of their way to treat people with dignity. All of his businesses aim to deliver high-quality products and to deal honestly with everyone.

Nielson said what’s going on in Indonesia is similar to what you’ll hear in the **faith and work** conversation in the United States. But he added that it seems easier to give the concept legs in Indonesia. That’s partially because of the high level of religiosity in the country. Most Indonesians (85 percent) identify as Muslim, and nearly everyone feels strongly about their faith, and expects to see that in others.

Riady’s Financial Support

The other reason Reformed enterprises are taking off is the financial backing of the Riady family.

Riady came to Christ in 1990 while struggling with depression. “I was so desperate,” he **told** *Fortune Magazine* in 2001. “I couldn’t even look at my wife, or talk to her, or kiss her. I started praying in my room, and God showed me this film—a reflection of my life. Everything that came out was all the sins I committed. I thought I was a good man. God said, ‘You’re a horrible man.’ I cried and cried and cried—big sins, small sins. Since then I try to be a better person, and my life has changed. One by one, the family has all turned to the Lord.”

Even after his conversion, Riady wasn't perfect. He **pled guilty** for "unlawfully reimbursing" donors to the 1992 Bill Clinton presidential campaign "with foreign corporate funds" in 2001 and was fined \$8.6 million. The year before, the Riadys were fined \$500,000 by the Indonesian government for artificially inflating the stock price of one of their companies.

But in the early 2000s, after surviving three heart blockages, Riady turned his focus to theology in earnest.

One of Riady's **religious influences** comes from Indonesian megachurch pastor Stephen Tong, who founded the Reformed Evangelical Church of Indonesia in 1989. According to Cannada, Tong has been "one of the key leaders" and "a positive Reformed influence for a long time."

Spices and Scripture

But Reformed theology and its influence have been around Indonesia much longer than Tong. It came first in the late 1500s with the Dutch, who aimed to monopolize the spice trade with their Dutch East India Trading Company.

Along with traders, the Dutch sent pastors who, like much of Holland, embraced Calvinism.

Those pastors reached out to the indigenous people, but Calvinism never became dominant in Indonesia for at least two reasons, according to Yudha Thianto, professor at Trinity Christian College and author of *The Way to Heaven: Catechisms and Sermons in the Establishment of the Dutch Reformed Church in the East Indies*.

First, the entrenched presence of Islam. Second, the Dutch came as conquerors, not as friends, which made conversion to their religion seem traitorous to native Indonesians.

But the Dutch were there for a long time, until August 1945. So Calvinism had plenty of time to gain a toehold. By 1945, missionaries and pastors had felt the influence of Abraham Kuyper's teachings about the importance of common grace and God's involvement in every square inch of creation.

So in the late 19th century, mission agencies started Christian schools, Christian hospitals, and Reformed churches.

Thianto, who was born in 1965, was raised in one of those churches.

"I grew up singing the psalms and hymns rooted in Calvin's Geneva, adopted by the Dutch, and then brought to the archipelago and translated into the language that's now Indonesian," he said.

Regrettably, many of these churches eventually lost their biblical and theological vigor.

“By the end of my parents’ generation, Reformed Christianity had become too practical in terms of their reaching out. They’re close to what I would call ‘social gospel,’ reaching out to the community without preaching. They were trying to apply the every square inch in their everyday life, but they forgot the doctrinal foundation.”

But there’s good news: Thianto’s generation has instigated a kind of renewal, now about 25 years old, that has led to many rediscovering a new excitement for evangelism that finds its source from Reformed roots.

“We were tired of application without content,” Thianto said. “At least three of my peers are now presidents of seminaries in Indonesia, which are evangelical in their name and Reformed in terms of the engine underneath it.”

Church Catch-Up

Cannada is concerned by the state of many churches in Indonesia. So he and Nielson began a **new denomination**: the Presbyterian Reformed Evangelical Church of Indonesia, modeled after the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). The goal is simple: to start a local church everywhere there’s a Christian school.

So far the denomination has only two churches. **Karawaci Presbyterian Church** (KPC) at Universitas Pelita Harapan offers chapel services for university students, while a daughter church is located near one of the K–12 schools in eastern Indonesia, more than a 1,000 miles away on another island.

The university chapel services see about 4,000 attendees each week, most of them students. About 200 people in the all-English service of KPC are expatriates living and working in Jakarta, as well as native Indonesians who are more comfortable in an English service.

The second church was set up when teachers at the K–12 school, accustomed to attending the university chapel, asked for a church they could attend.

Looking for Pastors

The new denomination is **looking for pastors** with the same eagerness with which Pelita Harapan seeks Christian teachers and health care workers.

‘We don’t need money. We need people.’ — Ric Cannada

“No question, the biggest challenge is finding leadership,” Cannada said. “Typically in the States, when we think of missionaries, we think about sending money. We don’t need money. We need people.”

As mission fields go, this one isn’t physically difficult. Many Indonesians speak English, and no one needs to raise support since Pelita Harapan can pay salary, benefits, and a plane ticket back and forth.

“It’s just a huge, huge opportunity,” Cannada said.

Salting the Spice Islands

Though Christians won’t likely overtake the Muslim majority in Indonesia, they will, according to Nielson, act as “salt, a flavoring that softens and enriches human life and culture.”

“We don’t talk about changing culture,” he said. “We talk about blessing people and about flourishing and about helping to contribute so their lives become better.”

It’s not always smooth—there’s sometimes pushback, especially from hard-line Muslims. But many other nonbelievers recognize the good work of Reformed Christians.

“For instance, in one heavily Muslim area, leaders wanted us to bring in a hospital, because they’re the highest-quality ones around,” Cannada said. “There were protests by some of the people who said we were trying to Christianize the area. They held us off for a while. But eventually the government leaders said, ‘We want you anyway.’”

The hospital was built, and now “the people come to the hospital because it offers so much better health care.”

Nielson points to this as a consummate example of common grace.

“Even though it’s not saving grace, common grace is still grace,” he said. “In that sense, it does change culture—it makes it a kinder, gentler, more inclusive place where people can get jobs and support their families. And where people have a sense of hope for the future.”

In this context openings for the spread of saving grace abound—all across the world’s most populous Muslim nation.

The Legacy and State of the Reformed Movement in Israel

By: Pastor David Zadok

To better understand the legacy and state of the reformed movement in Israel, one has to know something of the development of the church for the church in Israel is a paradox. While "Christianity" began among Jewish people in the land of Israel, the church among the Jewish people for almost 2,000 years was almost non-existent. This is mainly due to the fact that the Jews were living in diaspora far from the land of their fathers. However, there have always been Jewish people and even prominent rabbis who believed in Jesus as their Lord and Savior, though not unified as a Jewish church. Many Jewish Christians who lived in Europe were annihilated together with other Jews during the Nazi regime and that made the church among the Jews even weaker. But in God's sovereignty when Israel became a state in 1948, and the Hebrew language was revived in the 18th century, the church became vibrant. The restoration of the land and language paved the way for the restoration of the people and their desire to worship. Today, the church in Israel is growing steadily though it is less than 1% of the population. It is in this background that we need to understand the state of the reformed movement in Israel.

A Small Beginning

Churches in Israel began to be established in the 1970 and 1980's. As more and more Israelis were converted, the need for a local Hebrew speaking church also increased. Some of the churches had their roots in a mission organization from abroad or by missionaries who came to the land.

In 1976 the Grace and Truth Christian assembly was established as a reformed Baptist congregation. The founding pastor Rev. Baruch Maoz, together with others, worked to write a confession of faith. The confession that eventually was adopted by the elders and the members was based upon the Westminster Confession of Faith. Back then it was one of the first congregations in Israel to have a written confession. The church was the first and only reformed congregation in Israel for many years. Although in the last four decades the church has gone through many changes including splits, it has remained faithful to its confession.

Grace and Truth has not only impacted other congregations in Israel, but also established a sister church in the city of Holon through one of its members who studied at Westminster Seminary in Escondido, California. By the goodness of the Lord that church is still in existence as part of the reformed church in Israel.

One has to realize that the reformed faith in Israel is often seen in a negative light. This is due to some misunderstanding and misconception about Calvinism and unfortunately, many of the writings of Martin Luther against the Jews did not help. One such writing was the treatise called *On the Jews and their Lies*. Luther writes that Jewish synagogues and schools should be burned down and even their prayer books should be utterly destroyed. He even wrote that their properties should be confiscated, and they should be drafted into forced labor or expelled for all time. Many of these writings were

later adopted by Nazi Germany during WWII during the holocaust when six million Jews were murdered. Calvinism is often seen in a Hyper-Calvinism strand against evangelism. Furthermore, the recent resolutions adopted by the general assembly of PCUSA against Israel and the BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) caused real damage to the cause of the reformed movement in Israel. Most Jewish believers consider the PCUSA, though a very liberal denomination, to be a reformed denomination. And finally the fact that quite a few of the reformed churches adopted a replacement theology, (the idea that the church has replaced ethnic Israel and that God is past caring about the Jewish people, and there is no future hope for the ethnic Jews), does not help the cause of the reformed movement in Israel. However, thankfully because of the Lord's mercy and his acts of love, along with the testimony of Grace and Truth and its contributions to the church as well as the HaGefen Publishing (a reformed non-profit publishing company), reformed faith is now seen in a more positive light.

In recent years, a fellowship of pastors from the reformed churches in Israel began. There are today in Israel five reformed churches and one church plant. The pastors meet once every two months for prayer, encouragement and also to prepare a summary of the reformed confession. The need for such a confession arose, since the reformed creeds (HaGefen Publishing has published the Heidelberg confession and has helped in the translation work on the Westminster Confession of Faith) don't deal with some of the issues facing the church in Israel today. The main two being the Messianic movement and also the place of Israel in God's redemptive work. In addition, we want to have a short summary of the confession of our faith, so that other pastors and laymen can read it briefly and understand who we are and what we believe. The goal is of course to enable others to join the fellowship by adopting the confession and teaching it. We hope to have the confession ready by the end of 2017, and then we will send it to theologians who can critique it before we adopt it officially.

Another role that the fellowship has taken on is the training of young men for ministry. Seven men have been chosen after going through interviews by a small committee. While they study at the university or work, they are trained through ad hoc courses in various disciplines of theology. Pastors and elders of our churches are teaching the courses. At times we have had an outside lecturer from overseas who has come and taught the students.

An important part of the state of the reformed movement in Israel has to do with publishing. As the church grows, there is a greater need for sound reformed books that can provide the backbone and foundation of the church. HaGefen has been publishing commentaries by reformed writers of the past and present. These include Matthew Henry as well as Sinclair Ferguson. Also, for the first time the daily meditation of Spurgeon is being published in Hebrew. Other books by Ligon Duncan, John MacArthur, Mark Dever and R. C. Sproul are also in the works. HaGefen is publishing solid reformed books which are impacting pastors, elders and deacons as well as other laymen and women in both reformed and non-reformed congregations.

So the state of the reformed movement in Israel is indeed encouraging, though much work needs to be done. The fact that in the last seven years the number of reformed churches has grown from one to five is positive. We hope this number will continue to increase and unify us in a common base through the confessions in order to encourage one another and teach and preach reformed theology.

Soli Deo Gloria,

David Zadok

The legacy and present state of the Reformed movement in Italy

By Leonardo De Chirico

As the Protestant Reformation was suffocated in the 16th century by a powerful Roman Catholic church, the evangelical community in Italy has always been a tiny persecuted minority until the second half of the 20th century. Having learned to survive, churches are made of solid believers who nonetheless tend to be inward-focused and suspicious of others. However, these difficult conditions didn't prevent the gospel from spreading, especially in the southern regions of the country. Evangelicals represent roughly 1 percent of Italy's 61 million people. So the work ahead of us is massive.

In the past, Italian theologians have significantly contributed to the cause of the gospel worldwide: think of Peter Martyr Vermigli (1499–1562), peer to John Calvin and Heinrich Bullinger, whose *Loci Communes* (*Common Places*) were standard works for generations of Protestant pastors. Think of Francis Turretin (1623–1687), whose *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* is a crown of Reformed orthodoxy that served as the theology textbook at old Princeton Seminary. So while there's still much to be translated, there is the need for Italians themselves to write and develop contextually appropriate resources.

The faithful evangelical witness of past generations in difficult circumstances is inspiring. The gradual growth of cooperative efforts—for instance, in advocating for religious freedom or mercy ministries—is also encouraging. There are more solid books being translated into Italian (e.g., authors like Don Carson, Tim Keller, John Piper, John MacArthur, Mark Dever), and conferences and training initiatives are available for the Italian public. Recently the *Dictionary of Evangelical Theology*, a 900-page volume with more than 600 entries, was edited by Italian theologians and had to be reprinted—something unthinkable even a few years ago. There are 140 students following a non-residential five-year course in Reformed theology at the [Istituto di Formazione Evangelica e Documentazione](#) (IFED); this is also encouraging.

There's also a growing desire to see a shift from the survival mentality of the past to a missional mindset for the glory of God and the good of the nation. Without negating our struggles and problems, there is a sense of a coming momentum for the gospel. Efforts to help the Italian church from abroad have largely tended to either bypass national Italian church leadership or support autonomous individuals. I think we are becoming more credible partners to work with in promoting the gospel in our country.

As my senior colleague at IFED Pietro Bolognesi rightly argues, we have three main challenges: (1) identity, (2) unity, and (3) training. In a struggling minority situation, Christian *identity* has been largely defined not by who we are but by who we are *not* (e.g., not religiously Roman Catholic, not theologically liberal, not culturally secular). The overall perception has been that evangelicals are a cult. There is a need, then, to better grasp our evangelical identity based on core gospel essentials rather than on subcultural features.

Then there's *unity*. Secondary distinctives have produced too much fragmentation. We need to do together what's biblically possible, knowing that most of the challenges ahead of us (e.g., public witness, church planting, quality training) cannot be faced on a local level alone.

Lastly there's *training*. In struggling and small churches, formation haven't been viewed as a priority. Most leaders are self-taught and self-trained. Cultural engagement is often shallow. The situation won't improve if leaders don't emerge who are better equipped for ministry and if we don't have Christians better prepared for how to be faithful and missional in their vocations.

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE INFLUENCE OF THE REFORMED FAITH IN LATIN AMERICA

By WRF Member Paul Gilchrist

In the early 1900s, the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland, apportioned certain geographical areas and nations to the various denominations participating. For example, Guatemala, southeastern Mexico, Brazil, and other sectors in Latin America were commended to the Presbyterian Church in the USA and the Southern Presbyterian Church. The Anglicans and the Dutch Reformed were assigned other sections, as were the Methodists and Baptists, etc. There was a strong missions zeal, with Princeton Theological Seminary being a great resource of spiritual energy for such venture. The modernist-fundamentalist controversy had its effect. Of course, Roman Catholicism was introduced by the Spanish conquistadores and has maintained a strong hold on the people. But though solid evangelical reformed churches thrived, Pentecostalism really spread like wildfire. In more recent years, the ministry of Reformed missionaries, pastors and teachers, is providing a more solid biblical foundation in Latin America. With the formation of the World Presbyterian and Reformed Fellowship (changed in 2000 to World Reformed Fellowship) and its regional group Confraternidad Latinoamericana de Iglesias Reformadas in the 1990s, through conferences and seminars, contacts were made with reformed churches throughout Latin America. In Chile, Peru, Brazil, Bolivia and Mexico, the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions (and later, the World Presbyterian Mission of the RPCES and MTW of the PCA), churches in Mexico, Brazil, Chile, etc were revitalized. The Brazilian IBP has a very strong reformed influence not only in Brazil, but in Chile, Paraguay and Bolivia. The reformed influence is also felt through the Anglican communion in the southern hemisphere. The Dutch Reformed tradition has been quite strong in Central America and Puerto Rico as well as elsewhere in South America.

There were contacts with all kinds of churches and denominations through Evangelism Explosion International, founded by Presbyterian pastor Dr. James D. Kennedy in Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Amazingly, even though EE did not take root in American Presbyterian soil as much as Kennedy wanted, it was widely accepted throughout the world, and especially in Latin America through the efforts of Dr. Woody Lajara. In the last 6 years, Lajara and Paul Gilchrist have held training seminars for the leadership of EE in Colombia, Ecuador, Chile, Argentina, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Mexico and Puerto Rico. One of the rising leaders in Argentina is completing his doctoral program and is a solid reformed Baptist. We have used WRF member Dr. Richard Pratt's III Millennium materials, which are solidly reformed, and the studies have been very well attended and well accepted, by a diversity of backgrounds for participants, i.e.,

Baptists, Methodists, Disciples of Christ, Assemblies of God, Dispensationalists, etc. We have been clear who we are and what we are teaching, indeed, the III Millennium material is unquestionably reformed. In Costa Rica, we held our seminars at the Salvation Army Academy for training their cadets. Interestingly, the Coronel who was the director of the Academy, told us one day: "As you know, I represent the Salvation Army throughout Central and South America, and I meet the top leadership of denominations" (he was speaking of Arminians and Pentecostals). He then added: "Wherever I go, these leaders are saying to me that what you (Woody and Paul) are teaching here is what they want for their churches." One of our students in San Jose, approached us and asked if we would come and present these give these studies to his group of churches in Cartago (further south of San Jose). He is the leader of the Assemblies of God in the country. We agreed. We started with some 35 pastors and lay leaders from that district. Just this past August they celebrated their graduation. The pastor together with an independent pastor, are planning to replicate these studies throughout their churches in Costa Rica using III Millennium programs.

Sometimes, Calvinism can be presented in such a frigid manner that people fail to see the magnificent warmth of reformation theology. Latin America is poised to receive and hear this wonderful expression of the Gospel of grace.

Personal P. S. Sam, I am now almost 85, and I wish that I could give a full new life to serving the Lord in Latin America – where the church is so "stripped a sunder" – but from our experience, so open to this best expression of what the Gospel is all about. Thanks. Please feel free to change or use what you want. Blessings. Paul

LEGACY AND PRESENT STATE OF THE REFORMED MOVEMENT IN MADAGASCAR:

written by Pr. Dr. Ndriana Rabarioelina, ThD, PhD.

MADAGASCAR: The Great Island in the Indian Ocean has a surface of 592,000 km² with 24 million people, including around 41% Christians, 50% Indigenous Believers (Monotheism, Syncretism, Cult of ancestors), and 7% Muslims. And there are nearly 4 million Reformed Protestants (16.4% of the population).

I. HISTORY OF MADAGASCAR:

4000 BC: Madagascar, a World Apart, the Eden of Africa, is among the Last Vestiges of the Eden Land.

3000 BC - 2500 BC: Historical Relations between Madagascar and Sumer.

10th Century BC to 8th Century AD: Installation of the Lost Tribes of Israel in Madagascar. More than seventy percent (70%) of the population have Hebrew Israelite and Jewish origins. Biblical Relations between Israel and Madagascar. Indigenous Religion: Pre-Talmudic Jewish Monotheism.

1st Century AD: From oral traditions, Jesus-Christ himself came to Madagascar.

1632-1639: Introduction of the Catholicism in Madagascar. Failure of the expansion of this religious denomination.

1818: The King Radama 1st of Madagascar (1810-1828) introduced officially the Christianity for the Education of the people and the Development of the country (cf. London Missionary Society). Beginning of the Expansion of the Christianity in Madagascar.

1831: Translation of the first Holy Bible from the Hebrew and Greek languages into the Malagasy language by Rev. David Jones and Rev. David Griffith from United-Kingdom (LMS) and twelve Hebraist Malagasy Evangelists, descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel.

1835-1861: The Western political leaders in Europe betrayed the Queen Ranavalona 1st of Madagascar (1828-1861). In reaction, almost all Western people were expelled and there was a Great Persecution of Christians in Madagascar (1835-1861) where more than 30,000 Malagasy Christians were killed. Expansion of the autochthon Christianity.

1868: The Queen Rasoherina (1863-1868) was baptized at the end of her life by a Catholic Priest. Then, the Queen Ranavalona II of Madagascar (1868-1883) was baptized and became a Protestant Christian.

1869-1896: The Christianity became the State Religion, since the reign of the Queen Ranavalona II (1868-1883) in 1868 until the reign the last Queen Ranavalona III (1883-1896). These queens were Protestant. Building of a Protestant Royal Temple in Antananarivo to remember that Jesus-Christ is the King of kings and Lord of lords in Madagascar.

1896-1960: French colonization. Ideological domination of Atheism, Laity, and French Freemasonry. Coalition of the French Colonial Administration and the Catholic clergy against the Protestant Church. Persecution of the Protestants. Imprisonment of some Protestant Leaders. Closure of many Protestant Christian Schools, High School, and Hospital.

1960-2016: Installation of a French, Masonic, neo-colonial, democratic, republic, from repetitive and generalized electoral frauds. Poverty rate : From 30% to 95% of the population, due to Spiritual Syncretism, Corruption and Bad Governance of all republican political leaders.

1991: Under the conducting of the former minister Mr. Emile Ramarosaona and the General Roland Rabetafika, leaders of the Laic Department in the Reformed Protestant Church, the Federation FFKM is operating to destitute the dictator Didier Ratsiraka, president of the marxist, socialist, democratic, republic of Madagascar (1975-1991). Installation of Government of Transition conducted by the Liberal Lutheran Prime minister Mr. Guy Willy Razanamasy (1991-1992), then the Catholic Mr. Zafy Albert, president of the republic (1993-1997).

2001-2002: Co-operation between the Catholic Church under the conducting of the Cardinal Armand Gaetan Razafindratandra and the Federation FFKM to destitute again the dictator president Didier Ratsiraka (1997-2002). Installation of the Liberal Protestant Mr. Marc Ravalomanana as president of republic (2002-2009).

2009: Cooperation of the French President Nicolas Sarkozy, the Catholic clergy under the conducting of Mgr Odon Razanakolona with the Catholics Didier Ratsiraka and Andry Rajoelina for a “Coup d’Etat” to destitute the dictator Marc Ravalomanana the president of republic of Madagascar. Installation of Mr. Andry Rajoelina as President of the Transition (2009-2014), but not recognized by the International Community.

2014-2016: Installation of the Free-mason and Liberal Protestant Mr. Hery Rajaonarimampianina as president of the republic. Influence of the French Free-masonry. Corruption, bad governance and many advantages given to the Muslims by the High Administration.

II. LEGACY AND PRESENT STATE OF THE REFORMED MOVEMENT:

- **Systematic Theology:** Apostles Creed, Athanasian Creed, Nicene Creed, and Calvinist Theology in the Reformed Churches. In the theory, there is a Conservative Theology. But in the practice, there are different theological points of view, from the Conservative Reformed Theology, the Evangelical Reformed Theology, the Syncretist Theology, to the Semi-liberal Theology, and which depend on the pastor of the parish. However, 99% of the Christians believe that the Holy Bible is the Word of God.

- **Practical Theology and Missiology:** Four Awakening Movements, with Mr. Rainisoalambo in Soatanana (since 1894), Mrs. Ravelonjanahary in Manoloitrony (since 1900), Pastor Daniel Rakotozandry in Farihimena (since 1941), and Mrs. Nenilava in Ankaramalaza (since 1941), inside the Reformed Church (FJKM) and the Lutheran Church ((FLM), until the present times.

Since 1894 until the present times, the Awakening Movement, inside the Reformed Movement, is like that of the primitive Church at the times of Jesus-Christ and the Twelve Apostles. The Gospel is proclaimed to many people. Many sinners repent and accept the Salvation in Jesus-Christ (St.Matthew 3:2 and 28:18-20; St.Mark 16:15-20). The sick are healed, the blind receive the sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the demons are cast out, the dead are raised (Isaiah 35:5; St.Matthew 11:5; St. Luke 11:20).

- **Ecclesiology:** In 1940, the Pastor Daniel Ratefy, the Pastor Daniel Ralibera (Reformed Protestant Churches) and the Cardinal Armand Gaetan Razafindratandra were the conceptors of the Federation of Christian Churches in Madagascar (FFKM).

In 1980, Foundation of the Federation of Christian Churches in Madagascar (FFKM) with the Presbyterian Reformed Church (FJKM), the Roman Apostolic Catholic Church (EKAR), the Anglican Church (EEM) and the Lutheran Church (FLM)..

The principal Calvinist, Presbyterian, Reformed Church called FJKM has 6,000 Congregations with more than 1,500 pastors. But, there are also other small Reformed Presbyterian Churches (FMTA, MET, FPTAF, ...etc).

- **Political Theology:** In 2010, Public Declaration of the Prince Dr. Ndriana Rabarioelina, Head of the Royal House of Madagascar, for the vision of a Modern Christian Monarchy, based on the Holy Bible, under the conducting of Jesus-Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords, for the true development of Madagascar.

- **Christian Ethics:** In 2016, Declaration of the New Executive Board of the Reformed Church (FJKM) against the Homosexuality, the LGBT, the Corruption and the Free-masonry. Then, Public Declaration of the Past. Dr. David Rakotonirina, the new president of the Lutheran Church of Madagascar (FLM) against the Homosexuality and the Free-masonry.

Presbyterian Reformed Education: There are only 3 Biblical Colleges, 1 Theological Seminary, and 500 Protestant Schools in the FJKM Church. Then, young people constitute the great majority of the population and the Churches in Madagascar. All Churches are full of Christians on Sunday morning. But there is a need of ten (10) million Bibles in the Malagasy language. Need to build Biblical Schools, Biblical Colleges and new Churches in the 22 regions, and need to build Theological Seminaries, Christian Universities, Christian Libraries, Book Stores, Museums and Centers, Christian Radios and Televisions in the six provinces of the Great Island. Need of an Education of Excellence. Need to train a Conservative Reformed Theology for new Evangelists, Deacons, Elders, Pastors, and Doctors of Theology.

III. PERSPECTIVE OF THE REFORMED MOVEMENT IN MADAGASCAR:

From Biblical prophecies (Isaiah 60:1-3) since 1900, Madagascar will be the last Center of the Global Evangelization, with the Conservative Theology, like that of the time of Jesus-Christ and the Twelve Apostles, from the Reformed and Lutheran Churches in this Great Island to the whole world, and until the Second Coming of Jesus-Christ.

Among those who have this Global Christian Vision, and who work for it, are Mrs. Helene Rasoazanacolona (Spiritual shepherd, Lutheran, 85 year old), Mrs. Bernadette Ravolazaimanga (Spiritual shepherd, Reformed and Lutheran, 84 year old), Dr. Bruno Rabarihoela (Theologian, Sociologist, Professor of University, France), Rev. Dr. Roger Andriatsiratahina (PhD in Theology, Trinity University, USA), Pastor Tolotra Ratefy (Theologian, Hebraist, University of Munster, Germany), and Pr. Dr. Ndriana Rabarioelina (Theologian, Hebraist, ThD, PhD, USA).

May the Lor Elohim, the Creator of the Universe, always bless all of you, in the name of Jesus-Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Antananarivo, Madagascar, December 12, 2016.

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1 Attached Images

Iglesia Nacional Presbiteriana de Mexico

By

WRF Member Danny Ramirez

1827. The dawn of Presbyterianism in Mexico occurred around the year 1827 with the arrival of the First canvassers such as Diego Thompson. He came as an agent of the British and Foreign Biblical Society and brought a cargo of Bibles, unloading it in the Port of Veracruz and then carried it to the center of our country. However, it is fair to mention that there were ministers whose work stood out, even before the official arrival of the missionaries. Amongst them was one in the North whose name was Rigido Sepulveda and Mr. Arcadio Morales at the center of the country, who had groups to whom he taught the Holy Scriptures.

1872 is the year that is recognized as the official date of the start of Presbyterianism in Mexico. In October 1872, the Presbyterian Church of Northern U.S.A. sent missionaries who set foot in Mexican land. The following year the Presbyterian Church of southern U.S.A followed the same steps. However, there were foreign missionaries working in Mexico long before 1872. Among the first remembered Presbyterian missionaries are: Maxwell Phillips, Mr. Thomspom, and Merrill Nathanael Hutchinson who took the education and training from the first Mexican ministers. Miss. Melinda Ranking, who since 1852 had a daily school for Mexican children in Brownsville, Texas. In 1857, she moved to the city of Matamoros, Tamaulipas and dedicated 20 years of her life working among Mexicans in the north of our country particularly in Matamoros, Tamaulipas and Monterrey, Nuevo Leon.

1874. The first Presbyterian congregation of Mexico was established this year in Villa de Coss Zacatecas. On January 25, 1875, the church was rightfully organized. In the same year (1874) "El Divino Salvador" (Divine Savior) emerged as a congregation in Mexico City.

1875 During this year the second Presbyterian Church is organized in Mexico, which was the "Principe de Paz" (Prince of Peace) in Matamoros, Tamaulipas. The church was organized on May 21, 1875.

1881. "El Divino Salvador" (the Divine Savior) was organized as the third Presbyterian Church in Mexico City on May 8th, 1881. This was the first organized church in the central part of Mexico City. Its first pastor was Rev. Arcadio Morales, who had been ordained to the Holy Ministry in the year 1878, together with 10 other colleagues.

1885. "El Faro" (the lighthouse), which is still published today, became the first denominational magazine of the INPM.

1901. The R. General Synod was organized with four Presbyteries which were: Zacatecas, Tamaulipas, the City of Mexico and the Gulf of Mexico.

1914. Se estructura el Plan de Cincinnati, Ohio E.U., en donde las denominaciones por causa de la revolución mexicana se dividen el territorio mexicano. Así la Iglesia Presbiteriana que estaba desde Tamaulipas hacia el sur y sureste del país, redujo su área de trabajo a Oaxaca, sur de Veracruz, Chiapas, Tabasco, Campeche, Yucatán y territorio de Quintana Roo.

1947. Para este año se habían formado 2 nuevos Sínodos, por lo cual el R. Sínodo General, se convierte en R. Primer Sínodo, se organizó el R. Sínodo del Golfo de México y un tercero denominado R. Sínodo del Centro. De este modo existían los elementos suficientes, para conformar el máximo cuerpo de gobierno presbiteriano que es la R. Asamblea General. Por lo que en una reunión celebrada en la Iglesia "El Divino Salvador" de la Ciudad de México el día 8 de noviembre de 1947 se organiza la R. Asamblea General de la INPM con tres R. Sínodos conformados por 9 Presbiterios en total siendo los siguientes: del Primer Sínodo, los presbiterios: del Sur, del Pacífico y del Norte; del Sínodo del Golfo: los Presbiterios del Golfo, Peninsular y de Veracruz y del Sínodo del Centro: los Presbiterios de la Ciudad de México, Nacional Fronterizo y el de Oaxaca.

1972. Durante todo este tiempo previo la Iglesia Presbiteriana en México se fue preparando para convertirse en una Iglesia con decisiones autónomas y sostenimiento propio, es así, que al cumplirse el primer centenario de existencia, ya había un acuerdo tomado 10 años atrás, en 1962 de que las misiones extranjeras irían disminuyendo sus aportaciones en un 10 % anual y al llegar 1972 la Iglesia Presbiteriana tomó el sostenimiento de sus trabajos y obras misioneras, por lo cual tomó el acuerdo de darle salida del país a todos los misioneros extranjeros de E.U., que eran los que colaboraban en México. Sobre todo porque la visión de las Misiones de E.U. eran las obras sociales, hospitales, escuelas y proyectos agrícolas y los presbiterianos mexicanos se proyectaron a la evangelización y plantación de nuevas iglesias.

2004. Algo muy relevante para la Iglesia Nacional Presbiteriana de México en este año fue la conformación Plan Nacional Visión 2020 con el propósito de llegar al año dos mil veinte habiendo realizado acciones de crecimiento en todo el país en donde hay presencia presbiteriana y de alcanzar consolidación de la obra en los lugares donde aún es limitada. Una de las cosas que se han dejado sentir del mencionado plan es la actividad de "MOVIPRES" organismo encargado de la plantación de nuevas iglesias mediante acciones directas a nivel sinódico y presbiterial. En la actualidad, se han capacitado y se siguen capacitando nuevos plantadores en el ámbito nacional y hay fruto de este trabajo y aún esperamos más con la ayuda del Señor.

2016. A la presente fecha la Respetable Asamblea General de la Iglesia Nacional Presbiteriana de México, A. R., está conformada por 74 Honorables Presbiterios, 15 Respetables Sínodos, agrupados en alrededor de 6,000 templos en el país. Se estiman la cantidad de 1,500 pastores en todo el territorio nacional y aproximadamente 2 millones de presbiterianos, distribuidos desde el norte hasta el sureste de nuestro país. La Iglesia Presbiteriana cuenta con muchas iglesia compuestas por hermanos indígenas Chóles, Tzeltales, Tzotziles, Mixes, Zapotecos, Amuzgos etc., que adoran a nuestro Dios en su propia lengua materna.

Photo:

Directiva de la R. A. G. 2014-2018 De izquierda a derecha:Pbro. Amador López Hernández

Presidente: Pbro. Danny Ramírez Célis

Vicepresidente: Pbro. Adolfo Arias Job

*Secretario:*A.I. David Monroy Adame

1914. The Cincinnati, Ohio U.S.A. plan was structured. However, due to the Mexican Revolution, the denominations become separated and divide amongst themselves the Mexican territory. Therefore, the Presbyterian Church that had been established from Tamaulipas to the south and southeast of the country, reduced its work area to Oaxaca, southern Veracruz, Chiapas, Tabasco, Campeche, Yucatan, and the Quintana Roo territory.

1947. By this year two new synods had been formed. The R. General Synod became the first synod. The General synod of the Gulf of Mexico was later organized and a third called Central Synod was consolidated. Thus, there were enough elements to form the maximum body of the Presbyterian government, which is the R. General Assembly. On November 8th, 1947, at a meeting in "El Divino Salvador" (The Divine Savior) Church of Mexico City the R. General Assembly of the INPM was organized with three Synods made up of 9 total presbyteries: the first synod, the presbyteries: South and North Pacific; Gulf synod: Gulf Presbyteries, Peninsular and Veracruz and the Synod of the Centre: the Presbyteries of Mexico City, National Border and Oaxaca.

1972. During this time the Presbyterian Church in Mexico was preparing to become a self-sustaining Church with autonomous decisions. Upon completion of the first century of its existence, and 10 years Prior in 1962, they had already established an agreement stating that foreign missions would decrease their contributions by 10 % annually. By the time 1972 came around, the Presbyterian Church took full control of their work and missionary work, so they made the agreement to say goodbye to all foreign missionaries from U.S.A that had been collaborating with them in Mexico. Especially since the vision of the American Missions was social projects, hospitals, schools, and agricultural projects, but Mexican presbyteries were focused on Evangelizing and new church plantations.

2004. Something very relevant to the National Presbyterian Church in Mexico this year was the establishment of Vision 2020 National Plan. Which was created with the intent of reaching the year two thousand and twenty having fulfilled growth stocks across the country where there is Presbyterian presence, and achieve consolidation of the work in places where it is still limited. One of the things that have been felt of that plan is the activity of "MOVIPRES", the group responsible for planting new churches through direct actions in synodic and Presbyterian levels. They have been, and currently are, training new planters at the national level. The fruit of this work is truly visible, and they expect more with the help of the Lord as they continue growing.

2016. The Respectable General Assembly of the National Presbyterian Church in Mexico currently consists of 74 honorable Presbyteries, 15 Respectable synods grouped around 6.0000 temples around the country. It is estimated that there are currently 1,500 pastors throughout the national territory, and approximately 2 million Presbyterians, distributed from the north to the southeast of our country. The Presbyterian Church consists of many indigenous brothers, such as: Ch'oles, Tzeltal, Tzotzil, Mixes, Zapotecs, Amuzgos, and others native people who worship our God in their own native tongue.

PERSONAL VIEWS ABOUT THE REFORMED CHURCHES IN PUERTO RICO AND IN CUBA

By WRF Member Woody Lajara

"Puerto Rico was under Spanish colonial rule from 1493 until the end of the 19th century. The Spanish self-government. Two distinct cultures co-exist in Puerto Rico, Hispanic and North American. Popular protest has obliged the US government to stop using the island of Vieques, which is part of Puerto Rico, for military purposes. The economy of Puerto Rico is based on agriculture, industry, and service. The Catholic Church is the oldest, and the largest, church. Protestant missions from the USA started working in the island at the beginning of the 20th century, after the cession. Puerto Ricans returning from the US brought Pentecostalism. Today there are many indigenous charismatic groups. The estimate in 2000 was that one third of all Christians in Puerto Rico were Evangelical and Pentecostal/Charismatic. The former Evangelical Council of Puerto Rico became in 2002 the Council of Churches of Puerto Rico. The Methodist Church is the first church in Puerto Rico to join the WCC (2005). The Anglicans come under the Episcopal Church in the USA, which is a WCC member. exterminated the indigenous population, and brought in slaves from Africa. After the Spanish-American war of 1898, Puerto Rico was ceded to the USA. Since 1952 it has the status of free associated state with the USA and has internal" (FROM BROTHER "GOOGLE")

The Presbyterian Church of Puerto Rico was my mother church and where I spend all my young life as key leader in the local church and at the Presbytery level for practically all my younger life. By the way, my mother almost gave birth of me in the local church where we were members. She was leading the prayer meeting in the church the night that she had me, she had to be rushed to the hospital from the church when I was on the way to come to the World.....

AS I grew up I was properly trained in the local Presbyterian church in the city of Aguadilla, P.R. The Presbyterian Church in Puerto Rico was very conservative, following the general teaching from the Northern Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Puerto Rico was part of the Synod of New York at that time. We had one church in each town in the Island, 75 of them. Then later on, as the cities were growing, some other churches were build in the big cities, like in Mayaguez we used to have three churches, they were Central, Balboa, and La Marina. In the city of Aguadilla we had two main churches, La Central and Higuey. This big churches developed some "country churches" like in Borinquen, Calero, and Montaña. I grew up in the Borinquen Mission church that belonged to the main church in the city of Aguadilla.

God gave me the blessing of becoming a Ruling Elder in my church at the age of 17 years old. So, I was very involved in the church government since very early in my life and of course, I was very involved in the Youth Ministry. We build up our youth program up to 260 participants with seven (7) key leaders whom today are active in the Ministry in different places in Latin America. It was good because we were growing up in a very good conservative denomination following the BIBLICAL TEACHINGS under the guidance of good dedicated Teachers, Pastors and good Theologians.

When I was 21, active at the University of Puerto Rico, our churches started taking other ways in their teachings and specially in Missions opportunities. The whole denomination (UPCUSA) started to support liberal theologians, liberal missionaries, (like Angela Davis) that were supporting communist governments (like Castro) and the Guerrillas in the Latin American Continent and in other places around the world. A lot of "mission funds" were send to support liberals missionaries and works outside of the church.

In the whole area of the Continent, whilst reading the historiography of our Reformed Churches, specially Presbyterians, it is possible to observe how and apologetic narrative has been constructed completely secular with no reference to biblical teaching in our Reformed denominations; mostly by its own protagonists like Dr. Fals Borda and Maria Cano in Colombia, Pablo Freire in Brazil along with other leaders in the Continent whom where of a tremendous influence to the leaders in Puerto Rico, as well as the whole region.

On the other hand, the Catholic historiographer emerged as a production with a some number of publications that can be considered completely liberals and influencing greatly the new Reformed Theologians in the Latin American continent. As all of us know, Theology of Liberation reached the coasts of our Continent and very soon the Reformed Churches of Puerto Rico, specially Presbyterians, embrace the new teachings. This brought a very big problem among the leaders in the Island and in the region causing that several churches leaves their Presbyteries and Denominations.

This situation changed, thanks to the steady growth of non-catholic religious communities, that oriented the scholars' attention towards an explanation of how Latin American has been the scenario for a process of religious deregulation or diversification, oriented to end the prevalence of Catholic church, and the Theology of Liberation along with it; allowing the formation of charismatic Pentecostal churches. Despite the above mentioned religious mutations, and the effort of many authors to provide a good and solid historiographic review that shows all the new work in this field isn't still available because the so many mutations in the denominational realm in the continent. Like a life body, still moving along in different ways.

Lately the new emphasis in the UPCUSA concerning the ordinations of homosexuals and the problem of the "marriage of same sex" have brought divisions among the Presbyterian churches in Puerto Rico. A good friend and a **member of the WRF** send me an article regarding their decision of leaving the Presbytery and starting a new path. Rev. Juan Ramon Rivera, pastor of one the largest Presbyterian churches in the Island decided, along with the total members of the church to leave the Presbytery because the decision of their General Assembly to bless the "same sex marriage" situation. Part o the article reads:

"In an act of full obedience to biblical authority, this past Sunday, Feb. 8, 2015, the congregation of Primera Iglesia Presbiteriana en Bayamón (First Presbyterian Church in Bayamón), located in Santa Rosa Community, resigned in plenary from the Presbyterian Church of United States of America (PCUSA) and declared itself an independent Reformed Presbyterian congregation, under the name Iglesia Presbiteriana Westminster (Westminster Presbyterian Church), seeking to join the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC).

This action, which included over 250 signers, was taken mostly due to the arbitrary and repressive positions assumed by the Commission for Evaluation, Education and Resolution of the Presbytery of San Juan, after the Bayamón congregation communicated their opposition to the position assumed by the PCUSA regarding: 1) the authority of the Holy Scriptures, 2) the centrality of the work of Christ, 3) abortion, 4) same-sex marriage and 5) the ordination of homosexuals, among other topics; and requested to transfer their membership to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) denomination in the United States.

The spokesman for the congregation, **Pastor Juan Ramón Rivera Medina**, indicated that all prayer and worship services, community work, as well as the other ministries, would continue as they usually do, operating under the newly-created Iglesia Presbiteriana Westminster, whose headquarters are now in the facilities of American School, located on Hermanas Dávila Urbanization, 9th Street, C-1, in Bayamón.

When asked the rationale behind this sudden mass departure, Pastor Rivera Medina indicated that on Jan. 31, 2015, the Presbytery of San Juan presented a resolution to remove Pastor Emeritus Juan Pérez Alda, who pastored the church for over 30 years, from all ties to the congregation and its voluntary services. Moreover, they left the following recommendations pending: to deny their transfer to the EPC, to relieve the congregation-elected governing officials (the Session of Elders) of their duties, and to relieve Senior Pastor Rev. Juan Ramón Rivera Medina of his duties. "In light of this oppressive situation, the Session, myself, and the congregation have decided to obey the Word of the Lord. We did not want to submit to the theologically liberal policies of our former denomination, and as faithful believers in the Word, we decided to leave behind all material possessions and carry firmly onward," concluded Rivera Medina."Several other churches has also left the denomination and joined to the E.P.C.

The REFORMED CHURCH in Puerto Rico is very small. They had a good start with several missionaries and probably up to 12 churches. But several types of problems caused for the missionaries to leave the Island and left local churches to a very ill and not so good trained leaders that has caused the denomination to loose more and more churches. I thin that a this moment they have about 3 churches functioning as the REFORMED CHURCH OF PUERTO RICO. They closed their seminary and book store.

In the Continent very few Reformed Bodies have grown significantly. Only the I.P.B., the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico, The Independent Church of Brazil, the Independent Church of Mexico, The National Presbyterian Church of Guatemala are practically the larger ones.

CUBA:

In 1890 a small group of Presbyterians began to meet in Havana. They asked the Presbyterian Church in the USA to send them a missionary. A visit was made and the First Presbyterian Church in Havana was established that same year, with the first ordained Cuban Presbyterian pastor. A few years later, in 1895, the church had to close because of the Cuban War of Independence against Spain. In 1900 Protestant missionaries arrived in Cuba, at the time of the intervention of the USA in the war. Among them were several Presbyterians who re-initiated the work of the Presbyterian Church. During the following sixty years the church stood out in the organization of excellent schools and its participation in social service, especially literacy programmes. In the same way, its ecumenical foresight led the church to found the Council of Churches in Cuba in 1941 and, together with the Methodist and Episcopal churches, the Theological Seminary of Matanzas in 1946.

After the Cuban revolution in 1959, the church lost its schools and its membership diminished. It took the status of an autonomous and independent church in 1967, maintaining fraternal relations with the Presbyterian Church in the USA. When, starting in 1990, an opening occurred on the part of the government, the church started growing again rapidly. Currently it has three presbyteries and a synod. Its ecumenical influence is reflected in its participation in the various national, regional and global bodies of which it is a member. The church is now involved in a "Ministry to the Cuban People Today". Taking into account that 70 percent of its members have joined the church in the last ten years, it has strengthened its efforts for Christian education. The church is also exploring new ways of evangelization, organizing many Bible studies and prayer groups in different places. It has developed an important action of liturgical renewal, which includes using Cuban rhythms in the music and providing a balance between tradition and innovation. Also, after many years in which all the social services were in the hands of the government, the church has set up some social projects, which have

been very well received by the people. (from GOOGLE)

Today the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba continues to extend its international relations and also its impact in the country. An important factor has been the theological preparation of the laity, in special courses organized by the seminary in cooperation with the local congregations.

(PERSONAL)

I started traveling toward Cuba, once or twice a year, 19 years ago to introduce the ministry of EVANGELISM EXPLOSION. I had the opportunity to personal visit practically all denominational leaders in the Communist Island in order to invite their denominations to be involved in the ministry of Evangelism Explosion Intl. After providing a scholarship to 6 of them to go to Mexico City to participate in an E.E. Clinic, they went back to Cuba and three of them started E.E. in their local churches. One of them was the Director of the Reformed Church of Cuba. Unfortunately, even they had a good start, they could not developed the E.E. do to personal conflicts with some of the leaders.

The Reformed Church of Cuba was to involved and identified with the Communist government that they could not dealt with anything new, or outside of the government, beside that there were problems among themselves as leaders of the Small Denomination. They had only 5 Churches, and were reduce to two.

The Presbyterians were also identified with the Government, but they had more congregations, practically one in each town. Since they were so involved in government affairs it was difficult for them to do any evangelistic activities. Everything was controlled by the government influenced leaders that were not involved in Evangelism. Their evangelistic activities had to do with moving and motivating their members to be involved in government meetings and activities. Their major theologian, a friend o mine Dr. Arce, has represented the Government of Cuba in major meetings around the globe.

Even though they have practically one church in every town, their total membership is very small and it is an arm of the Castro's movement in the Island. The Presbyterian Church of Cuba have a very good an positive relationship with the PCUSA with representative from the PCUSA visting them on a regular basis.

Avery good and positive church doing the work of evangelism in the Island is the BAPTIST CHURCH OF CUBA, specially the church in east (Havana). Being a "CALVINISTIC CHURCH" has really build up a very good and positive ministry of evangelism with a good solid multiplication of membership in practically every churches that have started E.E.

In Cuba I had the blessing to train 17 key leaders, most of them Baptist Reformed to become Professors at a Seminary that we started in Placetas called ECETE. This is a very REFORMED SCHOOL with 256 full time students.

SCOTLAND

Fergus Macdonald

The following denominations in Scotland formally affirm the Westminster Confession of Faith (1647):

- Church of Scotland
- Free Church of Scotland
- United Free Church of Scotland
- Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland
- Free Church of Scotland Continuing
- Associated Presbyterian Churches
- Reformed Presbyterian Church
- International Presbyterian Church

With a membership of 360,000, and over 800 congregations, the Church of Scotland is by far the largest of these. The Free Church of Scotland with 13,000 members and over 100 congregations is a distant second. The other Presbyterian denominations are even smaller: the United Free Church of Scotland (59 congregations), the Free Presbyterian Church (32 congregations), the Free Church Continuing (27 congregations), the Associated Presbyterian Churches (8 congregations), the Reformed Presbyterian Church (5 congregations), and the International Presbyterian Church (4 congregations).

Church of Scotland membership represents 7.5% of the Scottish population but a much larger proportion (28%) claim some form of Church of Scotland allegiance in social surveys.

While ministers in all these denominations are called to affirm the Westminster Confession, in the case of the Church of Scotland and of the United Free Church of Scotland (59 congregations) liberty of opinion is granted 'on such points in the Standards not entering into the substance of the faith.' At the time when such liberty of opinion was granted (1879 and 1892), the substance of the faith was not explicitly defined, but in 1921 the Articles Declaratory of the Constitution of the Church of Scotland affirmed the doctrine of the Trinity, the incarnation of the Son, the Headship of Christ over the church, his Cross and Resurrection, the forgiveness of sins, acceptance with God through faith, and the gift of Eternal Life. The Article concludes: 'The Church of Scotland adheres to the Scottish Reformation; receives the Word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as its supreme rule of faith and life; and avows the fundamental doctrines of the Catholic faith founded thereupon.' However, in practice the Church of Scotland embraces a wide range of theological and ethical positions from conservative evangelical to liberal. There are more conservative evangelicals in the Church of Scotland than in all of the other denominations all together.

In addition, there are around a dozen reformed Baptist congregations in Scotland, some of which form the Grace Baptist Partnership focusing on church revitalisation and church planting. The '20 Schemes' initiative ('Gospel Churches for Scotland's poorest'), has a reformed statement of faith, and so far has planted four churches in areas of urban deprivation and has a vision to plant more.

Regular church attendance in Scotland is declining - down about one third since 2002 - and now represents less than 10% of the population. Some of the smaller denominations are experiencing growth, but this is largely (but not exclusively) accounted for by the crisis over human sexuality in the Church of Scotland.

There are two theological colleges committed to the Westminster Confession – the Highland Theological College in Dingwall, which is a constituent college of the University of the Highlands and Islands, and Edinburgh Theological Seminary, which is a partner institution with the University of Glasgow. The Rutherford House network, which encourages people to think biblically and theologically, and organises the biennial Edinburgh Dogmatics Conference, affirms the Westminster Confession. Covenant Fellowship Scotland has recently been set up to counteract the move of the Church of Scotland away from Scripture and the Westminster Confession, and to work for the reform of the Church in terms of Declaratory Article I. A Scottish Reformed Conference is held annually at which 500 believers of all ages and denominations gather to benefit from biblical exposition and fellowship. Positively Presbyterian is a smaller annual theological conference initiated by the Free Church of Scotland, but open to members of other denominations. The Scottish Reformation Society, a small non-denominational body, exists to defend and promote the work of the Protestant Reformation in Scotland, and holds regular public meetings in Aberdeen, Lewis and Inverness, as well as publishing its quarterly magazine *The Bulwark*. There are two reformed publishing houses in Scotland: the Banner of Truth Trust in Edinburgh and Christian Focus Publications in Fearn, Ross-shire.

**UNION DES EGLISES PRESBYTERIENNE AU CONGO
THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES IN CONGO**

UEPCO/UPCC “asbl”

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (SYNOD)

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FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The United Presbyterian Churches would like to inform its history background, realization, its consequences and its prayer request for the primary purpose of any reader interested potentially for a contribution, whatever little or many, it may be to advance and to strength the work of God’s ministry for the kingdom expansion.

UPCC is located in DRC, North Kivu Province, specially in the Eastern part of Congo/Goma town, the headquarter of the UPCC.

This part is the theater of tribal conflict ethnic, slaughter, volcanic eruptions and repetition of wars.

Let us to be together in prayer so that God brings peace and puts a good leadership in this country of DRC.

Trust Merchant Bank (agence: TMB GOMA) DRC

Account number: 1272-0289901-28

Code swift: TRMSCD3L

UEPCO/SAFARI KANZEGUHERA Dieudonné

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES IN CONGO “UPCC” asbl

The United Presbyterian Church in Congo “UPCC” is the mainline protestant Christian of reformed traditional. It comes from in merger of two denominations. All Nations Presbyterian Church in Congo “EPTN” and Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Central Africa “EPCCA” the leaders of these two denominations took place after many times of dialogue and decided to become one in the denomination of United Presbyterian Churches in Congo on July 5th, 2016.

The All Nations Presbyterian Church in Congo “ANPC/EPTN” was coming from Presbyterian church in Eastern of Congo “EPECO” called “EPEZA” in period of ZAIRE recommended by the Presbyterian church of Rwanda “EPR” since 1992 in collaboration of the Presbyterian community of Congo “CPC” rooted in the ministries of the American Presbyterian Congo mission “APCM” since 1890 began by missionary William Sheppard established from the general of the Presbyterian church of South American took place in Atlanta Georgia in 1885 and concentrated in the West and Eastern Province of Kasai and also in Shaba (Katanga).

Engagement of the Presbyterian church USA in Congo involved ministry through mission personnel and partner church relationship approached to ministry that included education and leadership development, health ministries, community development, evangelism and new churches development.

The couple John Morrison made effort to establish APCM from Kasai Province to Kinshasa capital city in the denomination of Presbyterian community of Kinshasa in 1950 CPK “and became an autonomous partner church of the PCUSA also in the metropolitan area of Kinshasa, western provinces of lower Congo and Bandundu.

Now community Presbyterian church “CPC” is very strong in Kasai Provinces and community Presbyterian of Kinshasa “CPK” is also very strong in Kinshasa and they are members in world council churches (WCC) since 1972.

Those two Presbyterian communities work in western part of RDC and are regrouped in ecclesiastic platform of many denominations called church of Christ in Congo (Eglise du Christ au Congo “ECC”).

Apparently the convention signed between the Belgium’s government and the protestant missionary companies blocked some extensions skills.

Apart from the above mentioned, the United Presbyterian churches in Congo “UPCC” is coming up from in the Merger of those two denominations (EPTN and EPCCA), EPTN from EPECO/EPEZA and EPECO from the community Presbyterian church of Congo “CPC”, EPECO broken relationship with EPR when the war shook the East of Congo due to Rwanda genocide of 1994 and because of politics’ issues was between Rwanda and DRC.

United Presbyterian churches in Congo is autonomous is marking partnership with Presbyterian church in Uganda (PCU) and is seeking denominations or a platform which it can make partnership. Its claim to extend the mission in other parts of DRC, South Kivu province, Maniema, Kisangani and Equateur.

2. MISSION

The UPCC, mission is to spread the gospel of Christ to all nations, plant the churches, Bible schools, educational centers and promote other development affaire related to the church vision. Develop charity among members, assist the vulnerable (orphans, widows, women raped, people living with HIV/AIDS and fight against racial discrimination or ethnic.

3. VISION STATEMENT

The united Presbyterian churches desires to spread a passion for the worship of God’s glory becoming a multinational servant-resource church in order to radiate the gospel of grace by word and deed to the DRC and to the word (The doctrine of grace and grace alone).

4. DOCTRINE POSITION

UPCC is a part of a reformed tradition in the world wide church of Jesus Christ subscribes to the reformed confession. Emphasizes the sovereignty of God, the authority of the scriptures and the necessity of grace trough faith in Jesus Christ.

5. THE UPCC GOVERNMENT

The UPCC is governed by Elders (Presbyters) and deacons elected by the church members. The church officers make most of the necessary decision on behalf of memberships;

No single officer may make a decision, but decisions are made on collective basis by elders known as a session. This form of government which expresses the UPCC's connectionalism that is to say the bond of union between and among all our churches. It seeks to follow the connectionalism in the apostolic church by its various courts which are: the session, the presbyteries and the general assembly (synod).

6. UPCC'S DEPARTEMENT OR COMMISSION

1. Department of evangelism, spiritual life, theology and mission;
2. Department of development and social affair (Deacon);
3. Department of finance;
4. Department of Christian education: Nursery, primary, secondary school, high school, academy and university, Sunday school and Bible school;
5. Department of children ministry, youth and adult;
6. Department of women and family ministry;
7. Department of health.

7. REALIZATION

A. Evangelism and church planting, lands and building in North Kivu Province;

N°	DISTRICT	LOCAL CHURCH	LANDS	BUILDING	OBSERVATION
1	GOMA TOWN	NDOSHO KESHERO KABUTEMBO MAJENGO MUGUNGA	57Mx80m 40mX40m - - -	Permanent building Semi-permanent	Destroyed by the wind lost it Home house, lost it Home house, lost it House ranting is functioning
2	NYIRAGONGO	RUSAYU/KARAMBI	40mx60m	-	Need to be built
3	MASISI	SAKE BWERAMANA KABASE BUFOMANDU/KAT MATANDA/KOY MUTI KAHANGA HANIKA MIANDJA MIFUNGULU	30mX50m 35Mx60m 25Mx45m 50Mx70m 30Mx35m 20mx30m 30Mx45m 20Mx100m 50Mx40m 25Mx30m	Semi-permanent Semi-permanent Semi-permanent Semi-permanent Semi-permanent Semi-permanent straw Semi-permanent Semi-permanent Semi-permanent	Lost Lost Lost Lost Lost Lost and destroyed sheeting exist functioning Destroyed by the war Destroyed Destroyed

		NYUNDO	30Mx38m	straw	Sheeting in functioning
3	MASISI	LUALA	45Mx50m	Straw	Destroyed
		MACHUMBI	47Mx37m	Straw	Destroyed
		KIRYAMO	30Mx40m	Straw	Destroyed
		KIRINGI	27Mx35m	Straw	Destroyed
		KARAMBI	25Mx30m	Semi-permanent	Exists is functioning
		KAZINGA	20Mx18m	Semi-permanent	Exists is functioning
		KITSHANGA	-	Semi-permanent	Renting land, lost
		KISE	30Mx25m	Straw	Destroyed
4	RUTSHURU	NYARUBANDE	10Mx50m	Semi-permanent	Is functioning
		MASIZA I	25Mx30m	Straw	is functioning
		MASIZA II	30Mx40m	Straw	Destroyed by war
		MIHINDO	-	-	Destroyed by war
		RUVUMU	30Mx35m	Straw	Destroyed
		KINYABWITSI	20Mx15m	Straw	Destroyed
		KIYEYE	20Mx25m	Straw	Destroyed
		NYANZALE	11Mx13m	Semi-permanent	Is functioning
		BIRISHEKE	20Mx30m	Straw	Destroyed
		KIKUKU	-	-	Abandoned
		MUTI	20Mx35m	Straw	Destroyed
		BAMBO	30Mx50m	Straw	Destroyed
		MOULIN	20Mx25m	Straw	Destroyed
		KABUGA	25Mx30m	Straw	Destroyed
		KIKOMO	25Mx25m	Semi-permanent	Lost it
		KABIZO	-	-	Lost it
		LUNGA	30Mx30m	Semi-permanent	Abandoned
		MURIMBI	20Mx20m	Straw	Abandoned
		KIHONGA	17Mx37m	Semi-permanent	Is functioning
		KIRINGA	-	-	Is functioning
		BUSENE	30Mx30m	Straw	Abandoned
		PEMBA	20Mx25m	Straw	Abandoned
5	WALIKALE	KATOBO/MITEMBE	30Mx50m	Straw	Destroyed
		KASHIKIRI	20Mx20m	Straw	Destroyed
		IHULA	50Mx50m	Semi-permanent	Exists is in functioning
		HAGAMA	-	Straw	Abandoned
		CHAHI	20Mx25m	Straw	Abandoned
		CHUNGO	35Mx30m	Straw	Abandoned
		MABESHE /MASINGI	30Mx40m	Straw	Exists is functioning

		KIJOTE	25Mx20m	Straw	Destroyed and abandoned
6	BENI	MBAO	35mx30m	Straw	Abandon
SOUTH KIVU PROVINCE					
7	KALEHE	MPANAMA/ZILARO	50mx50m	Straw/flaw	Destroyed/abandoned
		LUMBISHI	27mx40m	Straw	Destroyed/abandoned

Among 59 local churches, now we remain only with 11 local churches:

Goma district: we have Mugunga/renting house

Nyiragongo district: we have only land of 40mx60m not far from Mugunga, it is at 800m from Goma-Sake main road.

Rutshuru district: we remain with 5 local churches: Nyanzale, Nyarubande, Masiza, Kihonga and Kiringa

Walikale district: we remain with two local churches: Ihula and Masingi

Masisi district: we remain with 3 local churches: Karambi, Kazinga and Kahanga.

Kalehe district/South Kivu Province: Mpanama and Lumbishi local churches are completely destroyed and abandoned

We lost 48 local churches and many members, some died, others scattered in the different camps of refugees. The remainders of servants and believers who know to read need the Bibles and hymn songs.

One Bible cost 10\$ and one hymn songs cost 5\$. To find them, it is not easy for the servants and believers because of the poverty caused by pillage, looting, done during the war and by different rebels.

LEADERS OF THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES IN CONGO

NAMES, TITLE, QUALIFICATION AND OBSERVATION

N°	MANES	FONCTION	QUALIFICATION	OBS
1	SAFARI KANZEGUHERA DIEUDONNE	Pr President	B.TH.DEGREE	Need to continue up master
2	SIBOMANA FAUSTIN	Ev.Tresure		
3	MUHAWWE	EV		
4	NTIBARIKURE ZAMANI Saltiel	PASTOR		
5	MAGORANE NDAYAMBAJE	PASTOR		
6	MPABANZI KALENGE	PASTOR		
7	NDABAHARIYE TIMOTHEE	PASTOR		
8	BIHAME RENZAHO	PASTOR		
9	BAGIRIMANA MUHIMA	PASTOR		
10	SEBUHINJA SERUMAKA	PASTOR		
11	NIYIBIZI SHIRAMBERE	EVANGL.		
12	BARITONDA MVUMBA Jean	PASTOR		
13	HABINEZA BOSCO	EVANGELIS.		
14	NDABAHARIYE BIRIHANZE	PASTOR		
15	MUHIRE BARASESEKAZA	PASTOR		
16	MAOMBI SAFARI SEMATEKE	ASS.Pr		
17	TUYISENGE MATIAS	ASS.Pr		
18	MANIRAGENA INNOCENT	PASTOR		
19	NSABIMANA NYAMUVUGWA	PASTOR		
20	SEMIRYANGO MIVUMBI	PASTOR		
21	MANIZABAYO NGENDA	DIACRE		
22	MUGENZI DIRIJITE	DIACRE		
23	RUGABA TUMANI	EVANGEL		
24	MASOTERA MAZIMPAKA LADISLAS	EVANGEL		
25	NDAGIJE MUTAYOMBA	EVANGEL		
26	TUMAINI NDIMUBANZI	ASS.EVANG		
27	HITIMANA ABIYINGOMA	DIACRE		
28	BIKORIMANA GASIGWA	DIACRE		
29	ZAWADI SEMANYWA	DIACRE		
30	NIYOBYOSE BANZI THEONESTE	EVANGEL		
31	NDAYAMBAJE RUSHIGISHA	EVANGEL		
32	GASHUTI MUHETO MATIAS	ASS. PAST		
33	BARIKIWA WETEMWAMI	EVANGEL		
34	HASIZIMISI BARASA	PASTOR		
35	NDUSHABANDI MASHAGIRO Martin	Elder		

Those servants need to be trained Biblically, trough the mobile school, like in CEFTD: (Study Center and Theological Training Decentralize) Centre d'Etude et de Formation Théologique. Pray for them.

STATISTICS OF BELIERS FROM 1998 UP 2008.

N°	DISTRIC	LOCAL CHIRCH	BELIEVERS							VULNERABLES						OBS
			W	M	Y	TOT	CHILDREN (0-12 years old)			WIDOWS			ORPHANS			
			W				G	B	TOT	W	M	TOT	G	B	TOT	
01.	GOMA	NDOSHO	20	20	8	58	52	28	80	60	20	80	25	12	37	
		KESHERO	22	15	18	55	60	20	10	10	30	15	11	11	26	
		KABUTEMBO	6	4	7	17	10	6	16	3	1	4	6	4	10	
		MAJENGO	11	6	20	36	12	5	17	4	2	6	8	4	12	
		MUGUNGA	8	6	12	26	14	7	21	6	2	8	4	2	6	
02.	MASISI	SAKE	24	10	30	64	62	20	82	12	8	20	12	4	16	
		BWER/NDU	20	10	19	49	32	17	49	6	2	8	2	1	3	
		KABASE	13	7	15	35	16	12	28	7	4	11	12	6	26	
		BGE/KATOY	21	11	25	56	18	12	30	6	2	8	12	4	16	
		MATANDA/KOYI	15	10	18	43	20	16	36	9	2	11	10	3	13	
		MUTI	18	9	16	43	31	15	46	10	3	13	13	7	20	
		KAHANGA	16	8	26	50	26	13	39	9	4	13	14	8	22	
		HANIKA	13	9	18	40	20	12	32	16	4	20	4	2	6	
		MIANDJA	20	15	22	57	30	18	48	4	2	6	6	2	8	
		MIFUNGULU	16	8	18	46	22	12	34	7	3	10	4	2	6	
		NYUNDO	15	11	30	60	22	18	10	28	6	3	6	4	10	
		LUALA	18	12	30	60	22	18	40	9	6	15	20	9	29	
		KISE	12	10	16	38	18	8	26	10	2	12	7	3	10	
		MAUTUMBI	14	11	22	47	16	14	30	11	5	16	7	4	11	
		KIRINGI	13	9	15	36	12	6	18	9	4	10	2	1	3	
		KIDYAMO	18	12	16	46	20	11	31	7	2	9	4	1	5	
		KALAMBI	30	12	40	82	36	20	56	9	7	16	12	8	20	
KAZINGA	8	6	8	22	12	6	18	4	3	7	2	1	3			
KITSHANGA	21	12	20	53	16	8	24	6	4	10	5	2	7			

N°	DISTRIC	LOCAL CHIRCH	BELIEVERS							VULNERABLES						OBS
			W	M	Y	TOT	CHILDREN (0-12 years old)			WIDOWS			ORPHANS			
							G	B	TOT	W	M	TOT	G	B	TOT	
04	RUTSHURU	NYARUBANDE	20	12	26	60	26	16	42	6	3	9	12	6	19	
		MASIZA I	17	12	20	49	16	12	28	3	2	5	6	4	10	
		MASIZA II	9	7	15	31	20	11	31	5	1	6	10	2	12	
		MIHINDO	7	5	12	24	14	6	20	4	2	6	8	2	10	
		MUVUMU	8	6	14	28	14	7	21	7	3	10	14	6	20	
		KINYABWITSI	11	7	12	30	22	9	31	2	1	3	4	4	8	
		MUTI	12	8	16	36	16	8	24	3	2	5	6	6	12	
		BAMBO	22	15	32	69	26	12	38	5	7	12	10	2	12	
		MOULIN	7	2	9	18	12	8	20	1	0	1	6	0	6	
		KABUGA	8	4	12	24	14	6	20	3	4	7	6	4	10	
		KIKOMO	12	8	26	46	8	4	12	1	2	3	4	3	7	
		KABIZO	4	2	8	16	6	4	10	2	0	2	0	2	2	
		LUNGA	22	14	32	68	30	15	45	5	4	9	10	14	24	
		PEMBA	8	4	12	24	14	6	20	2	2	4	4	2	6	
		MURIMBI/MUHINDO	6	2	8	16	8	4	14	2	-	2	2	2	4	
		KIHONGA	15	8	22	45	12	6	18	4	2	6	8	2	10	
		KIRINGA	6	4	10	20	10	4	14	4	3	7	9	2	11	
		BUSENENE	9	5	8	22	12	4	16	2	-	2	4	-	4	
BUGANZA	21	15	28	64	26	14	40	6	2	8	6	4	10			
BUVUNGA	12	8	8	28	12	6	18	4	1	5	4	3	7			
05	WALIKALE	KATOBO/MITEMBE	16	8	22	46	18	4	32	3	-	3	4	1	5	
		IHULA	18	12	28	58	22	10	32	6	2	8	12	4	16	
		MABESHE	7	5	8	20	8	2	10	4	1	5	10	1	11	
		KASHIKIRI	9	8	16	33	10	3	13	4	2	6	10	2	12	
		CHAHI	6	5	8	19	8	4	14	3	1	4	7	1	8	
		HAGAMA	8	4	12	24	10	6	16	5	1	6	12	1	3	
		KIJOTE	10	4	6	20	16	4	20	4	2	6	8	2	10	
		CHUNGO	6	4	11	21	12	6	18	3	2	5	7	1	8	
06	BENI	BOIKE/ MBAO	18	15	20	43	12	8	20	6	2	8	12	4	16	

SOUTH KIVU PROVINCE																
07	KALEHE	MPANAMA/ZIRAR O	20	15	26	61	25	16	41	7	4	11	16	6	22	
		LUMBISHI	18	12	30	60	28	16	44	8	2	10	16	4	20	

Total of beliers (women+men+youth= 2302), children (0-12 years, girls+ boys=1607, widows (women+ men=496), orphans (girls+boys=637)

General total: $2302+1607+496+637=5042$ members. Vulnerable (adults + children=1133). Now the numbers are increasing.

Among of 3909 members without vulnerable, we remain with 326 members with many vulnerable caused by wars.

Comments: This statistics of believers is from 1998 up 2008. Now due the different wars and ethnic conflicts and slaughter that have occurred in the region many of our churches have been destroyed and people have displaced in the camps and we have lost a great numbers of memberships. They need to be strengthened, reason of having lands with no church building our and members.

However our goal is to reestablish God's church in those abandoned lands. Pray to God so that He may bring peace in this country.

B. EDUCATION

- 1) One primary school at Goma/NDOSHO, EP LA PATIENCE, Six class room plus office with 450 pupils plus 2 classroom of secondary school;
- 2) One primary school at Kalehe: EP MPANAMA; Six class room and secondary school; Institut MPANAMA not functioning and abandoned;
- 3) One primary school at IHURA/WALIKALE: EP COURAGE D'IHULA Six class room and secondary school; Institut COURAGE D'IHURA six classrooms not yet build and they are stopped because of wars.

NB: This school of IHURA need to be built. One of MPANAMA has been destroyed and we lost it.

- 4) Initiation and creation of Bible schools: “study central and decentralized theological training (CFETD), Centre d'Etude et de Formation Théologique Décentralisé.

C. SOCIAL ACTION

- Health center at Karambi/Kilorirwe, construct in sheeting;
- Health center at Masiza: destroyed by the wars;
- One hundred pupils (orphans and vulnerable) of E P LA PATIENCE were assisting by the church in school fees, distribution of exercise books, pens etc.
- Assisting of widows by breeding of rabbits and goats

D. DEVELOPMENT AND UPHOLDING OF PARTNERSHIPS

- UPCC is maintaining collaboration with the Presbyterian church of Uganda “PCU” Children evangelism fellowship (CEF), Educating African for Christ (EAFC), Alliance of Evangelicals in Congo “AEC” which has partnership with Alliance of Evangelical in Africa (AEA); Westminster Christian Institute Uganda (WCIU), All Nations Theological College and Seminary (ANTS), African Leadership and reconciliation ministry. (ALARM) and world reformed fellowship. (WRF).

D. MINISTERS

UPCC has about 34 ministers whom two are trained Biblically and others are not trained. They need to be trained. Other ministers died during the wars, see consequences of wars in following.

E. HOPE FOR MINISTRY

UPCC'S hope that God will empower his servants of effectively serve him and that they will receive their hearts so that all together can reach the perishing souls and evangelize them for Christ. God's grace and help, the church will raise from embers to a flames.

CURRENT UPCC MINISTRY VEHUCULE

- God centered worship services (Sunday AM);
- Congregational prayer meeting; Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday AM);

- Women's Bible studies: Saturday AM;
- Elders and deacons Bible teaching: Wednesday AM;
- Children's ministries (Sunday AM);
- Youth ministries: Sunday PM

DIFFICULTIES

From 1993 this Eastern part of DRC is the theater of tribal ethnic conflict, slaughter, volcanic eruptions and repetition of wars until today.

We have lost a great number of lands, members, servants and construction's churches. Other members and servants whom rested scattered in the different camps of refugees without anything after being looted. People are poor, they live in miserable situation they need to be strengthened.

- Lacking of servants trained;
- Lacking of small and large catechisms;
- Losing of land, foundation of the church building, where this one collapsed and primary school building at Ndosho, Goma town which was headquarter, which you will see on photo. Lacking of this land and its buildings caused also a depart of many members in the Goma district and losing of local churches.

FUTURE VEHICLES THAT PROMOTE OUR VISION

- Bible school: equip servants for God centered ministry;
- Counseling centers: provide Biblical counseling for the church and community and equip believers to counsel;
- Community center: provide community services including sport, monitoring, life skill training, health center ministries, nutrition, education, orphanage, computer center, leadership development, community development, evangelism and cultural activities;
- Bookstore: provide high quality biblical and reformed books and materials to our community and to the church.
- Conferences and seminaries: provides teaching on strategic topics;
- To help us to develop a solid foundation for the Presbyterian reformed faith, evangelism and church, leadership training in theological university and the mobile school of theology through CEFTD which you will see its project proposal in following of his note;
- We request to you, to pray with us so that God helps and enables us to fulfill this vision.

Thank you, God bless you!

On behalf of the United Presbyterian Churches in Congo

Pastor SAFARI KANZEGUHERA Dieudonné
President and legal Representative

CONSEQUENCE OF WARS SINCE 1993 UP TO DAY IN DRC IN GENERAL AND IN PARTICULAR IN NORTH AND SOUTH KIVU PROVINCES

Dear servants of God in different denominations, individual congregations and Parachurch organizations members of WRF

we would like to tell you about the consequence of wars since 1993 up to day in north and south Kivu provinces DRC. Before the wars we had about 59 churches with 5042 members and 97 servants (Pastors elders and deacons

Now we remain with 11 local churches with 326 members+ vulnerable in functioning, we lost 3583 members, 48 lands of churches building and 8 servants of God died and 45 servants scattered and joined other different denominations. The following names of those servants below died.

- 1) Past BUTWATWA KATUKUNGUMBA JEREMIE M:RUTSHURU
District
- 2) Past SEMBERE RUTSHURU District
- 3) Past BASENDA RUTSHURU District
- 4) Past MAPENDO NDARUHUTSE MASISI District
- 5) Past RUGWIZA BAGWANWIRA MASISI District
- 6) Past SEBAHUNDE MASISI District
- 7) Past HAGUMA MASISI District
- 8) Past AKIMANA and his wife KALEHE District

The remaining of the church members and servants scattered in the different camps of refugees without anything after being looted

At Ndosho Goma town where were headquarter of UPCC, we had a land's church of 50mx80m where we built a church building in 2007 of 11mx20m in additional 11mx6m destined for offices all measure was 11mx26m,

When we were building ,we contacted a debt at the cooperative of serving and credit (COOPECU) of 5000\$ USA on 17th June 2008 which we could pay with a benefit (gain) of 525\$ in total (5525\$) USA in the period of six months from 17/7/2008 up on 17/12/2008, now after paying two months the war of CNDP became dangerous we lost many church members and also the servants said above died and the rest scattered in different camps ,the payment fees cam from offering, tithe and contributions of church members. That war of CNDP has been followed also by M23. These wars blocked us to continue to refund money at COOPECU. We became unable to refund the four months.

The rested were growing, after seven years when the COOPECU was near to accuse us at the court, we interested one person in the town to pay for the church, he accepted and paid 15500\$ USA including penalty, the land and all buildings (church building and primary school) became his property ,we made convention of renting ,we paid 70\$ per month, after one year, the proprietor refused to rent us again ,we gave up and loosing it in that way. Now he asks us to give him 20000\$ USA so that we may recuperate the land with all buildings (foundation of church building which collapsed, office building which remained and primary school buildings which was the unity of production(income) for the church progress.

That church building was covering by 240 sheets iron, it is where the members gathered in chapel time and S1 and S2 of secondary school used for studding. The primary school has been rehabilitated by International NGO Rescue from UK after the depart of M23 from Goma town.

Because of that, we lost our headquarter and properity and also members. Now we are functioning at the local church of Mugunga in renting house. It is why we send to you the photo and official documents of government which gave us about that church land, N°29475 lost of Ndosho/Goma town. You will check it, is written in French.

The second document is also the church land which we have at Rusayu /Karambi in Nyiragongo District 800m from Mugunga is for 40mx60m.

Now we would like to implore to you to plead for us at the different denominations, individual congregation and parachurch organization members of WRF who can be touched by this situation to help us in prayer and also in finance so that we may recuperate our land and our buildings after paying this 20 000\$ USA or to build the second land of Rusayu. When we shall be helped to recuperate this land and its buildings, we shall be glad and we assure you that we shall take care of them. We shall not again borrow any money.

2 Cor chapter 8 and 9. Paul encourages generosity the Macedonian churches about the grace that God has given them and instructs to Corinthian believers to complete their proposed offering for the needy believers in Jerusalem.

Be with us in prayer, it is the work of God, all things belong to Him.

Thank you, may God bless you abundantly.

On behalf of UPCC

Pastor SAFARI KANZEGUHERA Dieudonné
President and legal Representative

Presbyterians in the Punjab

AND THE MISSIONARY PROBLEM OF MASS MOVEMENT

Notes by Philip DeHart

Origins of American Presbyterian Missions

E.M. Wherry wrote a brief history of his sending mission board, the Foreign Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America:

The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America was from the very beginning a Missionary Church. The first general assembly, comprising four Synods, met in Philadelphia in May, 1789. The matter of missions occupied the attention of this Assembly. The Synods were enjoined to secure two missionaries each, and present them at the next meeting of Assembly. The Presbyteries were urged to arrange for the taking of regular collections for missionary purposes. All around them were vast regions, occupied by European settlements and Indian tribes. There was need of a great missionary work among these. For three quarters of a century, a "Board of Correspondents" had been established in New York forming a kind of auxiliary to the "Scottish Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge." This Board of Correspondents appointed the Rev. Azariah Horton a missionary among the Indians in Long Island. Later on the devoted David Brainerd was ordained by the Presbytery of New York and became a missionary to the Indians of New Jersey and Pennsylvania. This occurred in 1744, but this zealous and indefatigable worker wore himself out in scarcely more than three years, dying at the age of thirty years. He was succeeded by his brother, the Rev. John Brainerd, who had visited his dying brother and who had comforted him by the assurance that his beloved Indian Christians would not be left as sheep without a shepherd. The salaries of these missionaries were provided by the Scottish Society, but their expenses were supplied by the Colonial Society from funds chiefly contributed by the American Presbyteries.

Such was the beginning of the Foreign Missionary Enterprise which now occupies so large a place in the hearts of American Christians. It was in the year 1831 that the Synod of Pittsburgh, which, from the day it was organized, had been distinguished for its interest in the missionary work, founded a society called the Western Foreign Missionary Society, and chose as its secretary the Rev. Elisha P. Swift.¹ Mr. Swift was the pastor of a large congregation, but so great was his interest in the movement that he resigned his pastorate and devoted all his energy to the work of furthering the cause of Foreign Missions. The salary of this Secretary was provided by the liberal gift of the Hon. Walter Lowrie at that time the Secretary of the Senate of the United States.

In the year 1810, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was established. The Presbyterian churches were interested in the work of this society. The feeling of denominational responsibility, however, soon led Presbyterians to believe that as a Church they had always regarded themselves as a Missionary Church, and had carried on missionary work among heathen tribes in America, they should have a Foreign Missionary

¹This society was formed by the Synod of Pittsburgh as a result of the refusal of the General Assembly to do so. An overture to GA which originated with John Holt Rice had stated, "That the Presbyterian Church in the United States is a Missionary Society, the object of which is to aid in the conversion of the world; and that every member of the Church is a member for life of said society, and bound in maintenance of his Christian character, to do all in his power for the accomplishment of this object." Earl R MacCormac, "Missions and the Presbyterian Schism of 1837," *Church Hist.* 32.1 (1963): 32-45.

work for which they should be solely responsible, they believed that they should thus cultivate a larger interest in the work of carrying the Gospel into all lands. It was, therefore, with no purpose of rivalry that this new Society was formed.² Many churches and individual Christians continued to contribute to the American Board.

A few years after the organization of the 'Western Foreign Missionary Society' the General Assembly established the 'Foreign Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America' [hereafter referred to simply as the Board] and then the Western Foreign Missionary Society united with it.³

Overview of North India

In the 19th and early 20th Centuries, North India generally referred to the Punjab together with the United Provinces (see map below). This spanned about 900 miles East to West and about 250 miles North to South. It is a fertile interior region irrigated by two major river systems. In the 19th Century, society was structured according to a rigid caste system along feudal lines. Sikhs, Hindus, and Muslims coexisted and with hardly a trace of Christianity. The Punjab was the last territory of India to come under British control in the mid 19th Century. It was around this time that missionaries began to arrive in the region, first to the United Provinces and then later to the Punjab as it opened up.⁴

Numerous Anglican agencies engaged in this region, initially under the Bishop of Calcutta. "By the end of the century there were Anglican mission stations along the northwest frontier [the border with Afghanistan], in Kashmir, in the hill areas and heart of the Punjab, and in virtually all the major cities in the United Provinces."⁵

In 1836 the Methodist Episcopal Church from America established their first mission station in the region and by the end of the Century it had spread widely. Baptists and the London Missionary Society also had a presence but they were more narrowly confined to specific urban areas. The United Presbyterian Church (American) and the Church of Scotland arrived in Sialkot in 1855 and 1856 respectively. From there, these churches grew westward and thus were more localized within the Punjab.⁶

At the end of the century one could see, as the fruits of their labours, churches, mission schools, clinics or hospitals in most of the large towns and all of the major cities of North India. In some of them were Christian colleges of considerable repute . . .⁷

The map below shows the geographical grouping of three different missions of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and one mission, the Sialkot Mission, of the United Presbyterian Church of North

² Perhaps it was not rivalry which formed this new society but it was most certainly controversy. In fact it was quite close to the heart of the New/Old School separation as the interdenominational American Board was perceived by the Old Schoolers to be central to the alliance that the New Schoolers were advancing with the Congregationalists. Further, it was significant for Old School polity that the church is itself a mission agency and to structure mission work under a non-church entity was "interference and importunity." The Old Schooler Breckinridge argued this point in the strongest possible terms: "If the organization of any Church necessarily unfits it for the work of missions, in its proper person, then we should think it time to question the authority of that Church, and its conformity to the principles of Gospel constitution and order." Ibid.

³ E. M. Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834-1924* (Boston: THE STRATFORD COMPANY, 1926). Wherry himself set sail from Boston to India with his wife in 1867 to serve in the Punjab. (191)

⁴ John C. B. Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India* (Macmillan Co. of India, 1976), 3.

⁵ Ibid., 4.

⁶ Ibid., 4-5.

⁷ Ibid., 6.

America. The three former missions operated autonomously, even after all three were brought under the Board of Foreign Missions. Each dealt directly with New York until 1913 when the India Council was created to coordinate their activities (see this heading below). Thus for most practical purposes we may speak of four different 19th Century American⁸ Presbyterian missions (the ARP Mission was not established until 1910). The social ties were closer between the three northern missions because they sent their children to Woodstock School while the southern mission accessed Kodaikanal School.⁹

In 1936 Arthur Brown reported that 704 missionaries had been sent to the three missions in India with what had now become the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the USA.¹⁰ Only China had received more Presbyterian missionaries. By far the majority of these hailed from the North of the US. By the turn of the century, a significant proportion of new missionaries were unordained (specialists in medicine, education, agriculture, etc.) and, into the 20th Century, more women than men.¹¹

Punjab and North India Missions

John Lowrie & Ludhiana

The story of the Punjab and the North India missions begins as one. Arguably the first enduring Presbyterian work in India was that of John Lowrie who arrived in Calcutta with William Reed, together with their wives, in 1833. They were sent by the Old School Western Foreign Mission Society having replied to a letter sent by the society to the Theological Seminary in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, calling for volunteers. Among their first friends in India were the venerable pioneers Dr. Marshman (English Baptists) and Dr. Alexander Duff¹² (Free Church of Scotland). Louisa Lowrie and William Reed died soon after so Lowrie was alone when he proceeded westward to Ludhiana. He arrived after 18 months of travel and with the loss of 3 out of the 4 companions. His own ill health forced him to return home in 1836 after briefing the newly arrived reinforcements, 7 families in two parties (3 of the men were unordained teachers). He hoped to return to India but instead served for the remainder of his career as the secretary of the Presbyterian Board. His three sons would all become missionaries, serving in India and China.¹³

Ludhiana was selected as the first outpost of ministry because the coastal and river areas around Calcutta had already been occupied by various missions. The inland lay yet largely unclaimed and a political center (friendly to Christianity) must be selected from which the gospel would

⁸The Church of Scotland work began in 1856, ultimately forming the Sialkot Diocese of the Church of Pakistan when the CoP was formed in 1970. (James Edward McGoldrick, *Presbyterian and Reformed Churches: A Global History* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2012), 471.)

⁹John C.B. Webster, "AMERICAN PRESBYTERIANS IN INDIA/PAKISTAN 150 YEARS," *J. Presbyt. Hist.* 1962-1985 62.3 (1984): 193. This socializing is an important factor that is easy to overlook. Scattered missionaries tend to develop strong loyalties and their children's schools are the most natural venue to bring them informally together. It is possible that for the missionaries a greater bond and sense of belonging developed around the school communities than even around church communities.

¹⁰Arthur Judson Brown, *One Hundred Years; a History of the Foreign Missionary Work of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co, 1936), 1114-. Referenced in Webster, "AMERICAN PRESBYTERIANS IN INDIA/PAKISTAN 150 YEARS," 193.

¹¹Webster, "AMERICAN PRESBYTERIANS IN INDIA/PAKISTAN 150 YEARS," 194.

¹²The influence of Duff was of particular significance as his views concerning education and schools were, for the most part, adopted by the mission and came to significantly shape its strategy. Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 13.

¹³Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1924.*, 14-19. Julia Davis, a teacher, was the first single woman missionary sent by the Presbyterian Church USA. However, she left the mission in Calcutta and married a Baptist.

disseminate.¹⁴ A British officer posted in Ludhiana, the northern most frontier of British rule at the time, had sent a request for mission presence (see the heading below on Indian politics). He argued that Ludhiana was a strategic location as a gateway to the entire Punjab. And it was yet unreached, without a single church or missionary.¹⁵ Lowrie soon discovered that starting a church was going to be more difficult than he expected based on what he knew of other parts of India. Much of the population was Muslim and thus more difficult to reach. He devoted himself to operating a successful school for the locals and to the spiritual needs of the British. This work was not without controversy.¹⁶ As in the case of Duff, there were many, both liberal and conservative, who objected to the mission strategy of education. Lowrie led a defense that was to form mission strategy for years to come.¹⁷ He was soon invited by the ruler of the Punjab to begin a school in the capital of Lahore to educate the nobility in English.¹⁸ The mission thus enjoyed the favor of both the British and the local government.

Lowrie's successors continued the work of the school, gradually including a morning chapel service as a witness to the mostly Muslim students. Subsequent schools were opened from the beginning with chapel services so that their Christian identity was clear from the outset. The school was able to offer a stipend to poor students who contracted to enter government service upon graduation. It prospered. "Learning was not sought for its own sake, but as a means to secure emolument and an honorable position." Still, the missionaries were troubled by what seemed to be a diversion from their gospel call. If education was to be the strategy then it must be Christian education, for "The result of merely secular education would be to create a generation of infidels." Yet, because of the popularity of the school it grew rapidly and they were forced to employ Indian staff who were not Christians.¹⁹

The burgeoning mission of 7 families was invited by the government in 1836 to occupy further outposts of Saharanpur and Subathu. The former was later to become an important center for theological education while the later, a hill station, became a base for work among the hill tribes. Subathu was to host the first school for Indian girls in North India. Allahabad became the third new ministry base to begin that year and soon an orphanage was established there. As other reinforcements arrived more stations were opened, all at the request of British officials who supported and assisted the work. By 1840 the distances between the stations required that the mission be divided into two. The Ludhiana station later became **the Punjab Mission** and Farrukhabad was separated to later become **the North India Mission**.²⁰ Still, all of these stations were in the British-controlled border areas East of the Punjab and not in the Punjab proper. The ruler of the Punjab clung to Sikh dominance, crushing Islam and forbidding Christianity. The Punjab was to become the last region of India to kneel to the British Crown.

The Sikh Wars

The door began to open in 1839 when the powerful ruler of the Punjab, the Maharajah Ranjit Singh, died. His realm soon dissolving into division and conspiracy. Meanwhile the British strengthened their presence along the border with the Punjab, throughout the area that was occupied by the

¹⁴ Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 13.

¹⁵ Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1924.*, 4, 11.

¹⁶ Later, in the 1850's the Board became critical of the schools because of the slow growth in conversions and sought to shut them down, replacing education with a more direct evangelistic strategy. Ibid., 199ff.

¹⁷ Lowrie had argued for a 4-pronged strategy of the mission: preaching, publishing, educating, and training "a race of native preachers." Benevolence was always to be present, surrounding these works. Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 16.

¹⁸ Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1824.*, 16.

¹⁹ Ibid., 23.

²⁰ Webster has helpfully tabulated all of the data of the origin and nature of each mission station. Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 14-15.

mission. In 1845 the Sikh army crossed this border and the British forces engaged. The British crushed the Sikh army in a series of battles resulting in a treaty in March of 1846 which ceded vast territories of the Punjab to the East India Company. While this was not the end of hostilities,²¹ nevertheless the way was now open for mission work in the Punjab proper and a plea was sent to New York for the Board to send reinforcements.²² The plea was answered crucially by Rev. John Newton and Rev. Charles Forman who set up a station in the Punjab capital of Lahore in 1849.²³ According to the established model, the work in the Punjab began with Christian schools.

The Sepoy Rebellion

A setback to the mission was experienced a decade later by the Sepoy Rebellion of 1857 during which many missionaries and their families were killed in the great slaughter of Europeans. Churches, schools, and homes were burned to the ground and personnel evacuated. The work was severely affected for a time.²⁴ Strangely, during this revolt the Sikhs remained loyal to the British for the most part and the interior of the Punjab was relatively peaceful.²⁵ It was the Muslims in particular who showed their muscle during this violence and attempted to forcibly convert Indian Christians.²⁶ The political fallout of the Sepoy Rebellion led to the dissolution of the East India Company the following year and the beginning of the “British Raj” proper. It also led to the silencing, temporarily, of many of the enemies of Christianity and the work of the mission.²⁷ Christians who were widely thought to be opportunists were proven to be true. Thus Christians were now welcomed into the society at large.²⁸ So while the Sikh war of 1845-1846 resulted in an open field for mission work in the Punjab, it could be said that it was the Sepoy Rebellion that established the indigenous Indian church in the region.²⁹

Afghanistan

Further expansion to the far western part of the Punjab with eyes on Afghanistan was made possible by a brief British occupation of Afghanistan from 1838-1841 and a substantial donation to the Board

²¹ In the uprising of 1848 the British suffered a harsh defeat before they crushed the Sikh army with finality and annexed the Punjab.

²² Even A. A. Hodge and his wife served for two years from 1848 before returning home due to health problems. He would later succeed his father, Charles Hodge, at Princeton Seminary and become an effective trainer and mobilizer of missionaries there. Princeton seminary and Princeton theology in particular carried a dominant influence over these missions at least up to the end of the 19th Century. Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 25ff. Webster contrasts this influence of Princeton Seminary in the 19th Century with the increasing influence of Union Seminary and its alternative theology in the 20th. Ibid., 34ff.

²³ Forman successfully established a college which became a premier institution for many years. For more details concerning the early history of Forman Christian College see Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1824.*, 273-279. In addition, “Charles Forman had been asked to serve on virtually every committee on education appointed by the Government during his long career in the Punjab.” Thus competition with government sponsored education was precluded. Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 177.

²⁴ The mission recovered surprisingly well in spite of having lost half of its force due to the rebellion. However, the American Civil War soon caused a dearth in both new recruits and funding. Attrition due to disease and death was severe and the mission was dependent on a steady stream of new recruits just to maintain a stable presence. This prolonged the recovery period. Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1824.*, 154.

²⁵ Ibid., 100–101.

²⁶ Ibid., 114.

²⁷ A. D. Asimi, *The Christian Minority in Pakistan* (Word Alive Press, 2010), 55, <https://books.google.com.my/books?id=Y6xYBwAAQBAJ>. The retaliation of the British troops is reported by Asimi to be with even greater ruthlessness than the “mutiny” of the rebel forces.

²⁸ Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1824.*, 128–29.

²⁹ “Four years after the mutiny, the missionaries were able to make the encouraging statement that the number of Christians in the Northwest Provinces and Oudh [not in Punjab proper] had more than doubled.” Ibid., 153.

for this purpose. With the help of the CMS, the mission work began in Peshawar by Rev. Isadore Loewenthal, of Jewish parentage and a Polish immigrant.³⁰ A graduate of Princeton, he mastered the languages of Arabic, Persian and Pashtu and completed a translation of the New Testament from Greek into Pashtu.³¹ He was killed by his guard in 1864, thus ending the mission's work towards Afghanistan. The CMS soldiered on so the Americans were willing to abandon their efforts.

Publishing

One of the most significant contributions of these pioneer missionaries was producing and printing materials in many languages and in vast quantities. A singular achievement was the contribution towards the establishment of the written form of Punjabi, including a grammar and dictionary. Rev. James Wilson and Rev. John C. Rankin, having been transferred to the Islamic capital of Agra, became pioneers in the missions engagement with Islam and experts in the Urdu language. Wilson not only translated the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Shorter Catechism into Urdu but also produced a Romanized version of the Quran (with comments) as an aid in training missionaries. They were brought into close fellowship with Pfander and others who were engaged in public debate with Muslim clerics. As the North Indian Bible Society was formed in Agra, Wilson was elected its first secretary. Much effort was devoted to producing faithful translations of the Bible into Urdu and Punjabi from the original languages (rather than from English, which had been the tendency of prior translations). Wherry reports that literature became "considerable part of the work" of these pioneer missionaries.³² Much of this work was destroyed in the Sepoy Rebellion (see above) and had to be restarted in the 1860's.

Ecclesiastical Development

The missionaries sent by the Board were from two different American Presbyterian denominations. When in 1837 it seemed necessary to organize a presbytery in order to ordain the yet unordained men of the mission, the missionaries from the two denominations came together to form the Presbytery of Ludhiana under the Presbyterian Church USA.³³ Two more presbyteries were soon organized and brought together in 1841 to form the Synod of Northern India by decision of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA (Old School).³⁴ Also in 1841 the Presbytery of Saharanpur was formed by the missionaries of the Reformed Presbyterian Church (Covenanter).³⁵ All of this was accomplished with very few Indian conversions. It was not until 1840 that an Indian local church was organized and the local language used in the administration of the Lord's Supper.³⁶ After 3 years of study the first Indian, Mr. Gopinath Nandi (or Gopi Nath Nundy), was ordained to gospel ministry. He had been baptized by Dr. Duff in Calcutta in 1832 and was now the first native

³⁰ Ibid., 336ff. Also see Thomas P. Hughes, "Some Account of the Afghans and of the Peshawar Church Mission," ed. Wayne Kempton (Victoria Press, Lahore, 1877), http://anglicanhistory.org/india/tphughes/account_afghans1877.html.

³¹ Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1924.*, 130-33.

³² Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1924.*, 85-86.

³³ This was the same year of the Old/New School split in the Presbyterian Church back home. Perhaps this turmoil was one reason why the missionaries did not consult their General Assembly at that time.

³⁴ This synod did not actually convene for the first time until 1845. It had the same status as all other synods within the denomination. However, it, rather than General Assembly, was the final court of appeal for all of the Indian churches. In 1872, when more presbyteries were added the name was changed to the Synod of India. (Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1824.*, 244-245.) Through various mergers this body was ultimately absorbed into the present Church of North India when it was founded in 1970.

³⁵ Ibid., 262.

³⁶ Wherry saw this, whether evident to the mission at the time or not, as following a biblical pattern of "Jews first and then gentiles." The first priority was given to serving the needs of the embattled Christian communities. Ibid., 82.

Presbyterian minister in the East.³⁷ Churches had been established in every station but the missionaries themselves were typically the pastors. These churches were well supported by the British military and administration.³⁸ The ministry among them was fruitful.³⁹ The contribution of the mission to education was recognized as crucial by natives and foreign administration alike.⁴⁰ Even after 25 years of labor the number of converts in all of the mission churches together was quite small.

Gradually native workers began to be trained and assumed most of the regular itinerate ministries in the outlying areas. The missionaries were expected to visit each station annually, typically traveling during the cool winters. The annual religious festivals, bringing together throngs of people from all over India, were also an important occasion for evangelism and literature distribution. The distances covered by the missionaries could take weeks. Excursions were made into Kashmir⁴¹ and even to the border of Tibet. In 1837 the mission formalized what had become a regular annual week-long meeting. It was during the comfort of winter when the missionaries could all come together with their tents and camp outdoors. This meeting, together with the mission as a whole, was oddly separate from the Presbytery, establishing a pattern for Presbyterian mission work that was to continue until today.⁴² The relationship between missionaries and Indian presbyters became increasingly awkward and was never satisfactorily resolved.⁴³

Webster constructively asks the question why in these early years of the mission a sharp separation was maintained between the foreign mission and the local presbytery. Had the missionaries been New Schoolers this separation would be more understandable. However, given that the Old School position on missions was so vehemently argued that missions (whether local or foreign) was the purview of the church, the position of the mission in India seems particularly anomalous. Somehow these Old School missionaries and their sending bodies were able to reconcile this apparent contradiction. Webster suggests several possibilities, none of which seem entirely satisfactory.⁴⁴

By 1870, 13 Indian men had been trained informally and ordained to gospel ministry. This burden of training was increasing and the need was felt by the mission for a seminary program. After collecting data from all of the Presbyterian works in the region, the names of 25 candidates for gospel ministry were collected. This need was presented at the Synod of India in 1871 and the seminary opened its doors in Allahabad the following year. The first year was an experience of

³⁷ Gopinath later unsuccessfully demanded membership in the mission. Yet he is remembered favorably by the mission for enduring severe persecution and for many faithful years of ministry. "We do not want to rule over you," he said in an 1848 letter to the Board. Rather, he appealed for representation on behalf of the Indian church. Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 52, 193, particularly 210-211.

³⁸ The typical British cantonment was constructed with a Protestant church towards the center, easily accessible to the officers and their local staff. Towards the outside of the cantonment Catholic churches may be found to serve the needs of some of the Irish regulars. Christopher Harding, *Religious Transformation in South Asia - The Meanings of Conversion in Colonial Punjab*, First Edition edition. (Oxford ; New York: OUP Oxford, 2008).

³⁹ Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1924.*, 88.

⁴⁰ 1854 brought a government policy to give grants to the mission schools in spite of heavy political opposition which argued that the mission work of conversion was to be blamed for stirring the natives to rebel. This arrangement increasingly brought the mission schools under the control of the British administration. Ibid., 139. See also Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 150ff.

⁴¹ Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1824.*, 90.

⁴² It was in formulating the by-laws of this annual meeting that some aspects of the essential distinction between mission and church were formalized. Webster, "AMERICAN PRESBYTERIANS IN INDIA/PAKISTAN 150 YEARS," 191. Also, Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 209.

⁴³ Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1824.*, 246.

⁴⁴ Webster, "AMERICAN PRESBYTERIANS IN INDIA/PAKISTAN 150 YEARS," 191. Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 209.

weeding and only 16 of the initial 28 students appeared for the next year. The seminary was then closed for a time due to the lack of eligible students willing to travel and endure the training.⁴⁵ It was re-opened 8 years later in Saharanpur in 1884. Annexed to it was a training center for the students' wives.⁴⁶

Ecumenism in the Punjab

Other mission societies had begun to arrive in the Punjab: the United Presbyterian Church, the Church of Scotland, the Church Mission Society, and the Methodist Episcopal Church.⁴⁷ In 1871 discussions began concerning uniting all of the Presbyterian bodies to form a united church. Representation in the discussion included the Synod of India, the Church of Scotland, the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, the Free Church of Scotland, and the Irish Presbyterian Church. This effort was finally realized in 1875, including the Reformed Church in America, under the name, "Presbyterian Alliance of India." The first meeting was to be in 1877. But organic union had not yet been achieved and the alliance was floundering. Finally, in 1904:

The consummation of the union of nine Presbyterian bodies to form a single Presbyterian church in India was in a very special sense an accomplishment of our American Missions in India. The first promotor of such a union was Rev. Dr. John H. Morrison, who for twenty-five years labored in season and out of season for Presbyterian union. He especially desired to see the Indian churches occupy a place of independence. While two important bodies, the American United Presbyterian and the Welsh Presbyterian churches were at that time unable to come in, yet one, the Welsh Presbyterian church, was able to unite in 1919. It is hoped that the remaining unit may yet join up.⁴⁸

Conflict between Mission and Church

From the very birth of the first presbytery there was an inherent dilemma of polity. Two different American Presbyterian denominations came together to form it. Thus the relationships between the sending churches, the Board, and the Indian church were elusive. For the most part the Mission handled not only all of its internal affairs but also those of the Indian churches.⁴⁹ This "tended more and more to exalt the Mission above the Presbyteries. This state of things eventually created a spirit of dissatisfaction among the Indian ministers and elders."⁵⁰

One option to resolve this anomalous situation was to bring Indians into membership in the Mission. Since the Mission represented the center of power this was the most obvious solution.⁵¹ However, the Mission's proposed solution was to dissolve the Mission and have the Presbyteries take over. Clearly this solution was more in line with the Old School principle of carrying out the mission of the church through the organs of the church. However, this weaning from the mission was not so easily accomplished. The Indian Presbyteries were deemed unprepared to "wisely manage" some of the Mission's work (such as the women's ministries and ministries that spanned across Presbytery

⁴⁵ Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1824.*, 195.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 249.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 91.

⁴⁸ "On the 30th day of December, 1924, the organic union between the Presbyterian Church in India and the Congregation Church of Western India was consummated. The name of the united body is 'THE UNITED CHURCH OF INDIA (NORTH)'. This Church is in doctrine and polity a sister to the South India United Church." (*Ibid.*, 261.)

⁴⁹ Indians were never voting members of the missions. Under pressure from New York, women could become voting members in 1906 (Punjab Mission) and 1905 (North India Mission, but only on certain issues not pertaining to men). Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 17.

⁵⁰ A very mild statement of the intensity of the feeling that is conveyed in various correspondences. Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1824.*, 263.

⁵¹ This was the solution that had been favored by the mission earlier and that had been received favorably by secretary Lowrie. Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 213.

boundaries). In 1877 a plan was concluded to gradually shift the remainder of the Mission's work into the hands of the Presbyteries.⁵² And if the Presbyteries required funding beyond their own capacity then the Mission would mediate with the Board in New York. The Presbyteries did not act on the plan and almost a decade later, in 1886, the entire plan was abandoned.⁵³

At the root of the problem with the transition was that the Mission was responsible for the Board's funding. All of the institutions and their employees were accountable to the Mission's structure and not to the church. At this point a transfer of ownership from one entity to the other could not be accomplished because of the imbalance of structure. The Board in New York was a semiautonomous body which operated according to a hierarchical model.⁵⁴ The Synod of India had no comparable structure to accommodate this ownership. Any transfer of control was bound to be a messy one and likely to fail.

Various alternatives were proposed. Finally it was decided that the financial partnership between Board and Presbytery would be limited to evangelization efforts with self-support as being the aim.⁵⁵ For every rupee committed to these efforts by the Presbytery, the Board would commit 3 rupees. This contribution would be on a declining scale such that, in the case of Ludhiana Presbytery, by 1923 it would cease. This became a successful model for other presbyteries as the Indian churches took over the responsibility of evangelizing within their bounds.⁵⁶

A shift occurred in the Mission such that the newer missionaries declined membership in the Indian presbyteries and maintained their credentials in their sending presbyteries.⁵⁷ This was interpreted by their Indian brothers as "aloofness" and contributed to the ill-feeling. An Indian minister appealed to the Board:⁵⁸

The present policy of isolating the Mission and the Church and keeping them apart from each other, has resulted in such friction and misunderstanding as practically to paralyze all Mission work and to retard the growth of the Church in India. . . It is further a cause of offence to the non-Christians, who see in it the failure of practical Christianity. We appreciate the motive which dictated the present policy a desire not to pauperize the Indian Church, and hinder its development by putting the Mission in the place of the Church. By an irony of fate it has been perverted from its true ends and has succeeded in achieving what it set out to avert, viz: the hindering of the growth of the Church. . . It has preached 'self help' and 'self determination' to the Indian Church, but has failed to observe a just balance, by forgetting that in life there is such a thing also as 'other help' and 'other determination.' The response in the Indian Church to this teaching has been a fierce resentment against the foreign missionary and foreign missions, and a determination to have as little to do with them as possible, and so to boycott him and his work. This policy has made Mission work of

⁵² Webster's version of this morass is that between 1872 and 1893 the issue was discussed officially by the mission 13 times. Finally it failed due to contrary mission policy. Ibid., 218.

⁵³ Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1824.*, 264.

⁵⁴ The Gopi Nath Case was the historical context for articulating the distinction between "mission" and "church". Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 210.

⁵⁵ The mission found itself in a chicken and egg quandary with regards to its policies. Was independence to result in self-support or was self-support to be the condition of independence? Ibid., 221.

⁵⁶ Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1824.*, 266-267.

⁵⁷ Contrary to Wherry, Webster argues that this was mission policy and not merely a trend among the younger missionaries. Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 219.

⁵⁸ Stewart refers to a protest against the arbitrary powers of the Sialkot missionaries as well, brought to General Assembly in 1893. See Robert Stewart, *Life and Work in India: An Account of the Conditions, Methods, Difficulties, Results, Future Prospects and Reflex Influence of Missionary Labor in India, Especially in the Punjab Mission of the United Presbyterian Church of North America* (Philadelphia: Pearl Pub. Co, 1896), 137, ebooksread.com.; Also Note 2 of Ibid., 415.

all grades a by-word and reproach and has practically emptied [*sic*] our theological classes and has created a deep-rooted aversion in our young men against entering upon whole-time Christian work.the tragedy of Indian Church life consists in this that the more seriously we have grappled with the problem of evangelizing our country, the more thoroughly we have realized how utterly impossible it is for the Indian Church alone to accomplish it, even as it is for the Missions to achieve it single-handed, and that the only hope lies in a coalescing of the forces of the Church and the Mission and a consequent fusion of their organizations.⁵⁹

His particular complaints against the mission, offered as examples of the beleaguered relationship caused by isolation, are instructive. They range from transgressions of Presbyterian polity (the mission rather than the church ruling on matters concerning the church), an unwillingness to consult the church concerning philosophy of ministry, to a lack of interest in communication altogether.⁶⁰

Such correspondence from the Indian church has a significance for the historian given that a preponderance of the massive volume of historical data is filtered through the grid of the missionaries rather than that of the Indian church. The Mission wrote the history, not the church.

Meanwhile, nationalism was on the rise in India and many Indian Christians sensed a correspondence between liberation from colonialism and liberation from the Mission.⁶¹ The increasingly forceful political rhetoric was at times applied indiscriminately to both spheres. This story of the mission-church relationship will be picked up again below.

50 Year Summary

Wherry summarizes the first 50 years of the Mission's work:

The first half century of missionary work, as conducted by the Presbyterian church in India, bore comparatively little fruit in the villages. The work of education was as yet almost entirely limited to the large cities occupied as Mission Stations. From these centers the work of evangelization, as we have seen, was carried on by long tours in the village localities, made by the missionaries and their native assistants. In a few of the larger villages, Indian evangelists were located permanently, who, following the example of the missionaries, would travel among the villages in their circuit. All of these itinerant missionaries and workers were well supplied with scriptures and tracts in the vernacular languages, which they distributed by sale and gift. Medicine was also given out to many suffering from the more ordinary ailments, malarial fever, diarrhoea, dysentery, &c.

During the famines, many missionaries took charge of relief centers or camps, and supervised the distribution of food to the starving, or the payment of money to the refugees employed on public works.

In many places they gathered together children, whose parents had died or deserted them. After the famines were past, every effort was made to return such children to their parents if they could be found. For those left homeless, the orphanages provided for bodily wants, and, as soon as they were old enough, they were taught in the schools for boys and girls.

Previous to the year 1881, but few converts dwelt in their native villages, excepting those living in Ghorawaha and Morinda. Such converts were ostracized from their homes and

⁵⁹ Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1824.*, 269.

⁶⁰ Wherry offers this correspondence as "a good sample of many similar protests levelled at the policy adopted by Mission Boards in America, and by the Presbyterian Church in particular." *Ibid.*, 271.

⁶¹ Webster draws some substantial parallels. Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 225.

found a refuge in the Mission compound. Thus sprung up the native Christian villages as a sort of suburb near to the Mission compound. By this arrangement, such converts were trained and many of them became preachers, teachers, colporteurs, assistants in hospitals and dispensaries, compositors in printing presses, book-binders, bible women and domestic servants. Comparatively few Christians were as yet engaged in Government employ. A few were employed as carpenters, shoemakers, weavers and other forms of handicraft.⁶²

Prior to the so-called “Mass Movement” the Presbyterian missions were decidedly urban-centered. Rural converts were not nurtured *in situ* and had to come to the town in order to be disciplined and taught. Even as late as 1903 the Punjab mission was continuing to affirm the strategic importance of maintaining ministry centers in the cities.⁶³ However, providence brought this entire strategy into question.

The “Mass Movement”

The beginnings of the mass movement seemed imperceptible from the field perspective and only in retrospect does the drama become visible. The essential dynamic was individual believers from among the “outcast” sector of society influencing their families and their villages. Records from the mission show growth in the first 20 years, from 1837 to 1857, to be 294 communicant members. In 1885, after another three decades, the total had grown to 811. This growth indicated a healthy rebound from the setback caused by the Sepoy Rebellion in 1857. By 1914, after another three decades, it had become 6,395!⁶⁴ Wherry relates the early growth as nothing more than organic simplicity: faithful evangelistic activity in the rural areas combined with schools for the poor villagers was resulting in steady church growth. More Indian workers were engaged to meet the demands.⁶⁵ Itinerant preaching was soon accompanied by huge tents to accommodate the growing responsiveness.

Since the mass movement began outside of their territory, the Presbyterians had the advantage of being early observers. They considered some of the apparent success of the Methodists and Wherry reports that:

The example of the American Methodist missionaries, who authorized their evangelists to baptize any of the people, who were ready to openly declare their faith in Jesus Christ as their Saviour, led the Presbyterians to adopt the methods at least in part.⁶⁶

At the urging of the renown Methodist bishop, J.M Thoburn, the Presbyterians began to question their strategies in light of the dramatic harvest. High-caste or low-caste? Town or village? The decision was made for them. “The practical lesson was to turn away from the jabbering crowds in the market places of the city and go into the quiet villages and seek a hearing from the sons of the

⁶² Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1824.*, 232.

⁶³ Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 107.

⁶⁴ Communicant membership was smaller than the number baptized not only because it does not include young children but also because after baptism the new Christians went through a period of training prior to being admitted as communicant members. (This practice of postponed admission to the Supper was later forbidden by the synod.) *Ibid.*, 46.

⁶⁵ Harding argues that the native workers had a much more significant role in the life of the church in this period than is credited to them by the missions. They often stood between the mission and the converts and, with sometimes hardly any training or sense of loyalty, were responsible to teach and guide the new convert communities. They often had multiple roles. Not only were they the intermediary between village and mission but also between the village and the outside world in general. The later role perhaps at times became more significant than the former. Nor were the Indian workers always valued or trusted by the mission. Although his research is among the CMS and Roman missions, Harding’s observations likely have some universality. At the very least, it was both a critical and a complex relationship that deserves further study. Harding, *Religious Transformation in South Asia - The Meanings of Conversion in Colonial Punjab*, 153.

⁶⁶ Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1824.*, 300.

soil and the children of toil.”⁶⁷ The Mission proceeded deliberately in this new direction while maintaining much of its basic underlying philosophy of ministry:

Here too the first two generations of missionary life and work were preparatory. They were spent in the laying of the foundations. A Christian atmosphere had to be created. This was accomplished by raising up, through Christian sympathy and education, a new cult superior to that of philosophic Hinduism and Muslim scholasticism. The impact of western life and teaching had dealt a fatal blow to the caste system. The rise of democracy among the men of the younger generation, the leaven of Christianity, based upon the teaching of the Christian scriptures, could not but arouse a new spirit of social and national aspiration could not but disintegrate the whole structure of caste, which had for millenniums enslaved the masses of the common people under Brahmin domination, both in body and soul. The translation of the scriptures into so many languages and dialects and a wide distribution of these scriptures and the exposition of their fundamental teaching in the schools and by preaching and the printed page, had inaugurated a movement among the people. Some had heard the call and broken away from the prison doors.⁶⁸

Just as intellectual freedom and economic independence was realized in education,⁶⁹ so liberty for these downtrodden peoples was discovered in the church, with her Presbyteries and Assemblies.⁷⁰ But the church was by no means the only institution that grew dramatically along with these changes.⁷¹

The history of religious movements in India seems to prove that they are socialistic rather than individualistic. For long periods, [sic] while individuals may be deeply influenced, yet few have the courage to stand alone. Many hold off waiting the action of others. When many have been convinced by the teaching and an able leader appears, the stream so long pent up suddenly breaks forth.⁷²

At that time the “untouchables” or “Scheduled Castes” in India numbered about 50 million. They were animists with some influence from Hinduism and Islam. Entire villages would convert in waves to one or another of the religions or cults that made themselves available.⁷³ Many became Christian.⁷⁴ Sometimes a village would convert first and only afterwards inform the missionary or Indian evangelist. Such was the enthusiasm for conversion in some cases that villagers were willing to pay to be baptized.⁷⁵

The result was that a large part of the labor expended in the villages was that of shepherding the scattered communities of Christians, and in carrying on educational work to lift up an

⁶⁷ Ibid., 301.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ All of these changes were accelerated in the First World War as Indian were trained in Europe and America and served alongside international forces in Europe and Africa. India was now integrated into the world. (Ibid., 316.)

⁷⁰ The factors involved in motivating conversion of the Punjabi villagers are quite complex and difficult to determine conclusively from the historical data. Harding makes a worthy effort to replace simplistic notions with more nuanced research. Harding, *Religious Transformation in South Asia - The Meanings of Conversion in Colonial Punjab*, 124.

⁷¹ Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1824.*, 302.

⁷² Ibid., 306.

⁷³ Mass conversion is not an uncommon feature of Indian history. From the 16th Century until the 21st there are records of mass conversions among all of the major religions of India. Harding, *Religious Transformation in South Asia - The Meanings of Conversion in Colonial Punjab*, 5.

⁷⁴ For an argument concerning the providential preparation of the Chura people in particular see Stewart, *Life and Work in India*, 245.

⁷⁵ Harding, *Religious Transformation in South Asia - The Meanings of Conversion in Colonial Punjab*, 135.

illiterate community into an intelligent literacy, so as to make the light of a Christian community shine in the darkness of the numerous non-Christian homes round about.⁷⁶

Harding suggests that the missionaries were often clueless observers rather than actually perpetrators and their real work began only after the initial drama had died off.

Waves of large-scale conversions crashed over the . . . missions at different times from the 1890s onwards. Only once these had subsided did the real drama begin, as missions and converts surveyed the landscape left behind and began to build up a body of real knowledge about each other. . . Now, the brute logistical fact of new convert groups tucked away as minority citizens in hundreds of scattered villages meant that contact would be sparse and sporadic. In these circumstances even the smallest gestures that passed between mission personnel and converts – whether of initiative, creativity, defiance, or hostility – might well be crucial to the impressions formed about one another.⁷⁷

Conversion and Baptism

A central issue that the mission and church had to face was appropriate requirements for baptism. According to the Presbyterian system the only stipulation controlling adult baptism was a so-called “credible profession of faith”. This was a statement commonly used to summarize an article of the Presbyterian Directory for Public Worship:

"Before permitting any one to make profession of his faith in the presence of the congregation, the session shall examine him in order to assure itself so far as possible that he possesses the doctrinal knowledge requisite for active faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, relies for salvation on the merits of Christ alone, and is determined by the grace of God to lead a Christian life."

While the definition is clear enough, its application in the Indian context was fraught with challenges. One of the most obvious indications of a credible profession was a willingness to break caste.⁷⁸ A less straightforward issue was polygamy.⁷⁹

Meanwhile the missions were experiencing pressure from New York and elsewhere to produce the kind of results that were being experienced by the Sialkot Mission⁸⁰ and the Methodists. They pushed back, “We are perfectly convinced that our Presbyterian Church would not have us in the slightest degree yield to the demand for visible ‘fruit’ by admitting to the Church men and women destitute of all knowledge of themselves as sinners or of Christ as holy, upon the mere hope of ‘getting them converted afterward’.” This conservative position seems to have been hardened by the 1900 resolution by the Synod of India that “baptism should ordinarily be administered to those adults only, who are deemed fit to partake of the Lord’s Supper”.⁸¹

A serious controversy ensued concerning what this meant in the village context. Some argued that the illiterate villagers were incapable of the intellectual process that was appropriately normative for

⁷⁶ Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1824.*, 309.

⁷⁷ Harding, *Religious Transformation in South Asia - The Meanings of Conversion in Colonial Punjab*, 159.

⁷⁸ Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 59. While this could be a useful indicator for Hindus it was useless for the casteless of the Mass Movement. See Stewart, *Life and Work in India*, 224.

⁷⁹ Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 57. See also Stewart, *Life and Work in India*, 222. “The subject having been brought to the attention of our General Assembly in 1880, action was taken by that body forbidding the reception of polygamists into the church; and in accordance with this decision we are required to act.”

⁸⁰ Stewart is a strong proponent of the Sialkot Mission approach to conversion during the Mass Movement. For an impassioned and detailed argument see Stewart, *Life and Work in India*, 249.

⁸¹ Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 60.

the more educated. Others argued that baptized believers have a better chance of spiritual growth than unbaptized.⁸² Still others pointed to experience in the field which indicated that entire populations were collectively choosing to become Christian without much (or any) doctrinal understanding. Generally, there was sympathy for the plight of the “untouchables” and a rigorous screening process was perceived as unkind and harsh.⁸³ Deliverance from social and economic oppression was seen as a truly noble motive for baptism.⁸⁴ In some cases there was even a concern that if the Presbyterian mission refuses to baptize them then another mission will all too willingly move in to comply with the request.⁸⁵

The Sialkot Mission led the way with a policy that was stridently minimalist (and perhaps pragmatic), not even requiring memorization of the Lords Prayer, the Ten Commandments, or The Apostles’ Creed. It was argued that such requirements would represent “intellectual and educational attainments” that went beyond a “credible profession of faith” and would hinder growth.

[Some] objected to the qualifications for baptism which we required of these poor people. They wanted, besides a credible profession of faith in Jesus as their Saviour, more intellectual and educational attainments exhibited by those who received this ordinance than we were disposed in all cases to insist upon. They demanded of candidates for baptism at least the ability to repeat the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed and the Ten Commandments. On most of our laborers these criticisms had little effect except perhaps that of a stimulating character. They felt that notwithstanding such strictures our policy was right, and hence pressed forward in maintaining it without the least shadow of turning—glad to find their course, so far as its main features are concerned, vindicated at last by its general adoption throughout the Punjab. . . The demand for such intellectual attainments on the threshold of baptism as those which have been named would also materially limit the number of persons actually baptized and received into the church.⁸⁶

On the other side stood those sympathetic to CMS missionary C.F. Hall:

Haste will give us an ignorant, ill-taught Church, unable to read the Bible, only half -weaned from idolatry, a prey to superstition, and a real stumbling block to future progress among the caste people . . . [but] delay is even more dangerous for it means not ill-taught but untaught, and merely self-styled Christians.⁸⁷

⁸² Roman Catholics and Anglicans tended to see conversion as the first part of a 2-part process. The objective was to turn a social movement into a spiritual one. Success would more likely be achieved in the coming generations through education than with the first conversions, who would likely remain ‘imperfect’ Christians. Wherry’s inclusion of this point suggests a possible connection with these views. See Harding, *Religious Transformation in South Asia - The Meanings of Conversion in Colonial Punjab*, 134-136.

⁸³ Stewart makes a seemingly pietistic argument in this direction: “some express the conviction that they ought not to baptize any more applicants for baptism than they are able afterwards to train properly or care for—in other words, keep Christ’s lambs out of the fold until that fold is enlarged and put in order, so that every member of the flock can be systematically fed and nicely housed—as if these lambs would not do better in the church than in the world any how, however imperfect the former might be, or as if the Lord would make a mistake in regenerating people too fast and would not, in His providence and by His grace, make abundant provision for the spiritual nourishment and the highest welfare of all His new-born children.” Stewart, *Life and Work in India*, 221.

⁸⁴ Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 60., 60ff.

⁸⁵ This was of particular concern for the CMS in the competition with Roman Catholics in certain areas. See Harding, *Religious Transformation in South Asia - The Meanings of Conversion in Colonial Punjab*.

⁸⁶ Stewart, *Life and Work in India*, 219-220.

⁸⁷ Hall’s idea was to have simply educated teacher-pastors trained in the villages who would both conduct church services as well as teach children 4 hours a day in simple schools. Hall, ‘A Suggested Policy for Mass

The erosion of orthodox Christianity among the missionaries and the growing influence of Christian liberalism during this period should also be factored in. Princeton was no longer the bastion of orthodoxy in the early 20th Century that it had been in the 19th. Most other Presbyterian seminaries in the North had, to greater or lesser extent, come under the influence of New Haven Theology (New School) and were now increasingly influenced by German liberalism. Thus the orthodoxy and unity of the missionaries being sent by the Board were increasingly compromised. Harvey DeWitt Griswold, a graduate of Union Seminary and a liberal, was an example of this trend.⁸⁸ In addition, there was marked increase in missionaries who were not theologically trained.

The diversity of views in the mission resulted in many new church members who had little to no understanding of Christian doctrine, Christian faith commitment, or Christian ethics; let alone a personal commitment to Christianity as it is defined biblically.⁸⁹ It also resulted in internal division within the church, particularly between town and village church members. This distinction was already resident within the social structure as a consequence of the caste system. Christianity tore down this distinction but in practice it was inadvertently being reinforced.

The New Christian Identity

This division was deepened by distinct developments of Christian identity. In the towns, converts generally entered the church having been suddenly and sharply rejected by their families and society. They were immediately thrust upon the church or the missionaries as their new community. Village converts, on the other hand, tended to enter the church as cohesive communities, at least to some extent. Change in identity for them was more gradual as they increasingly came into contact with Christianity and with the outside world in general. The effect was a more significant change in identity forced upon the town converts and more continuity of identity maintained by village converts.⁹⁰

The appointment of elders in the church is a case in point. In the town churches elders tended to be those who were deemed qualified for office on the grounds of Christian character and training. In the village churches the elders tended to be the community leaders, the headmen, who may or may not aspire to spiritual leadership.

Social Experimentation

The mass movement provided the various missions with a fascinating opportunity: to establish discrete Christian communities within a heathen land. Not only were some villages becoming Christian en masse but also the government was inviting different missions to establish new colonies along a rapidly developing canal system in the Punjab. With this opportunity came the challenge of clarifying the powers of the church. Inevitably the church or the mission was drawn into administering not only the affairs of the church but also of the entire new society on behalf of the government.⁹¹

Indian Field Counsel

Another Presbyterian mission south of Bombay was started by Rev. Royal Wilder in 1852 with the support of the New School Presbyterians and, like the Punjab and the North India missions, originally came under the American Board. In 1870 it became the Kolhapur Mission and then later the

Movements', 281-283. Referenced in Harding, *Religious Transformation in South Asia - The Meanings of Conversion in Colonial Punjab*, 213.

⁸⁸ Griswold completed his missionary career as a professor of philosophy and history at Forman Christian College, 1894-1914. Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 98.

⁸⁹ For an argument somewhat contrary see Stewart, *Life and Work in India*, 249.

⁹⁰ Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century North India*, 70.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 72; Harding, *Religious Transformation in South Asia - The Meanings of Conversion in Colonial Punjab*.

Western India Mission. Although not directly related to the work in the Punjab, it is mentioned here in connection to the amalgamation of the Indian Field Counsel.

With all three missions (Punjab, North India, and Western India) relating independently to the Board in New York there were inevitable divisions that resulted. They were competing for the same funds and personnel. Added to this were natural distances of geography and peoples (recall the distinct social spheres that were created by the two missionary children's schools mentioned above). Thus it became necessary to form a field Counsel in order to enhance communication. The Counsel began in 1913 with annual meetings of two delegates from each mission. A report of the first years of the Counsel, 1913 to 1917, is astounding in terms of the immensity of the work undertaken and its rapid growth.

In round numbers there is a population of 15,000,000, occupying a territory of 50,000 square miles, for which our Missions are responsible.⁹² The average density is 300 per square mile. The Christian community in this area, in 1913, numbered 46,533. But in 1917, the number had increased by 20,305, making a total of 66,838.⁹³ The total number of Foreign preachers in 1917 was 210 and of Indians 230. The total attendance in Sunday Schools was 14,952. In addition to the members of the Church, there were 26,726 catechumens, or candidates for baptism.⁹⁴

Only a few years later, Wherry adds that:

the number of church members [is] at 85,225. The church organizations include 801 groups of believers, scattered among some 4,000 villages and towns. The entire evangelistic force is scattered about 33 centers: 14 in the Punjab, 12 in the United Provinces and seven in Western India. There are 151 sub-stations in village communities, occupied [sic] by 246 missionaries, men and women; and 1,288 Indian evangelists, teachers and workers.

Church-Mission Relationship

The condition and trend of the church-mission relationships by the early 1920's were less than favorable:

Up to this date, foreigners had conducted nearly all of the duties of pastor, presbyter and the business of Synod or General Assembly. Young missionaries came out from America and soon appeared as leaders in the church, while Indians sat in deferential silence. The business was for the most part transacted through the medium of the English language. Indian elders were often mere figure heads. The only sign of equality in evidence was the ignorance of the vernacular on the part of new missionaries and ignorance of English on the part of the Indian. But as the years went by, the second generation of Indian Christians grew up and was educated in English as well as in the vernacular. This generation was prepared to assume the role of membership in session and Presbytery on the basis of equality. This assertion of rights, although indisputable, was sometimes regarded as impertinence. This was the judgment of the older Indian elders or pastors, who preferred the humbler subservience to the manor-born.⁹⁵

This could only be resolved in one of two directions (as had been suggested earlier): Either the Mission must be dissolved or Indians be incorporated into the Mission. But the issue was deeper than anything structural: "The real difficulty in all these plans was the inequality of personality. The

⁹² It is not clear how this "responsibility" was determined. Clearly there were other missions that shared in it.

⁹³ Evidently this is the number of members in Presbyterian churches rather than the total number of Christians in the region.

⁹⁴ Wherry, *Our Missions In India 1834 1824.*, 311.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 320.

Indian does not want patronage. He wants liberty and love. This can only be attained by mutual confidence and co-operation.” Ultimately, it was this latter option of cooperation that was attempted. In 1921 a detailed plan of power-sharing between church and Mission was drawn up based on representation on various committees.⁹⁶ The success of the plan would be entirely dependent on relationships since the plan itself was susceptible to all sorts of abuses.

These relational dynamics in some ways set the stage for the headlong plunge into the ecumenical movement that ensued in the coming decades.⁹⁷ Finally, in 1954:

the Western India mission of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., voted to merge itself in the Kolhapur council of the United Church of North India and to recommend to the foreign missions board at its home base that the mission be dissolved. These Presbyterian missionaries will thus cease to have any separate organization of their own, and will lose their identity in the Indian body. All the property they have held, with the exception of a single medical center, will likewise be handed over to the United Church. The agreement which has been drawn up provides that hereafter all assignments of missionaries are to be made by the Kolhapur council, that American missionaries will be appointed only at the request of the council, that the council will decide whether missionaries going on furlough are to return to India, and that a wide variety of property rights and administrative powers shall pass into the hands of the council. In short, if this plan goes through—as it seems sure to do—while there will continue to be American Presbyterians working within the bounds of the present mission, within a few years the last trace of a foreign mission will disappear and there will be only the United Church of North India seeking to turn the eyes of that part of India to the figure of Jesus Christ. By that time also, it is to be hoped, the United Church will be on the point of disappearing in the projected and more inclusive Church of Christ in North India.⁹⁸

Sialkot Mission

The Sialkot Mission is the fourth American Presbyterian mission work in 19th Century India. Sialkot is a district of the Punjab that has a particular significance for the work of the Church. Until today the town of Sialkot is distinct from any other in Pakistan for its order and prosperity. To what extent this is connected to church history is yet to be studied.

The founder of the Sialkot Mission was Rev. Andrew Gordon who arrived from Pittsburgh in 1855 having been sent by the Associate Presbyterian Church (not to be confused with the ARP Church as it exists today which was formed from one of its synods in the South in 1822). Together with two other missionaries he formed a presbytery in 1856. With the merger of two home churches, this work came under the Board of Foreign Missions of the newly formed United Presbyterian Church of North America⁹⁹ in 1859. While initially overlapping with the Punjab Mission, this work spread north and west such that eventually the two missions became geographically distinguishable. The Scottish mission also had a presence in Sialkot since Thomas Hunter arrived in 1857 and, after a period of border disputes,¹⁰⁰ the two missions enjoyed a close relationship.

The work began with a modest missionary force such that by 1894 there were a mere 10 ordained missionaries, 12 single female missionaries, and 7 ordained Indians serving a Communicant

⁹⁶ Ibid. The ‘Plan for Cooperation’ is included in an appendix Ibid., 345ff.

⁹⁷ See the overview of this movement in Edmund P. Clowney, *The Church*, Contours of Christian theology (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1995).

⁹⁸ “West India Presbyterian Mission Dissolves - Editorial,” *Christ. Century* 71.48 (1954): 1452–1452.

⁹⁹ This was to merge with northern Presbyterian Church USA in 1958 to become the United Presbyterian Church in the USA and then merge with the southern church in 1983 to become today’s mainline PCUSA.

¹⁰⁰ Stewart, *Life and Work in India*, 101.

Membership of almost 6,000 spread across 557 villages. It was an impossible task, largely dependent on the 200 workers employed by the mission.¹⁰¹ By 1942, 313 missionaries had been sent by this mission, making it the largest single Presbyterian mission in India. Similar to its neighboring mission, the workforce became increasingly female. In 1941-42, out of the 102 serving missionaries, 40 were single women (there were no single men).

Strategic Focus

The Sialkot Mission, more than the others, was impacted by the mass movement to Christianity of untouchables. While the other missions maintained both an urban and a rural focus during the period of the mass movement, the Sialkot Mission narrowed its strategy to a more significant degree on the rural work and defended it stridently.¹⁰² A significant focus of the Mission became the economic, health, and educational condition of these disadvantaged peoples.

This strategic focus of the mission had significant consequences for the shape of the church that it produced. The emphasis of the mission, at least up to the end of the 19th Century, was almost completely oriented towards nurturing infant Christians in scattered villages. This came at the expense of church planting and of consolidating the indigenous church.

- Rather than producing pastors, the seminary was expected to produce workers with a bare minimum of education. Consequently, the mission was in the practice of recruiting seminary students before they had completed their course.¹⁰³ In 1894, in order to accommodate the growing demand, the education level of entering students was reduced from Middle School graduation to Primary School.¹⁰⁴ Thus after 17 years of the seminary's existence there were only 7 ordained Indian men and 2 Licentiates.¹⁰⁵ If the mission's stated goal of 1 pastor for no more than 6 villages was to be accomplished, together with proper staffing of all ancillary ministries, then Stewart estimates that about 124 ministers and Licentiates would be required.¹⁰⁶
- While the number of converts was increasing dramatically, there was a marked decline in church planting. Prior to 1880 there were three churches established. From 1880-1885 five churches were added, or one per year. During 1885-1894 only 2 more were added (with 2 churches transferred from other denominations). As a consequence, less than 20% of Communicant Members were in a church. The vast majority were directly under the care of the mission and its field workers.¹⁰⁷
- For Christian leadership in the villages, the tendency was to turn to the established structure of the *panchayat* rather than establish a new structure based on Presbyterian principles.¹⁰⁸
- Urgency demanded efficiency. The hierarchical structure of the mission was far more suitable to the handling of funds and the management of workers than a Presbyterian system.¹⁰⁹ There was no time to work on devolving power and training elders for its oversight. Almost all of the elders of the existing 12 churches (only 10 of which had multiple elders) were employees of the mission.¹¹⁰ The polity of the church, for most practical purposes, took the anomalous form of a church committee (the mission) overseeing the

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 386.

¹⁰² Ibid., 357.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 268.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 292.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 386.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 316.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 334.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 271.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 273. "our methods are largely autocratic in their nature and bear a closer likeness to Episcopalianism, or rather to the arrangements of the India Civil Service, than to Congregationalism or Presbyterianism."

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 341.

church courts.¹¹¹ Perhaps this default state of affairs should not come as a surprise given that the missionaries seldom had any church training prior to being sent.¹¹²

- The anomaly in polity points to the more serious, but somewhat less tangible, concern of the catastrophic relationship between the missionaries and the Indian church. Stewart made an alarming observation comparing missionary to slave-master, which concerned him a great deal:

“He is a sahib, an employer, a master. He has servants, coolies, artisans, Christian workers under him. He hires and dismisses at his pleasure. He says to one go and he goeth; to another do this and he doeth it. Scores of people await the mandate of his will and either bask in his smiles or tremble at his frown. There is danger of this relation producing its ordinary and natural effect, making him proud, unsympathetic, domineering, exacting, impatient, severe, unjust, a lover of power, and especially so when there is with it all the consciousness of a superiority of race, and also blood-relationship to the rulers of the land. Some have likened the effect to that which slavery has over slaveholders.”¹¹³

- Due to the sheer volume of new converts, training tended to increasingly take the form of “old-fashioned Methodist camp meetings” which roused pietistic enthusiasm (see Sialkot Convention below).¹¹⁴

Particular Contributions

In addition to its focus on ministry among the untouchables, the Sialkot Mission made the following particular contributions:

1. The Sialkot Presbytery established a seminary in Sialkot in 1877 which would later move to Gujranwala and continues today as the Gujranwala Theological Seminary.
2. The presbytery formed a Translation Committee which championed the printing of the Punjabi Scriptures in the Persian script.¹¹⁵
3. Perhaps more distinctively important was the work of the Psalm Committee in producing a Psalter with the aid of a local poet,¹¹⁶ faithful to the original Hebrew. Originally, from 1883-1891, they were written according to a western meter. In 1893 a book of 55 selections of Psalms was published in an indigenous meter.¹¹⁷ The completed work was published in 1908 and became a staple in Protestant worship throughout the Punjab and wherever Punjabi Christians scattered.¹¹⁸
4. The Sialkot Convention is an annual event begun by the Sialkot Presbytery that has brought together Punjabi protestants in an ecumenical gathering for over a century. Its first meeting was in 1904, stirred by the revivalistic John “Praying” Hyde in response to what some perceived to be a shallow Christianity. It displays a pietistic leaning of the mission perhaps in contrast to the more Old School Presbyterians to their East. Over subsequent decades it became an institutional center for pietistic teaching and ecumenism in general.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 346.

¹¹² Ibid., 299.

¹¹³ Ibid., 372.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 274. Although the Presbyterians would not baptize at conventions like the Methodists would. Ibid., 161.

¹¹⁵ Stewart, *Life and Work in India*, 302.

¹¹⁶ Yousaf Sadiq, “A Precious Gift: The Punjabi Psalms and the Legacy of Imam-Ud-Din Shahbaz,” *Int. Bull. Mission. Res.* 38.1 (2014): 36–39. Imamud-din Shahbaz was a Muslim convert.

¹¹⁷ Stewart, *Life and Work in India*, 304.

¹¹⁸ Asimi, *The Christian Minority in Pakistan*, 36. This Psalter “began to capture the hearts of Christians in all of Northern India.” Asimi suggests “One might say that, Punjabi Zabur is, perhaps, the only piece of indigenous Christianity to be found in the land and, therefore, the single most significant contribution to the communal life of Christians.” Ibid., 37.

When the Sialkot church became independent in 1961 it formed the United Presbyterian (UP) Church of Pakistan. After uniting with the Lahore Council of Churches (LCC) it continues until today as the Presbyterian Church of Pakistan (PCP).¹¹⁹

Civil Government

The establishment of the American missions as well as the subsequent development of the Church have been significantly intertwined with political changes in India. It has already been mentioned that the entrance of the missions into the Punjab as well as their ability to function was largely due to the friendliness of British officers and administrators. Likewise, animosity by India towards the colonialists was directed towards the missions as well. The nationalistic tendency was thus not only in the sphere of civil government but also in the sphere of the church. In other words, the condition of the church was bound together with the politics of India.

The history of the relationship between Christian missions and the British rule in India is one of conflicted policy. Although, as noted above, British hegemony was not attained until the fall of the Punjab in 1848, it began in 1600 with the establishment of the East India Company. Religious neutrality was the policy of the Company from the beginning. As the Governor General of Bengal commented, "One might fire a pistol into a magazine and it may not explode, but no wise man will ever hazard the experiment." A chaplain returning home from duty in India explained the general attitude: "The opinion is held, even among the most enlightened British officials in the country that, there could be no more dangerous means of estranging the hearts of the people from the Government, and no surer way of endangering the stability of the British Rule than by attempting to meddle with the religious concerns of the people, however prudently and carefully one might set to work."¹²⁰ There were several challenges to this policy of neutrality:

1. Chaplains were invited by the Company to serve the religious needs of their staff. Naturally, some of these chaplains developed concern for the natives. The bridge for this concern, in some cases at least, was the Eurasian offspring of mixed marriages.
2. Some of the devout Christians among the British military and administration became burdened by the heathenism surrounding them and began to promote missionary efforts.
3. The British government itself was in turmoil over the matter due to the influence of evangelicals such as William Wilberforce.¹²¹
4. The British administration was aware of the need for an educated and "civilized" India in order to advance its political agenda. The Christian missions were a means towards that end.
5. The religious conflict peaked in the Sepoy "Mutiny" which spread under the banner of Indian "Religion in Danger".¹²² Thus it represented an opportunity for promoting the neutrality policy. However, the supporters of missions argued that the data supported the opposite position. Where mission work was the strongest, the "mutineers" had the least influence.

Thus the policy of strident neutrality was tempered and emerged in the end as a somewhat ambivalent "tolerance".¹²³

How was this virtual alliance between mission and Raj, beleaguered as it was, interpreted by Indians? For the outcastes coming into the Church it was no doubt, at least initially, a welcome advantage, if not one that was being pursued. For most Indians, however, the Empire and the

¹¹⁹ <http://www.reformiert-online.net/>

¹²⁰ Asimi, *The Christian Minority in Pakistan*, 5.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 55.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 11.

Church became melted together into a single colonial power which threatened Indian sovereignty and Indian religions. India had been accustomed to religious wars and oppression for centuries but humiliation at the hand of a distant Britain was a new experience.

The humiliation was particularly sharp for Muslims. Not only was a narrative of the Crusades kept alive among Muslims but also the once mighty Ottoman Empire was rapidly losing ground in the colonial era. More immediately, the Muslims had grown accustomed to ruling India from Delhi and Lahore¹²⁴ during the Mughal Empire since the middle of the 16th Century. The British systematically demolished the Muslim aristocracy, culture, and prominence in the military.¹²⁵ Then in 1856 the British unceremoniously deposed Bahadur Shah, the last Mughal Emperor. While his actual power had dissipated to virtual oblivion, it was still a painful humiliation and no doubt contributed to the sentiment that resulted in the Sepoy Rebellion the following year.¹²⁶ The ruthlessness with which the British suppressed the rebellion only fueled the fire of Muslim resentment.¹²⁷

The entrance of missions on the coattails of the (mostly) 19th Century colonialists is widely recognized and the implications of this fact have been studied extensively in almost every history of missions. What is less understood is the impact on the church by the 20th Century counter-colonialist reactionary withdrawal – also on the coattails of the colonialists. Asimi offers a vivid picture: “the Christian community in Pakistan is nothing more than a piece of baggage left behind by the departing British Raj and the Western Christian Missions.”¹²⁸ To say that this Christian community which was to face the brunt of the accumulation of Muslim resentment after the state of Pakistan was formed in 1947 would over-state the case. Pakistan was more concerned about the struggle between secularism and Islamism than about colonialism. However, the Christian presence would remain a foreign presence and one that would be tolerated only according to the prevailing interpretation of Islam.

¹²⁴ Agra (1526–1540; 1555-1571); Fatehpur Sikri (1571–1585); Lahore (May 1586–1598); Agra (1598–1648); Shahjahanabad, Delhi (1648–1857).

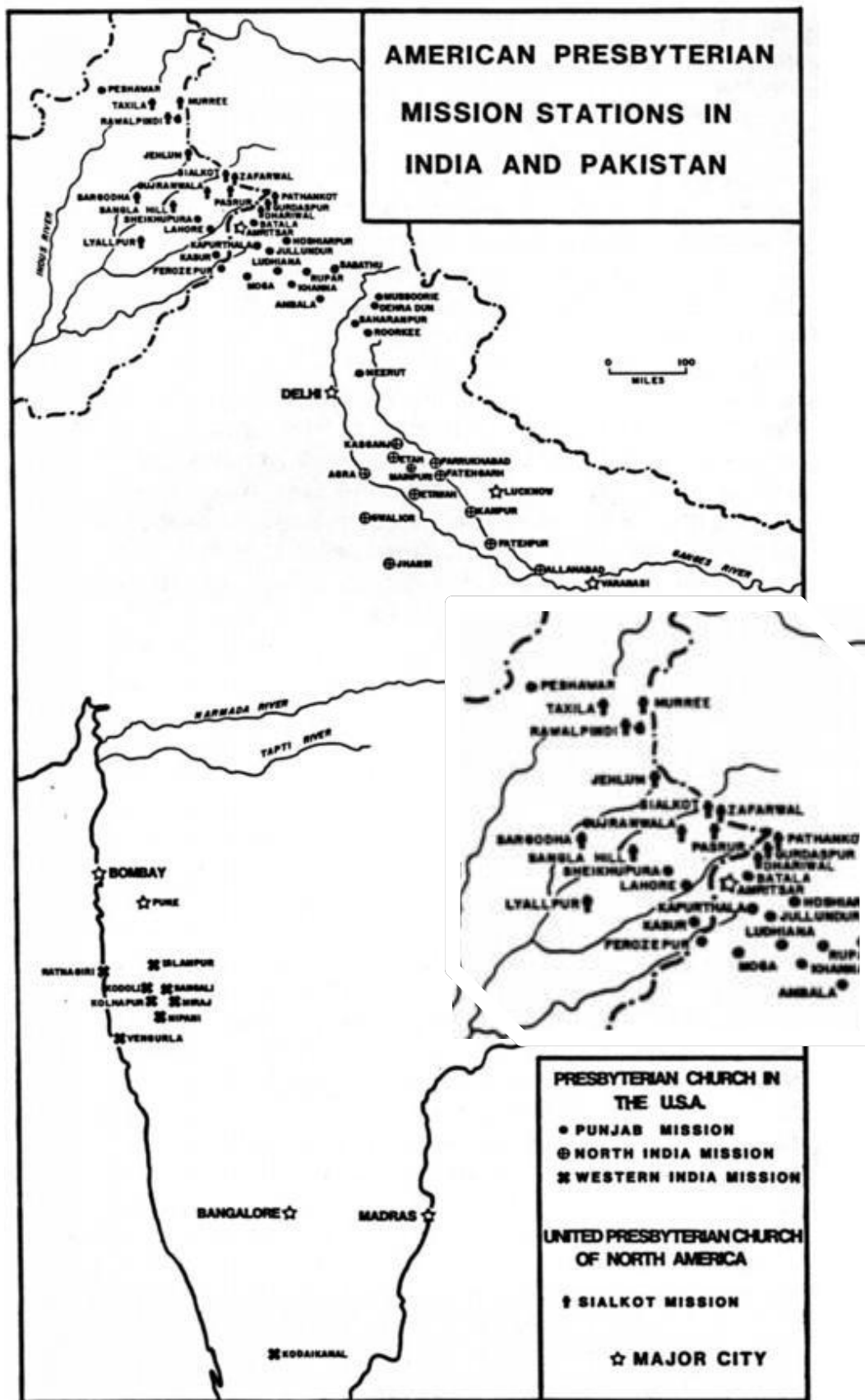
¹²⁵ Asimi, *The Christian Minority in Pakistan*, 51.

¹²⁶ Although the majority of the “mutineers” were Hindu and not Muslim, the Islamic cry of *Jihad* seemed to strike a particular fear of fanaticism. *Ibid.*, 57.

¹²⁷ “In India and in England, the news gave a welcome and almost religious sanction to any act of savagery which the British troops might perpetrate.” Quoted in *Ibid.*, 56.

¹²⁸ Asimi, *The Christian Minority in Pakistan*, xii.

Mission Station Maps



John C.B. Webster, "AMERICAN PRESBYTERIANS IN INDIA/PAKISTAN 150 YEARS," *Journal of Presbyterian History* (1962-1985) 62, no. 3 (1984): 192.

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MIDYEAR REPORT 2017

Sudanese Reformed Church

General Synod

P.O. Box 412, Juba, South Sudan, E-mail: srchurches@yahoo.com



Sudanese Reformed Church (SRC) started in Khartoum, Sudan in February 1992. She was restructured and established as Sudanese Christian Reformed denomination in October, 2005. In God's grace she has now grown into sixteen (16) congregations twelve (12) in South Sudan and four (4) in Sudan plus 18 groups in IDPs and refugee camps with a membership of more than 6000. Contextually, SRC is committed to a cross cultural vision of the church.

Outline

1. Message from SRC Synod President
2. South Sudan Continues to Suffer
3. South Sudan UN Key Figures
4. Relief Initiatives
5. 1st SRC Christian School
6. Middle East International Prayer Conference
7. Connecting with PCA
8. Trauma Trainings
9. CRCNA Synod
10. Focus on Juba
11. Leadership Development
12. Motorcycle Mission/Evangelism
13. SRC Silver Jubilee
14. SRC Immediate Needs
15. Prayer Requests

Message from SRC Synod President "Rev. Kewy Ismail Geng"



Rev. Kewy Ismail Geng

Despite the war situation and intolerant atmosphere, we are so thankful to our faithful heavenly FATHER WHO has brought us so far in the SRC ministry. Graciously, SRC will mark her 25th Anniversary early December, 2017. It will be a momentous occasion as SRC will look back and toward the future. During the

anniversary SRC will launch her strategic focus for the next ten years. We strongly believe that the future holds better opportunity and growth for SRC in both South Sudan and Sudan.

War in South Sudan although unpleasant, God Almighty in the midst of hardships has uniquely caused SRC to grow. At this juncture we need to appreciate and applaud the sacrifices of SRC pastors/evangelists who are promoting Reformed witness without salaries or supports from the congregations and the groups that they are shepherding. I believe you are heroes of faith and "know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain". SRC is making headway, Praise the Lord!

We are conscious that biblical leadership development has been one of SRC challenges in the last twelve (12) years since she was restructured and established as Sudanese Reformed Christian denomination. SRC needs leaders that are properly trained and formed so that they are skillful and capable of promoting properly Reformed witness. As we are developing strategic plan, one of the key objectives of SRC strategy for the next decade will focus on biblical contextual and relevant leadership development.

To conclude, the GOOD LORD who has saved and called us to this noble ministry is with us.

South Sudan Continues to Suffer

South Sudan civil war sparked when President Salva Kiir accused his former Deputy Riek Machar of plotting a coup in Mid-December, 2013. Since then 40% of the population have been displaced from their homes and more continue to be displaced. The war has been marked by brutal atrocities against civilians in spite of the presence of UN peacekeeping troops. Up to date the raging war has placed the country under unthinkable humanitarian crisis. It seems the world does not see the suffering and the misery of the people of South Sudan. Categorically, there is no clue of political will to bring the conflict and human suffering to an end.

Furthermore as war continues children and women are victims of this disastrous war. According to UNICEF more than two thousand children have been killed or injured, and many more have witnessed horrific violence. More than 2 million children have been forced to flee from their homes. 70% of children are out of schools. These children are acutely malnourished and without education, lack clean water and vulnerable to outbreak of cholera and other related diseases.

UN Update Key Figures

As violence rages on, here are some update key figures by UN as of May, 2017: **2 million** total South Sudanese refugees in six neighboring countries; **2 million** Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in South Sudan, including 230,482 people in UNMISS Protection of Civilians sites; and an estimated **6.01 million** (50% of the population) people are severely food insecure.

Relief Initiatives

There is famine in South Sudan because of the continuous war. SRC with relief assistance from generous partners have responded in a small scale to the needs of those who are seriously affected by the famine. With the generous relief donations, basic food items (rice, maize flour, beans, cooking oil, mild powder, salt, soups and used clothes) were bought and distributed to five camps in South Sudan. Three camps in Juba (Jebel, Mangateen and Khor Woliang) and three other camps in Malakal, Bor and Bentiu. **272** households totaling to **2500** beneficiaries (**1500 adults & 1200 children**) were reached with basic food items in Juba, Malakal, Bor and Bentiu. The beneficiaries have benefited from the food provision. The beneficiaries targeted and served were composed of the most vulnerable groups like children, single female headed households, widows, disabled and aging persons. This timely generous response has saved lives; stabilized food security gaps and improved health situation of the immediate beneficiaries.

1st SRC Christian School

Based on update UNICEF data, there are **2 million** children out of schools in South Sudan due to conflict and displacement. SRC in spite of her own struggles in this difficult situation



Grade 1-2 meeting at Bethel church building



Grade 3 meeting under a tree

is prompted to respond to the dire need of the displaced children in Juba. SRC had planned to start three primary schools in 2017 in Juba. But due to resource limitation she has started one primary school early this year with 179 pupils. Once these schools are operational, SRC hopes to start other four schools in Bentiu, Malakal, Awiel and Langken. The objective of the plan is to provide and increase access to education for the children affected by the conflict.

SRC has lands and spaces for erection of temporal learning spaces and has also identified and selected 18 volunteer teachers and three supervisors from the congregations. There are some SRC partners who have pledged to stand beside SRC and help in the realization of these schools.

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Middle East International Prayer Conference

Kasr El Dobra church has organized International Prayer Conference as from 30th March to 1st April, 2017 at Beit El Wadi, Egypt. Kasr El Dobra is one of the biblical and missional churches in Middle East. The prayer conference was preceded by two days mission Conference which focused on reports of the Lord’s labor in different Arab world mission fields. The international prayer was attended by representatives from over 30 countries with more than 12,000 prayer warriors in attendance each day. Rev. Patrick Jok, SRC pastor participated in the conference. He represented Sudan/South Sudan. He had also opportunity to meet Rev. Nasmly, Director of Arab World Mission Fields.



Nasmly and Jok at Beit El Wadi,

SRC connects with PCA

SRC has connected with Presbyterian Church of America (PCA) Mission To World missionary Rev. Steven Edging during the visit of Rev. Patrick Jok to attend PAX consultation with some selected relevant persons from South Sudan Civil Societies, Academia, Women and youth and Religious Leaders which was held in Kampala, Uganda as from 24th to 26th April, 2017. The consultation was about the possible five scenarios that might happen as result of the war in South Sudan. The two met in Kampala and were able to exchange their stories and experience on their respective ministries in the kingdom service in Uganda and South Sudan/Sudan. It is worth mentioning that PCA is one



Edging and Jok in Kampala

of the Reformed missional churches. They promised to keep in touch and pray for each other as they endeavor to promote the gospel of Jesus Christ in Africa.

Trauma Trainings

SRC in partnership with WORLD RENEW, South Sudan has in January and April, 2017 organized two trainings on trauma healing. The trainings were fully funded by WORLD RENEW, South Sudan. It was attended by 52 participants from four different Christian



Some SRC participants at trauma healing training

denominations in Juba (South Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church, Christian Brotherhood Church, Sudanese Church of Christ and Sudanese Reformed Church). The war has affected everyone in South Sudan. People are traumatized including Christian believers and their leaders. These trainings have helped relieved some of the deep wounds pains and hurts. It is hoped that the participants will go back to their communities and be useful instruments of assistance others to recover from their own traumatic conditions.

CRCNA Synod

Christian Reformed Church of North America (CRCNA) held her Synod 2017 at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, Illinois as from 9-15 June, 2017. For the first time, CRCNA invited nine (9) Reformed Churches from Eastern and Southern Africa as ecumenical guests.



Eastern and southern Africa guests with CRCNA agencies heads

Reformed Churches invited were Presbyterian Church of Ethiopia, Ethiopian Kale Hyewt Church, Sudanese Reformed Church, United Reformed Church in Congo, Reformed Church of East Africa, Christian Reformed Church of East Africa, Reformed Churches in South Africa, Christian Reformed Church in Burundi, and Evangelical Reformed Church in Burundi. These churches labor in Eastern

and Southern African but with very little limited connection, linkages or contacts among themselves. It is worth mentioning that the Synod beside her proceedings has provided an ecumenical platform for Reformed Churches in the eastern and southern African region to network and know each other and their respective labors in the Lord's vineyard.

Focus on Juba

Insecurity in South Sudan has made many areas inaccessible. Thus SRC leaders last year thought and planned to focus on Juba without neglecting at the same time other congregations that are laboring in areas of high security risks. Objectively, the focus on Juba is to continue consolidating SRC presence and to make it the hub of Reformed witness and preparing ground to later mission extension to other areas of South Sudan and Sudan. This focus includes:

- a. Looking for more lands and putting some structure on the grounds.
- b. Establishing a network of Reformed congregations with a sense of being a covenantal community with a distinct Reformed identity (DNA).
- c. Preparing, planning and setting up mission strategies that would strengthen the capacity of SRC to make significant Reformed witness in her mission fields.
- d. Establishing multi-training center to train and develop potential leaders for future leadership in hope of making more impact on communities in South Sudan and Sudan.
- e. Developing a realistic and achievable strategic plan (2018-2028).

Leadership Development

Early this year two SRC candidates: Yohana Chol Dau and Deng Akol who aspire to be SRC future pastors have joined Nile Theological College (NTC) to pursue BA in theological studies. NTC is a joint venture of Presbyterian Church of Sudan and Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church. Further, Rev. Kewy Ismail have also rejoined NTC to complete three semesters that he was not able to complete due to eruption of war in Malakal in 2013. They are partially being sponsored by Bethel Sudanese Reformed Church.



From left to right Yohana, Deng and Kewy

Motorcycle for Mission/Evangelism

In 2013-2014 SRC in Juba as well as in other parts of South Sudan had lost all the properties that she used to possess including one mission vehicle. In addition to those loses, SRC in July, 2016

conflict in Juba again has lost her only remaining mission/evangelism vehicle. This has made her mission/evangelism activities in Juba very difficult. With contribution from SRC members, SRC has bought a second hand motorcycle. Relatively, this motorbike has eased the mission/evangelism activities in Juba. We are praying to the Lord for vehicle provision.



Bought used motorbike for evangelism activities

SRC Silver Jubilee

SRC is now 25 year old. Hence SRC will be celebrating her Silver Jubilee in early December, 2017. Rev. Dr. Flip Buys will be a key speaker in this forth coming SRC historic event. Prof. Buys is the International Director of World Reformed Fellowship (WRF) and respected experienced minister of Reformed Churches in South Africa. Through his connection, brother Jan Lynzaad has offered to write 25 year SRC history. This book is hoped to be launched during the celebration.

SRC Immediate Needs

1. Relief assistance for the needy in South Sudan particularly SRC members who are living in UNMISS IDPs camps across the country.
2. Diaconal support to 32 pastors and evangelists who are laboring in the midst of IDPs across South Sudan.
3. Bibles and Christian literatures.
4. Trauma healing trainings, reconciliation and peace.
5. Parent or Reformed denomination which might coach mentor counsel and encourage SRC in her struggles and growth.

Prayer Requests

1. For peace to return to South Sudan, Nuba Mountains, Southern Blue Nile and Dar Fur.
2. Relief assistance to SRC most needy members and those around them particularly in IDPs camps around Juba, Malakal, Bor and Bentiu.
3. Diaconal support to 32 pastors and evangelists who are laboring among the IDPs in South Sudan. They continue to hang on with Christian Reformed witness despite all hardships. They are making heroic sacrifices for the cause of Reformed faith.
4. Needed infrastructures: completion of SRC Synod office in Juba.
5. Establishment of two IDPs primary schools in Khor Woliang and Gudele in Juba.
6. 1 Toyota pick-up for evangelism/mission in Juba.
7. Logistical provision for SRC synod to be held in 2017.
8. Safety and protection of SRC pastors and evangelists laboring in areas of high risk and hostility.
9. Reopening and rebuilding of two churches closed (Khor Woliang and Gudele) in late 2013 and planting of two new churches (Gueri and Gumba) in Juba.