

Scottish Baptists and Overseas Mission in the Late Twentieth Century

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Abstract

Scottish Baptists conducted a survey of support for overseas mission by their affiliated churches in the 1920s. A second more detailed one was conducted in 1994 with which the earlier data could be compared or contrasted. This study looks at the 1994 survey, examining the levels of support for different mission bodies and looking in more detail at the work of a handful of societies that received the greatest support. It also includes a short section describing the kind of work in which mission personnel employed by these agencies were engaged. It found that support for overseas missionary service was as strong in 1994 as it had been in the 1920s. The majority of missionaries were still employed in familiar roles in evangelism and church-planting or engaged in medical or educational services, but there was now a greater emphasis on alleviating suffering and injustice and in development work.

Keywords

Scottish Baptists; overseas mission; Scottish Baptists overseas mission 1994 BUS survey

Introduction

In 1994, the World Mission and International Affairs Committee of the Baptist Union of Scotland (BUS) conducted a survey of the level of support for overseas mission amongst its 170 affiliated congregations and nine other Baptist causes that had some engagement with the BUS.¹ There were eighty-one replies, representing 45% of the churches contacted (approximately 40% of Union-member churches), who gave details of their mission partners and their engagement with Christian

¹ It can be assumed that information listed in this article comes from the survey return forms held in the Baptist Union of Scotland History Archive in Glasgow unless otherwise indicated in the footnotes. See also David Hunt, *Reflections on Our Past: A Statistical Look at Baptists in Scotland 1892–1997* (Hamilton Baptist Church, 1997).

work in other countries, though ninety-eight congregations gave no response. It was the most detailed survey of overseas mission work conducted in the history of the Baptist Union of Scotland since its formation in 1869. The summary report given in the July/August 1995 issue of the *Scottish Baptist Magazine* indicated that some of the churches that did not reply were amongst the larger ones in the Union and were active in overseas mission, so it is reasonable to assume that the figures from the whole constituency might have been close to double those reported on below.² It is also likely that as well as there being more support for the familiar societies, there would also have been additional smaller bodies receiving funding from one or more of the churches.

The previous, more informal national survey was conducted by George Yuille in the early 1920s, prior to a report on this subject in his 1926 edited volume *History of the Baptists in Scotland*.³ A more detailed study of Scottish Baptist engagement in overseas mission in the early twentieth century was carried out by the present author.⁴ A further two publications on Scottish Baptist involvement in the work of the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) were the only other attempts to cover this under-researched area of Scottish Baptist denominational life.⁵ The present overview study of this 1994 survey is an attempt to highlight the level of engagement made by this network of churches in the last decade of the twentieth century. It will cover, first, the most popular causes

² 'Missions Survey', *Scottish Baptist Magazine*, July/August 1995, p. 14. Stirling Baptist Church, as an example of a church who did not submit a survey return, was supporting in various ways eighteen missionaries working with eight different mission agencies in the early 1990s. See 'Missionaries supported by Stirling Baptist Church between 1970 and 1995', in *Standing on the Rock: A History of Stirling Baptist Church, 1805–2005*, by Brian R. Talbot (Stirling Baptist Church, 2005), p. 162.

³ George Yuille, 'Scottish Baptists in the Mission Field', in *History of the Baptists in Scotland*, ed. by George Yuille (Baptist Union of Scotland Publications Committee, 1926), X1 – Appendices II pp. 290–295.

⁴ Brian R. Talbot, 'Spreading the Good News from Scotland: Scottish Baptists and Overseas Mission in the First Three Decades of the Twentieth Century', in *Pathways and Patterns in History: Essays to Honour David Bebbington*, ed. by I. M. Randall, Peter Morden, and Anthony R. Cross (Baptist Historical Society and Spurgeon's College, 2015), pp. 145–171.

⁵ Marjorie McVicar, *A Great Adventure: Scotland and the BMS* (Baptist Union of Scotland and Baptist Missionary Society, 1992); and Brian R. Talbot, "'Rousing the Attention of Christians": Scottish Baptists and the Baptist Missionary Society Prior to the Twentieth Century', in *Baptists and the World: Renewing the Vision*, ed. by John H. Y. Briggs and Anthony R. Cross (Regent's Park College, 2011), pp. 51–69.

supported, then those supported by a smaller number of congregations, together with a brief analysis of the type of work undertaken by approximately 490 supported individuals serving in these overseas mission endeavours.

The Most Prominent Causes Supported by Scottish Baptist Churches

Baptist Missionary Society (BMS)

BMS was the most strongly supported society, as expected, with eighty-one churches, 72% of the responding churches, reporting their active support for its work, with additional congregations reporting that individuals in their ranks supported it. Of this number, sixty-six had made a financial donation in 1994 at the time of the survey submission. In addition to general support, there was a commitment to the personal support of twenty named individual missionaries, of which sixteen had received additional financial gifts from Scottish Baptist churches. BMS is primarily a body supported by United Kingdom Baptist churches and of the workers recruited to this organisation from the UK, the vast majority were from Baptist congregations. Therefore, it is expected that Scottish Baptists would be committed to the work of this mission agency.

BMS work in Brazil and Nepal featured most prominently in their responses to this survey. The primary explanation for this is quite simple. They were the main locations of service for well-known Scottish Baptists who were members of congregations in fellowship with the Baptist Union of Scotland.

What was happening in these two countries in the late twentieth century? Brazil's population had grown rapidly, alongside significant economic advances in some of its states. The Baptist State Conventions were seeking more BMS missionaries than could be supplied in the late 1970s to assist national Christians in pastoral work and evangelistic ministries, in both growing cities like Sao Paulo and in more remote locations like the Amazonas Convention. Brazil was the second largest

BMS field of service by 1991.⁶ Nepal, in contrast to Brazil, was a relatively new location in which to place its mission workers. It was only from the 1970s onwards that BMS became a major contributor of missionaries to the United Mission to Nepal (UMN). By 1990, Nepal had become the third largest BMS field in terms of personnel, with twenty-three individuals engaged in a great variety of capacities, ranging from dentistry to rural development in the form of a hydro-electric project.⁷ It is probable that there were more opportunities to serve through BMS in these two places at that time.

The data presented in the 1994 and 1995 *Scottish Baptist Yearbooks* reveals that in the former year, eighteen individuals were employed by this Baptist mission agency and twenty-one in the latter year. Twelve out of nineteen in 1994 and fourteen out of twenty-one in 1995 served in either Nepal or Brazil. The missionaries serving in Brazil were, first of all, Christopher and Marion Collict who were linked with Dunoon Baptist Church. Marion had previously been a member of Paisley Free Church of Scotland. They served in pastoral ministry in Dois Vizinhos in the south-west state of Parana from 1984, continuing work begun by BMS missionaries John and Valerie Furrage. This well-established Brazilian church became a base for further evangelistic labours. In 1990, for example, under the Collicts' leadership the church partnered with Operation Mobilisation for a fruitful school and home visitation programme that resulted in twelve people committing their lives to Jesus Christ.⁸ They later served with the Baptist State Convention, Chris working in the Young People's department and Marion in the Women's department.⁹ Susan Cousins, a nurse, from the Port Glasgow congregation, came with her husband Peter to work in Brazil in 1976.¹⁰ They served initially in church-planting in the state of Mato Grosso, prior to working in the Baptist Seminary at Cuiaba in the state of Mato

⁶ Brian Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society 1792–1992* (T. & T. Clark, 1992), pp. 493–497.

⁷ Stanley, *Baptist Missionary Society*, pp. 434–438.

⁸ McVicar, *A Great Adventure*, p. 52.

⁹ 'Call to Prayer, Week 22, Brazil: Rio Grande Do Sul and Santa Catarina', *Missionary Herald*, April 1994, p. 17. This was the main BMS periodical at that time.

¹⁰ Susan Cousins, 'The New Pioneers', *Missionary Herald*, February 1997, p. 27.

Grosso do Sul, where Peter was the dean and Susan the librarian.¹¹ However, when the 1994 survey was conducted, only Susan was still listed as serving with BMS in Brazil. Vincent and Sadie MacDougall had been members of the Vale of Leven Baptist Church. They served in pastoral ministry in the state of Rondonia from 1986, firstly based in Vilhena and then in Cacoal. This work included oversight of a growing network of churches and leading in evangelism in those districts. Their last term of service doing similar work took place from 1992 onwards in Joinville in the southern state of Santa Catarina.¹² David and Catherine Meikle were sent out by Kirkintilloch Baptist Church in January 1992. They were mainly based in Baptist churches in the favelas of the city of Sao Paulo. Catherine, a nurse, had a medical ministry in the community while David served as a pastor and evangelist. He also taught in a Baptist seminary in the city, training students for pastoral ministry.¹³

In 1994, a similar number of Scottish Baptist missionaries were engaged in service in Nepal, mainly through the United Mission to Nepal (UMN), a faith-based non-governmental agency through which a number of Christian missions seconded personnel to serve in that country.¹⁴ Joy Ransom, Iain and Karen Gordon, and David and Catherine McLellan were all sent from the Bridge of Don Baptist Church in Aberdeen. Joy Ransom went to Nepal in 1988 to work as a teacher in a school for missionaries' children in Okhaldunga.¹⁵ The Gordons spent eight years in Nepal on various projects with UMN that included five years (1995–2000) when Iain worked as a consultant for a civil engineering firm in Kathmandu.¹⁶ David and Catherine McLellan

¹¹ Sam Gibson, 'Prayer Focus: Peter and Susan Cousins Brazil', *Missionary Herald*, August 1992, p. 19; McVicar, *Great Adventure*, p. 58.

¹² McVicar, *Great Adventure*, pp. 51–52.

¹³ McVicar, *Great Adventure*, p. 53; Sam Gibson, 'Prayer Focus: David and Catherine Meikle, Brazil' *Missionary Herald*, May 1996, p. 30.

¹⁴ UMN, *Fifty Years in God's Hand, 1954–2004: Blessings of the Past, Visions for the Future*, UMN, 2003 <<https://www.umn.org.np/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/UMN50th-Anniversary-book-English.pdf>> [accessed 19 October 2024].

¹⁵ McVicar, *Great Adventure*, p. 19; 'Call to Prayer: Nepal: UMN — Education', *Missionary Herald*, September 1994, p. 22.

¹⁶ McVicar, *Great Adventure*, p. 74. Two articles on or by the Gordons are Karen Gordon, 'The Gift of Encouragement', *Missionary Herald*, July 2000, p. 14; 'BMS News — Iain Gordon Recovered', *Missionary Herald*, January 2000, p. 32.

served from 1994 to 1999 in Nepal. David was appointed as an information systems consultant for UNM, after holding a similar position with BP, the oil and gas company in Aberdeen. They returned to the UK in 1999 when David was appointed Manager for Mission Partnerships at the BMS office in Didcot.¹⁷ The other couple seconded by BMS for work in Nepal was through another non-governmental agency, the International Nepal Fellowship (INF). They were Colin and Denise Clark from Dedridge Baptist Church in Livingston, who served in Pokhara where the INF ran a number of educational and medical projects.¹⁸

The other named Scottish Baptist missionaries in BMS ranks included David and Ann MacFarlane from Falkirk Baptist Church, who served in pastoral and evangelistic ministry in various churches in Italy, beginning in 1993 in Perugia and later in Altamura.¹⁹ Drs Christopher and Mairi Burnett from Madeira Street Baptist Church, Edinburgh went to work first as medical missionaries in Yakusu, Zaire, from 1985 to 1991, and then were seconded to engage in relief work in Albania, in partnership with the European Baptist Federation.²⁰ Dr Helen Johnson from Inverness Baptist Church, who had trained for medical mission in Zaire and served with BMS from 1990,²¹ was seconded to the European Baptist Mission to engage in similar work in Sierra Leone in 1994 as a result of the political and social unrest in Zaire.²² Stephen and Pam Seymour from Dumfries Baptist Church went with BMS to work in Ntondo, Zaire in 1985, before settling in Zimbabwe the following year.²³ Stephen was a specialist in permaculture training and drought mitigation programmes. He and Pam were focused on assisting nationals severely

¹⁷ 'Baptist House News — Welcome to David McLellan', *Missionary Herald*, July-August 1999, p. 32.

¹⁸ 'Prayer Focus Asia: Colin and Denise Clark Nepal', *Missionary Herald*, November–December 1998, p. 28.

¹⁹ *The Scottish Baptist Yearbook* (Baptist Union of Scotland 1995), p. 83; 'Call to Prayer — Belgium and Italy', *Missionary Herald*, September 1994, p. 22.

²⁰ McVicar, *Great Adventure*, p. 19; Chris Burnett, 'Behind the Last Curtain', *Missionary Herald*, June 1992, pp. 6–8.

²¹ McVicar, *Great Adventure*, p. 75.

²² 'Call to Prayer — Africa Secondments', *Missionary Herald*, September 1994, p. 22.

²³ Steve Seymour, 'Finding the Right Response', describing his work on a food distribution programme in Zaire, *Missionary Herald*, August 1992, p.11; *The Scottish Baptist Yearbook for 1995* (Baptist Union of Scotland, 1995), pp. 82–83.

affected by the shortage of rain in Zimbabwe.²⁴ Derek Clarke, the former National Youth Worker for the Baptist Union of Scotland and a member of Kirkintilloch Baptist Church, was appointed in 1992 as the Scottish representative for BMS in place of Ron Armstrong.²⁵ In addition to these longer-term appointments, Karen Clark from Kinmylies Baptist Church in Inverness went with BMS as a short-term Action Team member to Brazil in 1994.

A work long associated with Baptist churches in the United Kingdom was Operation Agri. The Baptist Men's Movement had launched this initiative in 1961²⁶ with the object of providing tools, seeds, and livestock to support the work of BMS agricultural missionaries in Angola, India, Bangladesh, and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).²⁷ From 1971 to the time of this survey of Scottish Baptist churches in 1994, the funds raised through the annual BMS Harvest appeal were for the work of Operation Agri.²⁸ It is likely that the majority of churches that were supporting BMS financially would have done so in part through its harvest appeal. In addition, two Baptist congregations, Townhead in Kirkintilloch and Bo'ness, supported unnamed individuals working for Operation Agri overseas. In summary, it is no surprise that Scottish Baptist churches primarily committed themselves to supporting the work of BMS in these years. Nor was it unexpected that a significant proportion of members sensing a call to overseas service were employed to work under its auspices.

*Worldwide Evangelisation Crusade (WEC)*²⁹

The second most strongly supported missionary society was the Worldwide Evangelisation Crusade (WEC) which was supported by

²⁴ 'Prayer Focus: Africa and Nepal: Steve and Pam Seymour Zimbabwe', *Missionary Herald*, February 1996, p. 32; Steve Seymour, 'Country in Focus – Zimbabwe', *Missionary Herald*, May 1996, pp. 21–23.

²⁵ 'In View', *Missionary Herald*, August 1992, p. 161. *Scottish Baptist Yearbook for 1994*, p. 176.

²⁶ Kenneth W. Bennett, *God at Work with Men: 80 Years of the Baptist Men's Movement* (The Baptist Men's Movement, 1997), p. 34.

²⁷ Bangladesh was then called East Pakistan. DRC was called The Belgian Congo and then Zaire (1971–1997), prior to being renamed the DRC in 1997.

²⁸ Bennett, *God at Work with Men*, p. 34. For more information on its work, see 'About', Operation Agri, n.d. <<https://operationagri.org.uk/about/>> [accessed 21 May 2024].

²⁹ I am very grateful to Douglas Craig for providing helpful information on these WEC missionaries in May 2024.

30% of the congregations.³⁰ Fifty-one churches indicated that they supported WEC, of which thirty-eight had made a financial donation that year. There were twenty-seven that indicated their support for individual WEC personnel, of which sixteen had sent additional personal financial support for named individuals serving with that mission society. Forty-one named missionaries from WEC were listed in the congregational returns. Lebanon Bible College (later called Northumbria Bible College) in Berwick-upon-Tweed was a well-known college for training women and men for overseas service and was where a number of WEC personnel would have received their initial training for work overseas prior to its closure in 1998. As a result of proximity to the college, Berwick Baptist Church had links to an unusually high number of missionaries compared to other churches of a similar size.

These missionaries included Barbara Ashworth, who worked with women in Togo and in Cote d'Ivoire; Mark and Joyce Budenberg, who were involved in Bible College teaching in Zaire and supported as a couple by Ayr Baptist Church where Joyce was a member;³¹ and Christine and Bill Aitkin, who were supported by Crown Terrace Baptist Church in Aberdeen. The Aitkins were leaders of the WEC Conference Centre at Kilcreggan in the United Kingdom. Adelaide Place Baptist Church in Glasgow, their home church, supported Douglas and Jeanette Craig, who had worked for eleven years as WEC missionaries in the Democratic Republic of Congo, then for thirteen years as staff members teaching at Cornerstone, WEC's cross-cultural training centre, in the Netherlands, where they were based at the time of the BUS survey in 1994. Sam Cairns was supported by the Crown Terrace Baptist Church for literature work and handling correspondence in Ireland. Wayne and Miriam Cowpland were supported in Bible College by Rattray Baptist Church, Dundee, Miriam's home church, prior to their service with WEC. Neil Davidson was supported by Inverbrothock Baptist Church in Arbroath. He worked in radio broadcast ministry with WEC in Leeds. Pauline Devenish was supported by her home church, Ayr Baptist Church, for her church-planting work in Thailand. Iain and Jane

³⁰ 'Missions Survey', *Scottish Baptist Magazine*, July/August 1995, p. 14

³¹ Information about the Budenbergs was obtained from 'Staff', Eastwest College <<https://eastwest.ac.nz/staff/>> on 6 May 2024. As of October 2024, the staff page on this link has changed.

Fairweather were based in the UK, but also travelled overseas to carry out their audio-visual and literature work for WEC. Iain was a former member of the Cumbernauld Baptist Church. He met Jane at the Lebanon Bible College in Berwick-upon-Tweed in the 1970s, prior to serving with WEC. In the 1990s, they were based at WEC premises in Buckinghamshire, England.³² Alex Frazer, who worked in both a leadership and administration capacity for WEC in Scotland, was supported by his home church, George Square Baptist Church in Greenock. Anne Greaves, linked with South Beach Baptist Church, Ardrossan, was called to work at WEC's school for missionary children in Senegal. Crown Terrace Baptist Church supported Moira Leslie, engaged in church-planting in Chad. Leslie Baptist Church supported Andrew and Nina Maclaren in their work at the WEC headquarters in Germany, where Andrew worked in finance and Nina in running the centre. Leslie was Andrew's home church. Derek and Heidi Malcolm were supported by Heidi's home church, Hamilton Baptist Church, for their church-planting work in Turkey. Bo'ness and Cornton Baptist churches likewise supported the church-planting work of Stewart and Jean Moulds in Java, one of many islands in Indonesia. The Moulds had been sent out from Murray Place Baptist Church in Stirling.³³ Inverbrothock Baptist Church supported their church members Zacher Potter and her husband for their work in Senegal. Margaret Ramsay, who worked in both administration and teaching in Thailand, was supported by the George Square Baptist Church in Greenock and her home church, Cowdenbeath Baptist Church. Margaret Reid, who was engaged in church-planting in Albania, was supported by her home church, Bearsden Baptist Church in Glasgow. John and Mavis Rodger from the Vale of Leven Baptist Church were based at the Kilcreggan Centre. They visited missionaries to give practical support to them in various fields of service for WEC, including Senegal, Democratic Republic of Congo, Yemen, United Arab Emirates, and the Netherlands. Neil Rowe, who served as the British Director of WEC until his retirement in 1994, was supported by Crown Terrace Baptist Church, Aberdeen. Sam Russell from Kirkintilloch Baptist Church went

³² Isobel Jarvie, 'Iain and Jane Fairweather', in *Cumbernauld Baptist Church 1962–2002*, by Isobel Jarvie (Cumbernauld Baptist Church, 2002), p. 49.

³³ Talbot, 'Missionaries Supported by Stirling Baptist Church between 1970 and 1995', p. 162.

to work for this mission agency in their literature work in Northern Ireland. Barbara Scott, who was engaged in church-planting ministry in Senegal, was supported by her home church, Gerard Street Baptist Church, and by International Baptist Church, both in Aberdeen. Roy and Daphne Spraggett were supported by Kirkintilloch Baptist Church. They had been serving with WEC in Vietnam in the 1970s, before becoming Scottish Representatives of WEC in the 1980s. In the 1990s, at the time of the survey, they were co-ordinating WEC's work in closed countries of Central Asia. Robbie and Margaret Toop from Hamilton Baptist Church worked in administration for WEC in Scotland in the early 1990s. Wilf and Patricia Urquhart from Inverness Baptist Church were missionaries with WEC in Burkina Faso, before becoming Scottish representatives of WEC. They were engaged in administration and prayer ministry. They were also supported by International Baptist Church in Aberdeen. Inverbrothock Baptist Church supported Iain and Linda Williamson for their service at the WEC Missionary Children's School in Senegal. This church also sent out Jill McKinnon at this time to work with WEC in Chad.

For a fairly small network of churches, the above record of support for this interdenominational mission was truly substantial. There is no particular reason that stands out as the cause of this growth in support. However, it is probable that the effective promotion of the work by home representatives who built good relationships with local churches, together with a steady supply of church members serving with this agency, was central to this increase.

Tearfund

This Christian aid and development agency originally founded by the Evangelical Alliance in May 1968, has grown dramatically since that date. It now works in around fifty countries and, as of May 2024, employs over one thousand people.³⁴ Thirty-nine Scottish Baptist churches reported their support for Tearfund in 1994, of which thirty-eight had made a financial donation that year. Some of these congregations, in addition to general support for Tearfund, provided

³⁴ More details on its work are available from 'About Us', Tearfund, n.d. <<https://www.tearfund.org/about-us/our-vision-and-values/our-story>> [accessed 21 May 2024].

personal support in finance and prayer for individuals working for Tearfund. These congregations were located in Bathgate, Bo'ness, Dumfries, Galashiels, Cathcart and Rutherglen in Glasgow, George Square and Orangefield in Greenock, Helensburgh, Kirkintilloch, New Prestwick, and Oban. Tearfund was able to have a high profile amongst Scottish Baptist churches in part because of its association with the Evangelical Alliance, a cause well-supported in its UK work by many of these congregations. It also had influential Evangelical church leaders like John Stott and Clive Calver promoting its work at conferences and conventions. The leadership at Tearfund was also skilled in developing a voluntary network of advocates for its work in local congregations.³⁵ In 1994 it was the third best-supported mission in Scottish Baptist ranks.

Overseas Missionary Fellowship (OMF)

OMF is a missionary society that initially focused on pioneering evangelistic labours in China, until the expulsion of all the international Christian missionaries in 1949 after the Communist Revolution. Until 1964, OMF had been known as the China Inland Mission.³⁶ Many workers employed by OMF subsequently worked in neighbouring Asian countries. It had been the second most-frequently named cause supported by Scottish Baptist churches in the 1920s survey.³⁷ The most likely explanation for this lower level of support is that so many new Christian overseas mission agencies had been created in the second half of the twentieth century and they were, in effect, competing with existing societies for the limited financial support available from a declining number of churches in most denominations in the UK. However, OMF was still a prominent, well-supported body with twenty-five congregations reporting their active interest in its work in 1994, of which twenty-three had sent a recent financial donation. A number of the churches had close ties to individuals serving overseas with OMF. The congregations that highlighted this point were as follows: Gerard Street, Aberdeen; Berwick upon Tweed; Dumfries; Rattray Street,

³⁵ Timothy Chester, *Awakening to a World of Need* (IVP, 1993), with a foreword by John Stott, tells the story of the growth of its work between 1968 and 1993.

³⁶ The details of its history and work can be found at 'About Us', OMF International. n.d. <<https://omf.org/about-us/our-story/>> [accessed 5 October 2024].

³⁷ Talbot, 'Spreading the Good News from Scotland', pp. 162–164. I am very thankful to Rose Dowsett for providing information on OMF personnel and their work.

Dundee; Abbeyhill and Charlotte Chapel, Edinburgh; Cathcart, Glasgow; George Square, Greenock; Hawick; Kirkintilloch; Leslie; Pitlochry; and Selkirk Baptist Church. In this survey of local church commitment for overseas missionary work, support for OMF was still strong seventy years after the previous denominational survey, with only three other causes attracting a higher level of support in the closing decade of the twentieth century. However, with a growing number of overseas mission agencies providing a more diverse range of opportunities for service, it was inevitable that there would be a reduction in support for many existing agencies from the limited number of churches that were providing the finance and personnel for this work.

Wycliffe Bible Translators

Wycliffe was formed in 1953 by representatives of other missions who saw a need for a greater focus on Bible translation in world mission. Its workers cooperate with communities around the world to provide copies of individual books or whole Bibles in each local language, as well as in developing specialist software to assist more effectively in future Bible translation projects.³⁸ This mission agency was supported financially by twenty-one Scottish Baptist churches in 1994, with ten congregations giving additional personal financial support to individuals working for Wycliffe. They were International in Aberdeen, Abbeyhill, Charlotte Chapel and Leith in Edinburgh, Dumfries, Dunoon, Helensburgh, Kirkintilloch, Newton Mearns, and St Andrews Baptist Church. The work of Bible translation and providing access for all people to the Scriptures was important to Scottish Baptists. This was reflected in the significant support given to Wycliffe in 1994.

Operation Mobilisation (OM)

OM began with mission trips to spread gospel literature in Mexico in 1957, but by 1962 attention was particularly focused on Europe, taking teams of young people to evangelise on short-term mission trips. By 1963, there were more than 2000 young people involved in this work on

³⁸ 'About', Wycliffe Bible Translators, (n.d. <<https://wycliffe.org.uk/about>> [accessed 19 October 2024]. See Kirk J. Franklin and Susan Van Wynen, *A Missional Leadership History: The journey from Wycliffe Bible Translators to the Wycliffe Global Alliance* (Regnum Books, 2022).

that continent and OM also started to work in India and the Middle East that same year. In 1970, it branched out into ministry at sea with the launch of the MV Logos, its first ship, delivering relief and medical aid as well as Christian literature at ports on different continents.³⁹ There were sixteen churches that reported their support of this cause. These included International in Aberdeen, Clydebank, Rattray Street (later called Central) in Dundee, Hamilton, Kirkintilloch, Charlotte Chapel and Wester Hailes in Edinburgh, and Queen's Park in Glasgow. An example of prominent OM workers associated with a Scottish Baptist church is that of Julyan and Lenna Lidstone from Queen's Park Baptist Church, Glasgow. They had been supported in their work with OM over many years. They had served for four years in India from 1973 to 1977, before fifteen years in church-planting work in Turkey. Julyan was then appointed as OM team leader for Western and Central Asia, the post he held at the time of the BUS mission survey in 1994.⁴⁰ This was a vibrant growing mission led by the inspirational figure of George Verwer. It was no surprise that there was a significant number of Scottish Baptist congregations partnering with OM.

UFM (The Unevangelised Fields Mission)

UFM was also well-supported by Scottish Baptist churches. Its vision is to support churches in identifying and training people for cross-cultural mission, with a focus on sending missionaries to some of the most unreached parts of the world with the Christian gospel.⁴¹ It began in 1931 with thirty-six missionaries serving in the Belgian Congo and Brazil who united to form this overseas mission agency. Over the course of the twentieth century, it had three main branches, the largest in North America, with the others in Australia and the United Kingdom. Work under its auspices has steadily grown over the last ninety years.⁴² In 1994,

³⁹ More details can be obtained from Ian Randall, *Spiritual Revolution: The Story of OM* (Authentic Media, 2008).

⁴⁰ Julyan Lidstone is introduced on the OM website. 'Meet Our Global Board Members', OM, n.d. <<https://www.om.org/eng/about/global-leadership/julyan-lidstone>> [accessed 17 May 2024].

⁴¹ UFM is now named Crossworld, and their story can be found at <<https://crossworld.org>> [accessed 24 October 2024].

⁴² Homer E. Dowdy, *Speak My Words unto Them: A History of the Unevangelized Fields Mission (UFM International)* (UFM, 1997).

there were sixteen congregations affiliated to the Baptist Union of Scotland that gave financial support for its work. These included Adelaide Place and Newton Mearns congregations in Glasgow, together with Helensburgh, Ardbeg, Rothesay, and Wishaw Baptist churches.

*YWAM (Youth with a Mission)*⁴³

Youth with a Mission was also well supported in 1994 by Scottish Baptist congregations. YWAM started in 1960 with a vision for getting younger Christians engaged in overseas mission. The work has grown and flourished with projects in more than 180 countries. It prioritises Christian work in the areas of evangelism, training, and mercy ministries. The diverse forms of ministry under its auspices include ship-based medical care, performing arts teams, Bible training programmes, business coaching, sports, and anti-trafficking work.⁴⁴ Sixteen Scottish Baptist congregations reported supporting YWAM in the year the survey was conducted. Twelve of these churches indicated that they were directly supporting individuals working for this missionary society. They were as follows: Ayr; Gerard Street in Aberdeen; Bathgate; Abbeyhill, Charlotte Chapel, and Leith congregations in Edinburgh; Falkirk; Queen's Park in Glasgow; Helensburgh; Inverkeithing; Oban; and Pitlochry Baptist Church. In the 1990s, Scottish Baptists were fortunate to have a good number of young adults in their congregations, following significant growth in their ranks through a successful outreach programme called 'Scotreach' during the 1980s. Those that came to faith in those years had done so often in a context of flourishing congregations committed to evangelistic work at home and overseas.⁴⁵ It is likely that a good proportion of the people offering for overseas service in the early 1990s either came to faith or were active workers in these mission-minded congregations.

⁴³ Information on the wider work of YWAM is given at <<https://ywam.org/>> [accessed 21 May 2024].

⁴⁴ 'About Us', Youth With A Mission, n.d. <<https://ywam.org/about-us>> [accessed 8 October 2024].

⁴⁵ See Brian R. Talbot, *Building on a Common Foundation: The Baptist Union of Scotland 1869–2019* (Pickwick, 2022), pp. 245–252.

The three most prominently supported missionary societies in the 1920s survey,⁴⁶ BMS, OMF, and WEC were still well supported by Scottish Baptist congregations seventy years later. However, five other causes — Tearfund, Wycliffe, UFM, OM, and YWAM — were now also attracting a significant level of support in terms of financial giving and in the numbers of serving missionary personnel. The world of overseas missions had changed significantly over this time, with the options for summer mission trips or shorter terms of service for a smaller number of years increasing, and with lengthy periods of service over decades in one field far less common at the end of the twentieth century. In addition to the traditional patterns of overseas ministry in evangelistic and church-planting ministries, as well as those in some form of medical or educational work, there was now a greater acceptance of and support for agricultural and development work in causes like Operation Agri and for the provision of disaster relief aid through bodies such as Tearfund.

Overseas Mission Societies Supported by a Smaller Number of Congregations

This section presents an overview of the range of organisations receiving support from Scottish Baptist churches, but from a more limited number of congregations. The organisations supported are listed below in alphabetical order, then further details of the nature of the support is briefly set out.

The Africa Inland Mission was supported by thirteen congregations in 1994, of which twelve had made financial donations to its work. Five of the churches had donated more generally to the society and eight had given funding for particular workers.

Arab World Ministries was supported by eleven congregations in the 1994 survey, of which six had made a financial donation that year in support of individuals serving under the auspices of this mission.

⁴⁶Talbot, 'Spreading the Good News from Scotland', p. 165.

A Rocha Trust, the Christian environmental trust, was supported by Dumfries Baptist Church in the form of a contribution to the funding of two people working for this cause.

ACRIS was an agency in the 1990s that was involved in community health projects in Mozambique. BMS partnered with them in some projects and seconded some mission workers for a time to serve under their auspices when they had to be withdrawn from Zaire in 1992 due to military conflict in that country. Sue Roberts, who was supported by Calderwood Baptist Church in East Kilbride, was one of the BMS workers who was asked to go to Mozambique.⁴⁷

Action Partners received funding from Kirkintilloch Baptist Church in support of four individuals who worked with this organisation.

The Bible Lands Society received funding in 1994 from three congregations: George Square and Orangefield Baptist churches in Greenock and Helensburgh Baptist Church.

Christian Mission to the Communist World received support from two congregations: Orangefield Baptist Church in Greenock and Dumfries Baptist Church.

Christian Witness to Israel was also supported by two congregations: Oban and Dumfries Baptist churches.

Four Baptist churches supported the work of *ECM (European Christian Mission)* in 1994. This society was formed by Ganz Raud in 1904 in Estonia. It is currently working in over twenty European countries with over 300 workers.⁴⁸ The congregations that reported support for ECM were Galashiels, Orangefield in Greenock, together with Abbeyhill and Charlotte Chapel Baptist churches in Edinburgh.

⁴⁷ 'Driven By the Wind: BMS Annual Report', *Missionary Herald*, 30 April 1993, p. 19.

⁴⁸ 'Our History', ecm, n.d. <<https://www.ecmi.org/en/our-history>> [accessed 10 May 2024].

The Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society (EMMS) was supported by three churches in its work overseas: Ayr, Denny, and Helensburgh Baptist churches.

The Dunfermline *Eurosave* charity was set up by Watson Moyes, minister of Viewfield Baptist Church in Dunfermline, during the war in Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Initially, the focus was on providing funds for Karlovac Baptist Church and its work with refugees on the frontlines between Serbian and Croat forces. A national appeal for this cause was promoted in the Baptist Union in 1995. Over the next ten years to 2005, many Scottish Baptist congregations collected money or goods for this cause.⁴⁹ However, in 1994 in the first year of Scottish Baptist support for the work of Croatian Baptists, only Helensburgh Baptist Church reported sending a financial gift to them.

FEBA (the Far Eastern Broadcasting Association) received some founding from ten Scottish Baptist congregations in 1994, with three giving particular support to named individuals working for FEBA. They were Charlotte Chapel in Edinburgh, Dumfries Baptist Church, and Kirkintilloch Baptist Church.

France Mission was a British evangelistic agency set up in the 1970s to partner with a similar French organisation, Perspectives, to assist French Evangelicals plant new churches in that country. It has been a remarkable success, seeing the growth in church membership from 150 000 to 650 000 people in 2500 congregations.⁵⁰ In 1994, two Scottish Baptist congregations were assisting in this work: Rattray Street Baptist Church in Dundee, and Pitlochry Baptist Church.

HCJB World Radio, ‘The Voice of the Andes’ was one of the two earliest Christian short-wave radio stations set up in 1931. The Vatican Radio was launched in February 1931, whereas HCJB radio was launched on Christmas Day that year in Quito, Ecuador, broadcasting in Spanish and English. The work of HCJB expanded later into

⁴⁹ For more details, see Talbot, *Building on a Common Foundation*, pp. 300–302.

⁵⁰ ‘Who We Are’, France Mission, n.d. <<https://www.francemission.org/who-we-are#story>> [accessed 14 May 2024].

television and into Russian language broadcasting in partnership with the Slavic Gospel Association. In 1994, it had two workers who were supported by Cornton Baptist Church in Stirling and Charlotte Chapel in Edinburgh respectively for their work in Ecuador and in the USA.⁵¹

IFES (International Federation of Evangelical Students) was formed in 1947 to support Christian students to engage in evangelism amongst their peers. Its work has spread to over 180 countries since its foundation. In 1994, two Scottish Baptist congregations, Kirkintilloch Baptist Church and Charlotte Chapel in Edinburgh, supported workers serving with this mission agency.⁵²

The interdenominational and international medical mission *International Mission to Nepal (IMN)*⁵³ had been working in India since the 1930s, working with Nepali people in the Indian town of Nautanwa on the border of Nepal. It gained permission to operate in Nepal in 1952, setting up a clinic and then the first hospital in the west of Nepal, subsequently expanding its work to other parts of the country. In addition to projects where BMS personnel worked with INF, Leslie and Wishaw Baptist churches independently supported families serving in Nepal with this medical mission.

Interserve, a Christian society engaged in holistic mission in Asia and the Arab world,⁵⁴ received funding from four Scottish Baptist congregations in 1994. Gerard Street Baptist Church in Aberdeen, Helensburgh Baptist Church, Kirkintilloch Baptist Church, and Morningside Baptist Church in Edinburgh.

⁵¹ Kenneth D. MacHarg, 'HCJB 1931–1991: A Celebration of Beginnings', November 1991 <https://www.ontheshortwaves.com/HCJB/Articles/HCJB_1931-1991-A_Celebration_of_Beginnings-1991.pdf> [accessed 14 May 2024].

⁵² 'Our Work', IFES, n.d. <<https://ifesworld.org/en/our-work/>> [accessed 14 May 2024]. For more information on the work of IFES, see Douglas Johnson, *A Brief History of the International Fellowship Of Evangelical Students* (IFES, 1964).

⁵³ More details on the work of this mission can be found in the history of the INF by Thomas Hale, *Light Dawns in Nepal* (International Nepal Fellowship, 2012).

⁵⁴ For information on this organisation and its history, see the Interserve website <<https://www.interserve.org.uk/>> [accessed 14 May 2024].

One of the features of the late twentieth century was the number of mergers or realignments of mission strategies undertaken by a number of Christian mission agencies. *Latin Link* was formed by the 1991 merger of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union (RBMU) with the Evangelical Union of South America (EUSA).⁵⁵ The congregations stating their support for this mission in the survey were Ayr, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Bo'ness, Cumbernauld, Wester Hailes in Edinburgh, Kirkintilloch, Knightswood in Glasgow, and Cornton in Stirling. An example of an individual working in this field was Elma Armstrong from Cumbernauld Baptist Church. She had gone out to Peru with EUSA in November 1973 after completing her training for work overseas at the Bible Training Institute in Glasgow. She married a Peruvian pastor, Hector Flores, a decision that under EUSA regulations required her to resign from the mission around the end of 1976. The Cumbernauld congregation committed to supporting her, increasing the level of its giving in 1992 when a monthly communion offering was taken in aid of her work. She paid a return visit to the Cumbernauld Church for a time of home leave in 1997.⁵⁶

The Leprosy Mission, founded in 1874, has been one of the oldest overseas mission agencies supported by Scottish Baptist churches. However, in the 1994 survey, there were only fifteen congregations that reported active commitment to promoting its work. Supporting congregations named in the survey were Clydebank, Dumfries, Leith in Edinburgh, Cathcart in Glasgow, Orangefield and George Square in Greenock, together with Kirkintilloch, Ladywell, Livingston, and the Vale of Leven Baptist churches.

*The Missionary Aviation Fellowship (MAF)*⁵⁷ was founded in London in 1945 and grew to become the world's largest humanitarian air operator, providing transportation to more than 1400 aid, development, and mission organisations around the globe. Seven Scottish Baptist churches gave financial assistance to MAF in 1994.

⁵⁵ 'History', Latin Link, n.d. <<https://latinlink.org.uk/about-us/history/>> [accessed 14 May 2024].

⁵⁶ Jarvie, 'Elma Flores (nee Armstrong)' in *Cumbernauld Baptist Church 1962–2002*, by Jarvie, pp. 48–49.

⁵⁷ 'Our History', MAF, n.d. <<https://mafint.org/about/our-history>> [accessed 14 May 2024].

They were International in Aberdeen, Ayr, Dumfries, Orangefield and George Square in Greenock, together with Kirkintilloch, and Pitlochry Baptist churches.

The Oasis Trust,⁵⁸ an organisation that engaged in education and humanitarian aid work in the United Kingdom, as well as overseas, received support from five congregations: Gerrard Street in Aberdeen; Calderwood and Westwood in East Kilbride; Abbeyhill in Edinburgh; and Helensburgh Baptist Church.

The Oriental Missionary Society (OMS) was supported by four named congregations: Berwick, Clydebank, Galashiels, and Selkirk Baptist churches.

Open Doors was supported financially by three Baptist churches in Dumfries, Hawick, and Pitlochry. Although financial support was given for particular individuals in overseas countries, there were no details given of their identity and location. It is probable that the reason for this decision was due to the countries in question being places where the Christian church faced discrimination or active persecution by the state.

Qua Iboe Fellowship was supported in its work in Nigeria by three Baptist churches. They included Charlotte Chapel, Edinburgh — which assisted Dr Nick Needham who was teaching under its auspices at the Samuel Bill Theological College in Akwa Ibom in south-east Nigeria — together with George Square Baptist Church in Greenock, and Dalkeith Baptist Church in Edinburgh. Its work in more recent years has expanded into Burkino Faso, Chad, and Kenya.⁵⁹

The Red Sea Mission Team (RSMT) engaged in healthcare and education work, primarily in Muslim-majority countries around the Red Sea, but later in West and North East Africa and in Pakistan.

⁵⁸ ‘Oasis Global’, Oasis, n.d. <<https://www.oasisuk.org/oasis-global/>> [accessed 14 May 2024] gives details of its overseas work.

⁵⁹ The name of this body was changed to ‘Mission Africa’ in 2002. ‘About’, Mission Africa, n.d. <<https://www.missionafrica.org.uk/about>> [accessed 21 May 2024].

Kirkintilloch and George Square Baptist churches supported missionaries serving with the RSMT agency.⁶⁰

There were seven congregations who gave financial support to SIM (the original name was the *Sudan Interior Mission*) in 1994. They were Crown Terrace and Gerrard Street congregations in Aberdeen, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Wester Hailes, Edinburgh, Kirkintilloch, and Renfrew Baptist churches.⁶¹

In addition to the eight mission societies mentioned in section one as receiving the most support, there were twenty-seven others supported by at least two but not more than fifteen congregations. It is clear that interest in a growing range of overseas mission opportunities had developed over the seven decades from the 1920 report, and that this increasing range of mission opportunities was also providing stronger links with the growing indigenous Christian churches around the world.

The Type of Work in Which They Were Engaged Overseas

The survey recorded categories of employment that were used to describe the missionaries sent out and supported financially by Scottish Baptist churches in 1994. This number included some that were fully supported through societies such as BMS and by other individuals, and couples or families who were partially funded through these congregations. The survey data, unfortunately, is not clear in reporting whether the name and employment category represent an individual or a couple or a family serving in that capacity. Therefore, it is only possible to offer general observations on the nature of the employment in which they were engaged. It is also important to acknowledge that many

⁶⁰ Further information on the history of this mission is given in Glenn Tainio, 'Missionary Spotlight — Pioneer Work among the Afars', *Evangelical Times*, 1 February 2008 <<https://www.evangelical-times.org/missionary-spotlight-pioneer-work-among-the-afars/>> [accessed 21 May 2024]. This mission has changed its name to ReachAcross to reflect its wider geographical focus. Information on its current work was obtained from the web page 'Reach Across', ECFA, n.d. <<https://www.ecfa.org/MemberProfile.aspx?ID=31961>> [accessed 21 May 2024].

⁶¹ Details of the work of SIM can be obtained from their website <<https://sim.co.uk/>> [accessed 21 May 2024].

individuals were multi-tasking in their spheres of service. So, for example, a significant proportion of medical missionaries were also responsible for the administrative duties associated with their work in a clinic or hospital. There were those employed as church-planters, evangelists, or Bible teachers who also engaged in pastoral work in a local church or more widely during their time of service. In broad terms, the largest numbers of these missionaries were employed in evangelism, church planting, and Bible teaching, closely followed by those serving in medical mission. In this late twentieth century survey, unlike the survey of the 1920s, there were a significant number engaged in aid and other relief work. In addition to those employed more broadly in mission administration, there were much smaller numbers employed in agricultural or other development work, in radio or literature ministries, or in those focusing on students, especially those in higher education. Another new focus was on child sponsorship or other work amongst vulnerable children. There was one pilot employed by MAF. Other categories that were new included support for A Rocha in its environmental work in Portugal. In summary, the majority of these missionaries were employed in similar work to those in the 1920s survey, though with a closer working relationship with partners in the national churches in their respective countries.

Conclusions

What is the big picture that emerges compared with the study seventy years earlier in this family of churches? BMS was still the most strongly supported society, as expected, with 72% of the responding churches reporting their active support for its work, with additional congregations reporting that individuals in their ranks supported it. The second most strongly supported missionary society was the Worldwide Evangelisation Crusade (WEC) that was financially supported by 30% of the congregations. There was also continuing strong support for OMF. What was particularly noticeable was the commitment to a number of newer missions that had begun their work after the previous survey had been taken; namely Tearfund, OM, Wycliffe, UFM, and YWAM. There were twenty-seven other mission societies supported by between two and fifteen Scottish Baptist congregations. It was also very

noticeable that there were a growing number of causes supported by only one local church.

Scottish Baptists continued to see themselves as part of the global Christian church and, where appropriate, were happy to serve with or support mission initiatives led by individuals from other denominations, for example in Nepal. This pattern was very similar to that found in the 1920s survey. The range of roles undertaken by these missionaries was also fairly similar in many respects to the time of the previous survey, and there was still significant support for projects in Africa and Asia as in previous decades, although other parts of the world, most notably the Americas and Continental Europe, were the recipients of a growing proportion of this work.

At that time in the 1990s, Scottish Baptists had a prominent focus on BMS work in two countries, Brazil and Nepal. There were a number of Scottish Baptist church members serving or who had served in Brazil in particular, which probably gave a higher visibility to that mission field. In Nepal, work was done in partnership with other Christian missions through the United Mission to Nepal and the International Nepal Fellowship. However, in total, mission workers linked to Scottish Baptist churches were serving in at least seventy different countries, which is a remarkable number considering the size of the Scottish Baptist constituency.⁶² This survey revealed clearly that there was no doubt concerning the continuing Scottish Baptist commitment to overseas mission at the end of the twentieth century.

⁶² 'Missions Survey', *Scottish Baptist Magazine*, July/August 1995, p. 14; and 'Overseas Mission' section of chapter ten in Talbot, *Building on a Common Foundation*, pp. 308–309.