Foundations for Mission

A study of language, theology and praxis from the UK and Ireland perspective

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churches
together

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Foreword

As we approach the centenary celebrations of the Edinburgh 1910 Missionary Conference, often described as the beginning of the modern ecumenical movement, we are having to fundamentally reassess what mission means in the UK. This research is crucial in helping us consider where and what those issues are. Just as the whole modern ecumenical movement is having to reconsider what its vocation is in the 21st century, so also the church is having to consider what mission means and how we can best live out our calling today.

This research helps us to move beyond glib answers and challenges us to think deeply about the relationship between what we say mission is, and how we live out God's mission in our own context. It is not enough for us to say then 'how should the church live out its mission,' suggesting some unified understanding and approach. Rather we need to acknowledge the huge diversity and complexity that exists within the Christian community and society at large. That is why a study such as this, which digs into the foundations of mission and then looks at language, theology and praxis, helps us to uncover the assumptions and mismatches that exist. It is vitally important that we read, mark, learn and inwardly digest the outcomes of this work.

What is new, exciting and helpful in all of this is the way in which the authors have delved into new methods of communication to assess what is happening at both the theoretical and local levels. The interrogation of websites is instructive. As we move into a world of increasing diversity with various methods of social networking, how is the church to communicate its mission effectively and coherently? The use of research techniques to understand HOW we are expressing and then LIVING out our mission points to the need for greater engagement with theological principles. With the growth of programmes such as Fresh Expressions and emerging forms of 'church' we need to understand how these relate to any shared sense of ecclesiology and identity. Our mission theology must be given greater place so that we have the resources to continue working into the issues raised in this study.

The study itself is an example for the future. The close working bonds that have brought together the Mission Theology Advisory Group's work within CTBI together with Global Connections and BIAMS shows the richness of ecumenical working and the continued need for collaborative working across the churches and mission agencies.

This research is a significant step forward. We owe a great deal of thanks to the writers. There is still much to be taken on as we move into the next stage of our journey and ministry together. When it comes to the planning of the 200th anniversary of the Edinburgh Missionary Conference, I believe that this research will be viewed as a significant point of reorientation on that journey.

Bob Fyffe

Mission language

Christians respond positively to the word 'mission' and have difficulty disagreeing with statements containing the word mission. However, naming priorities within mission is much more difficult. Some kinds of mission-related words such as 'hospitality' or 'reconciliation' attract strong positive reactions from all constituencies, while 'justice' is a problematic concept. Christians respond strongly to language which implies generous, mutually giving relationships between human beings and this reflects Trinitarian relationship even where Trinity is not explicitly mentioned. However, mission theological issues about how God works through human beings and who is best equipped to undertake mission prove more difficult to deal with.

Websites are a necessary tool of communication. However, public language about mission and theological statements about mission may be less important than other website content. Pictures and stories may be underestimated as indicators of what mission is about. Websites themselves may be underestimated as actual instruments of mission.

Mission theology

A tension emerges between a vision of, or theological perspective on what mission 'ought' to look like and what in fact the world of mission activity really 'is'. The gap between what mission is and what it ought to be is nonetheless bridged by the *missio Dei* and allows the diverse forms of mission thought and action to illuminate theological principles.

A Trinitarian understanding of mission is present within mission activity in the UK and Ireland, but it is not particularly overt. The *missio Dei* itself is a weak driver for mission. At local level there is more emphasis on biblical drivers such as Matthew 28:19. Theological drivers and an understanding of *missio Dei* only emerge more clearly when embedded in mission experience. Stories and contexts prove more helpful than theological 'position' or starting points. Reflection through engagement with a missiologically experienced person is particularly helpful in exploring both implicit drivers for mission and new ideas.

Mission praxis

Leadership and representation make talking about the foundations for mission more complex especially when there is a gap between: a leader's personal vision and agency 'position'; between team members; and between the mission understanding of clergy leaders and that of their congregations. Such tensions can be both creative and

frustrating and are sometimes solved by talking about 'holistic' mission which covers both sophisticated and unsophisticated views. Reflection on mission issues through a statement survey is extremely challenging but helpful in discovering such gaps and in provoking growth in self-understanding. It is clear however, that there has been a positive shift towards greater mission awareness among local clergy.

Recommendations

- Churches and agencies at national and local level should pay more attention to their websites as missiological tools. A reflective tool to help this process has been developed as a result of this research.
- Churches and agencies at national and local level should undertake mission audit as a means to understanding their own missiological drivers and understanding of mission. A range of tools based on the research survey will be developed to enable this process.
- Churches and agencies at national and local level can benefit from extended reflection and engagement with mission theological issues. A tool to enable this reflection has been developed as a result of this research.

Introduction

There has been much written about the theory and practice of mission since the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference in 1910. A hundred years later, a number of theological ideas and missionary practices have come and gone; some missiological perspectives have been discarded as inappropriate while others are still seen as experimental. One hundred years after the first Edinburgh conference questions about the theory and practice of mission in the UK and Ireland still need to be asked, particularly in a world of new technologies and news ways of reaching people. This study uses a combination of website analysis, survey research and in-depth interviews among national churches and agencies across the denominations in the UK and Ireland to show that confidently stated foundations for mission and the theological understanding of mission do not necessarily match mission practice or the rationale for mission owned by people working 'on the ground'. This means that there is often a mismatch between the theology and rationale for mission practice set out in academic study by mission theologians, offered in mission training and formation, and adopted by churches and agencies, and the complex and 'messy' nature of mission at the grass roots, especially in relation to contemporary situations such as a multicultural and religiously plural society.

We suggest that it cannot be simply assumed by church leaders that 'mission is everything' or 'we all know what mission is' since our study shows that in practice there is considerable disparity about the source of mission, how it relates to God, who is it for, and what its outcomes should actually be. Mission is therefore not something which has had its day, but is *still* waiting for a clearer understanding of its function in our present evolving contexts. We also suggest that much more attention needs to be paid to the complexity of mission theology and praxis as it is lived in local contexts across the denominations and promulgated from the UK and Ireland across the world and that there are dangers in simply subscribing to programmatic forms of mission action without careful attention to local needs and situations. [1]

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1 A point made clearly in *Mission-Shaped Church* (London: Church House Publishing) 2004.
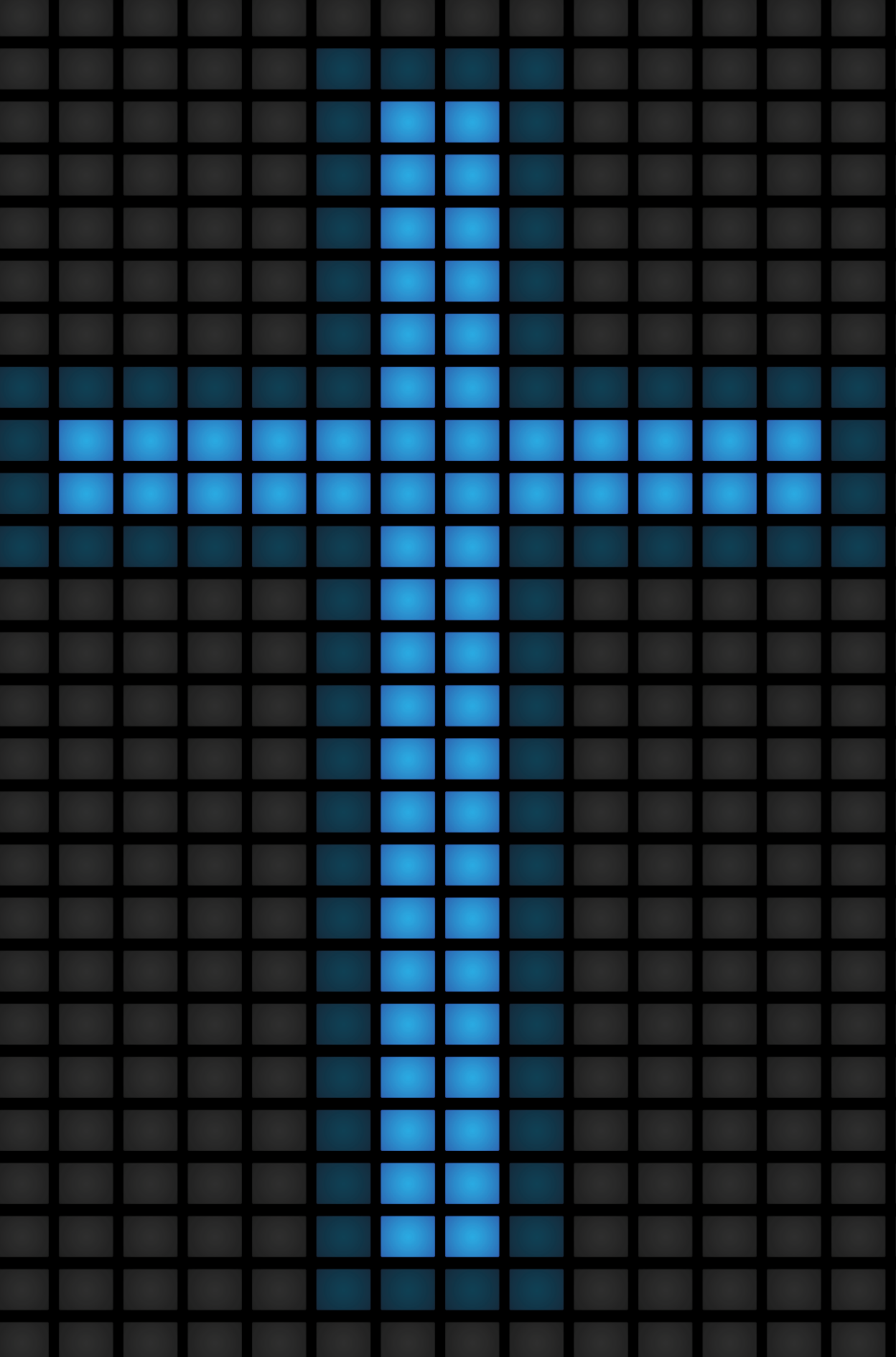
Background to the project

Edinburgh 1910

The World Missionary Conference, held in Edinburgh 1910, was considered a defining moment for the churches in the history of mission. Eight 'commissions' produced reports on what the future of mission work would look like under the headings 'Carrying the Gospel to all the Non-Christian World', 'The Church in the Mission Field', 'Education in Relation to the Christianization of National Life', 'Missionary Message in Relation to the Non-Christian World', 'The Preparation of Missionaries', 'The Home Base of Missions', 'Missions and Governments' and 'Co-Operation and the Promotion of Unity'. Because of the significance of this event and because of the changing face of mission theology and praxis in the century following, it was considered right to celebrate the centenary of the 1910 conference by holding another conference in Edinburgh in 2010. Beginning in 2005, an international group was set up to produce an inter-continental and multi-denominational project. The project, based at New College and the Church of Scotland offices in Edinburgh was headed by Dr Daryl Balia as its international director and governed by a 20 member General Council.[1] An account of the 1910 World Missionary Conference and the proposals for celebrating its centenary was given by Dr Kirsteen Kim at the BIAMS conference in July 2009.[2]

Edinburgh 2010

Building on the 'commissions' of the 1910 conference, the 2010 project included a series of nine study themes on: Foundations for mission, Christian mission among other faiths, Mission and post-modernity, Mission and power, Forms of missionary engagement, Theological education and formation, Christian communities in contemporary contexts, Mission and unity – ecclesiology and mission, and Mission spirituality and authentic discipleship. In addition, there would be seven 'transversal' themes cutting through all the other study themes, including: Women and mission, Youth and mission, Healing and reconciliation, Bible and mission, Contextualization, inculturation and dialogue of worldviews, Subaltern voices, and Ecological perspectives on mission.[3]

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1 www.edinburgh2010.org/en/about-edinburgh-2010.html.

2 A revised version is available in pdf or audio versions at www.martynmission.cam.ac.uk/pages/hmc-seminar-papers.php.

3 See www.edinburgh2010.org/en/study-themes.html.

Foundations for Mission study theme

The first theme, that of 'Foundations for Mission', was offered to the churches for research and study with the following aims and objectives:

> **The task of this study group is to explore how a Trinitarian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit relates to the theory and practice of mission; how the confession that God has a missionary identity impacts Christian witness; how a discernment of the Trinitarian God´s inner relationships and love impacts ecclesiology, community life and society.**
>
> **The meaning of salvation is being considered in its biblical witness and in relation to freedom from every form of slavery in every context and culture. The study group is considering the interfaces between the Trinity, mission, salvation, ecclesiology and scripture.**

In addition, the Study Process offered the following key issues and questions which a research group might address:

1. The relation of the Trinitarian nature of God to our understanding of Christian mission.
2. The relation of Christology to mission theology and practice.
3. The relation of the work of the Holy Spirit to mission theology and practice.
4. How does our understanding of the mission of the Triune God affect our ecclesiology and church practice?
5. What do we mean by salvation, present and future? What is its link to conversion, baptism and participation in the sacramental life of the church?
6. How does our understanding of salvation affect the way we do mission?
7. How does mission engagement affect our biblical hermeneutics and vice-versa?[1]

It was intended that a number of groups around the world might undertake study and research in each of the study themes and produce material which would then be contrasted and compared. Two such groups were convened to look at the 'Foundations for Mission' topic, a group from the World Council of Churches in Switzerland convened by Revd Dr Deenabandhu Manchala looking particularly at the experience of the Indian Dalits, and a group from Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI), convened by Canon Janice Price. The latter is the subject of this report.

Convening of the research group and membership

Canon Janice Price, as Secretary of the Global Mission Network (GMN) of CTBI[2] convened a group incorporating two other umbrella bodies interested in mission: Global Connections (GC), a network of evangelical churches, agencies, colleges and

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1 See www.edinburgh2010.org/en/study-themes/1-foundations-for-mission.html.
2 Canon Price is now World Mission Policy Adviser for the Church of England (from 2009).

support services dedicated to developing churches in mission,[1] and the British and Irish Association of Mission Studies (BIAMS), a consortium of churches and agencies interested in mission theology and practice, current issues in missiology, and holding a biannual meeting to promote collaboration and exchange.[2] Martin Lee was appointed to represent GC and the Revd Dr Philip Knights was appointed to represent BIAMS. The group also then was extended to include Mr John Clark, former Director of the Mission and Public Affairs Division of the Church of England, Dr Anne Richards, National Adviser for Mission Theology for the Mission and Public Affairs Division of the Church of England and Convener of the Mission Theology Advisory Group, Dr Paul Rolph, former Head of In-service Teacher Education, University College of St Mark and St John and Tutor /Supervisor on MA in Faith and Education, University of Bangor and Revd Canon Dr Nigel Rooms, Director of Mission and Ministry, Southwell and Nottingham Diocese. The group began its preliminary work in 2007 and was in place by 2008.

Parameters of the Project

CTBI is an umbrella organisation covering the major denominations of the UK and Ireland. The constituencies with which the group was familiar therefore covered the major UK and Ireland churches, agencies, theological institutions and mission networks. It was therefore necessary to confine the research project to the UK and Ireland on the understanding that within the Edinburgh 2010 international process, the UK and Ireland material could be contrasted and compared with material emerging through the study process from other parts of the world. Given the small number of persons on the group and the limited time and resources available, it was also considered necessary to limit the scope of the study and use technological resources such as NVIVO (a qualitative research and data analysis software) and SurveyMonkey (an online tool for survey collection and analysis)[3] as much as possible. Outside resources would include the Mission Theology Advisory Group, which commented on reports from the group and acted as a focus group for part of the research and the BIAMS conference 'Sinking Foundations: Why Mission Today?' July 1st–3rd 2009 where participants took part in the research process and commented on the preliminary findings.[4] The Church of England's head of research and statistics, the Revd Lynda Barley, also assisted the group with their analysis of statistical evidence.

Paul Rolph and Janice Price also took preliminary findings from the project to a meeting in Geneva from 1st–4th May 2009 to compare results with Deenabandhu Manchala's 2010 parallel project on Foundations for Mission. It was clear from this meeting that the two approaches were extremely different particularly in terms of the subjective *experience* of mission. Dr Manchala was invited to be part of the BIAMS conference in July 2009 in order to feed this perspective into the conference but unfortunately he was unable to attend.

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1 See www.globalconnections.co.uk.
2 See www.biams.org.uk/page.php?2.
3 See www.surveymonkey.com.
4 Papers from the BIAMS consultation are included as Phase 2.2, pp. 51-92 in this book.

Foundations for mission: a brief background

The 1910 World Missionary Conference had focused a number of questions on mission as a theological imperative and these questions had been honed by theological enquiry and practical experience of churches and missionaries in the ensuing hundred years, changing and challenging the theological understanding of mission over time in the light of historical and cultural factors, such as the loss of empire and new respect for the faith of indigenous peoples. What exactly *was* mission? Did mission originate with God (the *missio Dei*)? Was there a specific mission of, or for, the Church? Was mission only to be found in, or commissioned by, Jesus Christ? Did mission mean evangelism, leading to conversion and commitment to Christ, or evangelization, the changing of cultures and structures to reflect God's will? Should there be a robust mission to people of other faiths and should people from other nations and traditions who became Christian be left alone to spread the gospel by themselves?

These questions of theology became more complex as the fruits of mission multiplied. What about *reverse* mission, as those evangelized began to travel back to the sending nations with energy and renewed fervour? How does mission relate to justice? Is mission about preparing for the imminent arrival of Christ or is it about establishing God's Kingdom on earth? In 1991 David Bosch's monumental *Transforming Mission* was published, tracing a series of 'paradigm shifts' in the theology of mission understanding and practice and with a call to find a new paradigm for postmodern mission expression.

One of the by-products of the interest in mission theology and the work done on it was the idea by the end of the twentieth century that 'mission' activity in the UK and Ireland was the mark of churches that were *doing* something. Lesslie Newbigin had argued in *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* that the congregation was 'the hermeneutic of the gospel' and a suitably motivated congregation was at the heart of local mission activity. His work on gospel and culture issues and that of others, such as John Finney's *Finding Faith Today* in the 1990s, changed the focus of evangelism from large events such as Billy Graham rallies to the ability of the local church to make disciples. This focus led to attention being focused again on the potential of Christians at the grass roots and so led to audit tools such as *The Measure of Mission*, the development of the 'five marks of mission' by the Anglican Consultative Council and adopted at the 1998 Lambeth conference, church planting manuals and documents, and the development of mission oriented Christian basics courses, such as *Alpha*. In line with this practical focus on local tools for mission was a developing mission theology which saw mission as *God's* mission, the *missio Dei*. As the Mission Theological Advisory Group's *Presence and Prophecy* puts it:

> Mission theology speaks of the *missio Dei* – the mission of God's love to the world. It assumes that God, having created all that is, both allows the creation freely to unfold in its own way, and at the same time retains a purpose of love towards it. This purpose is made known to us through God's revelation and we are offered a share in the process of achieving it.[1]

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1 MTAG (2002) *Presence and Prophecy*, (London: Church House Publishing) p. 25..

MTAG went on to suggest that mission is not a theological category to be juggled alongside other forms of theological interest, but a 'function of God's own being' and 'the heart of God' overflowing continuously into the world. [1]

One problem with the concept of *missio Dei* however, highlighted by Bosch, was that if all mission emanated from God then all kinds of things could be called mission and blamed on God. This led to Bishop John V Taylor speculating in 1998 that there were dangers in the all-embracing idea of mission. The concept of the '*missio Dei*' could be used as an excuse for almost any kind of activity and labelling something as mission was a feel-good action that did not necessarily relate to God's intention for the creation.[2] These cautions focused back on the relationship between mission theology and praxis, so that for example Robert Warren in *Building Missionary Congregations* argued for mission practice that was grounded in the prayer and spirituality of the congregation. A report on church planting, *Breaking New Ground* was followed up by the best-selling *Mission-Shaped Church* and its companion books, leading to an emphasis on reflexive listening, grounding in locality and decision making based on the needs of local communities. Programmes emerging from the Mission-shaped initiative, such as Fresh Expressions, and movements such as Emerging Church, continue to encourage mission as a reflection of local need and opportunity. A number of churches and dioceses have also subscribed to 'the five marks of mission' as a template or programme for mission activity. These are:[3]

- To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom;

- To teach, baptise and nurture new believers;

- To respond to human need by loving service;

- To seek to transform unjust structures of society;

- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of earth.

In addition it was suggested in 2009 that a 'sixth' mark should be added referring to the need for peace and reconciliation.

All of these developments showed that mission is not a clear cut practice or issue and is complex, diverse, and sometimes driven by factors or needs other than a pure gospel imperative. How then do Christians, churches, agencies and institutions *decide* how mission is to be promulgated and what resources to give to it?

The Project Hypothesis

These developments, evolution and changes in the theology and practice of mission helped us formulate the hypothesis on which our research would be founded:

> **Public statements about mission by UK and Ireland churches, agencies and institutions do not necessarily match up with the mission practice, understanding and outworking of those same bodies.**

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1 p. 26.

2 John V Taylor, (1998) *The Uncancelled Mandate*, (Loondon: Church House Publishing).

3 See, for example: www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/mission/fivemarks.cfm.

We expected to find that statements of purpose, including any foundational theological statements, often summed up in sound bites or straplines on websites and church notice boards and which implied a particular focus or direction, would unravel when those implications were examined and their outworkings interrogated. For example, a word like 'change' or 'transform' in a statement of purpose gives an impression of doing good things for God, but can break down when we start to ask questions about what is really meant. Who or what is transformed? Who should do the transforming? What does transformation look like? When does it come to an end?

We expected to find that the missiological expression of national bodies is tested by working in a culture of web communication, advertising and marketing, and sometimes competing for funds and access while also being driven by faith, vision and vocation. We expected to find a dislocation between the technical and theological language of mission, and the understanding and activities of those using it and we designed the study to show if that dislocation existed, and if so what was its range and extent among both the national bodies and a sample of churches working at local level. The study theme asked for an emphasis on theological foundations and we included these within a wide ranging area of mission enquiry, since we felt that the wider theological rationale and theological drivers for mission would only become apparent in the context of other kinds of questions about mission praxis.

We used Bevans and Schroeder's work in *Constants in Context* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2005) as the theoretical basis for the evaluation of theological foundations for mission. They claim, following González and Sölle, that there are essentially three types of theology discernible throughout Christian history and they call them simply, A, B and C types. Mission according to these theologies then varies so that in type A it is 'Saving souls and extending the Church', in type B 'Discovery of the truth' and in type C it is 'Commitment to liberation and transformation'. More crudely in today's terms it would be possible to describe them as conservative, liberal and radical types of theology. However Bevans and Schroeder do not believe they correspond exactly to *current* understandings of mission. Rather they discern three further positions on mission that have been taken during the twentieth century. These three positions are:

a) Mission as proclamation of Jesus Christ as Universal Saviour or 'Proclamation';
b) Mission as participation in the Triune God or *missio Dei*;
c) Mission as Liberating Service of the Reign of God or 'Kingdom' mission.

The first corresponds to type A theology, the second to a mixture of type B and C, while the third corresponds to type C.

Scope and design of the project

The project was divided into three interlocking parts which would contrast, reinforce and interrogate each other. The first part of the project entailed an examination of websites of selected national denominations, agencies and institutions, looking at the composition of the site and in particular at straplines about mission, mission language, vision statements and whether or not the site contained theological statements

or descriptions about its mission purpose. This was the only phase of the project which concentrated solely on information from the national bodies. Phases two and three included a local study for comparison. It was not felt, however, that local church websites would contain enough useful information about mission theology and praxis to provide helpful comparisons about the issue of public language.

In phase one, information on language use and phrasing was collected from forty-six sites (Appendix A). The information was then subjected to an NVIVO search by Janice Price. NVIVO is a piece of software which allows qualitative data to be searched, classified or otherwise modelled and allows a large amount of data to be sorted and examined. In this case we were looking for repeated or common phrases, for popular mission statements as well as unusual statements. Following a broad search of these websites belonging to members of GMN, BIAMS and GC, looking for particular key words and concepts, the group then looked at seven specific websites more closely for information about their approach to and promotion of, their mission interests and concerns. The information from these two processes was carried over and factored into the design of the second phase of the project.

In the second phase of the project, we developed a survey as a mission audit tool. The survey was designed by composing a number of statements about mission, focusing on theological issues, but also issues of mission praxis. There were three statements in each category (only two in the category Mission and Salvation) focused on 15 particular areas of mission enquiry. The 44 statements were developed in the following categories:

- Origin and Purpose of God's Mission
- Kingdom, Mission and Church
- Who best does mission?
- Evangelism and Mission
- Mission and Development
- Mission and Improving Lives
- Mission and Other Faiths
- God at work through….
- Mission and Proclamation
- Mission and Sin
- Mission and Salvation (two statements)
- Mission and Church (essence of the Church)
- Mission and Church (function of the Church)
- Mission and Partnership
- Mission Outcomes

The purpose of providing three statements in each category was to enable different wording, and to state the same idea in different ways to see if this had an effect on the response. For example:

✝ **Christians have much to learn from other faith traditions (S2)**
✝ **All faiths need to learn from one another as we share much in common (S22)**

✝ **Christians have little to learn from those of other faiths (S24)**

In addition, similar wording was used in *different* category statements. For example:

✝ **Mission without social action is not mission (Mission and Development)**

✝ **Mission without proclamation is not mission (Mission and Proclamation)**

One of the issues of interest was whether completing a linear survey would show different responses as the participants made their way through it, meeting similar statements at different points in the survey. To enable this, the statements were randomly distributed throughout the survey (Appendix E). Respondents were asked to consider each statement in turn and to select an answer from the following categories: strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree. Participants were able to leave comments about the statements in a box on each of the three pages of the survey. At the end of the survey, participants were invited to tick up to five from twenty-two suggested areas of church interest which would represent the priorities for the respondents' agency, church or group. It was also possible to comment on this section via another box. Participants were then asked to identify themselves by denomination or other (eg independent evangelical) affiliation. Finally, the survey promised confidentiality but respondents were asked to supply their details for the eyes of the group only together with an indication of willingness to be approached for in-depth interview.

The group composed and sent a letter to the head person in a range of churches, agencies, and institutions drawn from those members of CTBI and from GMN, GC and BIAMS (Appendix B). Thirty-seven letters were sent to CTBI members, sixteen to members of GMN, thirty-seven to members of GC and thirty-five to members of BIAMS (numbers adjusted for overlap between the bodies). That person was asked to fill in the survey on behalf of the church, agency or institution they represented, not from personal conviction or interest. The Survey was made available online via SurveyMonkey, an online tool at www.surveymonkey.com which allowed us to compare and filter the results in a number of different ways in order to analyse the results. This constituted a national survey across the four nations of the UK, and Ireland.

In addition, Nigel Rooms sent paper surveys by post to 292 churches across the main denominations within the Anglican diocese of Southwell and Nottingham and also to independent charismatic and Pentecostal churches. There were some differences between the national survey and the local survey layout in that the 'mission priorities' page and the final page were adjusted for the local environment, – for example including activities such as 'Parent and Toddler groups' as a possible priority. Dr Rooms then collated the ninety-eight paper replies he received (33.6%). This constituted a local survey for comparison with the national survey. One difference between the completion of the national survey and the local survey was that the online survey does not allow respondents to skip responses, whereas the completion of a paper survey meant that responses could be left blank if the respondent chose not to answer.

The national survey was also critiqued and considered by the Mission Theology Advisory Group acting as a focus group. In addition, the BIAMS conference members in July 2009 also filled in and returned the survey. This constituted a third, smaller group of data.

There were seventy respondents in the national survey, ninety-eight in the local survey and twenty-seven in the BIAMS survey. The results were analysed as quantitative data with help from Lynda Barley at the Church of England's statistics department who suggested using a ranking system for the aggregated results in addition to the various filters possible with SurveyMonkey. Those results are collated in Appendix H.

The final part of the project was a follow up of the national survey by eleven in-depth interviews with a range of heads of organisations, agencies and churches undertaken by Janice Price, Martin Lee and Philip Knights. Nigel Rooms conducted in-depth interviews with 16 participants from the local survey (Appendix C). The purpose of the interviews was to collect qualitative data, opening up why participants had responded to the statements in the survey in the way that they did, and asking for further elaboration of their understanding of mission theology and praxis. The interviews were based on a template of questions prepared by Dr Rooms, then recorded and transcribed (see Appendix F and G).

Search of websites: national churches and agencies

In the first stage of the web search, texts were collected from forty-six websites of the national churches, agencies and organisations included within the three sponsoring bodies (GMN, GC, BIAMS) and these were then subjected to searches using NVIVO. Of particular interest to the triangulated national study were the mission and vision statements (where these were available) setting out the mission focus of the church or agency. The main type of search used was 'word' search and 'word frequency' search. The purpose of these searches was to ascertain the most frequent uses of terms used to express mission theologically. NVIVO analysis produced an emphasis on a number of concepts and actions:

'Transformation'

'Sharing'

'Equipping'

'Community'

'Fellowship'

'Supporting'

'Creation'

This method of analysis produced a number of variations between sites. Based purely on a word frequency search the Baptist Mission Society (BMS) emphasised 'God', while the Church Mission Society emphasised 'Jesus'. 'The Church' or 'churches' was a large focus of much of the language across the websites.

It was found that in a search of both Protestant and Roman Catholic agency sites there were frequent references to 'God' and 'mission' but rarely references to 'God's mission'. References to 'Jesus Christ' were more frequent (84) but these were not to 'Christ's mission' but to Christ as God and these two terms could have been used interchangeably. References to 'Kingdom' were infrequent (13) and the NVIVO search *only* returned these references from Roman Catholic sources. There was one reference to mission being expressed in the language of 'Trinity' and eight references to the agency of the Holy Spirit. The initial evidence of the theological foundations for mission was therefore that agencies tend to express their theological understanding of mission in the public genre of a website in terms of 'God' and 'Jesus' rather than in terms of Spirit, Kingdom or Trinity.

One interesting result was that there was a different use of the word 'community' in the texts of the Protestant agencies and the Roman Catholic New Communities. 'Community' was a frequently used word (77 references in 57 agencies and communities surveyed). However the way it was used had different nuances divided between Protestant and Roman Catholic sources. In the Protestant sources the tendency was to use the word 'community' to express the *object* of mission whereas in Roman Catholic sources 'community' was expressed as a means of evangelization. This was not entirely surprising considering the importance of ecclesiology to Roman Catholic identity and being. In the Protestant churches there has historically been a greater emphasis on the action of the individual in response to Christ. However, this finding served as a reminder that similar language ascribed to mission can be differently nuanced in ways that are easy to overlook. Therefore, this was an issue that had to be carried over to further stages of the project. This initial study of what the churches and agencies said about themselves on their public websites, even in their straplines, opened up some key terms and concepts which were instrumental in the formulation of the survey, particularly about who does mission and who receives it.

Typical straplines.

Phase 1.2

Analysis of selected websites: national churches and agencies

Anne Richards and Janice Price then undertook a more detailed semiotic analysis[1] of the websites of the Church Mission Society, USPG, Baptist Mission Society, St Joseph's Missionary Society, the Methodist Church, the United Reformed Church and the Church of England. We expected to find that the mission agencies would have a clearer and more immediate mission focus, while the national church websites would have a wider range of initial materials. However, we still expected to find some theological or other explicated rationale for mission which would enable us to discover what churches' public statements about mission would be and what mission messages they would expect website viewers to obtain.

Some comments on the nature of websites

Some important questions have to be asked about websites as a new technology which is now considered *essential* for any organization or institution seeking to reach out to others. If a church, agency or organization is involved in mission, then surely a website in itself is a missiological tool? This led us to ask: what sort of a text is a website and what is its purpose? For Christian organizations which communicate through worship, prayer, scripture, oral faith sharing and Christian actions, how does this traditional communication affect notions of exchangeable text?

One of the key aspects of assessing a website is that it is multi-semiotic. Websites by nature can combine a variety of styles or means of communication with written text, still pictures, video, podcast, social networking and purchasing capacities among others. A website as text most often combines written and/or visual material in electronic form which also allows for an immediate exchange between users and/or viewer and originator. It also has clear boundaries between it and other texts delineated by ownership of the text and style of the message but which expresses something of a wider and bigger discourse, including textual poaching.[2] It is this combination of styles of communication through electronic means that characterize the genre of the website. This opens a key relationship between form and content. Content has to be appropriate to the form and a website that only contains written text is not judged to be as successful as those sites which combine different modes of discourse in this particular genre. The development of interactivity characterized by immediacy of

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1 Semiotic analysis involves looking at the interplay of text, visuals, messages and signs on (for example) a website and analysing what meanings are derived from the entire system.

2 Michel de Certeau, a Jesuit, first suggested this term in relation to the way readers actively take what they read and realign its content to their own interests and purpose. See *The Practice of Everyday Life* (English trans. 1984) (Berkeley:University of California Press). An example would be reading a mission story on a website and using it in a sermon.

encounter enabled by electronic means is one of the important ways in which websites have changed communication. Early websites were focused to a greater extent on the provision of information. Today, websites have multiple uses and have become an important part of social exchange and practice for many people. The development of webinars as a form of interactivity for a group combines the ability to give, receive and discuss information. This is in contrast with webcasts which only allow data transmission is one way and do not allow interaction between presenter and the audience.[1] We were therefore looking for multi-semiotic materials about mission as well as the purely text based themes uncovered by the NVIVO search.

Results

What was immediately clear in studying the websites for their sign systems and coding is that in each case the website front page was a multi-semiotic experience in which colour, design, text, layout and images combined to promote messages to the viewer, and which could be taken away and used by the viewer. It was interesting to see what the viewer might glean about the church or agency's view of the foundations for mission and how far these were obtainable from the website. It was noticeable, sampling the websites on a number of occasions how the syntagmatic (surface) structure of many sites changed (for example to reflect the seasons of the Church's year) while paradigmatic (self-contained) structures, such as vision and mission statements remained embedded in the site. It could therefore be argued that such websites seek to combine both syntagmatic and paradigmatic structures in relaying message about mission. Paradigms of mission would be encoded by mission statements or statements of purpose and practice while syntagmatic indications of what is happening in mission *now* would be encoded in changing pictures and text perhaps pointing to specific events, fundraising initiatives, news items, quotes, links to the wider church or photo items. One important question was therefore whether these two aspects of the design and layout of the site reinforced each other or whether the linear surface of the site, especially on the front page, was actually continually dominant.

A particular focus of this analysis was the use of language about mission and about other kinds of messages about mission that might be conveyed by the layout and design; bearing in mind the concepts and ideas about language which had been generated by NVIVO analysis in the first part of this phase. Another matter was whether the primary driver for messages about mission might be conditioned by the need to raise funds and support. To that end, we concentrated mainly on the front page, 'about us' page and 'support us' page before searching the rest of the site. It was necessary to bear in mind that website design and upkeep is expensive and variations in quality would not say anything about drivers for mission, but more about available financial resources. Notwithstanding, in view of the funds available for websites, it was interesting to see what churches and agencies prioritised. The websites were also sampled at intervals to compare any changes in appearance and content.

The screenshots below are included for illustrative purposes, not to compare their relative merits in terms of layout, design or messages about mission.

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1 What is a Webinar? Webopedia Computer Dictionary, www.webopedia.com/TERM/W/Webinar.html, accessed 9 October 2009.

Church Mission Society

Our observations about the CMS (Church Mission Society) website first led us to the permanent strapline 'sharing Jesus, changing lives' which offers an explicit vision of the agency's purpose and intention described as current ongoing action. The word 'mission' was all over the front page on each occasion it was sampled; we also noted an explicit mention of 'God's mission' and a summary of the theological drivers. All this was explicated one click away from the homepage as: 'CMS is committed to evangelistic mission, working to see our world transformed by the love of Jesus. We dream of the day when the whole of creation is restored to a living, loving relationship with God. We believe that by living a mission lifestyle, equipping people for mission work and sharing resources for mission we make our unique contribution to God's mission. We do this as a community that shares a longing to see all peoples being drawn into fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ'. A key document setting out a commitment to 'Trinitarian faith' has to be downloaded as a pdf and says that it encourages mission service in 'those who have experienced conversion to Christ, are being renewed by the work of the Holy Spirit, are committed to the local as well as the worldwide mission of the church'. Trinitarian values were also affirmed in another downloadable 'Ethos Statement'.[1]
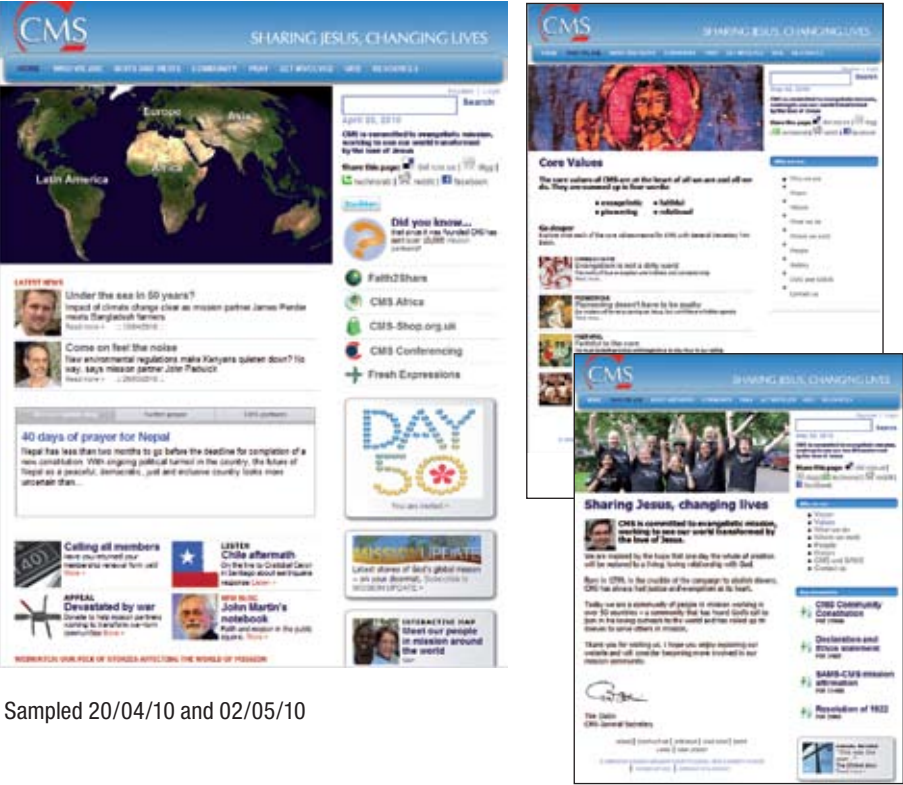
Sampled 20/04/10 and 02/05/10

The front page was laid out magazine style, with three dimensional button boxes, was seasonally directed and changing with a large amount of focus on interaction and sharing, including icons for Del.ici.ous, dig, technorati, reddit, an RSS and Facebook.

1 www.cms-uk.org/Whoweare/Vision/tabid/167/language/en-GB/Default.aspx.

There were strong incentives to explore 'mission' directed objects, to join a community. There was a personal message to the user from the General Secretary one click away highlighting both justice and evangelism. The site often included symbolic images (such as candles in November, bare feet) and a prominent tab for donation.

USPG: Anglicans in World Mission

The USPG: Anglicans in World Mission front page had a series of differently coloured boxes outlining text in similar fonts. There was no RSS or sharing icons, although Twitter was available. There were more people and faces on the front page indicating strongly the relational nature of what USPG is about but the theological rationale, like that of CMS, had to be downloaded as a pdf. This document also set out a commitment to Trinity and also explicitly to the *missio Dei*.[1] There was no evidence on the front page of the agency's view of the foundations for mission and was rather identified with 'supporting churches'. 'Doing things' was also an important mission theme but this theme was transmitted by images of people, especially women, engaged in activities, rather than text descriptions. One question arising from examination of the website through its images was whether the agency advocated doing things *to* and *for* people or whether it helped people to help themselves, so there were issues of power and helplessness in trying to ascertain the agency's drivers for mission. Donation was also prominent together with a strong impression of multi-culture and a worldwide agency, strongly supporting the agency's self description as 'Anglicans in world mission'.

Sampled 20/04/10

1 www.uspg.org.uk/images_cms/Pages%20from%20theological_basis-page1.pdf.

The Baptist Mission Society

The Baptist Mission Society front page was designed with two dimensional flat boxes and a left hand menu set out in strong orange and purple colours. Its foundations for mission were clearly stated in a central position on the 'about us' section, a click away from the home page: 'BMS believes in holistic mission, an approach that stays true to the Christian call to evangelisation without neglecting the duty to take care of the physical needs of the poor.' Baptism and male images, including ministers, were important signifiers on the 'about us' page. Images of women tended to show them as receivers. The front page was topical with focused news, prayer and updates and directed and used similar language to CMS about 'changing lives' and 'being transformed' by God through the work of BMS. Sharing was offered through an RSS feed and Facebook. Later, Twitter was added. The 'support us' tab gave a large amount of 'churchy' donations information with many options. The site also offered different 'channels' of information and experience which could be chosen by the user. The general impression given by the website as a whole is that it is focused at the committed person who needed to be challenged and inspired.

Sampled 20/04/10 and 02/05/10

At 25/02/10 the site offered its vision and strategy document 'For God...' for download listing its foundational driver as John 3:16 and basing its principles on words such as 'relationship', 'commitment', 'transformation', 'witnessing', 'responding', 'listening', 'engaging' and 'resourcing'. These words were strongly supported by significant images, such as a cross among minarets.[1]

St Joseph's Missionary Society (Mill Hill Missionaries)

The St Joseph's Missionary Society (Mill Hill Missionaries) offered a repeated strapline 'to love and to serve' across the top of the front page together with emblematic signifiers of the Holy Family for 'St Joseph' and of a ship crossing the ocean (for

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1 www.bmsworldmission.org/standard.aspx?id=434374.

Sampled 20/04/10

mission). The front page directly addressed the viewer with a welcome message and a message and picture from the General Superior. Pictures on the front page tended to be of static, formal groups and the 'what we do' section offered only text without images. However, the front page offered a number of images of the cross in various guises as well as the 'Joseph' motif. There was a mixture of quite formal and traditional church elements (eg ordinations, blessing) with more modern images. The mission statement was quickly accessible and was set out as:

> **Acting on the Lord's command, Mill Hill Missionaries are ready to leave country and culture in order that the Gospel of Christ may bring together people of different races and may become incarnate in every culture and nation.**

The introduction traced the scriptural drivers for mission to John 1:39 and Matthew 28:19. This contrasted with another Roman Catholic mission site such as SEDOS, based in Rome which set out its driver on the front page from Luke 4:

> **The Spirit of the Lord is upon me – he has appointed me to bring good news to the poor – to proclaim liberty to the captives and new sight to the blind – to free the oppressed and announce the Lord's year of mercy.**

The Methodist Church

We then contrasted mission society websites with the front pages of a number of denominations to see how mission messages were handled and disseminated.

The Methodist Church front page also offered scripture: 'neither height not depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that

Sampled 20/04/10

is in Christ Jesus our Lord' (Romans 8:39). Its message is one of openness and inclusiveness. However a search was needed to find the Priorities,[1] and it was more difficult to find out what Methodism says about mission. A search for the word 'mission' led to a number of results for events and issues rather than about a Methodist view of mission. The priorities offered the closest thing to a mission statement:

> **To proclaim and affirm its conviction of God's love in Christ, for us and for all the world; and renew confidence in God's presence and action in the world and in the Church.**

The front page was laid out as columnised two dimensional boxes with small images, heavy on brown text. On the day the image above was sampled it did, however, figure the cross, arguably the most powerful signifier of what Christianity is about. There was an emphasis on prayer on the front page, but the foundations and theological drivers for mission were more difficult to ascertain. Social networking was not offered, but there was an ability to connect with the President and Vice-President's blog, featuring text and pictures, but mostly of static groups.

United Reformed Church

The URC front page featured white text on brightly coloured sections in a non-standard shape. This website offered a login for membership. The front page offered resources such as booklets and manuals. The networking possibilities included not only an RSS feed and Facebook link, but links also to Flickr and YouTube. On 25.02.10 the front page offered the URC's first webinar.

The 'about' section offered as its self description: 'Called to be God's people, transformed by the Gospel, making a difference in today's world', though this section was all text based. The 'what we do page' has a series of links under the heading Mission[2] and offers:

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1 www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=opentogod.content&cmid=559.

2 www.urc.org.uk/what_we_do/mission/mission.

Sampled 20/04/10

We work with the whole church to give expression to our mission and faith in ways which bring alive our vision of 'being Christ's people, transformed by the gospel, making a difference to the world' Our work areas are wide-ranging, reflecting the Five Marks of Mission.

In addition to a basis for mission in the five marks, this section of the website enables the user to discover the people in the mission team and more about their interests and activities, although when it was sampled some of the links were repeated and some were missing.

The Church of England

The front page of the Church of England website was defined by its purple colour and had a two dimensional columnised layout with small pictures and colour coding for significant words such as 'faith', 'worship' and' life'. It carried no scripture on the front page and no foundations or drivers for mission, though the face of Jesus figured next to the welcome message (this image changes at intervals). Mission matters require entry through the 'faith' portal[1] and are described as:

The Church of England is called, as are all Churches, to carry forward the work that Jesus Christ began in all aspects of the life of people in society. Jesus said to those who followed him 'As the Father has sent me, so do I send you'. (John 20:21)

This page was text-based with an image of an open Bible, so offering an image of yet more text. A search from the front page for the word 'mission' brought up a number of results, including the Archbishops' Council's mission statement which was the five marks of mission.[2]

1 www.cofe.anglican.org/faith/mission.
2 www.cofe.anglican.org/about/archbishopscouncil/missionstatement.html.

The front page was therefore clearly a portal requiring the enquirer to search for what is wanted. The front page carries an RSS feed but no icons for Facebook or Twitter. The site offered podcasts but no direct interaction with user and no message from the Archbishops (who have their own websites). The Church of England's website message was much more that it is topical and this site does carry a strapline: 'a Christian presence in every community'.

Sampled 20/04/10

Summary and Transition

An examination of these websites showed that the elucidation and explication of mission is not in general a high priority. Only CMS made a conscious effort to high-light and prioritise the idea of mission *per se*. Some other agency sites prioritised action in the world. Denominational websites covered far more ground and offered a range of options, often with portal style features. The Methodist Church featured openness and inclusiveness. Church of England promoted its ubiquity and inclusiveness.

The web-search yielded a number of interesting points.

- Websites in general are designed for the public and not necessarily for people with an in-depth or specialised knowledge of mission. We were looking for evidence of the foundations for mission and for the theological drivers and these were present within websites but usually in designated sections embedded in the site, only used as justification for action or outlook for those willing to work to find and study the relevant material.

- Many of the websites, particularly those constructed by mission agencies, were looking for support and are built with the intention of attracting interest and hopefully involvement and donation. Consequently many sites combined not only words about mission, but pictures, colours, logos, designs, interactive and social networking features. Portal designs were also present in some sites to draw searchers into the site. Denominational websites also tended to assume searchers

are looking for something specific, like a local church, and sought to meet that need first.

- Theological language, especially about the Trinitarian foundations for mission, where present, was often relegated to a page or downloadable document a number of clicks away, so perhaps mission theology as a foundation for mission simply does not translate into web friendly language. Consequently, front pages offered 'snapshot' theological ideas such as CMS' *Sharing Jesus, Changing Lives*, or MHM's 'To love and to serve', a short snippet of scripture, or a picture of something related to Jesus.

- Rendle and Mann argue that: 'There are two components to all mission and vision statements: the axiomatic and the unique. The axiomatic states what is self-evident for all congregations...The unique states what is important to the particular congregation because of who it is, where it is located and the historical moment it is in.....we consistently encourage planning teams...to shape their future by giving particular attention to unique statements about themselves.. that expresses as sharply as possible the unique gifts, call, and challenge that this congregation claims'.[1] Similarly, websites have to offer what is axiomatic: Christian, missionary, inclusive, worldwide, and set this against the unique identities of the church or agency. So we can expect to see the language and pictures of God and Jesus, displayed against unique identifiers such as biblical straplines, or theological statements or purpose and intention. There was a tension between the axiomatic and the unique in all the sites, felt strongly in the CMS site and the MHM site, less strongly in the USPG site and hardly at all in the current Church of England website.

This initial phase of the project created some issues to be carried over into the design of the survey. How far did leaders of churches and agencies feel that the foundations for mission set out in their public language about mission on their websites reflected their understanding of what their church or agency was really about and how it operated in the real world? How far was such language an accurate descriptor of the behaviour and activity of the church or agency and what effect did their vision or mission statements have on complex issues of practice? For example, how far did stated foundations for mission drive attitudes to people from other faiths, or social justice? How far did views about mission condition ideas about who is best placed to act or work in mission? What about those who receive mission? Were they just receptors as some website images seemed to suggest, or participants? These questions then enabled us to create a tool for churches and agencies to discuss with web designers and writers when producing web materials related to mission (Appendix D)

These questions informed work which was then undertaken on the design of survey for church and agency leaders from the GC/GMN/BIAMS constituencies.

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1 G. Rendle and A. Mann, (2003) *Holy Conversations: strategic planning as a spiritual practice for congregations* (Herndon, VA: Alban Institute) pp. 85-6.

Survey of national churches and agencies, local churches in Nottinghamshire, England, and BIAMS conference attendees

The website search had provided a number of key words around the issue of mission which we decided to incorporate as far as possible into the survey statements to see if these elicited a particularly positive response. Other elements of the survey would try to determine whether there were both axiomatic and unique identifiers (for example church tradition or theological position) which would carry over into the mission praxis and understanding of the people in the church or agency.

The survey was designed and tested in stages in order to make sure that the required topic areas were covered. We decided to have categories of enquiry that would be researched by using statements rather than questions. Statements were checked to make sure they were not ambiguous, loaded or leading. We also tried to cover Bevans and Shroeder's lenses of mission in the triplet statements in order to see if one lens or perspective of mission was more prominent than another. One issue that preoccupied us was the use of the word 'primarily' in a number of statements. When the ecumenical Mission Theology Advisory Group (a partnership of the Church of England and CTBI) was used as a focus group to trial the statements (09.12.08), one member commented that there was a 'but' with responding to all the statements and another felt it had stopped him from saying what he wanted to say. On reflection, however, the word 'primarily' was included in some of the statements in order to provoke a more considered response. Other comments about the design of the survey concerned whether there was a bias against proclamation and evangelism, and the statements were checked again to make sure different emphases were properly covered. It was also noted that 'Kingdom' is an outdated word for post-Christians and might not be helpful in all applications of the survey, although not likely to cause a problem for the immediate constituency. Another very pertinent question from MTAG was whether the statements were about how things are now or about how they *ought* to be. This was also noted by respondents in both the national and local survey. This was a very interesting idea and one which it was felt could be teased out helpfully in the follow-up in-depth interviews in the third stage of the project to see if people interpreted the statements as a way of describing the world as it is or the world as it ought to be in an ideal working out of the missiological process.

Comments on the survey made by respondents showed that people in general find it difficult to react to statements about mission even though the websites often offer precise statements and straplines. Respondents wrote comments such as 'needs defining…', 'it needs to be debated…' 'It depends what you mean by…'. Some were

frustrated by being asked to react to the statements in a way which translated into a precise response, and commented that they were forced to be 'fence sitters' or wanted to add 'sometimes' into the statements. This showed that there was a difficulty with even the most commonplace Christian concepts, including theological concepts, all of which proved more slippery and complex than might be normally imagined. Respondents commented on the difficulty of defining, for example, 'justice', 'mission', 'partnership' and 'Church'. The comments made by the participants in the process of completing the national survey were gathered up and carried over into the design of the local survey, where changes were made in the mission priorities section to reflect more accurately the interests of churches engaging in mission 'on the ground'. There was also an added question about what kinds of advocacy and campaigning a church might be involved in in order to elicit more detail about the 'justice' question that had proved so difficult in the national survey (see Appendix E). The comments from the national survey were also taken forward into the design of the third section of the project.

Paper copies of the national survey template were given to the BIAMS conference attendees to fill in at All Nations Christian College in July 2009 and this exercise was the first item at the conference. Those results were entered into SurveyMonkey immediately by Dr Knights and provided new data for the whole research team who were reporting preliminary findings from the national and local surveys to the conference. This was extremely helpful, because those who had just filled in the survey were able to comment on the preliminary findings from their own experience. Reflections from Dr Knights and Dr Rolph about the conference, as well as papers from the conference are included in Phase 2.2 below.

The results of the survey can be understood in two ways, as quantitative data on individual questions about the foundations for mission, and qualitative data on the way Christians *deal with* questions about their understanding of mission. The data was analysed using a number of filters: by aggregating the response from the three sets of data, including ranking the scores, and by individual survey results. The national survey was filtered for response by denomination. Data is illustrated in this book by means of pie charts, but pie charts only show positive results, so where a zero result was returned, that is indicated in the legend. Complete sets of data for the survey will be available on the CTBI website.

We began with a number of assumptions about the sample. In particular, the BIAMS sample from the conference was made up of mission practitioners and theologians, most with direct overseas experience. We expected their results, in the conference setting, to be driven by theology and their personal experience rather than by theories about mission praxis. The national survey included churches, agencies, and organisations with *responsibility* for mission activity by others, so we expected this sample to show a tension between theological concerns and issues of responsible praxis. The local sample included church leaders of different Christian denominations working at local level on understandings of mission. We assumed these might be mostly praxis driven where they were dealing with mission issues together with their congregations.

Because the sample was small, we looked for emerging themes rather than definitive results. We were aware that the survey forced answers where there might be shades of meaning or different answers according to context and we expected to be able to use the in-depth interviews to address this. Some particular issues caught our attention:

- It can be hard to disagree with the word 'mission'
- Respondents had difficulty with negative words like 'condemnation' but endorsed words like 'repentance'
- 'Transforms', 'Hospitality', 'reconciliation' and 'God's love to all' were regarded most positively
- Respondents wanted to embed the statements in contexts and stories
- Ranking or prioritisation of mission perspective was extremely difficult
- Respondents had difficulty with the word 'justice'
- Engaging with the statements caused a slight shift in attitude in some respondents
- Strong assent for a missionary 'Church' but not for planting churches or bringing back people to church.
- Stronger assent for partnership at national level and BIAMS than in the local survey

These issues are discussed as emerging themes. It is possible that if the survey is taken up in other quarters and contexts and the results fed back to CTBI in the future, it will be possible to get a clearer picture of these themes and others may yet emerge.

Emerging Themes

Agreeing and Disagreeing

One significant result across the data was that respondents did not like to use the 'strongly disagree' option (coloured cyan in the pie chart) which was ranked with the lowest response in 33 out of 44 statements and next to lowest in 9 other statements.[1] Of the two remaining statements, both were expressed negatively: asserting that there is no separation between Kingdom and church and that we have little to learn from other faiths. By contrast the (blue) 'strongly agree' option was not used consistently. It appeared that there is a general tendency to want to respond positively to mission-related language even if the concepts were complex and the respondent unsure. We thought it was possible that people found it difficult to disagree with statements with the word 'mission' in them when voluntarily undertaking a survey that had to do with mission and noted this for development in interviews.

It also appeared that where the statements required a great deal of thought, respondents used (green) 'neither agree nor disagree' when they were unsure or wanted to register 'don't know'. In some cases, respondents commented that they wanted *both* to agree *and* disagree with the statements simultaneously because they

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1 Data is recorded in Appendix H.

were aware of complexities that made a simple straightforward answer impossible. Indeed some of the comments on the statements suggested that respondents spent time agonising over some of the issues, perhaps consulting with others, before committing themselves to a response. One respondent commented that s/he wanted to strongly agree with one statement before thinking of a number of other issues which moderated the response to 'agree'. Comments also showed that some statements proved especially difficult to deal with when the person filling in the survey was trying to apply theological concepts to the church's or agency's actual outworking and this was another issue we wanted to explore further.

Another point we became aware of was that respondents treated the statements *as if* they were questions and so looked at all sides of the implicit question before deciding on a response. Consequently, some respondents had difficulty and frustration with the survey, even though the statements used common words about mission, because they were not in a position to expand on their answer and this resulted in some long explicatory comments. Another particular difficulty with decision making in response to the statements were ranking words like 'best' or 'primarily' as discussed below. One respondent also noted the difficulty of responding to statements without a context and some others who commented on the experience of taking the survey sought to provide contexts for their answers by reference to scripture or indicating the theological position they wanted to take. This was interesting because it suggested that the foundations for mission can (must?) be context-dependent rather than theological givens. Respondents tried to picture who would be involved in the statement – for example, what kind of 'poor'? These issues and difficulties were noted for address by the third part of the project in which questions would be asked and issues of this kind explored. In particular, would people want to ground their answers in stories or illustrations rather than vision statements? If that was true then it would have implications for website design and whether pictures of people engaged in activity and set in particular (especially worldwide) contexts would more accurately explicate the church or agency's foundations for mission.

Mission language

Certain words drew very high levels of positive (blue and red) agreement, especially 'transforms' 'hospitality and openness' and 'reconciliation': S05, S10, S33.

Other statements in the statement-triplets (Kingdom, mission and church; mission and evangelism; mission and improving lives)in which these three statements were found did not draw this level of positive response, so it is possible that this kind of language contains key or 'trigger' words which do constitute foundations or impetus for mission and which people want to respond to positively. Interestingly, these are principles for human *relationships*, bringing people together and working for good outcome; they create pictures of human behaviour. 'Transformation' was noted in the NVIVO search of websites and it is interesting that 'reconciliation' has now recently been added as a 'mark' of mission.

The Kingdom of God transforms the world (all)
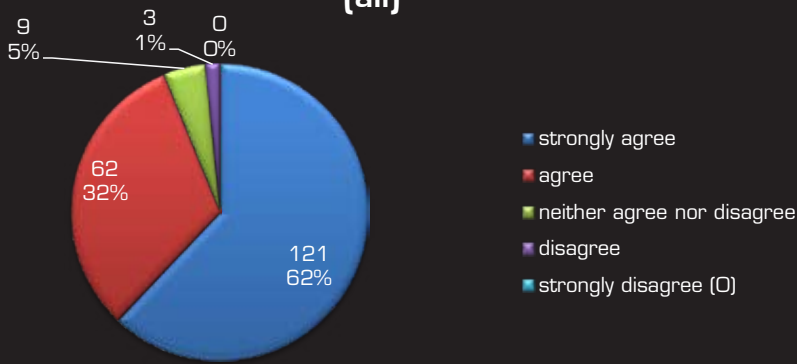
- 9 — 5%
- 3 — 1%
- 0 — 0%
- 62 — 32%
- 121 — 62%

Legend:
- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree (0)

S05

Hospitality and openness to all are key aspects of mission (all)

- 1 — 1%
- 0 — 0%
- 12 — 6%
- 71 — 36%
- 111 — 57%

Legend:
- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree (0)
- strongly disagree

S10

In a world of conflict mission must address reconciliation (all)

- 10 — 5%
- 4 — 2%
- 0 — 0%
- 68 — 36%
- 110 — 57%

Legend:
- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree (0)
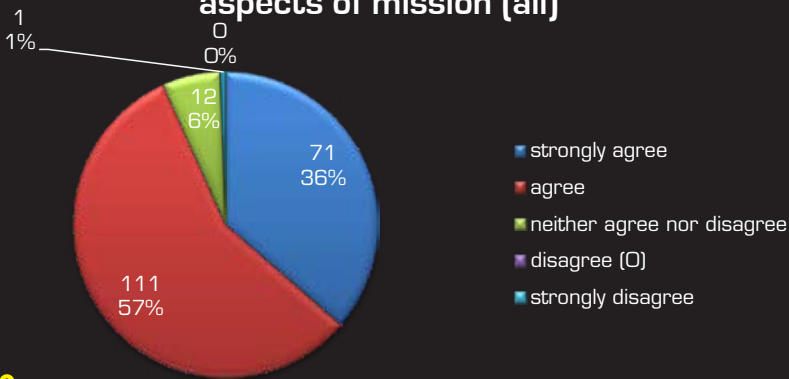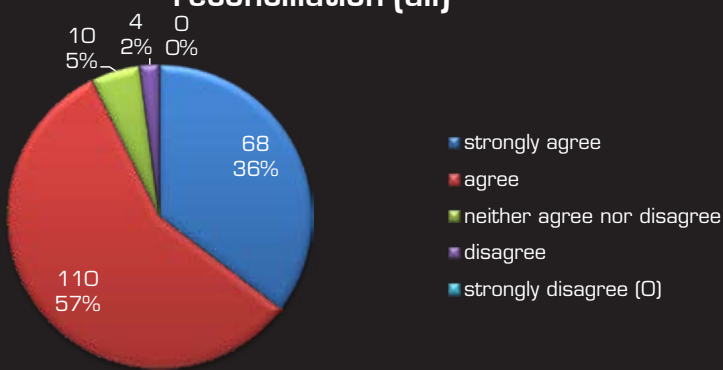
S33

Difficult language

As noted, people found judgement statements using words like 'primarily' or 'best' to be difficult to deal with and it was particularly noticeable that statements including these words attracted a high degree of response in the (green) 'neither agree nor disagree' category across a range of topics. For example, one respondent commented:

> Answers which have put 'neither agree nor disagree' come with much thought. Our reason for choosing these is that we affirm the statements as part of mission, but reject the language of 'priority', or 'primarily', we see these elements as important but do not see these elements as more important than others.

This is particularly seen in a complex statement about who best carries out mission:
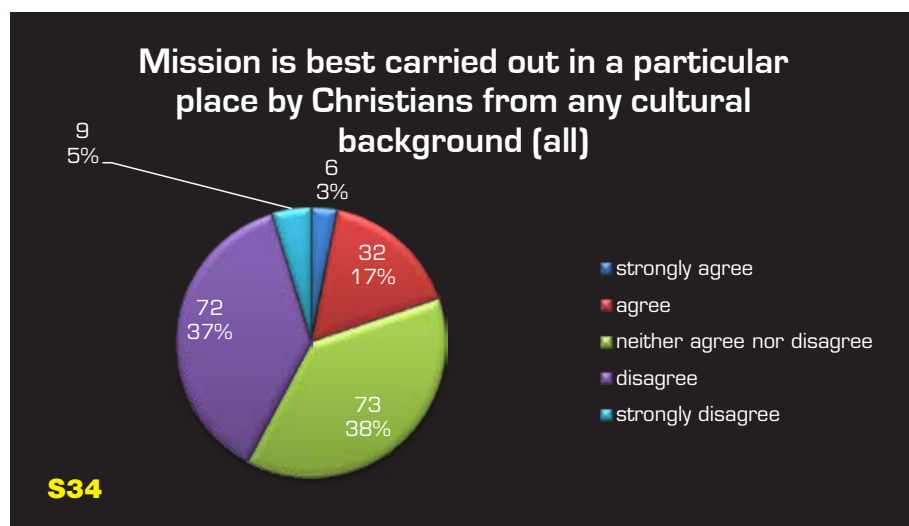
In looking at the results it was helpful to look at the rankings for the 'neither agree or disagree' option to lead us to statements with which people had had difficulty. The word 'primarily' also appeared to drive down positive responses to statements which would be expected to carry a high positive response. For example, a statement about 'welcome' which might have been expected to score as highly as 'openness' returned a much less positive result.

People found most difficulty with language about 'justice' and its relation to mission. This might be because of confusion about human justice or God's justice, the theological place of justice and a world 'under judgement' as opposed to 'social justice'. The BIAMS respondents were much clearer about their response to justice as might be expected from that constituency (see S01).

There was similar ambiguity about the triad of statements relating to mission and development, with a high degree of neutrality especially in the local survey to the statement 'mission and development are inseparable' (see S04), but there was a greater positive response to the statement mentioning 'social action' (see S15), perhaps simply because 'social action' creates clearer pictures for people than 'development' and because

Mission is primarily about bringing justice to the world (all)

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

20 10%
19 10%
51 26%
49 25%
56 29%
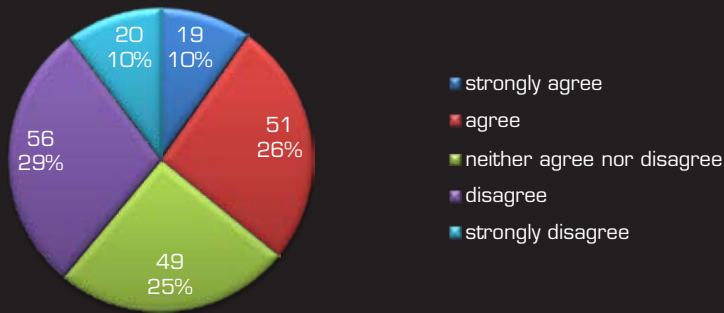
S01

Mission is primarily about bringing justice to the world (BIAMS)

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree (0)

0 0%
3 11%
5 18%
8 30%
11 41%
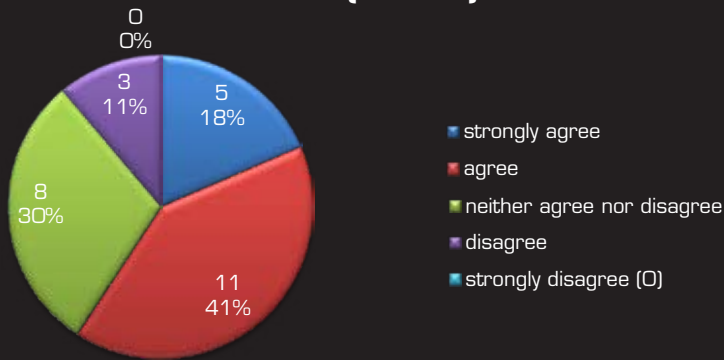
S01

Mission and Development are inseparable (local)

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

1 1%
8 8%
12 12%
33 34%
44 45%

S04

Mission without social action is not mission (local)

4
4%

11
11%

20
21%

15
16%

47
48%

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

S15
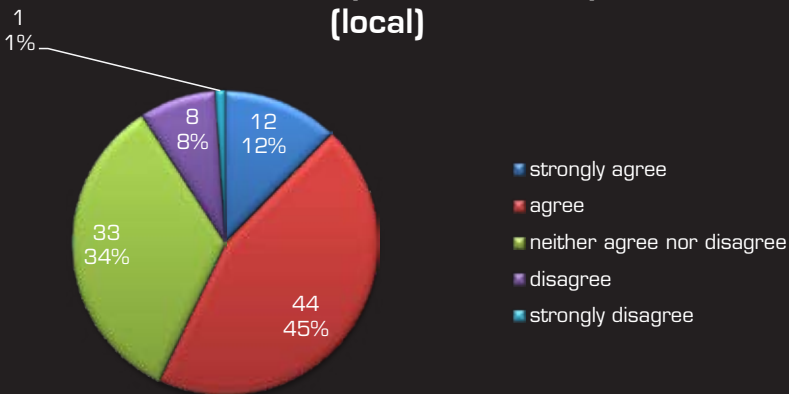
at local level, social action, such as commitment to Fairtrade products, was easier to understand than 'development' which is passively supported but actively undertaken by others.

The final statement in the survey, about concern for the poorest, by contrast drew a high number of neutral responses.

Distributed Concepts: other faiths, how God works and who best carries out mission

Statements which were essentially the same but repeated in different formats in different parts of the survey showed that the theme was being thought about and this thought process changed the results in a few of the respondents. This was particularly true in statements about relations with people of other faiths (see S02, S22 and S24).

The triplet questions, distributed across the survey showed a small shift in response across the more complex statements particularly those which needed to be context related, so not only the statements about relationships with people of other faiths but statements about who is best equipped to carry out missionary tasks, showed such a shift in response. Further, different categories which had related issues, principally relations with other faiths, who should best carry out mission and how God works through people, all showed a spread of response and shifts to high neutrality, with particular problems about whether God works primarily through Christians (see S17).

Theology as Foundations for mission

A comparison between the three sets of data showed as expected that the BIAMS theological constituency had a stronger understanding of the origin and purpose of mission as being founded in Trinitarian theology than those in the other surveys.

Two comments in the national survey referred explicitly to the *missio Dei.* However, other theologically oriented statements, particularly concerning whether proclamation should include particular theological positions *vis a vis* sin drew a spread of response, generating higher 'disagree' responses (purple and cyan).

Christians have much to learn from other faith traditions (all)
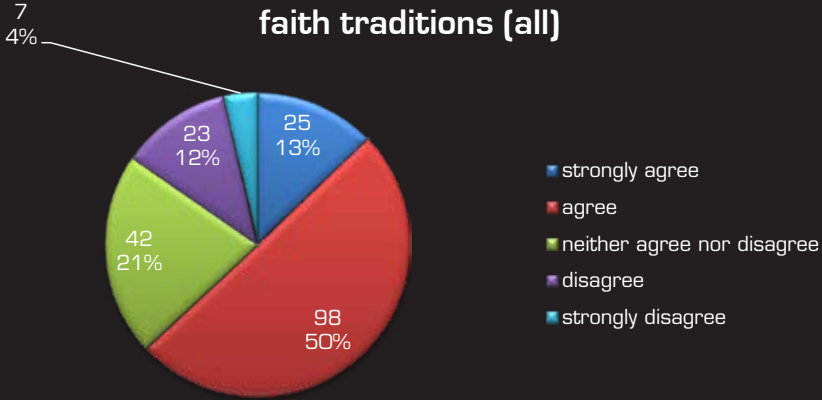
7
4%

25
13%

23
12%

42
21%

98
50%

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

S02

All faiths need to learn from one another as we share much in common (all)

14
7%

26
13%

31
16%

46
24%

77
40%

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

S22

Christians have little to learn from those of other faiths (all)

3
1%

23
12%

37
19%

38
20%

93
48%

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

S24

God works primarily through Christians (all)

15 — 8% strongly agree
53 — 27% agree
56 — 29% neither agree nor disagree
61 — 31% disagree
9 — 5% strongly disagree
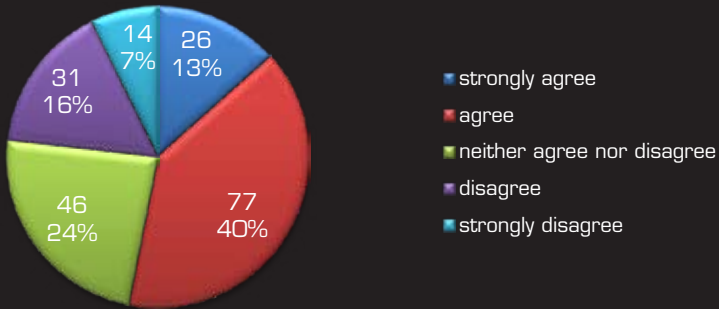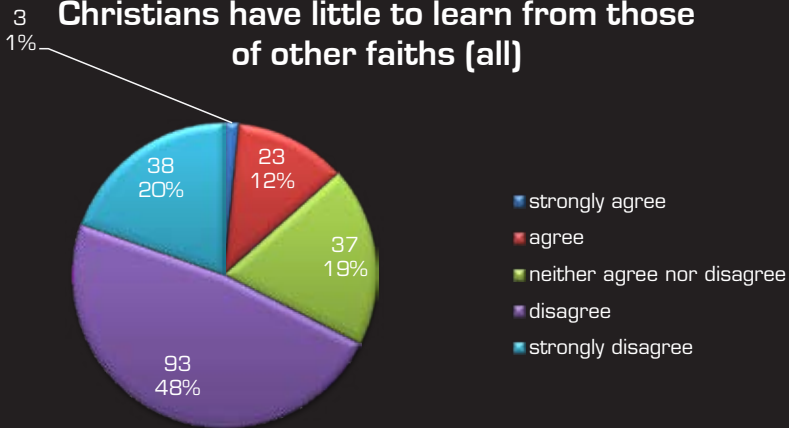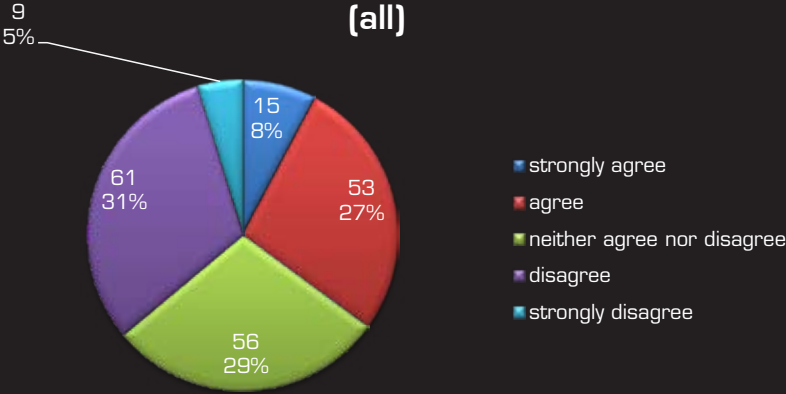
S17

For the Church mission is primarily about following God the Holy Trinity into the world (BIAMS)
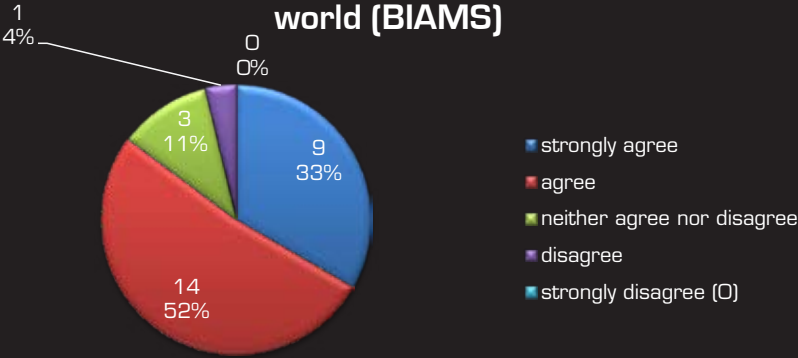
9 — 33% strongly agree
14 — 52% agree
3 — 11% neither agree nor disagree
1 — 4% disagree
0 — 0% strongly disagree (O)

S28

For the Church mission is primarily about following God the Holy Trinity into the world (national)
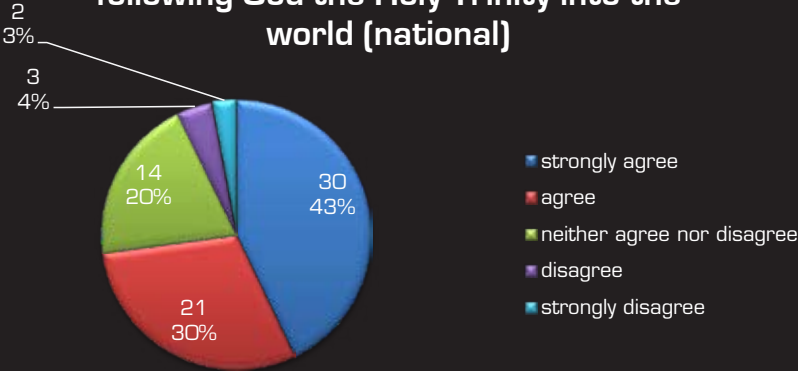
30 — 43% strongly agree
21 — 30% agree
14 — 20% neither agree nor disagree
3 — 4% disagree
2 — 3% strongly disagree

S28

For the Church mission is primarily about following God the Holy Trinity into the world (local)

1
1%

7
7%

19
20%

21
22%

49
50%

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

S28

Mission addresses sin understood primarily as personal wrongdoing (all)

7
4%

15
8%

52
27%

65
33%

55
28%

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

S29

Mission means confronting people with the consequences of sin (all)

14
7%

28
14%

39
20%

61
32%

52
27%

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree
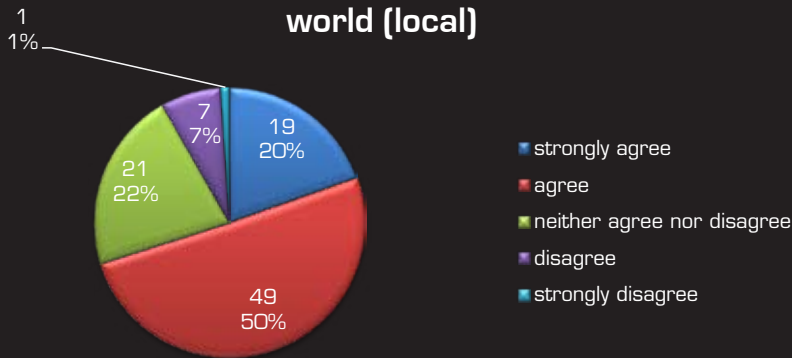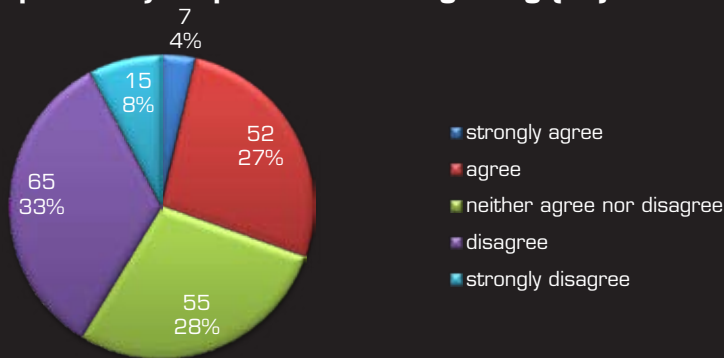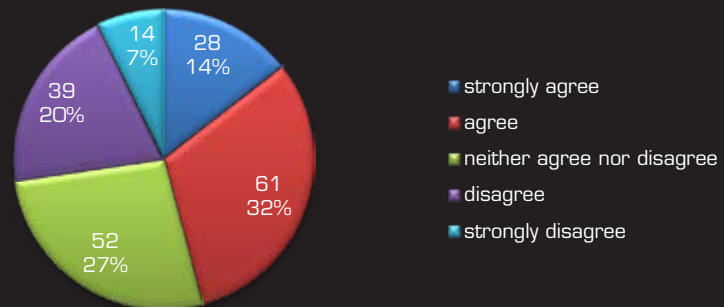
S26

Mission challenges people to find salvation in Jesus or risk eternal condemnation (all)

S32

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

28 / 15% — 24 / 12% — 43 / 22% — 34 / 18% — 63 / 33%
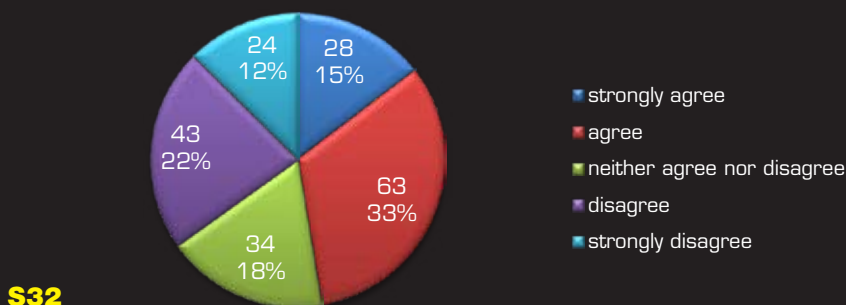
What was interesting about these responses was a high neutrality and a problem dealing with the negative feel of the statements using language like 'confronting', 'challenges' 'condemnation' and 'wrongdoing' whereas a statement about a call to 'repentance' (S13) drew high agreement. The statement about 'eternal condemnation' in the Mission and Salvation pairing had a positive twin about the 'hope of heaven' (S35) and this generated a far more positive response.

Church

The National and local surveys were committed to idea of *church* as vehicle for mission. There was strong assent around the word 'church' and about the idea that the Church is missionary of its nature.

The Church is, by its very nature, missionary (all)

S14

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

3 / 1% — 2 / 1% — 16 / 8% — 44 / 23% — 130 / 67%
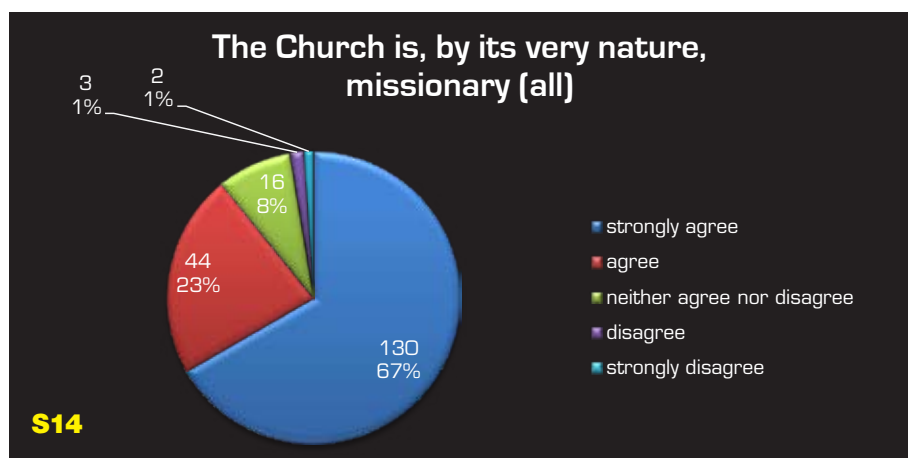
There was less certainty about the relation of the Church to Kingdom. Nearly all respondents agreed that the Kingdom of God transforms the world (see p. 37). However, they disagreed (profoundly disagreed in BIAMS) that the Kingdom and the Church are one (S16) but agreed that the Kingdom includes the Church but is wider than the Church (S07). This finding was interesting when it interrogated statements about who should be involved in mission. Respondents were equivocal about whether

mission is just a task for Christians (S17) but agreed that indigenous people should be assisted by Christians from 'other contexts' (S21). But when the statement included Christians from 'any cultural background' (S34) this caused difficulties:

Mission is best carried out in a particular place by Christians from any cultural background (all)

S34

9 — 5%
6 3%
32 17%
73 38%
72 37%

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree
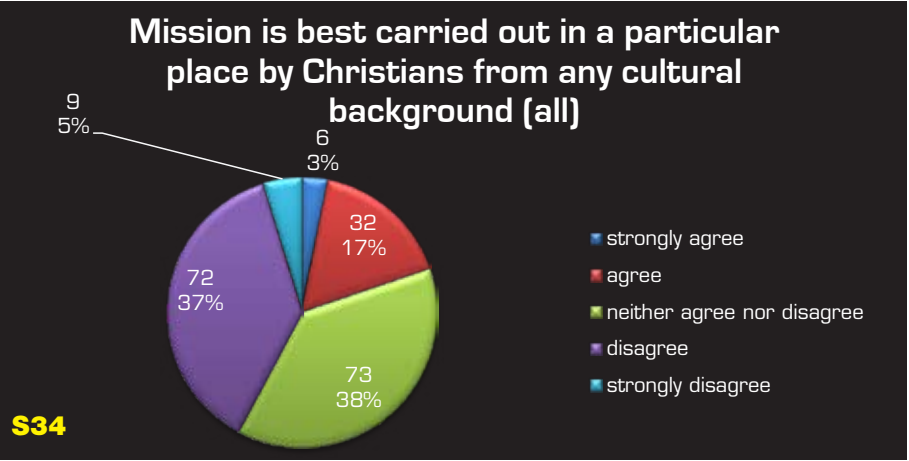
This result was returned despite a positive result for cross-cultural mission (S39, S41). So is mission still imagined as being 'us' doing to 'them'? What about reverse mission? How, exactly are people admitted to God's Kingdom? This issue of what people engaged in mission look like, how they relate to conceptions of 'Church' and the place of other Christians in the transformation of the world was again a matter we wanted to explore at interview.

Further, the issue of the 'church' seemed a difficult word to vote against, although interestingly there was high neutrality around a question about planting *more* churches (S43), and high neutrality (though general assent) to statements about recovering drifting Christians (S11), or bringing people into the worshipping community (S19): outcomes for mission which would see augmentation or even 'success' of the ecclesial community. There was a difference between the statements on 'essence of Church' and 'function of Church', where respondents agreed much more with theoretical statements about what the Church was (or should be) and what that really meant in practical mission terms.

The Church is essential for mission (all)

S25

2 1%
18 9%
33 17%
54 28%
87 45%

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

Mission is mainly about planting and growing churches (all)

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

S43
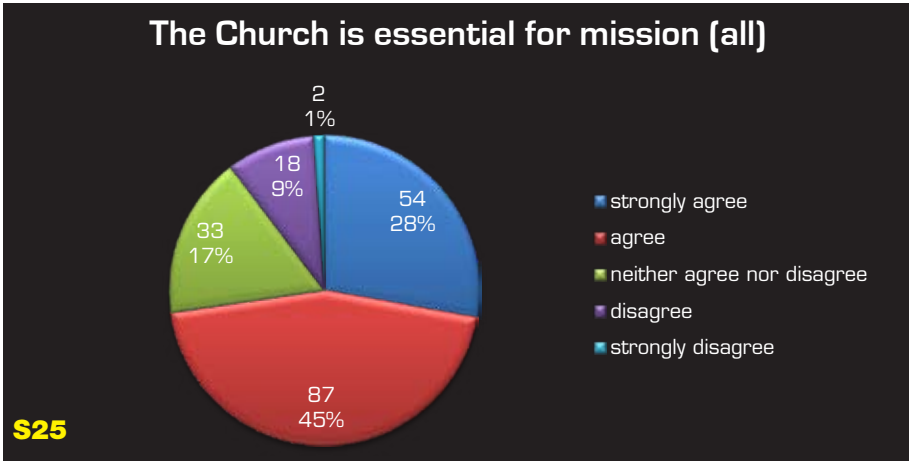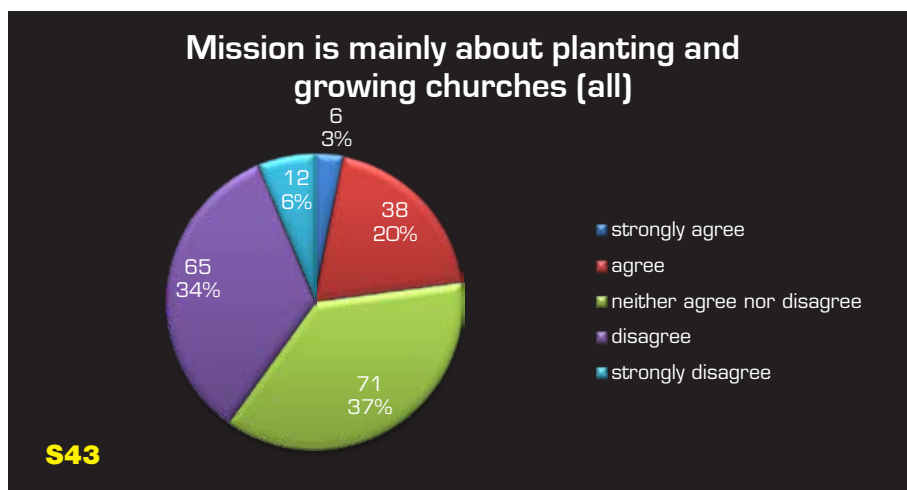
This seemed to suggest a relationship between mission and ecclesiology that is centred on the concept of Church as sending authority acting on the world and transforming it but not necessarily as the beneficiary of the mission process. From this we wanted to find out if there was (especially at local level) a continuing view of mission as sending missionaries and what the role and function of church or 'home mission' was expected to be. It seemed possible that there was an ecclesiological pressure in the foundations for mission which could eclipse mission theological principles. We saw this in differences between the responses from the national and local surveys and the BIAMS results. The BIAMS constituency was less positive about the word 'church'. We were also interested in seeing whether differences were generated along denominational fault lines, or more present in the Catholic new communities. For example, the Catholic respondents returned a higher 'strongly agree' level for the statement 'The Church is essential for mission' (S25) than either the Anglican or Independent Evangelical constituencies – although the numbers were too small to see definitive stratifications.

The Purpose and Outworking of Mission

A statement in the triad on 'Proclamation' that 'the Gospel is about proclaiming God's love to all' (S40) drew a very high level of assent and was the most heavily endorsed statement across all three data sets. The three dissenters were all from the national survey. Yet, as noticed, the statement about mission as primarily *welcoming* all people (S03) carried much less enthusiasm and carried more disagreement.

Further, the other two 'Proclamation' statements, concerning the relationship of proclamation to mission (S27) and proclamation as action towards others *first* (S20), further down the survey, drew a spread of response.

Partnership

Unsurprisingly, there was much stronger agreement in the national and BIAMS survey than in the local survey on the issue of the benefits of cross-cultural training, perspectives and partnership.

Proclaiming the Gospel is about using both word and deed to express God's love to all (all)

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

1 0%
1 1%
1 1%
68 35%
121 63%
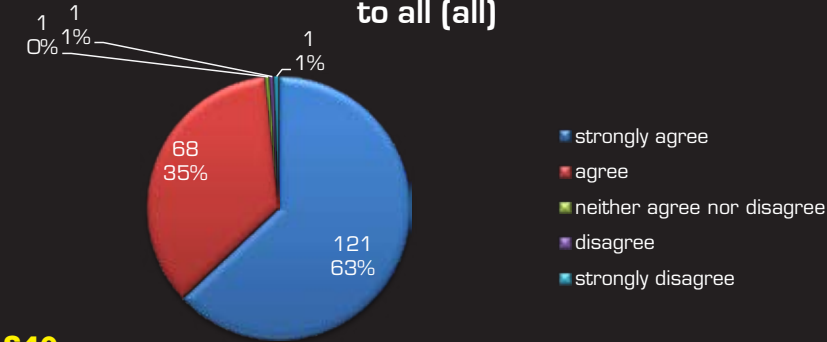
S40

Mission is primarily about welcoming all people (all)

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

32 16%
72 37%
34 18%
45 23%
12 6%
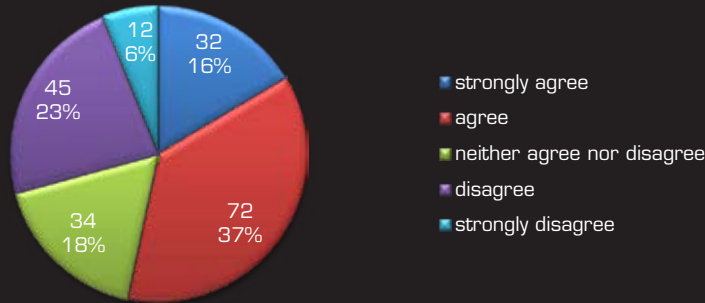
S03

Proclaiming the Gospel is primarily about acting justly and loving neighbours, only using words if necessary (all)

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

16 8%
16 8%
61 32%
58 30%
43 22%

S20

Mission is enhanced by cross-cultural and world perspectives (BIAMS)

0 0%
0 0%
0 0%

12 44%

15 56%

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree (0)

S41

Mission is enhanced by cross-cultural and world perspectives (local)

1 1%
0 0%

11 12%

30 31%

53 56%

- strongly agree
- agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- disagree
- strongly disagree (0)

S41

However, it might be the case that the benefits, clearly borne out by cross-cultural training and experience and brought back into mission agencies take much longer to trickle down into the understanding of local churches. If this is the case, then at local level, there might be a much greater struggle to understand both world mission insights and reverse mission insights and this in turn might affect the foundations for mission as understood at local level.

Priorities

We also had to read the data against the results from the 'priorities' page where respondents ticked up to five possibilities concerning what they saw as priorities for their church or agency. The local survey particularly came to attention here where home mission in form of 'community building' far outweighed mission giving, though mission giving outweighed mission and exchange visits. Where people ticked the 'advocacy' box this overwhelmingly meant a commitment to Fair Trade. This was interesting in terms of the local survey responses (especially neutral responses) given to statements about development, partnership and views of who carries out and receives mission. These priorities also have implications for how mission agencies

interact with their constituencies and the profiles they maintain of those people who would be most likely to support them. There is therefore another tension between treating Christians at local level as passive *supporters* of overseas mission whose chief purpose is to give badly needed financial aid, and who do so because they don't do anything else, and potential *doers* who might actively become involved in mission and need support themselves.

Taking issues forward

In considering the emerging themes, it was clear that the data were complicated and difficult in many cases to interpret. Perhaps we need to ask: what pictures do these statements conjure up? Some issues are clearly much more complex than the statements allow and made it more difficult for respondents to give clear answers, especially as they started to think about them. Is it that taking the gospel into the world is *clearly* identified as missionary, with attendant images (thus relating back to the language of, for example, Matthew 28:19) or is it simply that the idea of 'justice' in the world is more difficult to picture without further context? It might be necessary to 'unpack' such a concept in order to get a picture of how it might relate to mission. From a process point of view, this might further suggest that it is only through interviews and reflection that it is possible in essence to get at the 'foundations for mission'.

Summary and Transition

The analysis and results from the three sets of data suggested some areas which were then included in the follow up in-depth interviews including:

- Whether respondents wanted to respond positively to all statements carrying the word mission and if so, why?
- What respondents felt about the relationship between mission and justice.
- Whether some of the questions made respondents think more deeply about the issues in such a way as to affect some of the later questions.
- Whether respondents chose 'neither agree nor disagree' when they meant 'don't know'.
- Whether respondents could talk more widely about their choice of response to particular questions.

Theories of Mission: the BIAMS perspective

Preliminary results from the project (national and local survey results and a preliminary website analysis) were taken to the BIAMS conference 'Sinking Foundations: Why Mission Today?' at All Nations Christian College in July 2009. The programme for the conference was planned and executed by the 2010 research group under the leadership of John Clark in consultation with the BIAMS executive. Participants were invited to complete the survey first of all for themselves and then to comment on the interim results and the process of the project. At this point, it was felt that it would be helpful to balance the interim results against some current perspectives in mission theology.

Three speakers were specially invited to give mission theological perspectives broadly following Bevans and Schroeder's three 'lenses' for mission orientation: mission as proclamation of Jesus Christ as Universal Saviour or simply 'proclamation'; mission as participation in the Triune God or *missio Dei*; and mission as liberating service of the Reign of God or 'Kingdom' mission. These lenses were also applied in the in-depth interviews in the third part of the project.

The speakers were: Michael Doe on '*Missio Dei*', Ann Morisy on 'Mission as Transformation' and Wonsuk Ma on 'Mission as Proclamation'. In addition Philip Knights gave a paper on the Roman Catholic perspective and Paul Rolph was invited to produce a paper as conference reflector. Kirsteen Kim also gave a paper on the historical perspectives for Edinburgh 2010 as noted above on page 11.

The papers on mission theological perspectives, together with the conference reflection are reproduced here, as they provided a context for further work on the project and in particular the direction of the in-depth analysis in phase three of the project. Dr Rolph's observations were particularly important in shaping the tasks and processes of the remainder of the project.

Mission as *missio Dei*

I have been asked to address the topic, *Sinking Foundations: Why Mission Today?*, in preparation for the centenary of Edinburgh 1910 next year, from the particular perspective of the *missio Dei*. I do this as a convinced Anglican, yet someone whose ministry and thinking has been very much within an ecumenical context. And I do it as the General Secretary of *USPG: Anglicans in World Mission*, with SPG going back more than 300 years, and an UMCA history which began with David Livingstone. A hundred years ago SPG was part of Edinburgh, but UMCA formally boycotted it: supporters of both were fearful of being seen with 'dissenters' and even 'heretics'!

Today, in a very different world, we seek to be part of the movement from Colonialism to Communion, yet aware that the impacts of globalisation, also reflected in much that is happening in the Church, are resulting in the creation of new and equally damaging colonialisms. In all of this, what we believe about the *missio Dei* could not be more important. My paper has three main sections: the *missio Dei* itself, the Five Marks of Mission, and the role of Mission and other agencies.

1. The theology of *missio Dei*

First, some theological background. One definition goes like this: 'the *missio Dei* is God's self-revelation as the One who loves the world and is actively involved in and with the world, it embraces both church and world, and the church is privileged to be called to participate in God s mission.'[1] Or in the words of David Bosch: 'To participate in mission is to participate in the movement of God's love toward people, since God is a fountain of sending love.'[2] Twentieth-century theology, reacting against the kind of theology which resulted from the Enlightenment, put the emphasis back on the initiative of God, rather than seeing mission as primarily a human activity. This found particular expression in the work of Karl Barth, to whom the concept of *missio Dei*, if not the exact words, is often attributed.

So the Willingen Statement from the 1952 meeting of the International Missionary Council said that Mission must be first and foremost God's mission. It went on to say that we can only understand this mission of God in terms of the Triune character of God. It is in the very nature of God to give and receive, to send and return, fundamentally to love the other, and where this overflows in the world, in creation, in Christ, and ultimately in the consummation of all things in Christ, we see the mission of God, the work of God, and the self-revelation of God himself (herself/themselves).

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1 Euntes Asian Centre, Mindanao, Philippines.
2 David Bosch (1991) *Transforming Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books).

And we are called to join in, to discover what God is doing and to reflect who God is. This raises the question of where the Church fits into the *missio Dei*. The Willingen Statement was clear that 'the Missionary Calling of the Church is derived from the mission of God': the Church has a missionary calling rather than a mission, and that calling is to engage in God's mission. Our mission therefore has no life of its own, only in the hands of the sending God can it truly be called mission, because the missionary initiative comes from God alone. The Church is both part of what God is doing, as a particular expression or embodiment of the work of God flowing from the very nature of God, and the Church has a particular vocation to engage with God in this work, in and for the world. In the words of Jurgen Moltmann, 'It is not the church that has a mission of salvation to fulfil in the world; it is the mission of the Son and the Spirit through the Father that includes the church.'[1]

In USPG's own theological statement we have focussed on the concept of 'Communion' ('*koinonia*') as a way of speaking about such things. We say:

1) **Communion is at the heart of God, the very life of the Trinity.**
   God yearns to draw each one of us into this communion with him.
   It is in communion with God that we know and are known, we love
   and are loved.

2) **Communion is God's gift to the Church.**
   We respond in worship, most of all when this communion is made
   real in the Eucharist.
   The Church is called to be the sign, foretaste and anticipation of
   God's mission.
   We are called to support each other as we engage in this mission
   wherever God has set us.

3) **Communion is God's will and desire for all humanity and the whole
   of creation.**
   Mission is therefore 'holistic', responding to all of God's liberating
   activity so that people may 'grow spiritually, thrive physically, and
   have a voice in an unjust world.[2]

One consequence of all this is the need to exercise care when we use the word 'Mission' and especially when we talk about the 'Mission of the Church'. Last year I was invited to the Missions Conference of The Episcopal Church in the U.S.A., and asked to make a contribution on 'The Overseas Mission of the Episcopal Church'. My short response was that it shouldn't have one! Partly because, as we've just said, it is God who has a mission not the church, but also because a proper understanding of this *missio Dei* means that Mission can no longer be seen as the activity of one Church overseas or in another culture.

Similarly, when people ask: 'How many countries does USPG work in?' I answer 'None, or at least none outside Britain and Ireland'. God works in every country,

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1 Jurgen Moltmann (1977) *The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology* (London: SCM Press).

2 USPG: Anglicans in World Mission (2008) *Our Theological Basis and Ways of Working.*

Anglican churches are found in most countries, and USPG supports their work in between sixty and seventy countries. We should watch our language and stop talking about 'going on mission', 'short-term missions', 'mission teams', and so on.

The frontier of mission is no longer primarily a geographical one. Indeed, what we have been saying about the *missio Dei* raises fundamental questions about the kind of imperialism which shaped mission in the colonial age, where mission was about moving from the world that immediately surrounded the church to beyond the frontiers of the empire(s) of Christendom. It also raises questions about new and more contemporary imperialism – geo-political, economic, and intellectual – which can be seen as shaping mission in our own day.

This mission shift away from such Christendom thinking was described by the 1963 meeting of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism, in Mexico, in this way: the missionary frontier now runs around the world, it is the line which separates belief from unbelief, the unseen frontier which cuts across other frontiers and presents the universal Church with its primary missionary challenge.

So the *missio Dei* both challenges each one of us with the need to do mission in our own situation, and also causes us to rethink how we relate to the rest of the world.

In *Transforming Mission*, David Bosch summarised how people had seen mission in the past.

> During preceding centuries mission was understood in a variety of ways. Sometimes it was interpreted primarily in soteriological terms: as saving individuals from eternal damnation. Or it was understood in cultural terms: as introducing people from East and the South to the blessings and privileges of the Christian West. Often it was perceived in ecclesiastical categories: as the expansion of the church (or of a specific denomination). Sometimes it was defined salvation-historically: as the process by which the world—evolutionary or by means of a cataclysmic event—would be transformed into the Kingdom of God.

He went on to describe the new emphases within *missio Dei*.

> Mission was understood as being derived from the very nature of God. It was thus put in the context of the doctrine of the Trinity, not of ecclesiology or soteriology. The classical doctrine on the missio Dei as God the Father sending the Son, and God the Father and the Son sending the Spirit was expanded to include yet another 'movement': The Father, Son and the Holy Spirit sending the church into the world. As far as missionary thinking was concerned, this linking with the doctrine of the Trinity constituted an important innovation … Our mission has no life of its own: only in the hands of the sending God can it truly be called mission. Not least since the missionary initiative comes from God alone … Mission is thereby seen as a movement from God to the world; the church is viewed as an instrument for that mission. There is church because there is mission, not vice versa.[1]

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1 Bosch, *op. cit.*, p. 390.

Let me end this more theological introduction to *missio Dei* by noting two opposing directions in which it has been interpreted or misinterpreted, so leading us away from where some of us might think it should be taking us, and giving one word of warning.

The first direction, and in many ways in reaction to its Barthian origins, has been to emphasise the worldly context of the *missio Dei* and to see God's engagement in the world as primarily humanistic. This rather modalist God, stripped of any real Trinitarian character or relationship, creates the world, identifies with it in Jesus, and remains active through the Spirit who blows wherever he (or she) wills. The Law is not so much transformed by grace as replaced by a new kind of good works. Programmes like the World Council of Churches' 'The World sets the Agenda' – which I have to say profoundly influenced my own training and early ministry – are often accused of having reinforced this trend. It is found in the critique which liberation theology makes of even the global and holistic agenda of someone like David Bosch. It is seen today in many Christian charities, and in Development Agencies who have much to say about 'life before death' but without any larger context of life beyond it. It assesses the Church not as part of the activity of God but in terms of whether it can deliver certain goods.

In the opposing corner is the second direction in which *missio Dei* may be seen by some of us to have been misinterpreted, where the emphasis on God's initiative and agency is taken to mean that only those who are in conscious relationship with Christ or his Church can be caught up in it.

For some, this leads to the more Evangelical/Charismatic belief that God only works, or at least works most effectively, through those who have in some way been 'born again' or who are filled with the Spirit.

For others, the role of the Church is so understood within the *missio Dei* as to see little or none of God's activity beyond its confines. This may be being particularly evident where a more Catholic or Orthodox ecclesiology regards the church as the ark of salvation.

Finally, the danger that needs noting is John Taylor's warning about what he called this 'gloriously inclusive term'. He said 'There is an inherent, if not deliberate vagueness in the term "Mission of God" which lays it open to abuse. It can be made to include anything under the sun that anyone considers a Good Thing.' [1]

2. The Five Marks of Mission

As one way of putting some of this into practical form, and to avoid what I have suggested could be distorting directions, let me turn to the Five Marks of Mission.

I'm aware that these began as an Anglican formulation – although one of the things which interests me is the relationship between Anglicanism, with its incarnational and sacramental emphases, and Mission in both its historical and contemporary expressions, and I was asked to write an introductory paper on this for last year's Lambeth Conference.[2] But although the Five Marks of Mission originated within

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1 John V Taylor (1998) *The Uncancelled Mandate* (London: Church House Publishing) pp 1–2.
2 TEAC Signposts No 2 (2008) *Towards an Anglican Understanding of Mission and Evangelism*, Anglican Communion Office.

the Anglican Communion, they have been adopted far more widely, perhaps more in Protestant than Catholic circles, and for many people they provide a template for how the Church is engaging with the *missio Dei.*

The first thing to say about the Five Marks of Mission is that they begin with the statement: 'the mission of the Church is the mission of Christ.'[1] If we see the *missio Dei* as the overflowing of God into the world, nowhere is that more evident and more effectual than in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Many see the Five Marks holding together the various aspects of mission:

    1) To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom;

    2) To teach, baptise and nurture new believers;

    3) To respond to human need by loving service;

    4) To seek to transform unjust structures of society.

And, added a little later;

    5) To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

Many churches find these five marks a useful check list for their engagement in mission. But they are not without their dangers. The Anglican Communion's own Commission in Mission (Missio), meeting in Ely in 1996, raised some of these.[2] First, as we've already noted, they must not obscure the fact that it's God's mission not ours. Then, do they sufficiently take into account the different contexts in which churches find themselves? Next, do they take seriously enough the life of the churches themselves? For we are called to be not just doers of mission but a people of mission: that is, says the report, 'we are learning to allow every dimension of church life to be shaped and directed by our identity as a sign, foretaste and instrument of God's reign in Christ.'

Within this comes that central activity in the life of the church – our Worship. To quote the report again, 'worship is not just something we do alongside our witness to the good news: worship is itself a witness to the world. It is a sign that all of life is holy, that hope and meaning can be found in offering ourselves to God (cf. Romans 12:1). And each time we celebrate the Eucharist, we proclaim Christ's death until he comes (1 Cor. 11:26). Our liturgical life is a vital dimension of our mission calling; and although it is not included in the Five Marks, it undergirds the forms of public witness listed there.'

On these more ecclesiological questions, I found Tim Yates' article on David Bosch and 'Ecclesiology in the Emerging Missionary Paradigm' very useful.[3] Yates says that 'Ecclesiology provided the essential antidote to a world of post-Enlightenment individualism which had spawned the voluntarist missionary societies as its missionary expression.' He also reminds us that Bosch believed in 'theory' – unapologetically 'from above', living as he did before the time of postmodern suspicion – and also

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1 Report of the Sixth meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council, Anglican Communion Office, 1984. *Bonds of Affection.*

2 Report of the Inter-Anglican Commission on Mission and Evangelism (2006) *Communion in Mission*, Anglican Communion Office: www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/mission/fivemarks.cfm.

3 Timothy Yates (2009) 'David Bosch: South African Context, Universal Missiology – Ecclesiology in the Emerging Missionary Paradigm', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* (April) pp. 72–8.

– contrary to the criticism from liberation theologians – 'praxis', but he added a third element, 'poiesis': the need for beauty and for worship.

So, returning to the Five Marks of Mission, some have wanted to add more marks acknowledging the life, and the worship, of the Church. From another direction the Anglican Consultative Council meeting in Jamaica in May 2009 sought a different sixth Mark, on Reconciliation: it endorsed a request from the Anglican Church of Canada to add one relating to peace, conflict transformation and reconciliation. We will have to wait and see how this develops.

But there is something still more fundamental to say about the Five Marks, which takes us back to the nature of the *missio Dei*: how do we interpret the first Mark, and is it just one amongst five or do the rest follow from it and depend upon it? That 1996 report from the Anglican Communion commission[1] said that the first mark of mission, which was 'identified at [the sixth meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council] with personal evangelism, is really a summary of what *all* mission is about, because it is based on Jesus' own summary of his mission (Matthew 4:17, Mark 1:14–15, Luke 4:18, Luke 7:22; cf. John 3:14–17). Instead of being just one (albeit the first) of five distinct activities, this should be the key statement about *everything* we do in mission.' Is that right? More particularly, is the *Missio* Report right to identify the first Mark so explicitly with Personal Evangelism?

So we are back at the questions: what is God doing in the world and where does it connect with the response of the individual and the life of the Church? The answer to these questions will determine how we engage in mission – including how we relate to people of other faiths, yet another issue which there is no time to address here – and therefore what kind of mission activities we set up. It's that, in terms of mission and other agencies, to which I turn in my final section.

3. Mission and other Agencies

I have been asked to directly address how USPG seeks to engage in the *missio Dei*, perhaps in contrast to other agencies. I've already said that USPG's theological statement roots our work in the mission of the Triune God. Recent Anglican theology of church and mission has majored on the Trinity,[2] and although aware of the danger of over-structuralising what we believe here[3] it does root our identity as part of God's drawing-in and sending-out activity. That leads us to four central emphases.

The first is holistic mission. So all the issues raised here about the priority, interpretation and inter-relationship of the Five Marks of Mission, and what may need adding to them, come into play. I want to affirm our belief that the witness of Scripture to the activity of God – in creation, through the saving acts of Christ, and looking to the coming together of all things in Christ – gives us an agenda far wider and deeper than either a crusading evangelism or what might unkindly be called a social gospel. Those who fail to preach Christ (but, remember, Christ crucified), *and* those who fail to see Christ in the poor, have minimised the *missio Dei*.

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1 *Communion in Mission,* op. cit., www.anglicancommunion.org/ministry/mission/fivemarks.
2 *The Virginia Report,* Report of the Lambeth Conference 1998 – www.lambethconference.org/1998/documents/report-1.pdf.
3 Bruce Kaye (2008), *An Introduction to World Anglicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

The second is our commitment to the Church. When we extended our name to "Anglicans in World Mission" we were aware how counter-cultural this could be. Who, in this day and age, wants to identify with an inherited, institutional church? Fundamentalists who (although they pretend the opposite) are the products of Modernism, and charismatic evangelicals who (although they cannot see it) are the children of post-Modernism, prefer to choose their own loyalties. But USPG – and maybe it will be our undoing – works with the Church because we believe that it is an integral part of the *missio Dei* and, for us, the Anglican Communion is a 'given', literally our communion is a gift from God.

The third emphasis arises from the challenges of being post-colonial and coping with the plurality of contexts. We try, in this post-Christendom era, to play our part in the worldwide Church in the spirit of 'inter-dependence and mutual responsibility', and to recognise and respect the different and sometimes conflicting contexts in which our partners are seeking to engage in God's mission. That determines how we understand the Anglican Communion with its current tensions, and how as a Society we decide about priorities and budgets: we start from the basis that relationships come before resource-sharing, we do our decision-making together with partners, and they largely nominate how their allocation of money, personnel and scholarships will be used. Our Advocacy agenda also arises directly out of their concerns. Again, all this may be our undoing, because it flies in the face of the kind of sponsorship, even ownership, which now dominates our donor culture.

The final emphasis guiding the future of USPG needs to be a dynamic spirituality, although I admit that all the pressures of fund-raising for the more attractive kind of Development projects has sometimes threatened to unbalance us here. Again we return to the Holy Trinity, for in the end our assurance and the energy for our activity does not depend upon an institution or a book, but from the love of the Father, incorporating us in the Son, through the power of the Spirit.

I believe that the *missio Dei* can help us avoid the pitfalls into which other agencies may have fallen. Mission must be about real and costly engagement with the world, embracing all that is meant by prophetic dialogue, but not to the extent where some Christian Development agencies and many Christian charities play down the first and second Marks of Mission, concentrating on humanitarian work and justice issues, and ignoring both personal evangelism and the life of the church. That seems very like the Pelagian heresy.

Equally, for USPG mission must be about acknowledging and proclaiming the centrality of Jesus Christ, but not to the extent of those who interpret the first Mark of Mission in such a way that the *missio Dei* becomes a marketing and recruitment exercise where success will only be measured by individual conversion and church membership. That seems to me where the Gnostic heretics were heading.

God's activity in the world is larger and more challenging than all of these. And that's why we like to say in USPG that 'Mission is an adventure', God's adventure, which he calls us to join in.

Ann Morisy [1]

Mission as transformation

Faith? A positive link with wellbeing…

- 'Doing business with God' – American researchers suggest that going to church once a week improves people's wellbeing equivalent to their salary being doubled (cited in 'Life Satisfaction: The State of Knowledge and Implications for Government' published by The Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, Dec. 2002).

- Also the work of Dan Blazer and Erdman Palmore 'Religion and Aging in a Longitudinal Panel' *The Gerontologist*, Vol 16 (1) 1976 – and this work has been regularly repeated by other researchers and on each occasion a positive experience of growing old is strongly linked with 'doing business with God'.

- *Religious experience* has survival value i.e. when people feel they are at rock bottom or in a sudden crisis from which they have no way out, the experience of God's 'alongsideness' enable people to 'dig deeper and hang in. And particularly significantly, having once had a religious experience the person is invariably more open to the needs and fragility of others; Religious experience lessens the likelihood of 'authoritarianism' (i.e. assuming one is right and everyone else is wrong) and reassures that 'all will be well and all manner of things will be well'. (See David Hay, 2006 *Something There* [London: DLT])

Faith is good for *young people*…Who says?

- John J Dilulio [2] … regularly!
- Leslie Francis and Mandy Robbins [3] regarding urban 13–15 year-olds in England.

In the report *Spiritual Health and the Well-Being of Urban Young People* by Leslie Francis and Mandy Robbins [4] the following findings were noted:

- – Confirmation of lots of other research that having a sense of purpose is important to the flourishing of young people.

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1 This paper © Ann Morisy 2010.

2 Google 'John J Dilulio' 'Faith Factor' for more, also visit www.religionandsocialpolicy.org. Also of interest may be Ronald J Sider and Heidi Rolland (2005) *Saving Souls, Serving Society* (Oxford: OUP).

3 Leslie J Francis and Mandy Robbins (2006), *Urban Hope and Spiritual Health: The Adolescent Voice* (London: Epworth Press).

4 *Spiritual Health and the Well-Being of Urban Young People* by Gwyther Rees, Leslie J. Francis and Mandy Robbins, published by the Commission on Urban Life and Faith, University of Wales, Bangor, The Children's Society. Copies of this report (two versions are available – 8 page or the fuller 32 page version) can be downloaded from www.childrenssociety.org.uk/resources/documents/Research/Spiritual_Health_and_the_Well_Being_of_Urban_Young_People_3194.html. This reseach has been written up in more detail in Leslie J Francis and Mandy Robbins (2006), *op. cit.*

- Young people were more likely to have a sense of purpose if they:
  - had a religious affiliation;
  - prayed regularly;
  - believed in eternal life.

Detailed analysis suggested that each of these 3 factors were independently related to 'sense of purpose' (i.e. these 3 religious factors were not attributable to economic differences etc). Young people who were identified as having a religious affiliation and / or were regularly involved in prayer fared better than other young people on a number of different measures of wellbeing:

- they will more likely to have a 'sense of purpose';
- they will be more likely to have an active and constructive relationship with the community and the environment;
- they will be more likely to have positive views towards ethnic diversity.

The independent significance of religious affiliation and prayer in relation to sense of purpose and overall wellbeing suggests that a strong spiritual dimension to young people's lives might act as a protective factor, promoting well-being and mitigating the impact of other factors such as poverty and family change.[1]

Why focus on positive psychology?

I focus on positive psychology because positive psychologists are not theologians or Christian missionaries! And because of this they pass what John Rawls terms 'the test of public reason' unlike perceived self-interested recommendations or commendations made by the theologian or the clergy, or the committed lay person for that matter. Let me re-code – or decode Rawls' term 'the test of public reason'…. 'Self-praise is no recommendation!' In our secular world, all faiths have to submit themselves to the test of public reason if they are to have a right to a public platform.

A fraudulent narrative of transformation: that money makes us happy

Richard Layard, the economist who has pioneered work on wellbeing and wealth,[2] makes a case that is almost shocking in its simplicity: *Even for those who are only moderately financially secure, more money brings disappointment.*

Layard's analysis highlights 'habituation' (which means we quickly get used to our circumstances), as one of the reasons why the anticipated delight associated with high earnings or a windfall dulls quite quickly. Basically we get used to what we have and the lifestyle associated with wealth becomes routine.

The second factor that Layard identifies is that of status anxiety. We cannot resist comparing our circumstances with others: rivalry is hard to resist. So, rather than relax in financial security, we find ourselves having to negotiate a new batch of worries about losing out on the advantages that others have secured. In other words, we rarely assess our circumstances objectively, but rather we assess them in comparison with others.

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1 The report *Spiritual Health and the Well-Being of Urban Young People* from which this evidence was drawn was produced in 2005 and was based on the analysis of surveys returned by 23,418 young people living in urban areas.

2 Richard Layard, (2005) *Happiness: Lessons from a new science* (London: Allen Lane).

One of the most fraudulent narratives that has infused our world, is that money and happiness go together. Get money; spend money; get possessions (or 'Get Stuff'); become secure; relax and enjoy. This has been the implicit life plan that has dominated our lives for more than a century; it is a five act play of seduction.

The cat is out of the bag: once you can meet the cost of accommodation, clothing and food, then more money adds only a little to one's wellbeing. Liz Hoggard, on the basis of her work on the television programme 'Making Slough Happy', comments that, 'Wealth is like health: its absence breeds misery, but having it doesn't guarantee happiness.' And she goes on to say, 'Chasing money rather than meaning in life is a formula for discontent.'[1]

Having a sense that one's life has meaning is the essential foundation for a sense of wellbeing. Interestingly, the research being undertaken by positive psychologists suggests that our capacity for wellbeing is not just to do with our genes and circumstances, but that there is vast scope for *intentional activities,* even when confronted by the direst circumstances.

History provides evidence of how faith practices can enable people – especially those in dire circumstances (including addictions) – to rise above those circumstances and engage in life-enhancing *intentional activity.* This is the challenge to pastoral care that early Methodism and early Salvationism pioneered to such good effect. They achieved this because, as positive psychologists now acknowledge, the ability to make sense of our actions within a larger frame gives vital motivation to embrace the intentional activity that enables us to resist being *victims* of troublesome circumstances.

Circumstances matter, but not as much as we think…

The work of positive psychologists suggests that circumstances matter, but not as much as we think. There is an inclination to cede too much potency to 'circumstances' in making sense of our lives, 'circumstances' have acquired a more potent status in our life script than is warranted.

Our inclination to overestimate the degree to which we are limited by circumstances may be due to what psychologists refer to as 'the focusing illusion',[2] i.e. 'Nothing in life is quite as important as you think it is while you are thinking about it.'

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1 Liz Hoggard (2005) 'How to be Happy' (London: BBC Books) p. 64.

2 'The focusing illusion helps explain why the results of well-being research are often counter-intuitive. The false intuitions may arise from a failure to recognize that people do not continuously think about their circumstances, whether positive or negative– nothing in life is quite as important as you think it is while you are thinking about it. Individuals who have recently experienced a significant life change (e.g. becoming disabled, winning a lottery, or getting married) surely think of their new circumstances many times each day, but the allocation of attention eventually changes, so that they spend most of their time attending to and drawing pleasure or displeasure from experiences such as having breakfast or watching television… For example an experiment in which students were asked: (i) "How happy are you with your life in general?" and (ii) "How many dates did you have last month?" The correlation between the answers to these questions was –0.012 (not statistically different from 0) but when they were asked in the reverse order, the correlation rose to 0.66 with another sample of students. [By asking] the dating question first, this evidently caused that aspect of life to become salient and its importance to be exaggerated when the respondents encountered the more general question about their happiness.' From Kahneman D., Krueger A.B., Schkade D., *et al*., 2006. 'Would you be happier if you were richer? A focusing illusion'. *Science, 312,* 1908-10. (Article available at www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/abstract/312/5782/1908.)

Positive psychology, which has been energised by the work of Martin Seligman,[1] is based on research that suggests we are inclined to overestimate the impact of circumstances on our lives and *underestimate* the scope we have for 'intentional activity'. There are three things that have been identified as having an impact on wellbeing, as illustrated below.[2]
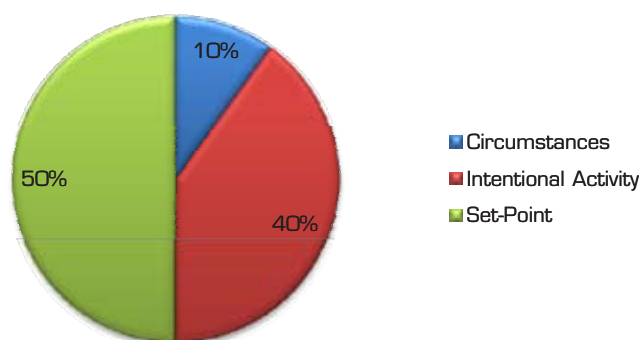
The set-point comes from our genes. Our genes play a significant part in whether we are upbeat or prone to gloom. This doesn't mean that those with gloomy genes can never be happy, just that when happy the gloomy genes are prone to pull us back to our 'set-point'.

The surprise is how little impact 'circumstances' have on people's wellbeing. Research suggests just ten percent. If we can get the motivation to engage in positive or meaningful intentional activities, circumstances associated with health, money, and even upbringing have a surprisingly small impact on wellbeing. So lottery winners are no happier one year after their win, and at the other end of the scale, people with paralysis are often not as unhappy as might be expected.[3]

This potent model suggests we are inclined to over-rate the impact of circumstances and underestimate the significance of our 'agency' (i.e. our ability to engage in meaningful intentional activities), and it is this that helps to account for the effectiveness of religious commitment and practice in coaching and sustaining change in people's lives.

Attitude matters

The commitment to follow Jesus in the way he lived his life, is a major contributor to empowerment which enables a sense of purpose to flourish. Embracing a faith commitment impacts on our attitude to our circumstances, and when our attitudes change so too do the micro-actions in which we engage.

Layard quotes Victor Frankl, who concluded from his experiences in Auschwitz that in the last resort 'everything can be taken from a man but one thing, the last of human

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1 Martin Seligman founded the field of positive psychology in 2000. He directs the Positive Psychology Center at the University of Pennsylvania.

2 S. Lyubomirsky, K M Sheldon, and D Schkade (2005), 'Pursuing Happiness: The Architecture of Sustainable Change,' *Review of General Psychology*, Special Issue: Positive Psychology 9 (20: 111–31).

3 See the work of Andrew Oswald and Nattavudh Pawdthavee (Sept. 2005), 'Does Happiness Adapt? A Longitudinal Study of Disability with Implications for Economists and Judges' (Mimeo: University of Warwick).

freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances.'[1] Becoming a Christian is about making an effort to choose one's attitude to one's circumstances.

Methodism and the Salvation Army

Rather than crushing the spirits of the new industrial proletariat, a case can be made that religious enthusiasm, and Methodism in particular 'may have helped the working men to face the challenges of the burgeoning industrial order, and others have added, may even have prepared them for a later socialism. Even Marxist historians were prepared to grant that Methodism had made many men "better rebels".'[2] To be a good rebel involves the capacity to resist the norms and sanctions on one's behaviour, it is, like revolution, the epitome of shaking oneself free from circumstances and opting for intentional behaviour, and the suggestion is that Methodism accomplished this amongst 'the anxious – the dislocated, the rootless, the disturbed.'[3]

There is one area where it is particularly difficult to step beyond circumstances, and this is in relation to addictions, where intentional activity consolidates or fuses with our circumstances. Addiction saps our best intentions, closing the door on other possibilities for life. But again history points to the ability of faith, and faith practices to help people break through the entrapping circumstances of addiction.

In 1865 the Salvation Army was co-founded by William and Catherine Booth. William was a Methodist preacher, and together they took the notion of Wesleyan holiness to 'the submerged tenth'. The movement spread rapidly, and was perhaps one of the earliest 'popular' global movements. It was a bold and innovative movement, seeking to engage with the poorest and most broken, often by chronic alcohol abuse. The Salvation Army achieved what today seems impossible:[4] to invite those broken and damaged by circumstances to positions of responsibility and leadership, that is to become sufficiently free of addiction to be able to embrace intentional activity.

In our culture which is dismissive of hierarchy and resentful of authority, the firmly hierarchical practice of the Salvation Army is easy to write off. Even if it did succeed in helping people to get free of addiction to alcohol and grinding poverty, the Salvation Army is dismissed because this was achieved at the cost of personal freedom, as people were recruited as soldiers and embellished with many of the trappings of the military, including the requirement to obey senior members. But this is to ignore some outstanding achievements in relation to intentional activity.

It may be apocryphal, but the witness of the woman who declares that 'I'd rather have my husband beat the Salvation Army drum than beat me!' is one of the early cries of the emancipation of women – and a description of transformation. The Salvation Army encouraged women as much as men into positions of leadership, and likewise those of African or Indian heritage. Whilst the Salvation Army might have modelled itself on a military chain of command, it also undermined the patriarchal power of

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1 Cited by Layard (2005) *op.cit.*, p. 8, taken from Victor Frankl (1985), *Man's Search for Meaning* (New York: Basic Books).

2 Semmel (1973) *op.cit.* p. 4, Semmel's reference to the Hammonds is to Hammond, J.L. and B. (1918) *The Town Labourer*, 1760-1832 (London: Longmans Green) p. 287.

3 Ibid p. 7.

4 It could be said that Alcoholics Anonymous achieve this today.

the Victorian household,[1] and put into practice the Gospel teaching that we are all God's children, regardless of gender and ethnicity – a thoroughly transformational notion in that period.

So how now?

If mission is to be about transformation them perhaps it has to build-up our confidence in the economy of abundance – as much as we have invested in – and believe in the economy of scarcity.

We are so caught up in this pursuit of things that are on offer in the market that we find it hard to believe that there is also a reliable economy[2] of abundance. The tendency has been for the church – and others to assume that economy of abundance belongs to the realm of Heaven rather than earth.

And this brings us to Jesus. Jesus, through his death and resurrection rescues us from our sin, but Jesus also brings salvation to us through the way in which he lived his life. In his actions and teaching, Jesus shows us how we can participate in this reliable economy of abundance.

Jesus lived his life in a very distinctive way. This included:

- *Eschewing Power* – Being alert to how easy it might be for him to become powerful in the land. He seems to make a point of resisting the things that would lead to him becoming powerful in the world's terms. (Being powerful and being authoritative are not the same thing.);

- *Willing to risk being overwhelmed* – Always risking the possibility that he might be overwhelmed, not feeling he has to be in control all the time and being willing to take risks that might make the establishment people furious with him;

- *Subverting the 'status quo'* – Challenging the taken-for granted ways of doing things and understanding things, including religious practice;

- *Wide 'fraternal' relations* – Seeing our concern for others as going well beyond our own family or neighbours or 'tribe'. If God is our heavenly father all his children become our brothers and sisters;

- *Avoiding tit-for tat' behaviour* – Avoiding escalating differences and trying to get one's own back and have the last word – but also standing his ground;

- *Investing in the most unlikely* – The people whom Jesus chose were not the most obvious 'top team', in fact very often they were people whom others had written-off.

My thesis is straightforward:

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1 See Lynne Marks 'The Hallelujah Lasses: Working Class Women in the Salvation Army in English Canada 1882-92' in Franca Iacovetta and Mariana Valverde (eds) (1992) *Gender Conflicts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press) p. 67–118.

2 The word 'economy' can be traced back to the Greek word 'one who manages a household' (hmm… women's work?). According to Wikipedia, the first recorded sense of the word 'economy' was found in a work possibly composed in 1440, is 'the management of economic affairs', in this case, of a monastery.

When we muster an intention to do things like Jesus, i.e. to follow Jesus – even in the most modest of ways – we arrive at the portal into the economy of abundance, where virtuous processes flow and grace cascades;

By doing it like Jesus (even just a tad, and even just with the intention – because there is so much grace around) we trigger virtuous processes that gain momentum;

This relevance and transformational power of faith make it urgent to articulate and promote the resources at the heart of faithfulness that lead to human flourishing. And we need others to help us pass the test of public reason – it is not sufficient for our theologians or evangelists to simply assert the virtuous processes that faith sets in train.

But more than this, in our troubled times, the faiths have to forego investing and promulgating 'hard-to-believe' formulaic faith – which for post-modern and troubled times are so hard to believe that the come close to a fresh expression of… Gnosticism.

So there is a new evangelistic challenge – to enable people to weigh-up whether by following Jesus they can:

- Achieve a way of making sense of their lives;
- A means of sustaining virtuous intentional behaviour;
- Avoid judging some as deserving and some 'undeserving' (because of being beaten by their circumstances).

Wonsuk Ma

Mission as proclamation

Theological motivation for Pentecostal mission: a case of Mission as Proclamation

Introduction

Three Models of Mission

The three models of Christian mission have been around in various expressions for some time now, particularly in the last century: *missio Dei*; mission as transformation; and mission as proclamation. These three theological themes are initial findings suggested by data collected among churches and mission agencies in Britain and Ireland. The conference invitation further elaborates on each:

- *Missio Dei*: God is at work in the world and mission is essentially about following God's agenda and making it explicit.

- Mission as Transformation: Mission is in essence about transforming individuals and society with an emphasis on liberation theology, bias to the poor.

- Mission as Proclamation: [Mission is in essence the] proclamation of Jesus Christ as universal saviour.[1]

A couple of initial observations are in order. First, although it is never said, everyone understands that this is an oversimplification of the complex nature of mission theology and practice. Even some words in the brief explanations can easily be contested. Secondly, there is an underlying assumption in this continuum that the first represents the extreme 'left' and the last, the far 'right' (theologically and often politically). Thirdly, more pertinent to the present discussion, the continuum spans between the universality of God and the exclusivity of Christianity. *Missio Dei*, for instance, is not compatible with *Missio Christi*, as the former suggests universality of God's restoration, while the latter insists on the exclusivity of the Christian claim for salvation. While the very definition of mission is far from settled, so will be its theological basis and practical approaches. There is no doubt that this is a fundamental challenge as the Church plans to present a clear message of God's love and restoration to an incredibly diverse world.

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1 'Speakers' Briefing Note' for BIAMS–Global Connections–Global Mission Network conference on 'Sinking Foundations: Why Mission Today?' (All Nations Christian College, UK, July 2009.) The order of the second and the third is adjusted.

The Task at Hand

My task here is to expand on the theological basis and practical outworkings of the third model: Mission as Proclamation. Although institutionally I represent a community which has pioneered various aspects of 'Mission as Transformation,' I suspect that my affinities to the Korean missionary movement and Pentecostalism may have led the organizers to assign me the study on 'Mission as Proclamation.' As I am theologically familiar with Pentecostalism, I decided to look at the Pentecostal mission theology and practice as an exemplar. It is assumed that readers are familiar enough with Pentecostalism.

While Pentecostalism can be defined and characterized in various ways, for this reflection I am taking a rather narrow scope of the global Pentecostal-charismatic family. Denominational Pentecostals or the first wave (or 'Classical Pentecostals') are more identifiable than Charismatics or the third category (sometimes called Neo-Charismatics), and for this practical reason, I am limiting my discussion to this group. They are doctrinally more coherent than the rest; they have been more articulate in their theology and spirituality than the others. But this comparison is only relative, and we need to keep in mind theological diversity that is present among classical or denominational Pentecostals, especially when they are transplanted in the global South.

Having argued for the availability of resources among classical Pentecostals, a challenge remains as much of the 'articulation' of their theology is embedded in songs, sermons, prayers and practices. The task of unearthing the assumed theological construct is never an easy task. Colorfully presented narrative preaching, for instance, employs nuances, illustrations and culturally interpretable symbols. The same message may be communicated in a radically different mode and language in a different socio-cultural context. This is, however, not to ignore an increasing number of scholarly researches and reflections.

Hermeneutical Roots of Pentecostal Mission Theology

Any theological investigation needs seriously to consider hermeneutical strategies of a particular group. Pentecostals' hermeneutical strategy influences how to read the scriptures and interpret their life towards their theological construct. Obviously much of Pentecostals' unique hermeneutical ethos was in development through the end of the nineteenth century. The following discussion is intended to be a brief presentation of key hermeneutical sources for Pentecostal mission theology.

Literalism

Pentecostals have maintained a notion that the more literally one takes the scripture, the more faithful one becomes to the word of God, thus the will of God. This led them to take all the narrative presentations as historical. Thus, denial of the historicity of any event recorded in the scripture is unacceptable. This is in part a reaction of conservative Christians against critical reading of the Bible, originating from the nineteenth century German scholarship, gradually spreading to Europe and North

America. Therefore, Pentecostals' firm belief in the supernatural work of God is based on their literalistic reading of the Bible. Another implication of their literalistic reading is the question of intent. The inclusion of a narrative pattern, according to them, has intent of normativity. Speaking in tongues as 'the initial physical evidence' of baptism in the Holy Spirit[1] is based on the recurrence of tongue-speaking in relation to the presence of the Spirit in the book of Acts. And this implication of Pentecostals' literalistic reading, such as 'snake handling,' has been hotly contested from without and within.

Restorational Impulse

As the twentieth century dawned, there is evidence of heightened interest in eschatology. One stream is the expectation of the early church restored with the manifestation of the spiritual gifts, particularly the supernatural kind found in 1 Cor. 11. Thus, healing houses and communities proliferated throughout North America, and not without controversy.[2] The expectation of prophecy was another. However, at the core was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, out of which other spiritual gifts would flow. Camp meetings were a common annual feature for devout believers and their families to experience personal revival. The book of Acts was the most favourite book of the Bible, as it records the feat of the early churches and their Spirit-filled heroes. One of the most popular expressions among the late nineteenth century Holiness and early twentieth century Pentecostal believers was 'apostolic.' Countless Pentecostal periodicals and newspapers printed this word; and the dawning of the new century reinforced their eager expectation of the 'latter rain' to mark the end of the end time.

Participatory Process: Place of Community

The role of community as the locus of a hermeneutical process has been well recognized. Naturally worship is the main feature which provides religious experiences, theological formation and the shared process of theology-making. To begin with, Pentecostal worship, with not only singing and prayers and even preaching, is incredibly participatory in nature, often blurring the demarcation between the pulpit and the pews. One excellent example is the 'testimony' time, where anyone can be the 'main speaker'. This provides any member of the community with an opportunity to contribute to the corporate deposit of theology and also for the community to exercise the 'gift' of discernment, evaluation and shared ownership of the presented experience and its interpretation. This community is also the space where some spiritual gifts, such as prophecy or message in tongues, are exercised. For this reason, it is argued that Pentecostals indeed have a well-developed liturgical tradition, but it is, unlike the traditional ones, informal, spontaneous, oral, and often more than oral as

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1 For example, the eigth of the (US) 'Assemblies of God Fundamental Truths' (ag.org/top/Beliefs/Statement_of_Fundamental_Truths/sft_short.cfm), accessed on 16 March 2010, reads, 'We believe…the initial physical evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is "speaking in tongues", as experienced on the day of Pentecost and referenced throughout Acts and the Epistles.'

2 Vinson Synan, (2000) 'A Healer in the House? A Historical Perspective on Healing in the Pentecostal/Charismatic Tradition' *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 3:2, pp. 189-201. Also Allan Anderson, (2004) *An Introduction to Pentecostalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) pp. 30–3.

the whole body is involved in dancing, clapping and other movements.[1] At the end, Pentecostals have demonstrated a strong community-forming potential through the shared belief in and experience of the Holy Spirit.

The Role of Experience

Another important aspect of restorational thinking is the recovery of the dimension of religious experience. Unlike the Reformer's notion of the Holy Spirit as a shy member of the Trinity, Pentecostals, based on their reading in Luke-Acts, have re-profiled the Holy Spirit as the active player in the birth of the church, initiator of mission, and overseer of the spread of the gospel through empowerment.[2] Many experiences, whether supernatural or circumstantial, are all carefully initiated by the Holy Spirit. This has led Pentecostals into two important theological conclusions: 1) The Holy Spirit interacts with God's people through a wide range of religious experiences, including prophecy (Acts 11:22-23; 19:6; 21:9), dream and vision (Acts 9:10; 10:3), hearing voices (Acts 10:19; 16:9; 18:9), healing (Acts 3:1-8; 4:30), and the like; and 2) Such experiences not only enrich and embolden believers in their faith, but more importantly lead them into opportunities to witness to the risen Lord. It is true that this heavy weight on experiences and undue influence of experience over the Word has caused criticism. Nonetheless, with their literalistic reading of the Bible, religious experiences have a definite role in strengthening their sense of call and commitment to sacred vocation, as baptism in the Spirit (see below) will illustrate so well.

Theological Resources for Pentecostal Mission

It is already assumed that Pentecostal mission has had a strong emphasis on proclamation. Historically, the modern Pentecostal movement as an organized theological and spiritual tradition traces its origin in the nineteenth century Holiness movement of North America.[3] The fact that Charles Parham and William J. Seymour, the two most recognized Pentecostal 'fathers,' are Holiness preachers, illustrates this well. What is evident is that Pentecostalism came out of an extremely conservative stock of American Protestantism. Mission implications of four theological beliefs unique to Pentecostalism will be discussed.[4] To illustrate the beliefs and practices of early Pentecostals, reports published in *The Apostolic Faith* (*TAF*) of the Azusa Street Mission of Los Angeles (1906-1909) will be used. *TAF* is considered to be the most representative Pentecostal periodical of its formative years.

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1 Walter J. Hollenweger, (1997) *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson), p. 47 traces Pentecostal oral, spontaneous and bodily liturgy to its African roots.

2 A pioneering work on this notion is Roger Stronstad, (2004) *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1984) and Robert P. Menzies, *Empowered for Witness: The Spirit in Luke-Acts* (London: T & T Clark).

3 I am well aware of arguments on multiple 'springhead' of the movement. For this reason, I used the qualifier, 'organized' theological and spiritual tradition.

4 On the contribution of pneumatology to Pentecostal mission, see Wonsuk Ma, (2007) "When the Poor Are Fired Up": The Role of Pneumatology in Pentecostal-Charismatic Mission', *Transformation* 24:1 (Jan 2007) pp. 28–34.

Baptism in the Spirit

This cardinal doctrine makes (classical) Pentecostals distinct from the rest of Christianity. Understood as an experience distinct from and subsequent to regeneration, belief in baptism in the Holy Spirit has caused a continuing debate between Pentecostals and Evangelicals. Based on the post-resurrection promise of the Lord that his followers would be baptized in the Holy Spirit, Pentecostals took it as a sign of the restoration of early church spirituality. Therefore, the reference to the 'latter rain' is fitting,[1] as it would restore the earlier experience, that is, the experience on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Although much has been written on the subject,[2] for the present discussion, three aspects of this belief will be explored with mission as proclamation in mind: experience, its interpretation and consequences.

As discussed above, Pentecostalism has brought back the significant role of religious experiences. Testimonies abound to the powerful impact of experiences loosely termed 'the baptism in the Holy Spirit'. Various life-changing stories are shared, although most North American classical Pentecostal churches insist on speaking in tongues as 'the physical and initial evidence'.[3] The sense of God's overwhelming presence is a common element of these experiences, as recorded in the first issue of *TAF*:

> **Proud, well-dressed preachers come in to 'investigate.' Soon their high looks are replaced with wonder, then conviction comes, and very often you will find them in a short time wallowing on the dirty floor, asking God to forgive them and make them as little children. It would be impossible to state how many have been converted, sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost. They have been and are daily going out to all points of the compass to spread this wonderful gospel.[4]**

Speaking in tongues also brought tangible impact not only to the recipients of the Spirit baptism but also to those who witness them. It is no wonder that Pentecostalism spread like a wildfire. In fact, each issue of *TAF* has a substantial part of its pages dedicated to the reports of the spread of Pentecostal faith.

Such powerful experience is interpreted in various ways. First, as noted above, this was understood as a sure sign for the restoration of early church spirituality. Second, it shapes the self-identity of people who are called and commissioned to bring the news of salvation to the ends of the earth. Third, the experience is also interpreted as the enduing of power from above for witnessing in the context of Acts 1:8. Although classical Pentecostal denominations are divided between 'holiness' and 'non-Wesleyan' camps, the early Pentecostal literature made it clear that this is solely

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1 The lead article of the second issue of *TAF* is illustrative: 'The Pentecostal Baptism Restored: The Promised Latter Rain Now Being Pours Out on God's Humble People', *TAF* 2 (Oct 1906), p. 1, cols. 1-2.

2 For example, the serious theological inquiry from a Pentecostal perspective by Frank D. Macchia, (2006) *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan).

3 Early testimonies are found in almost all the early Pentecostal periodicals of North America, and the best known among them is *TAF* of the Azusa Street Mission.

4 'Pentecostal Has Come: Los Angeles Being Visited by a Revival of Bible Salvation and Pentecost as Recorded in the Book of Acts', *TAF* 1 (Sept 1906), p. 1, col. 1.

for empowerment: 'The baptism with the Holy Spirit is not a work of grace but a gift of power…. The baptism with the Holy Ghost makes you a witness unto the uttermost parts of the earth. It gives you power to speak in the languages of the nations'.[1] Its biblical illustrations are often taken from Peter's bold preaching in Acts 2:14-40, and Stephen's courageous sermon in Acts 7:2-53. Last, especially at a popular level, baptism in the Spirit is understood to be the 'floodgate' of spiritual gifts including healing and miracles.

Consequences of this doctrine are evident in Pentecostal mission, often arguing that the pattern is found in the Book of Acts. The first is unbending commitment to mission. With a strong sense of calling to be witnesses 'to the end of the earth,' this revival movement quickly turned into a missionary movement. Heroic missionary achievements or passion, in spite of little or no training or support, is attributed to this sense of call. The second is zeal for preaching their 'full gospel.' In fact, tongue-speaking often functions as a reinforcement of this experience of call and empowerment. Some early Pentecostals even expected tongues to be a missionary language to bypass laborious language-learning.[2] Third, after the pattern of Acts, signs and wonders are expected in the context of mission. This power-orientation makes Pentecostals bold witnesses with claims of healings and miracles, albeit with many controversies surrounding them. The net result is the fast spread of the Pentecostal message and the expansion of the Pentecostal movement globally.[3] This pneumatologically-shaped missiology is well attested in a *TAF* report of an Azusa missionary in its early days:

> **A Pentecostal missionary has left for foreign lands, Bro. Thos. P. Mahler, a young man of German nationality. He has the gift of tongues besides the knowledge of several. He left here for San Bernardino. He may go by way of Alaska, Russia, Norway, Germany and to his destination in Africa. As our brother was leaving, Bro. Post spoke of his call and gave a message in tongues in regard to Bro. Mahler which he interpreted as follows: 'I have anointed this dear one with my Spirit, and he is a chosen vessel to me to preach the gospel to many, and to suffer martyrdom in Africa.**[4]

Prophethood of All Believers

This is closely related to the previous discussion on baptism in the Spirit. However, because of its significance in Pentecostal mission, a separate discussion is deemed necessary. This is almost a natural and logical outgrowth of the belief in baptism in the Holy Spirit. Peter's interpretation of the advent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost is important. In the Old Testament period, only a handful of leaders experienced the coming of the Spirit of God, such as the seventy elders (Num. 11), selected judges, first two kings of United Israel, and selected prophets. However, an

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1 'The Enduement of Power', *TAF* 4 (Dec 1906), p. 2, col. 2.

2 'Russians Hear in Their Own Tongue', *TAF* 1 (Sept 1906), p. 4, col. 3.

3 A further exploration of its potential is found in Wonsuk Ma, (2005) 'Full Circle Mission: A Possibility of Pentecostal Missiology, *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 8:1, pp. 5-27.

4 'The Lord Sends Him', *TAF* 1 (Sept 1906), p. 4, col. 1.

eschatological expectation of the Old Testament is to break this exclusivity of the Spirit: everyone in God's community will experience the coming of the Spirit. This is the prophecy by Joel (2:28-9), which has its root in Moses' desire for the whole of Israel (Num. 11:29). This democratization of the Spirit is the gist of Peter's sermon in presenting the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:16-21).

If anyone in God's community is baptized in the Holy Spirit, regardless of age, gender and social status, the calling, empowerment and commission for God's work is for every believer, thus, 'prophethood of all believers.' This theological paradigm should be understood within the context of Christianity in the West at the turn of the twentieth century. In spite of various expressions of 'every believer's prophetic call,' the dominant ministry paradigm among the established churches was clergy-oriented professionalism. Consequently, the clergy-laity divide was clearly established, and the new Pentecostal theology was a powerful challenge to the established norm.

The first evidence is the host of Azusa Mission missionaries who were laity, including many single women. The January 1907 issue of *TAF* published reports from 'Bro. and Sister Batman, Bro. and Sister Hutchins and Sister Lucy Farrow [who] sailed from England for Monrovia, Liberia, Africa'[1] and 'Mrs. Myrtle K. Shideler [who wrote] in New York on her way to Africa,'[2] among others. Particularly noted is the significant contribution of women in Pentecostal mission. Later this is expressed in Korea through the mobilization of lay women leaders in David Yonggi Cho's well-known cell group system. The second expression is found in mission networks, such as Youth With A Mission, which recruits, trains and mobilizes youth for mission. This is a radical expression of the liberation of ministry from the exclusive hands of elite clergy. Often advocating short-term missionary service, this movement and others have 'democratized' ministry and mission for every believer. Thirdly, an extension of this radical mission-thinking is the establishment and empowerment of, and transfer to, national and local leadership at the earliest opportunity. This paradigm was presented by Melvin Hodges, a Pentecostal missionary to Latin America, as a unique feature of Pentecostal missiology.[3] Undoubtedly this unique belief has made Pentecostalism the fastest growing religious movement in our day.

Eschatology

Early Pentecostals shared their eschatology with the late nineteenth century conservative pre-millennial orientation. The turn of the century provided a naïve expectation of the end of human history. Here is an example found in *TAF*:

> **All these 6,000 years, we have been fighting against sin and Satan. Soon we shall have a rest of 1,000 years.... We must go on to perfection and holiness, and get the baptism with the Holy Ghost, and not stop there, but go on to perfection and maturity. God has many things to teach us as we remain humble at His feet.**[4]

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1 'Latest Report from Our Missionaries to Africa', *TAF* 5 (January 1907), p. 3, col. 1.

2 'Received Her Pentecost', *TAF* 5 (January 1907), p. 3, col. 1.

3 Melvin L. Hodges, (1963) *The Indigenous Church* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House).

4 'The Millenium [*sic!*]', *TAF* 1 (Sept 1906), p. 3, col. 3.

To this general sense associated with the beginning of a new century, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was taken as a sure sign for the end of the end time, the last opportunity for the greatest harvest of souls before the return of the Lord. This created an incongruent theological system for Pentecostals, adopting the dispensational scheme of human history. With the fast closure of the church age, or the age of grace, the church is to be taken to heaven, before the return of the age where Jews are dealt with through tribulation. This formed the awareness of living at the 'five-to midnight' moment, giving them an extremely small window of opportunity desperately to save as many souls as possible as the 'latter day saints.' This eschatological consciousness made them extremely other-worldly oriented. Coupled with the religious consciousness of call and empowerment for witness, here we see the best ingredients for a significant mission movement. And that's exactly what we saw in the Pentecostal movement in the last one hundred years!

The Sept 2007 issue of *TAF* has the headline reading, 'In the Last Days: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith the Lord, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh"—Acts 2:17.'[1] Although the reports under the heading are full of revivals in various places with little eschatological exposition, interestingly the same issue of *TAF* prints a song titled 'Jesus Is Coming,' the only one with full music throughout the two year publishing of the periodical. Its last stanza reads:

> Jesus is coming! He's not far away!
> Jesus is coming! Jesus is coming!
> We'll care not to stay; the clouds are our chariots,
> The angels our guard; Jesus is coming!
> This truth is His word.
> Coming again, coming again,
> Jesus is coming, is coming to reign,
> The clouds are His chariots, the angels His guard,
> Jesus is coming, how precious His word.[2]

The most important contribution of this eschatology to Pentecostal mission is the urgency of witnessing. It is assumed that 'one-way ticket missionaries' were strongly motivated by the eschatological urgency. It was not unusual that engaged young women broke off their engagements and left for their mission field.[3]

In spite of this powerful and positive contribution of this form of pre-millennialism with the expectation of the imminent return of the Lord, such clock-setting eschatology has to expire sooner or later. The gradual disappearance of eschatological messages from Pentecostal pulpits became evident as the movement now moves to the third generation. This coincides with the sudden surge of this-worldly

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1 *TAF* 9 (Sept 1907), p. 1, col. 1.

2 'Jesus Is Coming', *TAF* 9 (Sept 1907), p. 4.

3 One example is Lillian Trasher who left for Egypt after breaking her engagement. She gave her life to caring for orphans and widows in Egypt until her death. See S. Shemeth, 'Trasher, Lillian Hunt', in Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Maas (eds.), (2002) *New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan) p. 1153.

concerns, such as church growth, the message of blessings and health.[1] Fortunately, the dynamic motive of Pentecostal mission does seem to lie in the pneumatological interpretation rather than its temporal eschatological expectation, as the global Pentecostal movement has continued its growth even after the waning of Pentecostal eschatology.

Primacy of 'Soul' Matter

Pentecostalism has had all the crucial ingredients to become an unprecedented 'religion to travel,' well-evidenced in the exponential growth and spread all over the world in its wild diversity and creativity. Its evangelical heritage and the temporally oriented eschatology shaped Pentecostal missiology as being sharply focused on evangelism and church planting. The rise of a social gospel in the middle of the twentieth century may have further driven into the already narrowly focused attention. Mission impetus was also taken from the mission roadmap found in their favorite passage: '…from Jerusalem, all Judea, Samaria and (finally) to the ends of the earth' (Acts 1:8). Crossing geographical boundaries, therefore, has been part of Pentecostal mission paradigm. Many brilliant social programs, such as the well documented Mark Buntain's Calcutta operation,[2] have soul winning as their ultimate goal.

This, however, may reveal the Pentecostal understanding of humans, sin and salvation (or 'anthropology'). Every evil, be it personal or corporate, is traced to the sin factor, and traced back to Gen. 3 where a separation from God resulted in spiritual damnation, physical suffering, broken society, and cursed environment. The Pentecostal view of restoration, therefore, reverses the order, beginning with spiritual regeneration, and then personal (including at the physical level such as healing), communal (social) and even environmental, if the notion is conceived in a Pentecostal mission framework. Teen Challenge, the world-acclaimed Pentecostal drug rehabilitation program with over a 70% success rate, for example, is known for its strong emphasis on regeneration and even baptism in the Spirit.[3] In a similar vein, David Martin attributes the upward social mobility among Latin American Pentecostals to this paradigm: from an inner change to behavioral changes.[4] Recently systematic research was published on what is called 'progressive Pentecostals' who consciously engage in social issues, and this method is described as a 'one person at a time' approach. Albeit its criticism is for not confronting structural evil, its efficacy is well noted.[5] Another study by Sebastian Kim compares two radically

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1 For example, Wonsuk Ma, (2006) 'Pentecostal Eschatology: What Happened When the Wave Hit the West End of the Ocean', Harold Hunter and Cecil M. Robeck, Jr. (eds.), *The Azusa Street Revival and Its Legacy* (Cleveland, TN: Pathway), pp. 227-242.

2 Calcutta Mercy Ministries, 'History' (www.buntain.org/about.html), accessed on 15 March 2010.

3 David Batty and Ethan Campbell, (2008) 'Teen Challenge: 50 Years of Miracles', *Assemblies of God Heritage* 28, pp. 14-21.

4 David Martin, (1990) *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Oxford: Blackwell).

5 Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, (2007) *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement* (Berkley: University of California Press), 182-83, 213-16.

different approaches to the issue of poverty in Korea: *Minjung* theology,[1] a Korean version of liberation theology, and the Pentecostal movement. He concludes that a long lasting impact to individuals and society has been made, not by the radical vision of Minjung theology, but by the transforming experience of Pentecostalism among the poor *Minjung*.[2]

Naturally 'revival' or 'renewal' is an important concept in Pentecostal thinking. The Pentecostal movement itself is often classified as a revival movement, with its impact to personal and communal transformation. The January 1907 issue of *TAF* opens with a headline, 'Beginning of World Wide Revival,' and reveals a glimpse of the Azusa Street revival:

> **The meeting went on till morning and all the next day.... Pentecost first fell in Los Angeles on April 9th [of 1906]. Since then the good tidings has spread in two hemispheres.... Wherever the work goes, souls are saved, and not only saved from hell but through and through, and prepared to meet the Lord at His coming. Hundreds have been baptized with the Holy Ghost. Many of them are now out in the field, and some in foreign lands, and God is working with them, granting signs and wonders to follow the preaching of the full Gospel.**[3]

As Pentecostal missiology matures, an argument seems to gain grounding that spiritual dynamism, evangelism, church growth and social service are not mutually exclusive. In fact, an increasing resource of a local congregation enhances social service and engagement, as demonstrated by, for example, the Yoido Full Gospel Church's engagement in public culture (through its daily *Kukmin* newspaper), reconciliation and unity (through the construction of a cardiac hospital in North Korea), and social service (through various non-governmental organizations and institutions).[4]

Conclusion

If this short study in any way leaves an impression that Pentecostals have finally unlocked the secret of Christian mission, the reality is exactly its opposite. In the name of God's kingdom and renewal, more church divisions were caused by this movement and unfortunately they have been part of its growth 'strategy'. Some of its serious blind spots, such as its eschatological expectation, have already been presented. While they are praised for their 'genius' creativity in contextualization,[5]

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1 *Minjung* is a Korean word for the underprivileged mass who often live with grudges (*Han*). See Nam-dong Suh, (1983) 'Toward a Theology of Han', in Yong Bock Kim (ed.), *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books), pp. 51-65. For a critical study between Minjung theology and Korean Pentecostalism, see Seyoon Kim, (1987), 'Is "Minjung Theology" a Christian Theology?', *Calvin Theological Journal* 22:2 pp. 262-63.

2 Sebastian C.H. Kim, (2007) 'The Problem of Poverty in Post-War Korean Christianity: *Kibock Sinang* or *Minjung* Theology?', *Transformation* 24:1 (Jan 2007), pp. 43-50.

3 'Beginning of World Wide Revival', *TAF* 5 (January 2907), p. 1, col. 1.

4 Young-hoon Lee, (2009)*The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea* (Oxford: Regnum Books), pp. 126-7.

5 Allan Anderson, (2007) *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism* (London: SCM) includes more than North American testimonies of early Pentecostal mission.

Pentecostals are also criticized for the ugly 'prosperity gospel'[1] and their extremely 'western' outlook and ethos. All in all, there is much to be reflected on and carefully studied.[2]

Classical Pentecostals also need to be reminded that they are the smallest components of the global Pentecostal-charismatic family, and yet with the most theological resources and institutions. And the western segment is not necessarily growing.[3] While it should continue its engagement in new frontiers of mission in the changing social context, it also suggests strongly that they have an empowering role to play to the rest of the Pentecostal-charismatic churches. It is good to note that the same church in non-western lands looks radically different from its North American or European 'mothers.' This seriously challenges their century-old theology and constantly institutionalizing ethos.

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1 For various discussions, see Hwa Yung, (2004) 'The Missiological Challenge of David Yonggi Cho's Theology', in Wonsuk Ma, William W. Menzies, and Hyeon-sung Bae (eds.), *David Yonggi Cho: A Close Look at His Theology and Ministry* (Baguio, Philippines: APTS Press,), pp. 85-90; Wonsuk Ma, (2008) 'David Yonggi Cho's Theology of Blessing: A new theological base and direction', in Young San Theological Institute (ed.), *Dr. Yonggi Cho's Ministry and Theology: A Commemorative Collection for the 50th Anniversary of Dr. Yonggi Cho's Ministry*, 2 vols. (Gunpo, Korea: Hansei University Logos), I:179-200.
2 For suggested topics of Pentecostal mission for future reflection, Julie C. and Wonsuk Ma, (2010) *Mission in the Spirit: Towards a Pentecostal-Charismatic Missiology* (Oxford: Regnum Books) particularly Chapter 18 'Reflective Mission Practice: Suggested Areas for Pentecostal Mission Research'.
3 For example, the Assemblies of God, perhaps the largest global classical Pentecostal church, reports more than 63 million as its total adherents globally. However, the North American part numbers only 2.9 million or 4% in 2008. 'AGWM Current Facts and Highlights', Issue 1 (2009) (www.agchurches.org/Content/Resources/AGWMCurrentFacts.pdf) accessed on March 15, 2010.

Philip Knights

The Response of a Catholic to the Research Processes and Conference

The various strands and modalities of research undertaken by BIAMS, GMN and GC and the insights of the participants in the July Conference hold together many themes and have stimulated thought in several areas.

This paper is the reaction of one Catholic participant. It does not claim to offer any definitive Catholic response or to be given on behalf of the Catholic Church, the Bishops Conference of England and Wales or any particular Catholic mission agency or society. Rather it is a personal reflection drawn from one person who has been part of the research team and who was involved in the Conference. My own background has been in teaching the theology of mission in a Catholic Institution and of working for two or three Catholic mission agencies.[1] Therefore this contribution speaks from a Catholic context but its limitations and inadequacies are those of its author.

The starting point of the research was to examine whether or not the widespread academic acceptance of a theology within the umbrella of *missio Dei* was actually the driver for mission in Churches, agencies and mission societies within Britain and Ireland. The suspicion of the research team was that empirical research would highlight other drivers. Indeed the survey data and the interviews revealed that both a 'proclamation' model and a 'transformation' justice led model which in different ways began with the activities of Christians and Churches were more prevalent.

However, *missio Dei* begins with the activity of God. And even if the shorthand thematic orientation of *missio Dei* is not as dominant as some may think, nonetheless the theological frame of all Christian mission must be the relationship of God to the world. This sets the context for mission in which the Christian communities may act as agents of mission.

The Context: God and the world, cultures and persons

The Conference discussion brought to the surface several approaches to the presence and activity of God in the world: incarnational, Pentecostal, transformational and others. Within these discussions seemed to be implicit, although not always explicit, understandings of the relationships between nature and grace or, to put the same questions in a different frame issues concerning the theological status of the world and peoples and their cultures within the world.

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1   The writer taught at the Missionary Institute London and worked for the *Catholic Missionary Society* which was transformed into the *Catholic Agency to Support Evangelisation*, whether that makes one or two agencies is an interesting semantic question. He is currently the Diocesan Director for the Diocese of Westminster for *Missio* the newly adopted name for the *Pontifical Missionary Societies*.

The dominant orientation of Catholic theological thinking of the second half of the twentieth century, at least that which is most prominent in missiological literature, may be associated with Karl Rahner SJ.[1] Without necessarily ascribing to all his philosophical anthropology or existentialist theology, his basic theological orientations of affirming the human person as a questioning being and of engaging with contemporary thought systems and a positive estimate of human cultures mean that we can recognise a loose commonality of views we may call Rahnerian. Hence writers including Vincent Donovan[2] and Walbert Buhlmann[3] may be considered missiologists in the Rahnerian mould. Certainly Gustavo Guttierez and other Liberation Theologians and Feminist theologians would acknowledge the influence of Rahner. (And yes, Rahner was without doubt the dominant theological thinker amongst lecturers at my old employer, the *Missionary Institute London.*)

However, it is apparent that more recently there has been a significant rise in what we may call neo-Augustinian theological thinking. The most notable and most influential member of this neo-Augustinian school being HH Pope Benedict XVI. However, even outwith Catholicism the 'Radical Orthodoxy' movement (albeit that that movement is partially from within Catholicism[4]) and others may be seen to be coming from a similar place.

Making comparisons can highlight differences more than similarities and it is important to notice that both the Rahnerian and *La Nouvelle Théologie* schools (the latter being perhaps the most significant progenitor of the contemporary neo-Augustinians) sought to move beyond the neo-scholasticism of the early twentieth century. In particular they both moved beyond the separation of the natural and the supernatural ends of humanity.[5] Nonetheless they differ as to whether contemporary culture is a partner or an opponent to the Christian tradition, or at least of lesser importance to that tradition. This is a tension that goes back as least as far as Aquinas and Bonaventure.[6] Commenting on tensions in the Second Vatican Council

1   For recent evaluations of Rahner see: Karen Kilby (2007) *The SPCK Introduction to Karl Rahner* (London: SPCK), Thomas O'Meara (2007) *God in the World: A Guide to Karl Rahner's Theology*, (Collegeville: Liturgical Press) Declan Marmion and Mary E. Hines (eds.) (2005) *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Rahner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) and Patrick Burke (2002) *Reinterpreting Rahner: a critical study of his major themes* (New York: Fordham University Press). The last of these is most critical of Rahner and closest to what we shall call neo-Augustinian.

2   E.g. (1978) *Christianity Rediscovered* (London: SCM) – it is interesting to observe that this is undergoing something of a new following today amongst 'emerging church' proponents – and very Rahnerian (1989)*The Church in the Midst of Creation* (Maryknoll: Orbis).

3   E.g. (1977) *The Coming of the Third Church* (Maryknoll: Orbis), (1977) *Forward, Church!* (Slough: St Paul).

4   See Tracey Rowland (2003) *Culture and the Thomist Tradition* (London and New York: Routledge) for a trenchant criticism of Rahnerian affirmation of secular cultures and an explicitly neo-Augustinian agenda published under the Radical Orthodoxy banner. Dr Rowland herself is an Australian Catholic, whereas most of the Radical Orthodoxy school are English Anglicans.

5   See Paul McPartlan (1995) *Sacrament of Salvation* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark) p. 50f. McPartlan discusses this in relationship to the teaching of Henri de Lubac, perhaps *La Nouvelle Théologie* thinker *par excellence*. But similar understandings of 'pure nature' can be found in Rahner.

6   See for instance Aidan Nichols (1991) *The Shape of Catholic Theology* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press) p. 302ff on the medieval tensions between Thomists and neo-Augustinians. The contemporary debate, although having different points of disagreement is recognisably within the same pattern of argument.

and the underlying debates behind *Gaudium et Spes* and *Dignitatis Humanae*, Joseph A. Komonchak notes:

> At the risk of considerable over-simplification, one of these tensions might be described in terms of the traditional opposition thought to exist between 'Augustinians' and 'Thomists'. (I prescind here from the question of how fair this contrast is to either Augustine or Thomas.) Two questions characterize the presence of this tension at the Council. The first might be put in this way: Granted that we can no longer be content with the anti-modern neurosis of recent Roman Catholicism, what attitude should the church adopt before the modern world? And, if we are to look to our past for examples of the church's engagement with contemporary culture, which is most pertinent to our day: the great Patristic enterprise which led to the creation of the Christian intellectual and cultural world, or the great
>
> Thomist effort to meet, confidently and discriminatingly, the challenge to that world represented in the medieval period by the introduction of Aristotelian philosophy and Arab science?[1]

The debate at the Council was often seen in terms of *aggiornamento* or *résourcement*: between engaging with contemporary thought forms and patterns of meaning or renewal based upon drawing upon the biblical, patristic and liturgical traditions of the Church.[2] The Rahnerian approach would be decidedly in the former camp, the neo-Augustinian in the latter. As a rough rule the Periodical *Concilium* became the house journal for the former and *Communio* provided the same service for the latter school.

Consider the following distinctions:

Rahnerian	Neo-Augustinian
❑ Knit with grace	❑ Dualism
❑ Capacity to respond (or not) to grace Natural to the human	❑ Sin
❑ Universality of grace	❑ Rupture
❑ Particularity of human responses	❑ World something to be rescued from
❑ Inherent optimism about the world, cultures and persons	❑ Cultures to be redeemed
❑ cf Tillich & correlation	❑ Extrinsic optimism based on intervention of God into world, cultures and persons
	❑ cf Barth

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1 Joseph A. Komonchak (2002) 'The Encounter between Catholicism and Liberalism' in R Bruce Douglas and David Hollenbach *Catholicism and Liberalism: contributions to American public philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) p. 86.

2 One significant account of these may be found in Joseph Ratzinger (1987) *Principles of Catholic Theology: Building Stones for a Fundamental Theology* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press) p. 134ff. The present Pontiff was a peritus at the Council and, of course has subsequently been an active shaper of the theological vision of the Church since the Council before and after his election as Pope.

Rahner was decisively 'integralist'. Indeed in the way he brings together nature and supernature his critics have claimed he naturalises the supernatural.[1] Certainly his understanding of human nature presumes an orientation to transcendence:

> **Our actual nature is *never* 'pure' nature. It is nature installed in a supernatural order which man can never leave, even as a sinner and unbeliever. it is a nature which is continually being determined (which does not mean justified) by the supernatural grace of salvation offered to it.**[2]

Thus it is impossible for Rahner to consider the human apart from grace and all that is human, including history and culture are knit together with grace. The capacity to respond or not to respond to grace is part of the constitution of humanity. All have a pre-apprehension of being (*Vorgriff auf esse*) which transcends the person and which is both an openness to the world and an openness to God whilst simultaneously the awareness of an emptiness, a lack which the person can only fill by reaching beyond self.

The consequence of these principles is to have a way of looking at the world and people in the world which starts with human questions and human experience. One may presume to discern the movements of God inherent within the movements of human hearts and human society. Although it would be wrong to draw too close a parallel, there may be seen here some parallels with existential theologians from outside Catholicism, not least Paul Tillich's 'method of correlation'.[3]

The neo-Augustinan presumption is very different. Whilst we should be careful of charging neo-Augustinians with being 'dualist', their manner of bringing together nature and supernature is to start with the Divine beyond the human. There is a consciousness of the distinction between God and the world. There is less a correlation than a rupture between God and the world. Whilst Rahnerian thinking does have a place of rejecting grace and therefore for the category of sin, one may be forgiven (excuse the pun) for thinking that this is the abnormal case. Neo-Augustinianism recognises sin as part of the normal human condition. There is a discontinuity between God and the world which must be bridged. The world is therefore something which needs redemption. The things of the world need the extrinsic intervention of God. Again, it should not be thought an exact parallel but one may see similarities here with Barthian neo-orthodoxy.[4] Compassion for the world into which God may irrupt, rather than identification with the world, would seem to be the engine of mission.

These two tendencies give us very different pictures of mission, the *missio Dei* and the mission of the Churches. The one has an intrinsic sense of God within the world leading the world to fulfilment; the other an extrinsic sense of the world as needing

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1   See for instance John Milbank (1990) *Theology and Social Theory,* p.207 (Oxford: Blackwell) although the comment probably goes back to Hans Urs von Balthasar.

2   From *Theological Investigations IV* reprinted in Gerald A. McCool (1973)*A Rahner Reader* (London: DLT) p. 183f.

3   Paul Tillich (1978) *Systematic Theology I* (London: SCM Press) p. 59ff.

4   Interesting comparisons and differences may be found in lectures given by Hans Urs von Balthasar (a leading *résourcement*/neo-Augustinian figure) on Barth collected in Hans Urs von Balthasar (1992) *The Theology of Karl Barth: Exposition and Interpretation* (San Francisco: Ignatius).

saving. Of course one can see these as two sides of a single coin but it seems that they articulate different attitudes. The former, to use an unfair caricature of some *missio Dei* thinking, might suggest 'the world sets the agenda'[1]; the latter that the world needs to hear proclaimed God's agenda. In terms of this conference, the balance of the participants appear to lean towards the former tendency, however there have been significant and important voices more at ease with the neo-Augustinian perspective, especially as revealed from the surveys and interviews with local Churches.

Within the presentations there was a discussion of dystopia. Certainly it is clear that there must be some understanding as to whether we are encountering a dystopic world or promoting something more utopian. Does mission build on the inherent good or in a counter-cultural manner combat existing evil? It is probably best to understand ourselves between utopia and dystopia with both positive possibilities and destructive dangers before us. One of the tropes of Liberation Theology was to promote a vision of Utopia, the image of what should be challenging what is:

> **Those committed to integral Liberation will keep in their hearts the little utopia of at least one meal for everyone every day, the great utopia of a society free of exploitation and organized around the participation of all, and finally the absolute utopia of communion with God in totally redeemed creation.**[2]

Certainly all Christian mission must take seriously the flaws of what is and engage with it in the hopes of what could be and what should be. However, it must be noted that whilst in the early period of Liberation Theology there was a confidence in the shape of that Utopia, it would seem there is now a lesser clarity and greater fragmentation in considering what the elements of that Utopia might look like.[3]

It would seem that there are two related tasks for Christians in mission from the perspective of *missio Dei*: to celebrate what God is doing and to accept the challenge that God's will be done.

One of areas of discussion which arose at the conference but which was not apparent in the web search of agencies' mission statements, had not been fully considered in the research survey and did not feature significantly in the interviews was that of eschatology. It may be that Rahnerian/neo-Augustinian tension discussed here is an example of the already/not yet tension in eschatology. What is clear from the conversations in this forum is our need to be more explicit about what are the ends of mission: towards what εσχατον, τελοσ or τελοι is God working, and how and how far is that 'completion', 'end' or are those 'ends' realised in the Church or in the world? I am also minded to regret the absence of an orthodox voice in these discussions

1   As Dr Martin Conway rightly observed at the conference this was never the published opinion of the Uppsala meeting of the WCC in 1968, but the phrase has become associated with 1960s missional optimism about the secular world. See for instance the work of another Conference participant: Timothy Yates (1996) *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) p. 197.

2   Clodovis Boff and Leonardo Boff (1987) *Introducing Liberation Theology* (Maryknoll: Orbis) 94f. Cf Gustavo Guttierez (1973) *A Theology of Liberation* (London: SCM) pp. 46 and 213, and João Batista Libânio 'Hope, Utopia, Resurrection' in Ignacio Ellacuría and Jon Sobrino (eds) (1993) *Mysterium Liberationis* (Maryknoll: Orbis) pp. 716-28.

3   See for instance Ivan Petrella (2008) *Beyond Liberation Theology: A Polemic* (London: SCM Press).

given the Western norm of 'eschatology as an orientation' and the Eastern stance of 'eschatology as a presence' and implications this has for ecclesiology.[1] To borrow the maritime metaphors of one the conference speakers, it is not only that the 'Bark of the Church' may be seen as a different type of ship but there is also the question as to how the voyage, of whatever ship, is to be navigated and what kind of seas does she sail upon and what kind of port is she heading towards.

And that as an observation may lead us to consider in more depth mission and ecclesiology.

Missio Dei and *Missio Ecclesiarum*

Accepting as a given for the purposes of this reflection the principle of *missio Dei*, this still leaves us with the ecclesiological question of how the Church or churches are involved with the mission of God.

The first observation is to choose the plural title *missio ecclesiarum*. Whilst there may be some general or universal or even worldwide 'mission of THE Church'; even from the universalising habit of Catholicism that *missio ecclesiae* may be best seen in an eschatological context. The practice of mission in the present time is engaged in by local and particular churches. Indeed a global perspective on ecclesiology and an ecumenical perspective would both applaud the understand of the Church as communion of churches.[2] The *missio ecclesiarum* must be primarily concerned with what happens within local contexts. 'Global' links all three organisations hosting this Conference (In the title of Global Connections and the Global Mission Network and the strapline of BIAMS) yet the global can only exist as the collective expressed in a multiplicity of local situations.[3]

> **The one and unique spirit works with many and varied spiritual gifts and charisms, the one Eucharist is celebrated in various places. For this reason the unique and universal Church is truly present in all the particular Churches, and these are formed in such a way that the one and unique Catholic Church exists in and through the particular Churches.**[4]

That multiplicity of situations gives rise to a multiplicity of needs. One of the discussions in a small group concerned the situation of violent conflict in which working for reconciliation was a necessary and obvious response of mission. Much of the recent

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1 See Paul McPartlan (2004) 'The local church and the universal church: Zizioulas and the Ratzinger – Kasper debate' in *International journal for the Study of the Christian Church*, Volume 4, Issue 1 March 2004, pp. 21-33.

2 See J-M. R. Tillard (1992) *Church of Churches the ecclesiology of Communion* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press).

3 Of recent interest in this field has been the public debate between the then two German Cardinals at the Vatican, Cardinal Walter Kasper (emphasising the importance of the local church) and the then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (emphasising the unity of the worldwide church). See Kilian McDonnell, O.S.B., (2002) 'The Ratzinger/Kasper Debate: The Universal Church and Local Churches', in *Theological Studies* 63: 227-50.

4 Extraordinary Synod of Bishops 1985, *L'Osservato Romano (English weekly Edition)* 16 December 1985) p. 7.

emphasis on Reconciliation and Mission comes out of those situations and their needs.[1] Clearly where obvious needs are apparent mission must necessarily respond to them. But what are the needs to which the necessary response is obvious in our time and in the various contexts for mission? Even if the world does not set the agenda, the course of mission must be in encounter with realities in the world.

This Conference meets the week after Catholics in England and Wales celebrated the feast St Peter and St Paul. In the homily preached by this writer on that Sunday the suggestion was made that 'the Church is ordered by Peter but ordered for Paul'. By which was meant that the structures of the Church and her internal coherence are there in order that the Church may reach out beyond her boundaries. Ecclesiology and mission are intimately and inextricably connected.

'[T]he Church on earth is by her very nature Missionary' (*Ad Gentes* 2) – asserted the Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity from the Second Vatican Council using explicit *missio Dei* reasoning. This was extended by Pope Paul VI in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*:

> **Evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelize, that is to say, in order to preach and teach, to be the channel of the gift of grace, to reconcile sinners with God, and to perpetuate Christ's sacrifice in the Mass, which is the memorial of His death and glorious resurrection.**[2]

This last quotation explicitly affirms both the connection between mission and ecclesiology and the place of the Holy Eucharist in both.

Eucharistic ecclesiology, together with the overlapping sets of ideas of Communion Ecclesiology, has been an important element in contemporary understandings of the Church from Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican and ecumenical perspectives.[3] However, the label 'Eucharistic Ecclesiology' whilst pointing to a connectedness of these understandings may hide their diversity. Dennis M. Doyle, for instance, identifies at least ten strands which stand alongside and may even compete with each other.[4] Eucharistic ecclesiology is therefore qualified common ground.

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1 See the papers of CWME Conference in Athens 2005, www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-commissions/mission-and-evangelism/cwme-world-conference-athens-2005.html, the BIAMS Conference report Howard Mellor & Timothy Yates (eds) (2004) *Mission, Violence and Reconciliation*(Calver: Cliff College) and Robert Schreiter (1996) *Reconciliation: Mission and Ministry in a Changing Social Order,* (Maryknoll: Orbis)

2 *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 14

3 See Paul McPartlan (1993) *The Eucharist Makes the Church, Henri de Lubac and John Zizioulas in dialogue* (Edinburgh: T and T Clark) for a discussion of perhaps the two most influential voices in this field. For a discussion of how these concepts are played out in the official documents of the Catholic Church at and since the Second Vatican Council see John J. Markey (2003) *Creating Communion: The Theology of the Constitutions of the Church* (New York:New City Press). See *Mission-shaped Church* (2004) (London: Church House Publishing) p101 for a very brief Anglican synthesis of mission, ecclesiology and Eucharist. The *Special Commission on Orthodox Participation in the WCC* identified several issues connected with ecclesiology and Eucharist several of which need further resolution at forthcoming WCC assemblies. www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/porto-alegre-2006/3-preparatory-and-background-documents/final-report-of-the-special-commission-on-orthodox-participation-in-the-wcc.html.

4 Dennis M. Doyle (2004) *Communion Ecclesiology* (Maryknoll: Orbis,)

Yet Eucharistic Ecclesiology may also be contested. What is central to some Christian traditions may be peripheral to others. Those who have strongly sacramental understandings of Church may misunderstand traditions who do not share their vision, and indeed be misunderstood themselves. Certainly the question was raised at the Conference about those outside explicit Christian believing and belonging who simply 'don't get it' when it comes to the practice of Eucharistic worship which may be experienced as exclusive and excluding.

'Worship and mission' was a topic of conversation, not least in some of the small groups at the Conference. If we can bear yet another Rahnerian allusion worship should surely be that which enables seekers to Hear the Word and which sends the Hearers of the Word into the world. Liturgy both gathers in the people of God and impels people into mission. There is therefore a double set of questions about worship and mission: how does worship gather in the world and people in the world into the Church and how does it send out those who are within the worshipping community?

Related to notions of Eucharistic Ecclesiology is to see the Church herself as a Sacrament, and indeed to understand her mission through sacramental imagery.

> **The Church, inasmuch as she is one and unique, is as a sacrament a sign and instrument of unity and of reconciliation, of peace among men, nations, classes and peoples.**[1]

Such a sacramental image does not simply describe the source, destiny and inner workings of the Church, it also orientates the Church to the world. The values of peace, justice, unity and mutuality which grow out of the Church's self-understanding are also a gift that the Church offers the world. There are circles of out-reach: God whose nature is love reaches out in love to include others in love. The Church is formed by that out-reaching love and because of it reaches out herself. Indeed we can say that the Church participates in the out-reaching love of God when she reaches out to the world. The Church is a beacon which reveals to people their true nature. It is as an effective sign of true humanity that the Church becomes both a location of transformed humanity and a symbol of transformed humanity. Just as all sacraments both point to and make present that which they signify, so the Church points to the unity and mutuality which is the truth and destiny of humanity and makes present that communion.

> **From this sacramentality it flows that the Church is not a reality closed in on herself. Rather, she is permanently open to missionary and ecumenical endeavour, for she is sent into the world to announce and witness, to make present and spread the mystery of communion which is essential to her, and to gather all people and all things into Christ so as to be for all an 'inseparable sacrament of unity.**[2]

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1 Extraordinary Synod of Bishops 1985, Final Relatio *L'Osservato Romano (English weekly Edition)* 16th December 1985) p. 7.

2 Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith 'Letter to the Bishop's of the Catholic Church on Some Aspects of the Church Understood as Communion' *L'Osservato Romano (English weekly Edition)* 17th June 1992 p. 8 ¶5.

Some other Catholic missiological streams

The previous two sections of this paper consciously developed themes raised at the Conference. However, it seems sensible, writing as a response from a Catholic missiologist to at least acknowledge some themes from contemporary Catholicism which were to some extent mentioned at the Conference but which may get obscured if not explicitly 'name-checked' here. That mission serves the world and changes the world is clearly an important stress for many Catholic missionary societies and agencies. A very brief web search of Societies of Apostolic Life, Congregations and Religious Communities engaged in mission reveals themes such as:

> **...working, in solidarity with the poor and the exploited earth, for justice, peace and the integrity of creation; promoting life-giving relationships between peoples of different cultures and religions;**[1]

> **We live together, usually, in small multi-cultural religious communities of MMM Sisters. We try to show God's love through a dedicated service of healing among people in areas of great need.**[2]

> **As an exclusively missionary Congregation, we seek to make common cause with the more unfortunate and disadvantaged of our world:**
> - **by proclaiming the Good News among peoples where Christ is unknown;**
> - **by fostering social development inspired by Gospel values;**
> - **by serving the Young Churches of Latin America, Africa and Asia as they grow and mature;**
> - **by bearing witness to the love of God for each and every human person by promoting the missionary vocation in all its many forms.**[3]

The priority for most of the established missionary communities has clearly been in the area of mission which this Conference described as 'transformational': to make a difference to the lives of the poor, to be in solidarity with those in greatest need, to be advocates for the poor, to further 'integral human development'[4] and to promote justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

That important stress being rightly noted, it is also true that we can see a restatement of a commitment to kerygmatic proclamation, especially in the case of the so-called New Communities and New Movements. This revived emphasis on proclamation is a major theme of the 'New Evangelisation' as it seeks to make good the late Pope John Paul II's call for an evangelisation 'New in ardour, new in methods and new in the means of expression'.[5] In particular this explicitly asserts

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1 Columban Missionaries (www.columbans.co.uk).

2 Medical Missionaries of Mary:
www.mmmworldwide.org/index.php?article=About_the_Medical_Missionaries_of_Mary.

3 Comboni Missionaries (www.comboni.org.uk/whycombonimissio.html)

4 Since the Conference the publication of the Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* has underscored the commitment to integral human development.

5 See www.caseresources.org/evangelisation/evangelisation_newevangelisation.htm.

the need to proclaim the Good News in areas where it has already been proclaimed.[1] It is important to note the vitality, especially amongst young Catholics, of the new ecclesial movements and the commitment they have to proclamation. [2] Whilst there may well be some similarities between such New Movements and 'fresh expressions of Church' as experienced in the Churches of the Reformation I would suggest that whereas those fresh expressions are largely 'post-evangelical', the New Movements in Catholicism are largely 'post-Liberal' and in the terms with which this paper began are more neo-Augustinian than Rahnerian.[3]

The other significant strand of the practice of mission in contemporary Catholicism which should be mentioned is the revival of the Catechumenate and the approaches to Catechesis which are simultaneously, liturgical, personal and communal. RCIA (The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) has become the norm for how enquirers learn and seekers encounter the Church and further their journey of faith.[4] Certainly in terms of the experience of mission by Catholics in Britain and Ireland RCIA represents both the most common practice and may well prove to be the most effective driver.

Phase 2.2 – Philip Knights: A Catholic response

1   See, for instance, Ralph Martin and Peter Williamson (eds.) (1995) *Pope John Paul II and the New Evangelisation* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press).

2   See Michael A. Hayes (ed) (2006) *New Religious movements in the Catholic Church* (London: Continuum Publications).

3   See The Research Report of the Von Hügel Institute and the Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology (2006) *Going Forth: An Enquiry into Evangelisation and Renewal in the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales* (Cambridge) and Philip Knights (ed.) (2007) *Changing Evangelisation* (London: CTBI).

4   The writing of books in this field is close to inexhaustible but I would recommend (1998) *The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults: A Study Book* (London: St Thomas More Centre), (1997) *The General Directory for Catechesis* (Rome: The Congregation of the Clergy) and other resources at www.rcia.org.uk/Resources/Books.html.

   NB: All web addresses are as accessed in August 2009.

Paul Rolph

A personal response to a rich and stimulating conference

This is a personal response to what, for me, has been a rich and stimulating Conference. We have reflected on:

(i) Two related research projects – one local and the other national;

(ii) Mission as participating in the *missio Dei*;

(iii) Mission as proclamation of the Gospel;

(iv) Mission as transformation;

(v) A comparison of Edinburgh 1910 with Edinburgh 2010 and learned of the latest plans for Edinburgh 2010.

We have had opportunities to discuss and comment on the issues raised. My task now is not to cover all aspects of our Conference but to offer a personal response to what I have been hearing. I have also attempted to include as much of your group feedback as I can. I will provide the Steering Group with a fuller account of your written feedback at a later date.

The Two National and Local Research projects

Do these two research projects have clear and worthwhile aims?

All research must have clear and worthwhile aims. In the case of our two research projects their aims are similar. The national research has been designed to:

- contribute to a global conversation on foundations for mission leading up to Edinburgh 2010;

- help us to have a clearer understanding of the theological drivers for mission across a wide variety of denominations and agencies in Britain and Ireland at the beginning of the 21st Century;

- gain insight into how those theological drivers work out in practice;

- provide pointers to help us to identify key issues for the future.

The Nottinghamshire Case Study has very similar aims except, of course, it has a local focus and has collected the views of those who are ordained. Feedback from the groups suggests that you feel that these aims are clear and worthwhile. I agree.

Are these two research projects part of an on-going process?

There is a resounding 'yes' in answer to this question. We all know that well-conducted research depends on clear and worthwhile aims and that one's aims must build on previous research. Good research also offers reasoned suggestions for future work.

Research, then, is a continuous process and this is particularly true of these two research projects. Each project is a snapshot but if they are isolated from previous research and do not point to future research, the impact of each snapshot will be limited.

Are these two projects located within Empirical and Practical Theology?

Again my answer is 'Yes'. The two research projects are empirical in their approach. Both projects sit within the established field of Empirical and Practical Theology where an evidence-based approach is taken so that claims to new understandings can be made. On occasions I would engage in a debate over coffee where those colleagues of mine who are systematic theologians would 'pull the legs' of their colleagues who described themselves as empirical theologians. 'Empirical theology cannot exist' the systematic theologians would say.' Of course it can' came the reply, 'You do not understand the nature of empirical theology and what we do'. At times, in my university, such discussions could get nasty and those of us from other faculties, particularly from the sciences and social sciences, would try to calm things down. There are some profound issues here but I do not have time to address them.

Do these two research projects need to be based on a thorough literature search?

I am wondering very tentatively whether something of this debate between systematic and empirical theologians is there in some way in mission research since I can find very few published references to empirical research that relates to 'our' national and local projects. Both projects need to be based on a firm literature search – especially if we publish. *I should therefore be pleased to receive any references to empirical (and indeed any other systematic) research on the understandings of, and motivations for mission set within any part of the global church in, say, this century and the previous one.*

What are the strengths and limitations of the methodology employed in these two projects?

The advantages of a multi-method approach for collecting data in this type of research are manifold. It is well known that exclusive reliance on one method of collecting data is likely to lead to bias in one's findings. *Data collecting methods act as filters and are never neutral.* Feedback from the small discussion groups has reminded us, quite rightly, that research findings are much influenced by the methods used to collect the data. That is why (i) surveys, (ii) interviews, (iii) a website search and (iv) the involvement of participants at this Conference have been employed in our methodology. These methods complement and contrast with each other and so increase confidence in the findings. That is why we are using both qualitative and quantitative methods as well as two surveys: a national and a local one.

We were careful to provide each potential participant with details of our research project so that they could give (or withhold) their informed consent to take part. Care has been taken to conduct this research ethically.

I have also been impressed by the fact that the two research projects continue to complement each other – each has provided a comparison and a contrast with the other.

Those who are experienced in empirical research will know that research is 'messy'. Our best intentions are never matched by reality. The sample size is hardly ever as large as was intended. Some interviewees do not turn up – and so on. These two research projects did not escape the messiness of empirical research. The Steering Group is well aware that the findings of these projects must be limited, for example, by the size and nature of our sample of those who chose to respond to the surveys. Group feedback identified a range of limitations to 'our' methodology. Most of your criticism was leveled at the use of surveys. They are, you said, a blunt instrument, not popular and too restrictive in the responses available – and most of you reported on the concerns about the use of the word primarily!

What of the task of interpreting the primary data?

Both research projects have generated a huge amount of data and some straightforward ways of analyzing that data are being used. You saw the sort of analyses that Philip was employing when he used SurveyMonkey to attempt an early set of findings arising from your completed surveys. *But it is clear that the task of <u>interpreting</u> our primary data is our most challenging task yet.*

Could the survey be adapted into a teaching and learning resource?

We have heard from a number of respondents that completing this survey has enabled them to enrich their own understandings and practice of mission. I am convinced that here we have the potential of a significant teaching and learning resource. The survey will, of course, need to be adapted for this purpose. Some of the statements will need to be changed.

I have come across this before. Respondents have said to me that participating in my research has helped them to clarify their thinking on a particular topic and this has led me to adapt my survey (or whatever data collecting instrument I am using) into a teaching/learning resource.

Section 2: The three presentations

Bishop Michael's presentation on Missio Dei

I want to draw attention to Bishop Michael's last section. Here we were introduced to the three central emphases to which USPG is committed.

1. **The first is holistic mission.** Here is USPG's emphasis on the witness of scripture to the activity of God,
    *   in creation,
    *   through the saving acts of Christ,
    *   and looking to the coming together of all things in Christ,
    that gives us an agenda far wider and deeper than either a crusading evangelism, or what might unkindly be called a social gospel. Those who fail to preach Christ AND those who fail to see Christ in the poor, have minimized the *missio Dei.*
2. **The second is USPG's commitment to the Church**. USPG works with the Church because they believe that it is an integral part of the *missio Dei* and

for them the Anglican Communion is a given – a gift from God. Therefore USPG plays its part in the Communion in the spirit of inter-dependence and mutual responsibility. It is necessary to recognise and respect the different and sometimes conflicting contexts in which USPG's partners are seeking to engage in God's mission.

3. **The third emphasis** guiding the future of USPG needs to be a dynamic spirituality which does not depend upon an institution or a book but from the love of the Father, incorporating us in the Son, through the power of the Spirit.

Wonsuk Ma's Theological Motivation for Pentecostal Mission – mission as proclamation

I want to highlight three issues that had great resonance for me.

1. I was much taken with a concept that was entirely new to me – The Prophet-hood of All Believers: the democratization of ministry and mission. We saw that this is linked to the establishment of local leadership at the earliest point possible. Has this something to do with the spread of Pentecostalism throughout the world? I want to reflect further on all that. There are, for me, important issues being raised here for other parts of the Church.

2. The Pentecostal strategy for social transformation impressed me. This was illustrated by' Teen Challenge' and their drug rehabilitation programme with such levels of success. I was the chair of a Christian Charity that worked among alcoholics and drug addicts for many years and so I know some-thing of how demanding is the work among those addicted to alcohol and drugs.

3. I noted that the emphasis on proclamation in Pentecostal Mission includes caring for the poor. This goes further in that the sense of empowerment experienced by the poor and marginalized becomes a significant part of their identity. They see themselves as those who are commissioned and called by God. Although enriching and empowering, we were told that it can bring problems too.

Ann Morisy's presentation on Mission as Transformation

Ann described research that shows faith being linked to well being. We looked at the fraudulent narrative that money makes us happy and that, although circumstances matter, they do not matter as much as we think. We were reminded of the work of Martin Seligman in positive psychology which has emerged from the earlier disci-plines of humanistic psychology or person-centred psychology. It was good for me to be reminded of these significant developments in psychology as I used to teach these areas to undergraduates training to be psychologists, teachers, social workers and other professionals. Ann went on to give us insights into early Methodism and the Salvation Army.

It was Ann's economies of abundance and scarcity that grabbed me. We are so caught up in this pursuit of things that are on offer in the market that we find it hard

to believe that there is also a reliable economy of abundance. The tendency has been to assume that the economy of abundance belongs to the realm of heaven rather than earth. This brings us to Jesus who through his death rescues us from our sin, although Jesus also brings salvation to us through the way in which he lived his life. In his actions and teaching, Jesus shows us how we can participate in this reliable economy of abundance. And then we came to Ann's straightforward thesis, as she called it. '*When we muster an intention to do things like Jesus (i.e. to follow Jesus) – even in the most modest of ways, we arrive at the portal of abundance where virtuous processes flow and grace cascades*'. I will take that away from this conference and reflect further on the '*transformational power of faith so as to make it urgent to articulate and promote the resources at the heart of faithfulness that lead to human flourishing*'.

Kirsteen Kim's reflection on mission theology as seen in Edinburgh 1910 and to compare that with Edinburgh 2010; and to learn the latest plans for Edinburgh 2010

Janice and I attended the Study Theme One Conference in the Bossey Ecumenical Institute in Geneva earlier this year. I am highlighting issues that emerged during that valuable experience in Geneva as well as quoting from part of Kirsteen's presentation last night. Kirsteen makes it clear that to compare and contrast 1910 with 2010 and to do justice to all the issues would require a book.

So, one hundred years later, what is the theological worldview of Edinburgh 2010? Kirsteen answers this question with:

> This time theology is being addressed but the theology of the conference itself is not stated so again we need to read between the lines. First, we can deduce the theology of Edinburgh 2010 from its governance. Somewhat like Edinburgh 1910, Edinburgh 2010 was initiated by several (male) mission thinkers and mission executives from Northern European Protestant bodies, some of them in Scotland. They contacted the World Council of Churches to see if they planned to mark the centenary, since the original conference had led directly to the Council's formation. The WCC reaction was to involve itself in the planning but not to claim the centenary. So the WCC is just one of the twenty stakeholders, although it is contributing the largest funds. Edinburgh 2010 is therefore an experiment in a new kind of ecumenism. In the twenty-first century, the WCC is having to adjust the way it works to suit the reality of world Christianity. The reality is that the Protestant churches of Europe and the Orthodox churches around which the WCC was constructed no longer represent a majority of the world's non-Catholic Christians. Whereas in 1910 the cooperation of European denominations would have international repercussions because they were closely related to European states and they also controlled the churches on the mission field, the reconciliation of churches in Europe can no longer be expected to have much impact worldwide. The unity of Europe, to which the ecumenical movement made such a significant contribution,

has been achieved and the rest of the world no longer expects to be troubled by European wars. The daughter churches of Europe in the former colonies are now independent, many North American churches always had a mind of their own, and many more new forms of churches have emerged from multiple origins in different parts of the world. In view of this complex situation and of the impasse in Faith and Order discussions of organic unity, the WCC now see it has a role as a catalyst of wider unity, and this view informs WCC participation in Edinburgh 2010.[1]

Some concluding comments

1. These are some of the many issues that have emerged for me during the Conference as significant, surprising and challenging.
2. I am still pondering the question 'Can different approaches to mission live together and if so, how?
3. I am looking forward to the outcomes and findings of the two research projects so that we can gain further insights into what drives and what hinders mission.
4. I am keen to receive references to empirical research into areas close to the concerns of the two projects.
5. I am enthusiastic about being involved in plans for the next stage(s) of the research, including ways in which our survey may be adapted for a teaching/learning resource in mission studies.
6. I look forward to hearing more news of Edinburgh 2010 and to reading its publications.

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1 Extract from Kirsteen's notes of her talk to us which she gave to me.

In-depth interviews with local survey leaders

This research, carried out by Nigel Rooms, was intended to provide a comparative local and contextual study to support the national research in order to ascertain the theological basis for mission in local churches in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire at the beginning of the twenty-first century. [1] Data collection was based on interviews with selected church ministers who responded to the initial survey and were willing for further research to be conducted on their views. Dr Rooms conducted these interviews before the national interviews were undertaken and his conclusions were examined by the Mission Theology Advisory Group. His findings and experience were taken forward into the process for the national interviews which followed.

A key issue for the interviews was on what criteria to evaluate the theological positions of the churches. Dr Rooms used Bevans' and Schroeder's work on mission theological perspectives as detailed above and which could be expected to be present in the survey of local churches in Nottinghamshire. A key interview question was then developed to expose the position of the church/interviewee on the Bevans and Schroeder spectrum. Each interview explored with the respondent their stated five priorities for mission action in relation to their understanding of mission. The survey also identified the issue of mission as justice as one to explore in the interviews with a specific question.

Selecting the churches for interview

The initial survey was followed up by interviews with selected church ministers. These were identified on the following basis:

> … 48% of the respondents agreed to be interviewed – a total of 47 possible interviewees. Overall in the total sample of 98 there was a split of Anglican to non-Anglican respondents which Dr Rooms rounded up to 60:40. 16 interviews gave a substantial sample size and associated data. It was also necessary to go this high in order to have sufficient non-Anglican interviewees to make a comparison. About 30% of respondents agreed to the mission as justice question so Dr Rooms was looking for around 5 of the 16 interviews to be in this category.

He then filtered the respondents who agreed strongly or agreed with the justice question with those agreeing to be interviewed. This produced 2 Anglicans and 1 non-Anglican in the 'strongly agree' field and 7, 2 and 1 unknown in the 'agree' field.

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1 The researcher in his professional role within the Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham is also interested in the missiologies of Anglican churches in the diocese and this may result in a separate internal study for the Diocese alone.

Since the 'strongly agree': 'agree' respondents were overall in the ratio of approx 2:3 he then needed 2 of three 'strongly agree's and three 'agree's. He also needed to keep the Anglican/non-Anglican ratio the same which meant one of each from the 'strongly agree's and 2 Anglicans (from 3 in total) in the 'agree's. These were chosen randomly where possible except in one case where he used local knowledge to distinguish someone whom he felt would be more in the justice category. This gave 3 Anglican and 2 non-Anglican interviewees – matching the overall ratio.

Of the ten remaining interviewees required these needed to be 6 Anglican and 4 non-Anglican. Dr Rooms filtered the 47 possibles for all those considered in the justice category above and then randomly chose the six Anglicans from what was remaining. On a random choice of the non-Anglicans he ended up with 2 Baptists and 2 Salvation Army so he changed one Salvation Army to the only Pentecostal that had agreed to be interviewed.

This initially gave a total of 15 interviewees: nine Anglicans and six non-Anglicans who were 2 Baptists, 1 Methodist, 1 URC, 1 Salvation Army and 1 Pentecostal. Because the Roman Catholic constituency were conspicuously missing, a Roman Catholic interviewee was added, making 16 interviews in total.

The interviewees were not filtered for gender but three of the nine Anglican interviewees were female coincidentally mirroring the approximate ratio of men to women clergy in the Diocese. There were no female interviewees amongst the non-Anglicans.

All were in 'sole charge' of a church/es, except the Salvation Army Officer who had a regional oversight role. Two of the Anglicans had additional oversight roles as Area Deans. All presented as White British (although this was not asked as a question) except for the Pentecostal who was originally from Pakistan.

Issues emerging from the Interview Data

Sixteen interviews were conducted on clergy who had responded to the survey.[1] The initial assumptions were that clergy do not fully represent the church and there is evidence that their views as leaders are in many ways 'ahead' of their congregations. The interviews confirmed our suspicion that the survey could be turned into an excellent tool for learning about mission and exploring mission ideas with congregations.

The following initial research conclusions and comments could be made from the interviews, which was done manually prior to confirmation by NVIVO analysis:

> **Most of my congregations are beginning to see this that we are in a missionary context in this country even in the little rural villages…**

- Clergy universally were convinced of the missionary task in Britain today and understand mission as the core purpose of the church, yet demonstrated a wide range of understandings about mission and an even wider range of mission actions. While we have no base line data from a previous age the research group suggests that this finding is significant since we suspect that until perhaps even 15 to twenty years ago the purpose of the church would

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1 A detailed analysis of interview responses is given at Appendix K.

have been understood much more in pastoral rather than missionary terms. However the view that mission happens overseas and we simply give money for it still prevails in congregations, but is being addressed. This should raise questions for the mission agencies.

- Matthew 28:19-20 remained a key biblical driver and even 'default position' for the clergy's understanding of mission – across the traditions.

I would never ever want to disconnect mission from the core life of the church. It's not an add on, it's not something we do when we have finished fund raising or we've finished making our services nice...

- The institution of the church was both a driver and a drag on mission and there was evidence that mission can too easily be reduced to creating church growth to answer the issue of institutional decline.

- There was some receptivity of the idea of *missio Dei* amongst clergy, but only some. It was strongest amongst those clergy with greater oversight in their denominations –with a few sophisticated understandings of it including one which might be termed '*perichoretic*' mission. The majority of clergy, if pushed would still hold to the proclamation of Christ as their preferred position. A small number held to a pneumatological understanding of the *missio Dei*:

I mean we're the hands of Christ, but the Holy Spirit is the empowerer and facilitator, he paves the way, we look for where he's at work and then go and get stuck in...

- There was a fairly strong movement however to hold the different strands, threads or positions on mission together in a *holistic* way, which distanced itself from the dichotomies of the past. There was evidence then of some kind of 'paradigm shift' going on.

- There were real nuances and some resolvable tensions of belief and action about mission between what is continuous and discontinuous in the different approaches. Nevertheless real discontinuities did exist between the varying ideological stances especially around approaches to other faiths, the proclamation / justice question and the definition of who is a Christian or not – especially in rural communities.

- There was not much enthusiasm for mission as radical justice, political intervention and certainly not direct action. So we might ask whether describing ourselves as 'holistic' could be a kind of 'get out clause' when it comes to the prophetic voice in mission. Sometimes mission as justice was simply misinterpreted as being charitable.

- There was some evidence that mission activity is *not* connected to a deep understanding of the nature of God. A demonstration of any spirituality of mission was missing in some of the interviewees. The accusation that the church remains religious without being spiritual could therefore be said to be somewhat upheld.

Phase 3.2

In-depth interviews with national survey leaders

Mission can mean so many different things to different people...
Mission agency leader

As the third part of a triangulated study of national bodies eleven in-depth interviews were conducted between February 2009 and February 2010. The national interviews were conducted in the same constituencies that had completed the survey in phase two of the project, namely the Global Mission Network of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, the Global Connections network.[1]

Relationship of the interview phase to the previous phases of the research

The purpose of the interview phase of the research was to explore in depth both the process and content of replies to the national survey. The research team was interested in the process participants undertook to complete the survey as well as what the replies revealed and the relationship between these two. In particular, the interview process made it possible to explore comments which had been made in the comment boxes on each page of the survey. The interview questions explored both of these areas using a template of questions devised by Dr Rooms (see Appendix G).

The most controversial aspects of the survey had been the use of terms such as 'primarily' and 'best' as qualifiers for the statements which pushed the participants towards a particular position. It was therefore useful to explore with interviewees how they had felt about responding to statements which contained these terms and whether they felt concerned about having to 'rank' issues of mission in this way. Equally it was necessary to explore further with respondents the nature of their theological understandings of foundations for mission which was at the heart of the Edinburgh 2010 research question. By enabling a more open and intensive discussion of key concepts and ideas, the limitations of the survey approach and its response system could be addressed. It was clear from comments on the survey that some respondents felt frustrated and also felt that, given the nature of theological language and concepts, the statements and responses could not easily be focused in a survey style. The need to put the survey statements in some sort of context and illustrate them with examples from experience could be tested in the interview process.

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1 A detailed analysis of the four interviews conducted with members of Global Mission Network is given at Appendix J.

We hold a spectrum of mission approaches and are trying to hold them together but projects may emphasise one or the other style or approach.

National denominational leader

Method

The interview framework designed by Dr Rooms and intended also to be used in the national interviews was followed closely by one of the research team in their interviews but needed adaptation by the two interviewers.[1] The reasons for adapting the interview framework were that two of those interviewed in the national church and agency sample did not complete the survey themselves. One did not complete the survey because their predecessor had completed it. The other attempted to complete it as a denominational world mission team but they were unable to come to conclusions. Therefore the survey was passed to another senior member of staff for completion. This resulted in a methodological weakness, making it difficult to make detailed analysis in the same way or direct comparisons between the three parts of the sample. This focused on some difficulties with the process part of the survey. However, the exploration of theological aspects of the interview was conducted in similar ways.

Analysis of the interviews was carried out with broadly similar methods. Two of the interviewers recorded and transcribed interviews closely. The third interviewer recorded through note-taking on four occasions and through recording and transcribing with one interview. Data loss will be greater through the third method but sufficient data was preserved to enable conclusions to be reached.

The size of the sample overall (11) was sufficient to draw conclusions but could not claim to be representative of the entire range of churches, agencies and organisations sampled through the survey. Given this sample size, the conclusions drawn would need further research to hold sufficient validity to represent general trends.

Theological framework

The theological framework adopted throughout the interview process was also that argued by Bevans and Schroeder in *Constants in Context* and as explored by the speakers at the BIAMS conference.

It was difficult to identify previous available research that fed directly into this research and which would provide a context for understanding and analysing the interview data. The relationship between this kind of empirical research and mission studies was, interestingly, found to be distant. Such empirical research in mission studies as has been undertaken tends to focus more on the experience of missionaries in the field. Hence the theological framework for the interview phase was theoretical rather than empirical.

Issues emerging from the interview data

The nature of the representational role

All respondents were asked to answer the survey and participate in the interviews as *representatives* of their church or agency. We were less concerned with personal

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1 For this reason detailed analysis in the appendices is restricted to those interviews which followed the designed template of questions. A summary analysis of the other interviews is included at Appendix I.

views. In reality however this was not easy to adhere to. The difference between personal views and organisational views were often blurred, though more so for the churches and less so for the agencies. The nature of many of the churches at local and national level is that they hold a simultaneously a number of different positions and approaches to complex theological issues. In effect this means that acting as a representative of a church cannot be easily equated with being a representative of an organisation that holds clear policy. Denominational Synods and Conferences do declare positions but these are often the result of compromises or a 'delicate balance' between different approaches that enable all views to hold together. This was the case with the churches in the national interviews.

With the agencies from the national samples (from Global Mission Network and Global Connections) it became clear that the majority of their spokespeople were able to say more confidently that they represented the views of their agency. One in particular said that their views were not accepted fully in the agency but they hoped the agency would move forward theologically. Issues about representation and speaking about mission on behalf of an organisation could be recognised across the sample. Others recognised that they had themselves learned or being moved to reflect, even 'grow' by the process of completing the survey and this had to be held in tension with the representative role.

We were therefore able to conclude from this data that churches and agencies work in very different ways and this is reflected in the way in which office holders attempt to integrate their personal views with those of the church or agency and represent them.

> **I was trying to do this on the basis of what the organisation would think. I expect there will be bias towards my personal views.** *Mission agency leader*

Potential of the survey for development as tool for mission education and reflection

There was agreement across the sample that whilst some had difficulty completing the survey it had been a valuable exercise that enabled reflection and theological engagement at a level beyond what was possible normally for individuals and teams. This led to a widespread view that the survey could be adapted for wider use as a learning tool in mission theology and practice. One interviewee commented that their organisation had a profile of the kind of people who would support their work and so a mission audit and reflection tool would be of benefit to agencies trying to reach a target constituency for support. This encouraged us to see the adaptation and refinement of the survey at a number of levels as a useful outcome of the project. It could be adapted for use as a learning tool in mission theology for use by ministerial and theological practitioners as well as local church members.

> **We probably don't reflect enough theologically. We are activist and concentrate on what we have to do rather than operate in reflective mode. We run around the same field instead of looking elsewhere – to the sidelines.** *National denominational leader*

Approaches to mission

The validity of the diverse nature of mission engagement was agreed upon by all interviewees. Mission is different in its expression in different places and this is the nature of its richness, versatility and adaptability. However, agreement on the theological *drivers* for Christian mission was more elusive. Of the three approaches outlined above from Bevans and Schroeder's work, proclamation proved to be the preferred model of the majority of interviewees in the local and Global Connections samples. The national sample of members of the Global Mission Network showed a clear difference in approach between the churches and the agencies. The agency representatives interviewed were able to articulate a coherent theology based largely though not exclusively on the *missio Dei* and liberating service. The churches, with their different role of holding the various approaches together were less likely to say one approach was more prominent than another. In one Roman Catholic agency interview *missio Dei* was the preferred approach but their work also included proclamation and liberating service. In this interview the agency representative did not want to associate with any form of proclamation that involved proselytism. A different Roman Catholic agency interviewee saw social justice as the filter for understanding God, so that empathy with those in need was a transforming (and therefore missional) experience.

Overall, we were able to determine from the interviews that whilst there was a high level of awareness of the *missio Dei* among the sample it could not be said to be the foremost driver of mission for the majority of the sample. There was little evidence of a spirituality of or in mission but the term 'holistic' was significant.

> **I would actually see the mission of God and Scripture as being two sides of the same coin.** *Mission agency leader*

Social justice and mission

It was in the relationship between mission and social justice that the biggest fault lines emerged between the various parts of the sample. The Global Connections sample which reflects the broad evangelical constituency expressed an enthusiasm for social justice, transformation and care of creation but did not understand these activities as mission in themselves. They understood such activity as the platform through which Christ's love could be shown and proclaimed. Mission activity was understood to be the setting or platform for proclamation. The word 'justice' for this constituency had a different resonance: only the return of Christ can bring true justice. In the Global Mission Network interviews, for the churches and agencies justice was seen as essentially equivalent to mission and was understood in itself as part of God's mission in the world. Both Roman Catholic agency interviewees showed there was a strong affirmation of social action and justice as mission as this strand runs throughout their ministry.

The interviews demonstrated that real differences in the understanding of mission exist between different parts of the sample and therefore across the range of churches and agencies in the UK and Ireland. These differences reveal an ongoing issue about what constitutes mission and how this is expressed in practice. An important question

arising from this is: do these differences find tangible expression in mission practice and what does that mean for the way partnership is expressed and lived out? It was also important to note that a strong relationship between eschatology and mission was evident only in one group finding no expression in other parts of the sample. This particular fault line resonates across attitudes to the practice and outcome of mission and asks questions about the nature of the foundations for mission. Do drivers for mission begin in Christ's ministry and commission, or do drivers also resonate from God's future, as Christians are called to create the conditions for Christ's return? Understanding these issues helps to contextualise different attitudes to social justice and to the role and activities of Christians in mission.

> **The key thing has to be addressing injustice and poverty. So that people's lives are actually transformed and that is an expression of mission.** *Agency leader*

National and local interviews compared

In this third phase of the study, the results of the survey were interrogated more fully by in-depth interviews: 16.3% of the total of those completing the local survey were interviewed and 15.7 % of national survey respondents. Those interviewed therefore included national church and agency leaders and some clergy and ministers in the county of Nottinghamshire. All of those interviewed therefore were in some position of leadership, but their relationship to those within their organisations and churches, and their ability to articulate their understanding of mission was coloured, and in some cases made more difficult, by the office they held. For example, some from the national bodies identified a tension between their own views and those of their organisation, another found that the team which tried to complete the survey were unable to agree on a common view. Leadership in mission is therefore complicated by different kinds of relationships and responsibilities. In particular, the interview data from the local interviews suggested that the relationship between the local Minister and their congregations is not simply and clearly defined. Whilst the Ministers in the local survey expressed their understanding of mission the majority were also eager to say that their view was not necessarily shared by all in their congregation. It was likely that the Ministers were ahead of their congregations in understanding mission and theology as is to be expected given their levels of training, but this raises the question of where ordinary Christians, who live and work in the community, work out their own understanding of the foundations for mission.

The tension between mission and social justice was a particularly interesting theme, especially in the national survey where some of the people interviewed set out mission activity, including activity in pursuit of social justice as a platform for proclamation, tilling the field, so to speak. It is interesting to set this view in the context of Wonsuk Ma's paper, where the essential driver, through proclamation, is to create the conditions for God's reign to occupy the *now*. This range of mission possibility: creating conditions for God's action, proclaiming God's news, and transforming the human social environment, appear as different strands or entry points to a bigger mission picture in which all of these are understood to interact in some way. There was a distinct desire in both local and national interviewees to hold the different approaches through the term 'holistic mission.' Thus the survey responses showed, and the interviews confirmed, that particular strands, foundations for mission or perspectives on mission are not necessarily exclusive. In the local sample justice issues were also seen alongside proclamation though for many their congregations' understanding of justice was related to the broad range of development issues such as Fair Trade rather than challenging unjust political structures. Justice was seen

as being part of mission alongside other approaches, again contributing to a more holistic picture of mission in operation in the world.

Some areas we identified for future research

Bible as driver for mission

The local survey in particular pointed to the Bible as providing foundational texts for mission, particularly Matthew 28:19–20. In view of the fact that this text also appears on websites, it would be interesting to explore how far certain Biblical texts not only provide inspiration but become hardened into drivers for mission activity.

Missio Dei *at congregational level*

Another issue for future research would be to test the receptivity of the concept of *missio Dei* in local congregations and to find out more about how congregations relate to the mission leadership provided by clergy. The survey could be used in by congregations in local churches, but it would require considerable adaptation to make it an easy tool to use for this purpose.

Mission and Social Justice

Another significant area for further study would be to examine more deeply the relationship between mission and social justice [1] and indeed the notion of 'justice' altogether. In particular, it would be useful to look for evidence that even if different churches and agencies at national and local level, across the denominations, have different entry points and drivers for mission, that they still cover common ground in the process of mission activity. Examining stories, for example might demonstrate that the 'difficulty' experienced by survey respondents in dealing with the word 'justice' is resolved by looking at what is actually done in the name of mission.

1 Currently being worked on by the Mission Theology Advisory Group.

Conclusions and outcomes

The Edinburgh 2010 study process asked us to look at the foundations for mission. To recap:

> **The task of this study group is to explore how a Trinitarian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit relates to the theory and practice of mission; how the confession that God has a missionary identity impacts Christian witness; how a discernment of the Trinitarian God's inner relationships and love impacts ecclesiology, community life and society.**

In particular, we were asked to investigate a number of questions:

1. The relation of the Trinitarian nature of God to our understanding of Christian mission.
2. The relation of Christology to mission theology and practice.
3. The relation of the work of the Holy Spirit to mission theology and practice.
4. How does our understanding of the mission of the Triune God affect our ecclesiology and church practice?
5. What do we mean by salvation, present and future? What is its link to conversion, baptism and participation in the sacramental life of the church?
6. How does our understanding of salvation affect the way we do mission?
7. How does mission engagement affect our biblical hermeneutics and vice-versa?

In order to engage with these questions, we built them into the design of our research. The questions were principally addressed in the research through the theological statements in the survey and through follow up in the interviews. The papers presented at the BIAMS conference also provided considered responses to the questions for a more purely theological point of view and the interaction between them particularly gave insights into how our understanding of salvation can affect the way we do mission and its links to church (questions 4, 5, 6).

Questions 1, 2, 3 and 7 were also especially taken up by the survey and the in-depth interviews. We also took account of these questions in our analyses which highlighted particular issues concerning the foundations for mission.

We undertook this research in the four nations of the UK and Ireland by looking at three interlocking areas: website analysis, a survey covering topic areas suggested

by the questions and in-depth interviews with some survey respondents. One of the interesting things we discovered was that the *process* was as important as the content. People were interested in the challenges presented by the survey and the opportunity it gave to reflect on what their church or agency thought or did. Consequently, one of the important outcomes of this research project has been to create three learning tools for churches or agencies interested in mission to use in website, mission audit or mission reflection. We hope that further and extended use of these tools will enable more data to be accumulated which will further elucidate the Edinburgh 2010 study process beyond the conference itself.

Conclusions against the task of the Study Process

Explore…how a Trinitarian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit relates to the theory and practice of mission…

Our initial hypothesis about what the research would show in response to the Edinburgh 2010 questions was that public statements about mission by UK and Ireland churches, agencies and institutions do not necessarily match up with the mission practice, understanding and outworking of those same bodies.

Mission Language

The three parts of the study showed our hypothesis to be upheld. Mission is a word open to many interpretations, reconfigurations and different understandings. This meant that respondents often had difficulty *starting* with theological statement and suggested that some of the study process guidance questions have been asked the wrong way round. It is the messy praxis of mission that most often enables people to see more clearly how the theology works and also where the gaps seem to be. Further, asking people to apply theological principles to ideas of mission can lead to a difficulty with making sense of the vast diversity of what it all means in practice. We saw this not only in the sheer variety of material offered on mission-oriented websites, but also in the participants' engagement with the statements of the survey, where they wanted to wrestle with and argue about the possible interpretations of the wording. This is important, because it suggests that our language, including theological language about mission, tends to be limiting, even bundling God into a straight-jacket, while the diversity of God's action in the world is without limit and people everywhere respond to it even if they don't know exactly what it should be called or how it should be categorized. Yet words which suggest or imply *relationship*, people responding graciously to others, are strongly endorsed and these emerge as descriptors of mission. As such, this kind of language reflects the Trinitarian mystery of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, even if it is not set out as a theological statement. Further, this points to the interesting idea that there are other ways of describing Trinitarian understanding than the 'orthodox' or 'received' ways of doing so, and that mission is a particularly good generator of such descriptions.

Explore…how the confession that God has a missionary identity impacts Christian witness…

Missio Dei

Respondents at interview wanted to provide *contexts* for their responses and to tell stories from their experience and the experience of their churches or agencies which would illustrate those contexts. This means that there is no way to address the theologically oriented questions of the Study Theme in a vacuum. We might even go so far as to ask whether the foundations for mission have *any* meaning outside the lived experience of Christians working in the world alongside others, finding out what God is doing, and so the pictures of mission activity on websites and the messages they give out matter perhaps even more than statements of vision or of even of faith. This has theological implications, because if we assert that mission is *God's* mission, then we would also be arguing that God's mission has no intrinsic *human* meaning except in so far as it is entrusted to (all?) human beings and thereby becomes apparent and open to theological investigation in mission working itself out within the creation. Again, a photograph on a website or a snippet of story told by a mission worker can convey a great deal about the *missio Dei*, but it is very likely that web designers, and churches and agencies themselves do not necessarily realise how significant this can be.

What mission 'is' and what mission 'ought' to be

This embedding of theological drivers in human experience would further imply that mission activity of all kinds (including those primarily Christological and/or Pneumatological expressions which were described in the local survey interviews) can become conduits through which the *missio Dei* becomes operative. This raises interesting questions about the role of leadership in mission and also about the purpose and function of the Church in the outworking of *missio Dei*, and even more interestingly points to a tension, even a struggle, between what those leaders believe mission *ought* to be and what it actually *is*, a point noted in comments by several national and local respondents to the survey. What mission *ought* to be comes from an understanding of mission theology and is the prime constituent of the concept of *missio Dei*, what mission *is* comes from all of those working in diverse forms of mission, whether that be mission workers, the experience of reverse mission, or local congregations just getting round to Fair Trade initiatives.

Clearly, the closer 'is' is to 'ought', the more nearly the foundations and drivers for mission should match actual mission practice, but this was not true for any of the respondents. This was also highlighted by the way the three papers on 'mission as…' at the BIAMS conference so obviously complemented and interrogated each other and made the point about the difficulty of translating theological perspective into 'real life', whether it be working out how transformation happens in Ann Morisy's paper or making sense of an expected end-time that does not come in Wonsuk Ma's.

Public language about what mission is did not translate perfectly into what churches and agencies thought they were about and this requires creative solutions for the tension between what mission is and what it ought to be. In some cases this was 'solved' by thinking around more holistic views of mission which would tie public language or foundational biblical texts into the general messiness of mission activity. Any lag between the vision of local church leaders and the understanding of congregations

could also be dealt with by looking for a more holistic understanding. For example, if congregations still think of mission just in terms of sending missionaries to foreign countries, then that could be contained within a more comprehensive view of mission held by the leader, rather than just becoming an anxiety for local leaders about outdated concepts of mission. However, there is also potential, within 'holistic' mission for Christians to misuse the concept of *missio Dei*, calling all kinds of thing mission and blaming any damage on God, but the research showed willingness to think deeply and to reflect on complex mission issues and to struggle to answer honestly and with integrity.

The results of the research showed that in some ways there is clearly a creative and fruitful tension between 'is' and 'ought' and this is reflected in survey results from all three sets of data showing: a positive view of partnership, a generous view of people of other faiths, yet more confused response about how God works through others and who is really best equipped to share God's love in particular cultures. This tension is perhaps illustrated by a story from one of the interviews where the interviewee said that he wanted to become a priest to follow and be like a loved mentor but was told to tell the authorities who would examine his vocation that instead he wanted 'to save souls'….He asked what that meant and was told 'you'll find out'….

> **Explore…how a discernment of the Trinitarian God's inner relationships and love impacts ecclesiology, community life and society…**

God and Church

There was an interesting tension too at local level where despite a hundred years of mission theological thinking and the absorption of mission experience and reflection on Christian engagement with other cultures and peoples, despite also, the experience of reverse mission in the UK and Ireland, there was still a continuing feeling at local level that for congregations 'foreign' mission involves sending missionaries 'out there' and that involvement in such mission means supporting others, through the church, rather than becoming actively involved. Yet at the same time, clergy were on board with the idea of mission as a function of the Church and wanted to live the experience. They were aware that God was at work in the world, not just in the church and part of the mission imperative was to make that real for their congregations. This in itself showed that there has been an important positive shift in mission involvement and understanding for clergy over the last 20–30 years.

Consequently, despite public assertion of key mission language in vision and mission statements on websites, churches and agencies continue to struggle with what mission means in practice. They *should* struggle, because real life does not happen in neat theological packages. Foundations for mission were discerned in scripture (especially Matthew 28:19), and in mission theological 'lenses', but ultimately praxis carves out meanings for mission, like water flowing through rock. The different denominations and agencies each have their own unique channels, caverns and wellsprings, as their websites demonstrate, but their paths are interestingly convergent, and even where they differ about perspective (for example about the relationships

between mission and development) the research showed that they all move in the same direction in areas broadly covered by the five (six) marks of mission. This is shown by those survey responses where statements carried a large amount of general agreement. The final picture is one of creative diversity among the national churches and agencies, with local church leaders showing an outward-facing desire for mission across the denominations.

Because we discovered that the process was equally, if not more important, than the results of the research and because so many people had said they had found the process helpful, we decided to create three tools to enable others to use the process for themselves. Accordingly the outcomes of this research project have been a short document outlining some questions for discussion for anyone looking at design of a mission-oriented website; various adaptations of the survey for use by congregations, theological education, leaders – such as diocesan staff, and others interested in the mission foundations of their group or organisation; and a template of questions for more in-depth exploration of the issues and reflection on mission understanding and experience. We hope that these tools will help Christians and promote mission enquiry, audit and reflection. We ourselves learned a great deal about our own mission perspectives from undertaking the research and we hope others will too.

Websites visited in first part of website research

Pioneers – Action Partners   www.pioneers-uk.org

Aim International (UK)   www.aimint.org/eu

Arab World Ministries   www.awm.org/uk

BMS World Mission   www.bmsworldmission.org

Catholic Agency for Overseas Development   www.cafod.org.uk

Christian Aid   www.christianaid.org.uk

Christians Abroad   www.cabroad.org.uk

Christians Aware   www.christiansaware.co.uk

CMS   www.cms-uk.org

CMS Ireland   www.cmsireland.org

Church Pastoral Aid Society   www.cpas.org.uk

Churches Ministry Among the Jews   www.cmj.org.uk

Community of Christ the Prince of Peace   www.newdawn.org.uk

Community of Saint John   www.communityofstjohn.btik.com

Community of the Beatitudes   www.the-beatitudes.org

Cor et Lumen Christi   www.coretlumenchristi.org

Crosslinks   www.crosslinks.org

European Christian Mission   www.ecmbritain.org

The Faith Movement   www.faith.org.uk

Feed the Minds   www.feedtheminds.org

Franciscan Friars of the Renewal   www.franciscanfriars.com

Frontiers   www.frontiers.org.uk

Grassroots   www.grassroots.org.uk

IFES Trust   www.ifesworld.org

Intercontinental Church Society   www.ics-uk.org

International Nepal Fellowship   www.inf.org/inf-uk

Interserve   www.interserve.org.uk

Irish Missionary Union   www.imu.ie

Latin Link   www.latinlink.org

Leprosy Mission   www.leprosymission.org.uk

MECO   **www.aboutmeco.org**

Miles Jesu   **www.milesjesu.com**

Monastic Fraternity of Jesus   **http://monasticfamilyfraternityofjesus.
wordpress.com**

Mothers' Union   **www.themothersunion.org**

Oasis Trust   **www.oasisuk.org**

OMF   **www.omf.org.uk**

Operation Mobilisation   **www.uk.om.org**

People International   **www.peopleintl.org.uk**

Pilgrims Community   **www.pilgrimscommunity.com**

SIM International (UK)   **www.sim.co.uk**

South American Missionary Society   **now part of CMS**

Tearfund   **www.tearfund.org**

USPG   **www.uspg.org.uk**

Verbum Dei   **www.fmverbumdei.com**

WEC International   **www.wec-int.org.uk**

World Vision   **www.worldvision.org.uk**

Websites analysed in-depth in Phase 1.2

Church Mission Society   **www.cms-uk.org**

USPG   **www.uspg.org.uk**

BMS   **www.bmsworldmission.org**

St Joseph's Missionary Society   **www.millhillmissionaries.com**

United Reformed Church   **www.urc.org.uk**

Methodist Church   **www.methodist.org.uk**

Church of England   **www.cofe.anglican.org**

Respondents by denomination: national and local

National survey [1]

Total started survey	**70**
Total completed survey	**68**
Anglican	29
Baptist	11
Black Led Church	5
Roman Catholic	10
Independent Evangelical	14
Interdenominational Evangelical	27
Methodist	13
Migrant led church	2
Orthodox	5
Pentecostal	7
Reformed	17

2 others did not respond to the question

Local survey

Total started survey	**98**
Total completed survey	**93**
Anglican	49
Baptist	6
Evangelical Lutheran	1
Independent Evangelical	3
Methodist	5
Pentecostal	7
Quaker	1
Orthodox	1
Roman Catholic	9
Salvation Army	3
URC	2
Anonymous	6

5 respondents did not answer the question

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1   Respondents in the National survey could give more than one response.

Interviewees by denomination: national and local

National Survey

Anglican	4
Independent Evangelical	3
Methodist	1
Roman Catholic	2
URC	1

Local Survey

Anglican	9
Baptist	2
Methodist	1
Pentecostal	1
Roman Catholic	1
Salvation Army	1
URC	1

Tools for audit (1) – Questions on web design for mission related sites

Following analysis of a number of denominational and agency websites for their mission content, we have identified a number of issues which it might be useful to consider. These issues are focussed on mission, not any other areas or concerns which might be part of your site. This tool is an aid to discussion in the design and maintenance of sites which include mission as an important element, it is not a template for effective website design which should be discussed with those who have the appropriate skills and experience.

General

- Who is your site for? Is it for the general public, all Christians, members only or all of these? Will you have material for general consumption or private areas via login for your membership? Is there any crossover between the two such that the public might encounter images and text about mission that properly belongs to the in-group? If so, this might be off-putting. For example, your members might be very familiar with mission personnel and want to follow their news and pray for them. For the general public, these people are strangers and need introduction and explanation in order to empathise with them.
- Can people find your primary messages about mission easily? What will happen if people use a search box to look for mission related subjects? Will they be able to understand the search results and pick what they are looking for easily?

Text

- Do you want to use a strapline which sums up your interest, function or attitude to mission? How does that strapline relate to images on the page and your theology of mission? Is the strapline followed through with evidence? For example, if your strapline is 'transforming the world' will the user find evidence of transforming action and will there be images or stories from other parts of the world?
- Do you want your mission focus to be rooted in scripture? If so, what text(s) do you want to use and how does this relate to the content of the site? The general public may be unfamiliar with scripture and unable to make sense of it without any biblical or other context. How does your scripture come across as a driver for mission through interaction with other parts of the site?
- Do you want to root your site in a theology of mission? If so, what theological principles do you want to emphasise and where will people see these at work in other parts of the site? If you have foundational documents available, do the

statements in these documents match up to evidence on your site that these theological principles are appropriate for what you do? For example, if you have principles about conversion and change of life through mission, is there evidence of this on the site?

- Are your messages about your mission priorities clear? If you have questions yourselves about the relation between mission and social justice or mission and development, can you be sure that your site does not reflect mixed messages?
- Do you have ecclesiological principles that you want to relate to mission? If so, do your images and descriptions of church, clergy and laity support these principles? What other kinds of messages might be picked up by people who do not know very much about church?

Design

- Colour coding: do you have a signature set of colours which define your church or agency? Do you want to use colour to create paths or channels to guide readers through your site? If so do you have a mission-oriented path or channel which can be followed by enquirers?
- Social networking: do you have an appropriate range of ways for interested people to follow what you are doing? If you are likely to have a fairly static site which is not updated that frequently, social networking and blogging can help people feel they are in touch with what you are doing. How will you make sure that your primary mission messages are maintained in snippet narratives such as those used on Twitter?
- Images: what kind of images best convey your mission messages? What kind of ideas *might* be generated by your images? For example, if you have a number of images of your personnel involved with local groups from the developing world, could those images be construed as perpetuating old colonial models, patriarchal dominance, or making people from the developing world passive receivers of mission? If your images have limitations or are susceptible to multiple interpretations how will your text balance this and 'guide' the viewer to your intended message?
- What images will you choose to indicate your foundations for mission? Is the significance of those images only likely to be interpreted by Christians? If you want to attract support from the general public, what kinds of images speak most powerfully to non-Christians?
- Support: if your site wants to attract support and donations, how easy is it for people to do so and how does the site 'reward' people for their support? For example, how are people engaged and stimulated by the mission messages on the site? Can they feel connected to the leadership of the church or agency? Can they feel connected and involved with the activities of personnel? Are there stories or issues with which they can feel involved and feel they have made a difference to them? Are there interactive possibilities for supporters to react to the site?

Tools for audit (2)
Survey Template [1]

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey of Churches and Mission Agencies. The purpose of the survey is to build a reliable picture of the theological understanding, motivation and practice of mission adopted by the Churches and Mission Agencies of Britain and Ireland at this current time. The results of the questionnaire will be used in the study process leading up to the 2010 Edinburgh Conference 'Witnessing to Christ Today' and at the conference itself. Individual responses will remain confidential though the results of the whole questionnaire will be used in presenting the research. The research is jointly sponsored by the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland Global Mission Network, the British and Irish Association of Mission Studies and Global Connections.

This survey concerns the theological understandings, motivation and practice of mission of the churches and agencies in the UK and Ireland. This means that we are asking you to record your responses to the statements below in your capacity as a representative of your agency. We are not asking for personal responses in this research. The questionnaire can be completed as a group exercise or by an individual.

Please submit any other literature that you feel will expand and clarify your responses with the questionnaire, for example, mission statements, strategy documents etc.

If you require further information on completing this questionnaire please contact Janice Price at janice.price@ctbi.org.uk

Please respond to all statements and indicate your level of response on the following scale.
– strongly agree
– agree
– neither agree nor disagree
– disagree
– strongly disagree

Survey being conducted by
Janice Price - Global Mission Network (GMN) of CTBI
Philip Knights - British and Irish Association for Mission Studies (BIAMS)
Martin Lee - Global Connections

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1   Adaptations will be available on the CTBI website.
    The introductory remarks were drafted at an early stage when a questionnaire was envisaged. In fact, since the resulting material used statements rather than questions, this material is referred to in this book as a 'survey'.

Mission foundations

1. Please answer these questions using the grading system indicated

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Mission is primarily about bringing justice to the world	○	○	○	○	○
Christians have much to learn from other faith traditions	○	○	○	○	○
Mission is primarily about welcoming all people	○	○	○	○	○
Mission and development are inseparable	○	○	○	○	○
The kingdom of God transforms the world	○	○	○	○	○
Mission is primarily about the church taking the Gospel of Jesus Christ into the world	○	○	○	○	○
The kingdom includes the church but is wider than the church	○	○	○	○	○
Mission is best carried out in a particular culture by the people of that culture	○	○	○	○	○
God works through all people, regardless of their beliefs	○	○	○	○	○
Hospitality and openness to all are key aspects of mission	○	○	○	○	○
The priority for mission today is to proclaim Christ anew where people are drifting from previous Christian believing and belonging	○	○	○	○	○
Mission is relational and is best expressed through partnerships	○	○	○	○	○

Please add any relevant comments

Mission Foundations (cont'd)

2. Please answer these further questions using the grading system indicated

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disgree
The heart of mission is the proclamation of the saving work of Jesus Christ and the call to repent and believe in Him	○	○	○	○	○
The church is, by its very nature, missionary	○	○	○	○	○
Mission, without social action, is not mission	○	○	○	○	○
The kingdom of God and the church are one, there is no separation between the two	○	○	○	○	○
God works primarily through Christians	○	○	○	○	○
The church is the herald of the Kingdom	○	○	○	○	○
Mission is about initiating people into the worshipping community	○	○	○	○	○
Proclaiming the Gospel is primarily about acting justly and loving neighbours, only using words if necessary	○	○	○	○	○
Mission is best expressed in a particular place by the people of that place assisted by Christian from other contexts	○	○	○	○	○
All faiths need to learn from each other as we share much in common	○	○	○	○	○
Verbal proclamation is essential to enable people to enter the Kingdom of God	○	○	○	○	○
Christians have little to learn from those of other faiths	○	○	○	○	○
The church is essential for mission	○	○	○	○	○

Please add relevant comments here

Mission Foundations (cont'd)

3. Please answer these further questions using the grading system indicated

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disgree
Mission means confronting people with the consequences of sin	○	○	○	○	○
Mission, without proclamation, is not mission	○	○	○	○	○
For the church Mission is primarily about following God the Holy Trinity into the world	○	○	○	○	○
Mission addresses sin understood primarily as personal wrongdoing	○	○	○	○	○
Proclaiming God to the world is more important than improving peoples' lives in the world	○	○	○	○	○
God works through all people of goodwill	○	○	○	○	○
Mission challenges people to find salvation in Jesus or risk eternal condemnation	○	○	○	○	○
In a world of conflict mission must address reconciliation	○	○	○	○	○
Mission is best carried out in a particular place by Christians from any cultural background	○	○	○	○	○
Mission means telling people about the hope of heaven	○	○	○	○	○
Mission requires a call to repentance and new life in Christ	○	○	○	○	○
The church is the servant of the world	○	○	○	○	○
Development is an integral part of mission only if it helps people discover the Gospel	○	○	○	○	○
Mission partners entering contexts different from their own should undertake cross-cultural education and training	○	○	○	○	○
Proclaiming the Gospel is about using both word and deed to express God's love to all	○	○	○	○	○
Mission is enhanced by cross-cultural and world perspectives	○	○	○	○	○
The church is the sign and foretaste of the Kingdom of God	○	○	○	○	○
Mission is mainly about planting and growing churches	○	○	○	○	○
The yardstick of mission is its concern for the poorest	○	○	○	○	○

Please add relevant comments here

Mission Priorities

4. Please tick up to five of the following areas of work which indicate the priorities of your agency or church

☐ Advice and support

☐ Advocacy and campaigning

☐ Church growth

☐ Church planting

☐ Community building

☐ Development

☐ Education

☐ Emergency relief

☐ Environment

☐ Evangelization

☐ Evangelism

☐ Exchange visits

☐ Fundraising

☐ Health

☐ Inter-faith dialogue

☐ Long-term service

☐ Poverty alleviation

☐ Short-term service

☐ Support for existing Churches

☐ Theological Education

☐ Youth work

☐ Other (please specify)

Final questions

5. If you have any further comments about the priorities of your agency or church, please add them here

[ ]

6. Please indicate the denomination your church or agency is linked to (more than one answer is possible)

[ ] Anglican

[ ] Baptist

[ ] Black Led Church

[ ] Catholic

[ ] Independent (evangelical)

[ ] Interdenominational (evangelical)

[ ] Methodist

[ ] Migrant led church (not denominationally affiliated)

[ ] Orthodox

[ ] Pentecostal

[ ] Reformed

Other (please specify)

[ ]

7. The survey is confidential and you will not be identified against your answers. However in order to ensure that we have a comprehensive list of those responding, please complete the information below.

Name of person completing survey: [ ]

Agency or church: [ ]

Email Address: [ ]

Local Survey – variation for Mission Priorities

4. Please tick up to five of the following areas of work which indicate the priorities of your agency

☐ Advice and support in the community (debt counseling)

☐ Advocacy, taking action and campaigning

☐ Church planting

☐ Community building

☐ Education / Schools Work

☐ Evangelisation

☐ Evangelism

☐ "Fresh Expressions" of Church

☐ Fundraising/giving for home mission / charities

☐ Fundraising/giving for overseas mission / charities

☐ Inter-faith engagement

☐ Overseas Exchange and Mission visits

☐ Pastoral care / Bereavement Care in the Community

☐ Work with the elderly / old people's homes

☐ Parent & Toddler Groups

☐ Open children's work

☐ Open youth work

☐ Other (please specify)

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5. If you ticked advocacy, taking action and campaigning, which of these areas you are engaged in:

☐ Asylum Seekers and Refugees

☐ Environmental Issues

☐ Health

☐ Fair Trade

☐ Racial Justice

☐ World Development and poverty alleviation

☐ Other (please specify)

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Tools for audit (3.1)
Ethical interview leaflet

Theological Foundations for Mission Research and Interview

Edinburgh 2010 is the global World Mission Conference taking place in Edinburgh from June 2–6, 2010 to mark the centenary of the seminal 1910 World Missionary Conference. Over 1200 participants from across the world are expected to attend. An international Study Process is underway in preparation for the 2010 Conference from which material will be presented at the conference.

Theological Foundations for Mission is the theme the British and Irish Churches and Agencies have been asked to consider. The Global Mission Network (GMN) of CTBI, the evangelical Global Connections and the British and Irish Association for Mission Studies (BIAMS) have agreed jointly to sponsor a research project seeking to take a snapshot of the theological understandings, motivation and practice of mission of the Churches and Agencies at the beginning of the 21st century. My name is Nigel Rooms and I am conducting a local church version of this research amongst Nottinghamshire churches to compare and contrast with the national research.

So far we have completed the survey phase and we are now conducting interviews – and you have been selected for one of these. **Thank you for agreeing to take part in this way.**

I am directing this local research and can be contacted at:

Dunham House, 8 Westgate, Southwell, NG25 0JL

01636 817231

email: nigel.rooms@southwell.anglican.org should you have any questions.

The information you give in the interview will be on the following basis:
- Your participation is entirely voluntary
- You are free to refuse to answer any question
- You are free to withdraw from the research at any time

The interview material will be kept strictly confidential. Individual results and excerpts from the interviews may be made part of the final research report and study paper, but under no circumstances will your name or any identifying characteristics be included in the work.

If you would like to receive a copy of the research report and study paper, please do not hesitate to say so at the end of the interview.

<div align="right">

Dr. Nigel Rooms

18/12/08

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Appendix G

Tools for audit (3.2)
Template for focussed interview questions

The survey could be completed by an individual or a group acting on behalf of their church or agency. Or the survey could be completed by individuals (such as a mission team or congregation members) as a basis for discussion and comparison of responses. The following questions could then be used either for focussed interviews for mission research or to facilitate group discussion of the survey in groups or teams.

Questions for focussed interviews with respondents

1. Was you who filled in the survey – and as yourself /yourselves or thinking about the position of the church as a whole?

2. I want to ask some questions about the process of filling in the survey so can you remember (have a look at your copy here it is…) …. What, if anything, did you find helpful about the survey?

3. What did you find difficult about the survey?

4. Where do you find your church's authority for (its engagement in) mission?

5. How did you react to the word 'primarily' in a number of questions?

6. How did you react to the question about the 'role of the Trinity'?

7. Did you want to respond positively to all statements carrying the word mission and if so, why?

8. Did some of the questions make you think more deeply about the issues in such a way as to affect some of the later questions? (*If yes, follow up by asking for examples….*)

9. Did you choose 'neither agree nor disagree' when you meant 'don't know'?

10. Can you tell me more about your choice of response to question x (to be decided on basis of responses from the survey)?
    The responses tend to fall into three understandings of mission:
    –   Proclamation of Jesus Christ as universal saviour as essential to mission;
    –   *Missio Dei* – God is at work in the world and mission is essentially about following God's agenda and making it explicit;
    –   Mission as Transformation – transforming society, individuals etc with an emphasis on liberation theology, bias to the poor.

11. How would you describe the theological understanding of mission that characterises the church you represent? (*Compare this with their reported five priorities from the survey – how do these confirm or deny the stated theological*

understanding? *Respondents may not wish to be fitted into these categories but range across two or more – this needs to be noted.*)

12. What understanding of God underlies your church's approach to mission?

13. What do you feel about the relationship between mission and justice?

14. Finally, choose any specific or interesting responses from the survey which may not have been covered and explore them.

Appendix H

Survey Data

In the local survey, one respondent only answered questions 1–14 (the first page of the survey), and two others dropped out after question 29 (page two of the survey). These are recorded in the 'no response' column, but there is otherwise no significance in the lack of response to these questions.

	national	local	n+l	biams	all	no resp	rank
S1 Mission is primarily about bringing justice to the world							
strongly agree	6	8	14	5	19		5
agree	13	27	40	11	51		2
neither agree nor disagree	18	23	41	8	49		3
disagree	24	29	53	3	56		1
strongly disagree	9	11	20	0	20		4
S2 Mission is primarily about the church taking the Gospel of Jesus Christ into the world							
strongly agree	38	47	85	7	92		1
agree	24	41	65	7	72		2
neither agree nor disagree	4	8	12	9	21		3
disagree	3	2	5	4	9		4
strongly disagree	1	0	1	0	1		5
S3 For the Church mission is primarily about following God the Holy Trinity into the world							
strongly agree	30	19	49	9	58	1	2
agree	21	49	70	14	84		1
neither agree nor disagree	14	21	35	3	38		3
disagree	3	7	10	1	11		4
strongly disagree	2	1	3	0	3		5
S4 The Kingdom of God transforms the world							
strongly agree	49	55	104	17	121		1
agree	18	36	54	8	62		2
neither agree nor disagree	3	4	7	2	9		3
disagree	0	3	3	0	3		4
strongly disagree	0	0	0	0	0		5

	national	local	n+l	biams	all	no resp	rank
S5 The Kingdom of God and the Church are one, there is no separation between the two							
strongly agree	8	11	19	1	20	1	5
agree	12	19	31	1	32		4
neither agree nor disagree	12	23	35	1	36		2
disagree	20	34	54	16	70		1
strongly disagree	18	10	28	8	36		2
S6 The Kingdom includes the Church but is wider than the Church							
strongly agree	36	42	78	20	98		1
agree	17	41	58	5	63		2
neither agree nor disagree	10	7	17	1	18		3
disagree	7	7	14	1	15		4
strongly disagree	0	1	1	0	1		5
S7 Mission is best carried out in a particular culture by the people of that culture							
strongly agree	21	17	38	9	47		2
agree	31	42	73	9	82		1
neither agree nor disagree	12	26	38	8	46		3
disagree	5	12	17	1	18		4
strongly disagree	1	1	2	0	2		5
S8 Mission is best expressed in a particular place by the people of that place assisted by Christians from other contexts							
strongly agree	15	5	20	4	24	1	3
agree	29	50	79	17	96		1
neither agree nor disagree	18	31	49	4	53		2
disagree	6	11	17	2	19		4
strongly disagree	2	0	2	0	2		5
S9 Mission is best carried out in a particular place by Christians from any cultural background							
strongly agree	1	5	6	0	6	3	5
agree	11	16	27	5	32		3
neither agree nor disagree	19	41	60	13	73		1
disagree	32	33	65	7	72		2
strongly disagree	7	0	7	2	9		4
S10 The heart of mission is the proclamation of the saving work of Jesus Christ and the call to repent and believe in him							
strongly agree	38	46	84	10	94		1
agree	19	40	59	7	66		2
neither agree nor disagree	6	8	14	7	21		3
disagree	4	1	5	2	7		4
strongly disagree	3	3	6	1	7		4

	national	local	n+l	biams	all	no resp	rank
S11 Hospitality and openness to all are key aspects of mission							
strongly agree	32	30	62	9	71		2
agree	34	59	93	18	111		1
neither agree nor disagree	3	9	12	0	12		3
disagree	0	0	0	0	0		5
strongly disagree	1	0	1	0	1		4
S12 Verbal proclamation is essential to enable people to enter the Kingdom of God							
strongly agree	15	20	35	3	38	1	3
agree	30	38	68	7	75		1
neither agree nor disagree	13	19	32	10	42		2
disagree	9	19	28	7	35		4
strongly disagree	3	1	4	0	4		5
S13 Mission and Development are inseparable							
strongly agree	31	20	51	10	61		2
agree	19	47	66	12	78		1
neither agree nor disagree	11	15	26	3	29		3
disagree	7	11	18	2	20		4
strongly disagree	2	4	6	0	6		5
S14 Mission without social action is not mission							
strongly agree	31	20	51	10	61	1	2
agree	19	47	66	12	78		1
neither agree nor disagree	11	15	26	3	29		3
disagree	7	11	18	2	20		4
strongly disagree	2	4	6	0	6		5
S15 Development is an integral part of mission only if it helps people discover the Gospel							
strongly agree	1	5	6	1	7	3	5
agree	17	34	51	2	53		2
neither agree nor disagree	16	31	47	5	52		3
disagree	29	21	50	18	68		1
strongly disagree	7	4	11	1	12		4
S16 In a world of conflict mission must address reconciliation							
strongly agree	30	24	54	14	68	3	2
agree	34	63	97	13	110		1
neither agree nor disagree	5	5	10	0	10		3
disagree	1	3	4	0	4		4
strongly disagree	0	0	0	0	0		5

	national	local	n+l	biams	all	no resp	rank

S17 Proclaiming God to the world is more important than improving people's lives in the world

	national	local	n+l	biams	all	no resp	rank
strongly agree	5	3	8	1	9	3	5
agree	17	15	32	3	35		3
neither agree nor disagree	16	33	49	6	55		2
disagree	26	41	67	12	79		1
strongly disagree	6	3	9	5	14		4

S18 The yardstick of mission is concern for the poorest

	national	local	n+l	biams	all	no resp	rank
strongly agree	10	12	22	4	26	3	4
agree	22	37	59	16	75		1
neither agree nor disagree	21	29	50	3	53		2
disagree	15	15	30	4	34		3
strongly disagree	2	2	4	0	4		5

S19 All faiths need to learn from one another as we share much in common

	national	local	n+l	biams	all	no resp	rank
strongly agree	12	9	21	5	26	1	4
agree	17	44	61	16	77		1
neither agree nor disagree	21	20	41	5	46		2
disagree	14	16	30	1	31		3
strongly disagree	6	8	14	0	14		5

S20 Christians have little to learn from those of other faiths

	national	local	n+l	biams	all	no resp	rank
strongly agree	2	1	3	0	3	1	5
agree	6	16	22	1	23		4
neither agree nor disagree	17	17	34	3	37		2
disagree	29	49	78	15	93		1
strongly disagree	16	14	30	8	38		3

S21 Christians have much to learn from other faith traditions

	national	local	n+l	biams	all	no resp	rank
strongly agree	12	7	19	6	25		3
agree	30	49	79	19	98		1
neither agree nor disagree	16	24	40	2	42		2
disagree	10	13	23	0	23		4
strongly disagree	2	5	7	0	7		5

S22 God works through all people regardless of their beliefs

	national	local	n+l	biams	all	no resp	rank
strongly agree	17	17	34	7	41		3
agree	24	46	70	10	80		1
neither agree nor disagree	19	23	42	7	49		2
disagree	7	10	17	3	20		4
strongly disagree	3	2	5	0	5		5

	national	local	n+l	biams	all	no resp	rank
S23 God works primarily through Christians							
strongly agree	8	6	14	1	15	1	4
agree	24	22	46	7	53		3
neither agree nor disagree	22	27	49	7	56		2
disagree	11	40	51	10	61		1
strongly disagree	5	2	7	2	9		5
S24 God works through all people of goodwill							
strongly agree	10	9	19	6	25	3	4
agree	22	43	65	16	81		1
neither agree nor disagree	27	23	50	5	55		2
disagree	9	20	29	0	29		3
strongly disagree	2	0	2	0	2		5
S25 Mission without proclamation is not mission							
strongly agree	17	15	32	2	34	1	4
agree	21	40	61	7	68		1
neither agree nor disagree	20	22	42	8	50		2
disagree	10	19	29	9	38		3
strongly disagree	2	1	3	1	4		5
S26 Proclaiming the Gospel is primarily about acting justly and loving neighbours, only using words if necessary							
strongly agree	6	6	12	4	16	1	4
agree	14	40	54	7	61		1
neither agree nor disagree	21	26	47	11	58		2
disagree	21	18	39	4	43		3
strongly disagree	8	7	15	1	16		4
S27 Proclaiming the Gospel is about using both word and deed to express God's love to all							
strongly agree	49	53	102	19	121	3	1
agree	18	42	60	8	68		2
neither agree nor disagree	1	0	1	0	1		3
disagree	1	0	1	0	1		3
strongly disagree	1	0	1	0	1		3
S28 Mission addresses sin understood primarily as personal wrongdoing							
strongly agree	2	5	7	0	7	1	5
agree	20	30	50	2	52		3
neither agree nor disagree	18	29	47	8	55		2
disagree	24	28	52	13	65		1
strongly disagree	6	5	11	4	15		4

	national	local	n+l	biams	all	no resp	rank
S29 Mission means confronting people with the consequences of sin							
strongly agree	14	13	27	1	28	1	4
agree	27	28	55	6	61		1
neither agree nor disagree	13	27	40	12	52		2
disagree	11	24	35	4	39		3
strongly disagree	5	5	10	4	14		5
S30 Mission requires a call to repentance and new life in Christ							
strongly agree	28	25	53	4	57	3	2
agree	33	52	85	14	99		1
neither agree nor disagree	5	10	15	5	20		3
disagree	2	7	9	3	12		4
strongly disagree	2	1	3	1	4		5
S31 Mission challenges people to find salvation in Jesus or risk eternal condemnation							
strongly agree	11	15	26	2	28	3	4
agree	28	30	58	5	63		1
neither agree nor disagree	14	15	29	5	34		3
disagree	8	24	32	11	43		2
strongly disagree	9	11	20	4	24		5
S32 Mission means telling people about the hope of heaven							
strongly agree	21	16	37	1	38	3	2
agree	31	57	88	12	100		1
neither agree nor disagree	11	16	27	7	34		3
disagree	2	6	8	5	13		4
strongly disagree	5	0	5	2	7		5
S33 The Church is the sign and foretaste of the Kingdom of God							
strongly agree	31	25	56	7	63	3	2
agree	26	50	76	15	91		1
neither agree nor disagree	11	16	27	3	30		3
disagree	2	4	6	2	8		4
strongly disagree	0	0	0	0	0		5
S34 The Church is, by its very nature, missionary							
strongly agree	52	58	110	20	130	3	1
agree	13	27	40	4	44		2
neither agree nor disagree	4	11	15	1	16		3
disagree	0	1	1	2	3		4
strongly disagree	1	1	2	0	2		5

	national	local	n+l	biams	all	no resp	rank
S35 The Church is the herald of the Kingdom							
strongly agree	20	14	34	5	39		2
agree	41	65	107	12	119		1
neither agree nor disagree	8	14	22	8	30		3
disagree	0	4	4	2	6		4
strongly disagree	1	0	1	0	1		5
S36 The Church is essential for mission							
strongly agree	22	28	50	4	54	1	2
agree	30	43	73	14	87		1
neither agree nor disagree	10	17	27	6	33		3
disagree	6	9	15	3	18		4
strongly disagree	2	0	2	0	2		5
S37 The Church is the servant of the world							
strongly agree	21	23	44	7	51	3	2
agree	30	44	74	15	89		1
neither agree nor disagree	13	13	26	4	30		3
disagree	4	13	17	1	18		4
strongly disagree	2	2	4	0	4		5
S38 Mission is mainly about planting and growing churches							
strongly agree	4	2	6	0	6	3	5
agree	15	20	35	3	38		3
neither agree nor disagree	22	38	60	11	71		1
disagree	22	31	53	12	65		2
strongly disagree	7	4	11	1	12		4
S39 Mission partners entering contexts different from their own should undertake cross-cultural education and training							
strongly agree	45	33	78	18	96	3	1
agree	21	50	71	7	78		2
neither agree nor disagree	2	11	13	2	15		3
disagree	1	1	2	0	2		4
strongly disagree	1	0	1	0	1		5
S40 Mission is relational and best expressed through partnerships							
strongly agree	30	17	47	18	65		2
agree	30	50	80	7	87		1
neither agree nor disagree	9	23	32	2	34		3
disagree	0	7	7	0	7		4
strongly disagree	1	1	2	0	2		5

	national	local	n+l	biams	all	no resp	rank
S41 Mission is enhanced by cross-cultural and world perspectives							
strongly agree	43	30	73	15	88	3	1
agree	20	53	73	12	85		2
neither agree nor disagree	5	11	16	0	16		3
disagree	2	1	3	0	3		4
strongly disagree	0	0	0	0	0		5
S42 Mission is about initiating people into the worshipping community							
strongly agree	7	2	9	4	13	3	4
agree	27	46	73	9	82		1
neither agree nor disagree	22	29	51	11	62		2
disagree	11	17	28	2	30		3
strongly disagree	3	3	6	1	7		5
S43 Mission is primarily about welcoming all people							
strongly agree	13	16	29	3	32		4
agree	16	42	58	14	72		1
neither agree nor disagree	15	12	27	7	34		3
disagree	19	23	42	3	45		2
strongly disagree	7	5	12	0	12		5
S44 The priority for mission today is to proclaim Christ anew where people are drifting from previous Christian believing and belonging							
strongly agree	6	21	27	3	30		3
agree	25	38	63	10	73		1
neither agree nor disagree	24	32	56	8	64		2
disagree	11	7	18	5	23		4
strongly disagree	4	0	4	1	5		5

National interviews: GMN and BIAMS bodies

Churches and Agencies interviewed: Mission to Seafarers, USPG, The Methodist Church, The Church of Scotland, The United Reformed Church, Mill Hill Missionaries, CAFOD.

Seven Churches and Agencies were interviewed between March 2009 and February 2010 with the purpose of exploring further the ideas and understandings expressed in the Attitudes to Mission survey which had been completed earlier. Five of the interviews were conducted with the representative who had completed the survey and two with senior staff members who had not completed the survey. In one case, the senior staff member who completed the survey was on sabbatical leave and the other had left the employment of the agency.

Interviews were not conducted in a formal style but as a discussion about the experience of completing the survey which led to general discussion about the theology of mission in their church or agency. Analysis was done by reflection on the interviews by the interviewer.

Process of completing the survey

All representatives interviewed found the process of completing the survey both stimulating and challenging. Two of the church representatives first attempted to complete the survey as a staff team in the respective Mission Departments of major British denominations. Whilst valuing the process of attempting to complete it in this way it was not possible to find sufficient agreement across the staff team to complete the survey together. Interviewees expressed the reason for this as the diversity of views or approaches to mission among practitioners in their departments who often have considerable experience of working in the world mission field. In both cases the survey was referred to a senior staff member who completed it as a representative of the denomination. One denomination completed the survey at a meeting of the senior staff member and Chair of a Mission Board. They came to a compromise on contested areas and used the middle categories of the responses to express their view. They said that *'at times they were almost contradicting themselves but the response to the question seemed the obvious, natural response from our life experience.'*

The five interviewees who completed the survey themselves were divided on the use of words such as 'primarily', 'best' and 'most' in the questions. The senior representatives of the denomination who completed the survey as a pair found such terms helpful as they sharpened the issues and therefore pushed them into a more natural response. Two specialist Mission Agencies also found such terms helpful. The

two denominations who attempted to complete it as a staff team found such terms unhelpful in the process.

All interviewees recognised the value of the survey as a learning tool both in the continuing professional development of their teams and for use with local churches after some modification in content and presentation.

Theological Expressions of mission

There was a clear divide between the way in which the Churches and Agencies expressed their theological understandings. The Agencies interviewed expressed a coherent theology whereas the Churches found it more difficult to articulate a theology of mission beyond the more general expressions such as 'mission is diverse.' One agency expressed their theology of mission in terms of always being 'through action' and cited Matthew 26 as the driving Scriptural force. Their theology of mission was bound up in the Gospels. They expressed the importance of context and justice to their work. However they had also changed their name in 2000 from 'missions' to 'mission' to indicate that all mission is one and it is God's reflecting the use of *missio Dei* thinking. The other agency interviewed saw their theology of mission as being relational, transformational and strategic. Relationships between the churches they work for and with in the world church as equal partners are expressed as historic continuity, funding, health and education. This was also the case for the Roman Catholic Mission agency interviewed. The Development agency interviewed emphasised the importance of work for justice within an ecclesial structure.

The approach of all the Churches interviewed was to hold together a variety of theological approaches to mission and to manage the complexity that this creates. One described this as '*a spectrum of mission approaches and trying to hold them together but projects may emphasise one or the other style or approach.*'

One church admitted that '*we probably don't reflect enough on theology…we are in activist mode rather than reflective mode.*'

Another church expressed the need to do theological and practical work on money and the need to look at issues of accountability through these lenses.

Conclusions

- All interviewees expressed the value of expressing their work theologically. As one said, '*we probably don't reflect enough theologically. We are activist and concentrate on what we have to do rather than operate in reflective mode. We run around the same field instead of looking elsewhere – to the sidelines.*'

- Though there was a high degree of awareness of the *missio Dei* among all those interviewed it was not acting as the overarching theological concept that governed practice. There was some evidence of convergence around the *missio Dei* though this was only articulated after prompting through a direct question. However one agency changed its name to reflect the belief that there is one mission which is God's. Two agencies expressly said that they saw their work as between the *missio Dei* and justice understandings. The denominations interviewed said that their staff and supporters would support a variety of approaches to mission and the

denomination was able to encompass all approaches. Their understandings of God would be equally as diverse.

- Christian mission for the denominations and agencies interviewed is not a neat package of theological ideas that directly guide practice. The relationship between theory and practice is complex and sometimes contradictory. This raises the question of what the nature of the drivers are for their continued participation in mission and what the hoped for outcomes are. For some the drivers are about transformative relationships, for others proclamation of the good news of Christ and for others the search for justice.

- Does the holding together of different approaches to mission theology in the churches mean that theological reflection is less attractive and the focus becomes task orientated, particularly in a challenging financial climate where re-organisation and budget cuts are commonplace? For the agencies, working in the same very challenging climate, does the need to focus activities within a coherent theological framework become more necessary in order to maintain partnerships and stabilise the financial base?

Appendix J

National interviews: Global Connections

Summary

Seven interviews were conducted with mission leaders, of whom four were people from the Global Connections network who had responded to the survey. This summary relates to those four interviews. The process of selecting the interviewees was based on using those with different answers for some of the key questions in the survey based around the three models on which the survey was based on.

In seems that agency leaders all play a key role in the missiological development of their agency and stated that there was considerable similarity between their own views and that of the agency.

The agency interviews confirmed our hope that the survey could be turned into an excellent tool for helping mission agency staff reflect on their understanding of their task and to hep agencies tease out a better expressed missiology.

The following initial research conclusions and comments can be made from the interviews prior to a more detailed analysis:

- In general the agency leaders were committed to proclamation as a central or key part of mission, though Matthew 28:19–20 was not mentioned by any leader. However they did not like the use of the word 'primarily' even in questions which contained proclamation ideas.

- There was a fairly strong consensus that mission activity was varied and different expressions were all valid. So there was enthusiasm for social justice, social action, social transformation and creation care. However they were NOT seen as mission in themselves, but were activities through which Christ's love could be shown or proclaimed. The concept of mission activity being the context in which proclamation is done was emphasised and seems paramount. This activity and true mission divide came up repeatedly in one form or another.

- There was a range of views and understandings of *missio Dei*, with some unable to articulate it clearly. However for one leader this was clearly his preferred model, which for him led to mission being varied and creative, following God the Trinity in mission, rather than just proclamation.

- There was some variation around the understanding of how God works in the world and whether God can use people of other faiths and non-Christians as instruments of His mission. The church being the Kingdom of God seems to be the general position, though this needed further depth of questioning. Many surveys from those of an evangelical persuasion were more sceptical about whether and how God used non-Christians and this was borne out in the interviews.

- There are some real eschatological issues around the missionary task which was interpreted as proclaiming the gospel to all so that Christ can return. So, for example, while there was enthusiasm for social justice as an activity, there was little understanding of mission as justice as only Christ's return could really bring justice about.
- The view that the task of their agency was key in helping mobilise churches was expressed. Any development of the survey needs to take more account of the mission agency/local church divide in how questions are structured.
- There was some enthusiasm that with adaption the survey could be a useful tool to tease out some of the underlying theological drivers in mission. However there are some issues relating to some of the language and words used in the survey.

Detailed Analysis

Question 1: W*as the survey filled in as yourself or on behalf of the church?*
All said it was them, but that they tried to speak on the agency's behalf. However none had consulted others. One said that the agency was mainly activists, and they didn't really think about it.

COMMENT: An exercise to compare at different levels of an agency structure might be worthwhile.

Question 2: *What, if anything, did you find helpful about filling in the survey?*
Most had difficulty recalling completing as the interviews were conducted six months after the event. This is a flaw in the research. However people said it challenged you to think through issues. There was some discussion outside the interviews of it possibly being a tool they could use in their agencies.

COMMENT: There would appear to be evidence here that the survey could form the basis of an educational or developmental tool for agency leaders to help their staff and agency think about mission.

Question 3: *What, if anything, did you find difficult or unhelpful about filling in the survey?*
The only main issue was the use of the primarily, as it lead too a more negative answer than they wanted to give. For example, with the first question on justice, one person put strongly disagreed as he felt it was definitely not primarily about justice, though mission activity included justice.

COMMENT: There is some need to clarify words and meanings.

Question 4: *Where do you find your church's authority for its engagement in mission?*
The standard answer to this question was the Bible or the scriptures. However one leader also referred to the church in the location as being involved in giving permission. One qualified his comment with the statement – 'I find it in the mission of the triune God, in the nature of God, and only in scripture as an expression of God's mission'.

COMMENT: There was NO reference to Matthew 28 or the great commission. The scripture was the standard response, and only one referred to the missionary nature of God Himself.

Question 5: *How did you react to the word primarily in a number of questions?*
In general it was felt that this helped make a firm decision. However sometimes the qualifying word 'primarily' didn't quite fit, especially when the other words could have different meanings.

COMMENT: While people understood that the survey was trying to make them take up a position, most felt that it could lead to a variety of answers from people with similar positions, depending on whether one said disagree to the primarily or the issue itself.

Question 6: *How did you react to the question about 'the role of the Trinity'?*
The reactions were generally that people were pleased to see it there. All felt the Trinity is absolutely central to mission: 'Without the Trinity there is no mission'. However some questioned what was meant by the question – was He the initiator and well as the supreme missioner? Most showed little understanding of following the missionary, Trinitarian God into the world. Indeed that we could do this was questioned by one respondent as His understanding of Jesus' mission seemed to be only as coming as the supreme sacrifice. However for one this was the basis of his whole missiological understanding

COMMENT: Few agency leaders seem to have a well articulated understanding of the idea of following the missionary, Trinitarian God into the world.

Question 7: *Did you want to react positively to all the statements carrying the word 'mission' and if so, why?*
For mission agency leaders, this was not really a relevant question. However there was some debate on what was understand by mission, and whether with so much being mission these days, the word had been devalued.

COMMENT: None.

Question 8: *Did some of the questions make you think more deeply about the issues in such a way as to affect some of your answers to the later questions?*
In general most said that they filled it in without going back to make changes. However two interviewees stated that the survey had made them think. One used the opportunity to talk through the questions on the church and the Kingdom which had given him pause for thought that God's action is broader and surprising than the traditional evangelical view equating the kingdom with the church.

COMMENT: It seems the survey could be used to help people think through key issues, especially if an analysis tool was developed.

Question 9: *Did you choose 'neither agree nor disagree' when you meant 'don't know'?*
It had been used in several ways. This also varied from question to question. For

some, they were unsure of their answer. For others, they had problems with part of the wording again – for example the use of the terms 'mission means'. They felt mission included – but did not mean, and they used the neither agree nor disagree box.

COMMENT: The use of this term did not seem to cause a problem.

Question 10: *Can you tell me about your choice of response to question x (decided on the interviewer reflecting on the survey responses)?*
Not covered in the summary at this stage.

Question 11: *How does the respondent describe the theological position of the church they represent in relation to three understandings of mission:*
1. Proclamation of Jesus Christ as Universal Saviour;
2. *Missio Dei* – God at work in the world and the church's task to join in with that work;
3. Transformation, social justice, liberation theology, bias to the poor etc.

One respondent stated: 'I think the first category. I would not want to duck the need for personal repentance and reconciliation with God. I can see elements of mission where you could be doing something in mission without having got that across …. But the overall picture of mission cannot be without reconcilition with God.'

A second stated: 'I am also aiming for transformation in that sense. But really it is proclamation'.

A third: 'Sadly I don't think we have a theological position! We are committed to pragmatism, are roots are less theological, rather pragmatic. Our history is a pragmatic response to ….. So I suppose historically it sits in the proclamation area. I hope under my leadership we will move more to a *missio Dei* view.'

The fourth: 'Mission can only be mission if Christ is proclaimed.'

COMMENT: It is clear here that proclamation is the theologically underpinning for mission in the agencies interviewed, though one leader clearly wanted an awareness of the m*issio Dei* to be the agency's controlling basis for mission.

Question 12: *What understanding of God underlies your agency's approach to mission? In your opinion and experience, does the church constituency from which you come do enough thinking on the nature of mission?*
One felt that there was little thinking, and even the thinking was very confused. The agency was basically reactive to need and request. Another referred back to the scriptures as the sole place of the revelation of God, and all understanding came from there, where God sent His Son to die as saviour. That under-pinned all understanding of God. Another addressed the whole Trinity issue as key, but felt his agency was basically activists.

COMMENT: This question raised the whole issue that most mission agencies are activists, making the most of opportunities. Most spend little time in reflecting and contemplating any understanding of God who leads into mission?

Question 13: *What do you feel about the relationship between mission and justice?*
One leader was strongly supportive that mission by its nature was about justice and political, though he felt his agency would be horrified to hear him say it. At the other extreme, one felt that justice was all about God's justice. Most discussed again the issue of activity and mission.

COMMENT: This confirmed the conclusion that most saw a difference between missionary activity and mission itself.

Appendix K

Detailed analysis of local survey [1]

Question 1: *Was the survey filled in as yourself or on behalf of the church?*
The majority stated it was some of both of these – sometimes the length of service in a place influenced the ability to speak on behalf of the church. In one case, Geoffrey with over forty years as leader (with a particular model of leadership), stated that the church now 'follows the lead of the minister.' Several others were also clear that their personal views influenced the congregation's with Lee unsure whether they might be able to articulate their views in the way he could. James really only gave his own views as he was less than a year in post when surveyed. Only one interviewee, Luke from the Salvation Army was definitely speaking as a representative of the church, without much personal bias (except in the sense that he was a member of that organisation) – and he held a role slightly above direct church/congregational ministry.

COMMENT: It is clear from what follows that clergy/ministers are normally 'ahead' of their congregations when thinking about mission. We are researching 'foundations for mission' in the church and have chosen to interview ministers and we need to be aware of the biases that this approach introduces – we cannot simply equate clergy with church!

Question 2: *What, if anything, did you find helpful about filling in the survey?*
While a few could not remember that far back, the majority were positive about filling it in, some because they were actively involved in exploring mission questions with their congregations. In these situations it clarified thinking and reiterated priorities. For others it was reminder of such an exercise in the past. Several remarked on the comprehensive nature of the questions – covering as they did all aspects of mission – some noting that this was clearly the intention of the compilers. In the case of Martin the survey had actually enabled to him to start a new mission initiative in his church. In one case, Greg, the question prompted an important memory about the distinction made in some of the survey questions between gospel as word or deed which resonated with a real tension in his churches, or rather between himself and his largely rural congregations.

COMMENT: There would appear to be evidence here that the survey questions could form the basis of an educational or developmental tool for clergy and churches when exploring their views of mission.

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1 Names have been changed to protect privacy. Comments are made by Nigel Rooms.

Question 3: *What, if anything, did you find difficult or unhelpful about filling in the survey?*

The interviewees were virtually unanimously negative on this question – not really finding anything difficult with the survey – perhaps just noting the repetitive nature of some of the questions and the need to think hard about some of the answers. One interviewee, Lee questioned what he felt was the either/or nature of some or even a majority of the questions which made them difficult to answer. He preferred to hold to a 'holistic' view of mission (more of this later).

COMMENT: The majority of responses here simply underline the conclusions made for question 2.

Question 3: *Where do you find your church's authority for its engagement in mission?*

This question is open and slightly ambiguous and the answers to it were very illuminating. Eleven of the sixteen respondents (69%) referred to 'The Great Commission' or Matthew 28 either at this point or later in the interview either explicitly or implicitly (by referring to discipleship). Nevertheless how this passage was used varied greatly – it could be taken in a Trinitarian direction by Lee, a classic evangelical position was offered by Geoffrey and a sacramental perspective by James. Perhaps surprisingly, Mike, the Pentecostal did not offer Matthew 28 at all.

Seven (44%) referred, either solely or in addition, to the church institution either investing authority for mission in the minister or through its structures and initiatives. A few of the interviewees were encouraged by further questioning to offer a biblical passage to add to their institutional answer, but this took some time. They had not heard the question as asking about Scriptural authority. One or two noted the ambivalent nature of institutional authority and how it could both enable and disable mission.

There were not really any other possible responses except perhaps for Lee who offered mission as the 'primary calling on all Christians through their baptism.' Other Bible passages were Johannine in nature, focusing on love of God and neighbour as well as Luke 4 and Galatians 3:28.

COMMENT: The ubiquitous nature of Matthew 28 here has to be important for the research question, not least because it seems to be an almost 'default position' or an instinctive reaction to the question for many. What is remarkable is that no-one responded with the idea that God is missionary in very nature therefore the church might follow. What is behind the institutional answers? Perhaps that general feeling that mission is an 'ought' which is required rather than a spontaneous response to the grace of God in Christ?

Question 4: *How did you react to the word primarily in a number of questions?*

Twelve out of sixteen interviewees positively affirmed the use of primarily. This was mainly because of the ubiquitous nature of mission and the need therefore to prioritise beliefs and actions within an understanding of it. As Tim said; 'it forced you to make a choice.' The was one interesting main exception, Lee who objected to the use of the word since he argued mission is holistic and it is not either 'this way or that way'.

COMMENT: it is arguable here that Lee has point which is worth making and perhaps directs us to the much more nuanced approaches that can be taken in 'late-modernity' as opposed to those harder positions argued for earlier eras.

Question 5: *How did you react to the question about 'the role of the Trinity'?*
Again an open question offers several possibilities and the respondents do fall into several noticeable categories. This question overlaps into the idea of the *missio Dei* because the survey question was about 'following God the Holy Trinity in to the world'. This particular emphasis needed explaining to some interviewees – most notably Elizabeth.

Of course all the interviewees understand the doctrine of the Trinity but a significant minority, it seems, have no use for it in understanding mission. Matthew reads the Trinity only in terms of the Holy Spirit – in fact in the interview as a whole he offers a kind of pneumatological understanding of the *missio Dei* where it is the Holy Spirit who is at work in the world. Geoffrey is only really interested in presenting Christ in mission. Mark finds the doctrine opaque ('what do we mean by it? [the Trinity]) and therefore he is not really interested in its usefulness.

On the other hand there is a strong understanding of the Trinity as a driver for understanding mission demonstrated in a further significant minority. Most strong on this is Lee who bases his whole missiological understanding and action on the idea. Luke also has a good grasp of the concepts and their usefulness. Bob has signed up to the idea for some time and has taught the ideas to his leadership team although he admits not every church member would be familiar with them. I believe it is significant for the research that all three of these interviewees held positions of oversight in their churches/denominations as well as offering different levels of pastoral ministry.

In between are all the other interviewees who display varying degrees of understanding and interest – there is perhaps more agreement overall with the importance of the Trinity than an understanding of the idea of the *missio Dei*. James is interesting as he wants to hold together the three persons in the unity of God and is concerned not to end up with three gods.

COMMENT: There is some real evidence here for the research question. It seems there is some kind of continuum or even 'adoption distribution curve' with regard to the receptivity of the idea of following the missionary, Trinitarian God into the world. The age of the interviewee and time interval since training may be significant, as well as the level of operation within the organisation.

Question 6: *Did you want to react positively to all the statements carrying the word 'mission' and if so, why?*
While this question is more closed than others in the interview there is very little disagreement with the basic premise that yes it is difficult to argue against being positive about mission in our current climate. It was heartening however to hear just how many, in fact virtually all the respondents understood mission as foundational or core to the church's task – it is the purpose of its existence (at least Mary, Luke, Lee, Tim,

Bob, Philip and Elizabeth). This seemed to be regardless of the tradition and focused on mission at 'home'. There were two caveats to this that quickly arose. First that in some congregations there is a vestigial understanding of mission which is that it is the work which the mission agencies undertake overseas. In fact Philip commented that since mission is now understood much more locally this is a reason why support for mission agencies can only further reduce. Second is the 'institutional drag' that some clergy feel prevents them from carrying out their core task in mission (Mary, Tim). An exception to all the other interviewees was Mike, the Pentecostal who seemed to want to use the word mission as 'missions' i.e. specific evangelistic events where preaching for conversions occurred.

COMMENT: I believe this confirms the 'sea-change' that has at least now almost fully occurred amongst the clergy that in Britain since the so-called 'Decade of Evangelism' in the 1990s – that we are in new missionary situation which is addressed by affirming the church's core purpose as mission. The self-understanding of the clergy is now 'post-Christendom.'

Question 8: *Did some of the questions make you think more deeply about the issues in such a way as to affect some of your answers to the later questions?*
About four or five of the interviewees agreed that this process of intensification may have been going on. A similar number simply could not remember that amount of detail at the distance of the interview from the moment of filling in the survey. (This was about the only point in the interview where the time distance really did affect the responses.) Others were clear that they answered all the questions spontaneously.

COMMENT: I am not sure anything that conclusive can be really be gleaned from this question.

Question 9: *Did you choose 'neither agree nor disagree' when you meant 'don't know'?*
This is, it seems to me a more subtle question than it at first appears and it elicited some subtle and nuanced responses. The question is where is the boundary between equivocation (not agreeing or disagreeing), not caring/or having an interest in the question or being genuinely ignorant of the answer to the issue presented? That is – do the interviewees display all these possible approaches to understanding the question?

About one third of the interviewees agree with the statement they were presented with in the sense that they genuinely didn't know the answer to the question. As Sarah commented; 'there may be people who have far more experience than I' – implying that such people would be able to answer the question one way or the other with their superior knowledge. Occasionally in this group there was also the idea that there may be no answer to the question anyway – so displaying a slightly different nuance to the idea of 'don't know.'

A similar sized group were able to develop this understanding of 'don't know' in the sense that they absolutely had thought about the question and in some cases quite deeply, but that took them to the equivocal point on the scale – it was not a 'don't know' at all, but a genuine 'agnosticism' on the question or else in some cases an effort to hold a both/and position. Others were between these positions or gave inconclusive

answers to the question. There was little sense overall that interviewees had passed over any of the survey questions because they were too difficult or complex.

COMMENT: A simple first conclusion here is that there is real evidence that all the interviewees had interacted at some depth with all of the questions. Even those who really meant 'don't know' were saying so from a position of *knowing* they didn't know. The question also points up the nuanced nature of the possible positions that can be taken about missiological issues. In some of the responses there is genuine consternation at the need to hold together different and seemingly incompatible positions (e.g. Luke, Greg). Some interviewees are more at ease with having a position which can hold a both/and understanding rather than simply either/or. This of course may simply reflect the faith development stage (in Fowler's terms) of the interviewee. Nevertheless for the first time we come across the question of how far there are real incompatibilities and/or continuities between the various ideological stances/positions that can be taken in missiology.

Question 10: *Can you tell me about your choice of response to question x (decided on the interviewer reflecting on the survey responses)?*
We will look at this question at the end of this analysis when we take evidence from individual interviewees to add to the overall picture.

Question 11: *How does the respondent describe the theological position of the church they represent in relation to three understandings of mission?*

1. Proclamation of Jesus Christ as Universal Saviour;

2. *Missio Dei* – God at work in the world and the church's task to join in with that work;

3. Transformation, social justice, liberation theology, bias to the poor etc.

We will note all the responses to this question here as they are so important (the theological positions will be referred to as 1, 2 and 3):

- Matthew prefers a 'holistic' view of mission (uses the word twice) while offering a pneumatological version of the *missio Dei*.

- Mark declares his church to be firmly at 3 and himself mid-way between 2 and 3 (The church had moved from being Calvinist to liberal and pacifist during the 1930s and 40s.)

- Mary found herself partway between 2 and 3 while wanting to move on to 1 from that starting point. This was rather her personal view.

- Luke wanted to start with 1 but very clearly hold on to bits of 2 and 3. He uses the word holistic again and is aware of the concept of *missio Dei* but says it is not deeply rooted in the churches.

- Lee begins firmly in 2 while including 1 and 3, but *missio Dei* is definitely the starting point.

- Tim favours 1 first then 3 then 2 – he wants to emphasise Jesus as personal Saviour from his own experience and offer justice *for* others while not really recognising much role for the *missio Dei*.

- Geoffrey is firmly in position 1 as the church is the only body that is qualified and equipped to carry it out – others can deal with justice issues.
- Sarah has three concentric circles in her mind – 2 at the centre then 1 followed by 3. Proclamation and justice are still necessary.
- Bob is firmly in 2 but holds onto 3 and 1 (in that order) making three 'strands' – he calls 1 'journey into faith' rather than proclamation.
- James is clearly in 3 (personally) which 'puts you on the edge' with elements of 2 only.
- Martin has moved position in later ministry from 3 to 1 having a critique now of liberation theology as not sufficiently focussed on growth or conversion. He does not seem interested in *missio Dei* – even unaware of it.
- Greg again wants to hang on to all three, because of his life and ministry experiences, but if pushed will say 1 is most important above the others.
- Philip emphasises importance of all three but yet again if forced will hold on to 1, because that is his gifting – proclamation.
- Elizabeth – 1, 2 and then 3 in that order.
- Mark definitely 1, again offers a pneumatological version of 2 (in a previous question) and understands the importance of 3 while restricting it to mainly 'charitable works'.

COMMENT: It is clearly important here to note initially that 11/16 (69%) respondents want in some way to mention all three positions. Holistic seems to be an important word to several either explicitly or by implication. A question might be however are the different positions really that compatible? Where, if anywhere are the discontinuities?

Interestingly either when pressed or as a 'starting point' all the interviewees have a preferred position. The most, eight in all chose position 1, five position 2 and just two position 3. It is worth noting that these two were specifically interviewed on the basis that they had 'strongly agreed' to the mission as justice question. The interviews then confirm the survey results at this point.

It seems then there is some awareness of the *missio Dei* and while it is the controlling basis for mission for one or two and the starting point for others it is far from being a universal foundation for mission in the churches and amongst the clergy.

Question 11 continued: *Compare the five stated mission priorities of the interviewee with the stated view of mission*

All the interviewees are able to make significant connections between their understanding of mission and their top five mission action priorities. What is interesting is that in general there is little evidence of social and community interventions being made for the ultimate end of evangelism. Only Geoffrey really illustrates this phenomenon to any extent. Occasionally the evangelism/social action tension in theology is also played out in action as in the case of Luke in the Salvation Army.

The Anglican mission priorities are still to a major extent driven by the established nature of the church – so interaction with schools and church schools figures highly. Again there is evidence that churches are moving away from understanding mission as something that happens 'overseas' through missionary giving – though this still exists in some places.

What is also remarkable is the range of mission initiatives that are described by the interviewees – in what is a small sample of sixteen clergy there is an enormous amount of work going on – much of it for the 'common good.' Nevertheless drawing people into and becoming part of the Christian story is very much on the agenda of the churches.

Underlying the mission actions here is the general decline in church attendance which is a clear pressure on many clergy. It was difficult to discern how much of an influence this factor was on the actions but there is evidence in some of the interviews that there is real pressure felt to 'grow' the church.

COMMENT: This question is rather more difficult to analyse than the others [I wonder whether it might be possible to extract the text for this question only and subject it to NVIVO analysis?] If anything it at least confirms the findings of question 10 – that churches are not saying they are believing one thing and doing another.

Question 12: *What understanding of God underlies your church's approach to mission?*
This is a really helpful question as it repeats in a slightly different and more open way the earlier question about the Trinity. At least a third of the respondents are clear about their understanding of God but in very different ways – for Matthew it is the Holy Spirit at work and for Mark and Mary it is the incarnate God we meet and uncover at work in others. We know about Lee and James is offering a loving God exemplified by the cross – 'we [missionary priests] dig a pit for the cross' in the communities we are sent to.

However at least another third (five) interviewees found this question difficult to answer or gave an answer that didn't really refer to God but only repeated what they had said about mission. Only two gave a fully Trinitarian answer and while this was not required it was interesting that it was not the default position of most.

COMMENT: This is clearly a difficult area – there is little agreement across the interviewees on who the God of mission might be. Several are unable to articulate much at all about God. Why is this – are we simply pragmatists and activists, not really taking the time to reflect and contemplate our understanding of God who leads us into mission? What spirituality is there in mission?

Question 13: *What do you feel about the relationship between mission and justice?*
The response to this question was very varied. A couple of interviewees with a Christian Socialist background emerged on asking it (Matthew, James) and one or two who wanted to hold to justice as a vital part of mission (e.g. Martin). Others thought it was part of the whole, but only a part (Lee). Several equated justice with charitable giving or charity itself (Geoffrey, Mike). Elizabeth stated that it wasn't much of an issue in her context as it wasn't one of real poverty.

COMMENT: What is missing here is much sense (apart perhaps from Fair Trade and Trade Justice issues and some local interventions) that the church's task is to change the unjust structures of society. Is this because of the localness of church or that the theological foundations are not present to raise these issues over the horizons of Christians and clergy? Several interviewees focused on the importance of personal relationship with God which naturally militates against holding a quest for justice alongside other mission initiatives.

Question 10

Individual interviews and supplementary questions on particular issues in the survey answers....

Not every interview will be referred to here but it is worth noting at the end of this analysis the particularities of the individuals involved. They are not commented on directly as above but the issues raised are taken into account in the summary of the analysis at the start of this document.

- Matthew is a charismatic evangelical who describes himself as a 'pastor evangelist' having been trained for missionary work overseas but never realising that goal for medical reasons. He brings this missiological training to his ministry and demonstrates it in clear ways in the interview. As a charismatic he introduces the idea mentioned above of the pneumatological *missio Dei*, without of course using those terms, he puts it like this:

  > I mean we're the hands of Christ, but the Holy Spirit is the empowerer and facilitator, he paves the way, we look for where he's at work and then go and get stuck in...

- Mark: there are several things to note about this interview. First, as mentioned above, the legacy of pacifism and liberal theology passed down the generations of the church members (though how much longer it may last might be questioned). Second Mark reports a split with two members of the congregation who clearly held to position 1 for their missiology. Essentially this split is over Mark's and the church's understanding of mission as well as a specific issue around the idea of Inter-faith dialogue which distanced him from the neighbouring Baptist church these members had joined. Mark finds himself drawn into this area after studying it at Masters level and the church supports him positively in it such that he describes how he is active in it almost on their behalf.

  So the evidence here definitely points to incompatibilities and discontinuities arising from missiological positions.

- Mary: the only additional note here is about a mature, but non-growing church plant in her Parish which she describes suggestively as a religious community:

  > I always feel it as rather like and it's a funny sort of like evangelical way as something, a community, a religious community, ... it's about living together, praying together and all that, so it's community.

- Luke: there does seem to be a basic dichotomy running through this interview which could just be the classic evangelism/social action tension but seems more subtle than that since the interviewee is fully aware of the range of missiological positions including *missio Dei*.

- Lee, as we have noted above, argues cogently for a holistic view of mission versus what he refers to as the 'sixties' dichotomies of evangelism and social action. There is a sense in which he is developing an integrated, interconnected even *perichoretic* understanding of mission where the different strands overlap and interpenetrate each other:

  > I think mission is core to what we should be as a church. So it's not just about Sunday services, it's equally as much about going out in mission with God. So I would never ever want to disconnect mission from the core life of the church. It's not an add on, it's not something we do when we have finished fund raising or we've finished making our services nice, it's an equally important part of the life of the church, it's having communion, praising God together, praying and mission it's all a part of that.

  I also asked Lee at the end of the interview about his views on other faiths since his survey answers to these questions stood out. He understood these questions as also coming from a 'previous generation.' He did not think we had much to learn from other faiths, given his understanding of the uniqueness of grace in the Christian tradition. This did seem slightly at odds with the rest of the interview, but perhaps a strongly bounded Trinitarian theology can be exclusive in this way.

- Tim remarks in a supplementary question how he is moving the church from an understanding of mission as giving to a hospital in Lesotho through USPG to seeing it as something that happens through the local church.

- Geoffrey is a cogent proponent of position 1 – that the task of mission is solely down to the church and the church alone. He makes a clear distinction in supplementary questions between the task of the church in mission which is proclaiming Christ and 'good works' all of which can be said to come from God:

  > I was thinking there about the difference between mission, which is clearly the church's task and the work that humanists, secularists, people who claim to have no faith at all, nevertheless, do good work...

- Sarah has strongly agreed in the survey to questions about the importance of verbal proclamation and confronting people with the consequences of sin and she confirms this in the interview as being a 'biblical' approach.

  > it's [mission] about telling people who Jesus is not just providing something that's a nice thing to do or say a social activity that actually doesn't have anything to do with the fact that we're doing this because we're Christians and we want people to know Christ.

This leads to her to proclaim Christ as she puts it in a Christingle service where 30% of the people 'we'd never seen in a church setting before.' It might have been interesting however to ask how many of these people actually thought they were 'doing church' by attending the service.

- James is unique amongst the interviewees as he has a high Anglican or catholic tradition and is a member of an order of missionary priests, the Society of the Holy Cross (SSC). So as noted above he has a sacramental view of Matt. 28 which directly affects the way he conducts baptisms in the parish. In supplementary questioning it became clear James did not like the language of sin but was nevertheless concerned to confront people with the cross. For James the church is also essential to mission as it takes the individual element away and provides accountability – like Geoffrey he has a very high view of church as a vehicle for mission. Nevertheless God can be at work outside the church it's just that from the standpoint of being inside the expectations placed on members are different. Later in the interview James shares a deep tension within himself because having accepted the authority of the church he must stay loyal to it – but this is not always easy as being a missionary priest takes him very often to the 'edge' of things. The support and accountability that the missionary order then provides for him is key to holding himself together within this tension.

- Martin had not strongly agreed with any of the statements on the survey which I checked out and he said it was perhaps more to do with his person after 30 years of ministry than anything he particularly believed. What was interesting though was an exchange we had about him disagreeing that the 'Franciscan' statement in the survey about mission as acting justly and loving neighbours only using words if necessary. He responds with a story which amounts to being 'evangelised' by a Muslim prison chaplain:

    > **We both happened to go in on a Friday, ...he used to say 'you should be more up front about what you're about, I am, why don't you,' you know cause I was quite diffident about it initially. He was a Muslim coming into the prison life and Asif he used to challenge me all of the time and say, get out there, you know and sort of speak who you are to people and there's nothing wrong with that. I think probably I've learnt that from him.**

- Greg: in a supplementary I ask him about his insistence on proclamation when the Kingdom is bigger than the church. He states than interesting tension for many protestants:

    > [quoting those 'outside' church] **... you don't need to go to church to be a Christian. Now that's technically in my mind true, you don't need to go to church to be a Christian. You need to enter into a relationship with God to be Christian. Now I like to think the church is significantly important**

> **in the process and in the discipleship afterwards and how you go in faith, but you know what I mean, there's a difference between entering into a relationship with God and church.**

The question remains then what do we mean by the word Christian – especially in the rural context, this is clearly contested in Greg's mind. At the end of the interview the issue surfaces again with a background of church decline and the need for growth to survive:

> **most of my congregations are beginning to see this that we are in a missionary context in this country even in the little rural villages, you know, you can no longer assume everybody is a Christian and even then** *what is a Christian is the big question.* **(My italics)**

Int: what is it do you think that convinces them of that [need to be missionary]?

> **when they see the long standing church members being buried and sent to the crematorium. They realise that if we don't do something this church ain't going to be here in ten/twenty years time.**

- Philip clarifies his understanding of proclamation in a supplementary question that it doesn't need to be entirely verbal. He also disagreed with both God working primarily through Christians *and* through all people of goodwill He explains this by saying that clearly God is at work outside the church and in other faiths and that experience over a humanist funeral had made him nervous about the latter statement at the time. Interestingly this is much the same issue as that confronting Greg above:

> **...we had quite a few debates about humanists and the normal thing about I'm as much a Christian as anybody else because I'm good and I do good things and I suppose that's the bit I was, in a way, a bit nervous about, cause also many people come to faith and if we're honest the amount we sin we could hardly call ourselves good.**

- Elizabeth, in some supplementary questioning, wanted to hold together both finding God at work out in the world and also taking Christ out in mission initiatives.

  Later in the interview Elizabeth, when asked about the understanding of God which drives mission, tells a story about church growth and that being 'as good as it gets':

> **...there's also this sort of sense of mission is a sense of achievement in spreading the good news, but also in carrying something on that it will, you can then become like the domino effect that people will then teach other people who will then bring other people who will then bring other people, so it's that sense of achievement and when we had this confirmation a few weeks ago and people baptised in the morning and people confirmed in the afternoon ... there was a great sense of**

celebration in the community and when I was talking to Paul who is our evangelist afterwards we were both saying this was actually as good as it gets, this is what we are doing this for.

● Mike: I asked a supplementary about Mike not agreeing with mission meaning confronting people with the consequences of sin and he clarified that the message is one of forgiveness not 'bringing fear in their lives.' We then had a discussion about church planting which seemed to be determined (i.e. whether it was right to plant or not) by contextual and attitudinal reasons on the part of the recipients alongside a reliance on the Holy Spirit to reveal the ultimate direction and decision. It is also worth noting again Mike's basic understanding of mission as 'missions' which occurs throughout the interview.

Organisation Details

BIAMS

BIAMS is a membership association of colleges and individuals which brings together people from all parts of the Christian church who are involved in the study of mission. It exists:

- To promote the study of the history, theology and practice of mission.
- To encourage awareness of major issues in contemporary mission.
- To provide a meeting point for mutual enrichment, challenge and collaboration in mission. For more information visit www.biams.org.uk.

Global Mission Network

The Global Mission Network of CTBI was set up as an ecumenical space in which experience and perspectives on mission could be shared in order to benefit Churches and agencies in their mission work. GMN has now been superseded by The Churches Network for Mission, which seeks to assist the churches, agencies and the ecumenical bodies of the Four Nations in the common task of participating in God's mission in the world. See www.ctbi.org.uk/CA/13.

Global Connections

Global Connections (GC) is a network of over 300 UK based mission agencies, churches, colleges and support services linked together for resources, learning and representation. The network aims to serve, equip and develop churches in order to fulfil the shared vision of 'mission at the heart of the church, the church at the heart of mission'. GC was formerly known as the Evangelical Missionary Alliance and has its roots in bringing together evangelical mission agencies. For more information visit www.globalconnections.co.uk.

Group Details

John Clark served in Christian literature work and publishing for eleven years until the 1979 Islamic Revolution. For the next seven years he was Regional Secretary for the Middle East and Pakistan for the Church Mission Society travelling widely in the region, followed by five years as Head of CMS' Communications Division. In 1992 he became Secretary of the Church of England's Partnership for World Mission (PWM) which linked the Church of England world mission agencies with its Synodical structures. In 2000 he was appointed Secretary of the Church of England's Board of Mission, which in 2003 was restructured with the Board for Social Responsibility, Hospital Chaplaincy Council and Committee for Minority Ethnic Concerns into the Church of England's Mission and Public Affairs Division of which he became the first Director, retiring in April 2007. Among other roles he has been a member of successive Mission Commissions of the Anglican Communion and in retirement is involved with a number of charities involved in Christian presence and witness in the Middle East.

Philip Knights is a Catholic priest of the Diocese of Westminster. He is currently Priest Administrator of Marychurch, Hatfield and Diocesan Director of *Missio.* He also sits upon the *Overseas Mission Committee* of the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales. Before his current posts he taught at the Missionary Institute London and was a member of the *Catholic Missionary Society* and its successor body *CASE (The Catholic Agency to Support Evangelisation)*. He is also at present the Executive Secretary of the *British and Irish Association of Mission Studies* (BIAMS), one of the collaborating networks in this research. His interests in mission have traversed Central and Southern Africa and the UK. His doctoral thesis concerned models of mission tested against groups in Southern Africa and how in distinct ways they sought to be authentically African. He conducted research on behalf of the Catholic Bishops Conference on *Evangelisation in England and Wales.* He has also published analysis of and reports from various significant initiatives in Catholic evangelisation as *Changing Evangelisation,* which was part of the *Churches Together in Britain and Ireland*, 'Changing Mission' series. More recently he has been engaged in issues of environmental justice and the theology of mission.

Martin Lee has a 1st Class degree in Physics with Maths and initially started his career as a secondary school teacher. He then worked for 25 years as Director of a Christian Relief and Development agency, specialising in refugees and children caught in conflict situations, spending long periods in SE Asia and East Africa. Martin now serves

as Director of Global Connections, a UK mission network comprising of the majority of evangelical mission agencies and a growing number of churches. He also serves on various mission and charity trustee bodies. Martin is also actively involved in the European Evangelical Mission Association and the WEA Mission Commission. He specialises in researching and understanding mission trends. His passion is to see churches in the UK engaging in mission both locally and globally. He is concerned that such mission is relevant to the 21st Century with an emphasis on learning from the majority world and integral in approach. He is married to Georgina, who teaches English to refugees and the longer term settled community in Coventry. They are passionate about trade justice and own a small fair-trade business. Martin and Georgina have two daughters, a son and one grand-daughter and are active members in a local independent evangelical church.

Janice Price is World Mission Policy Adviser for the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England. Previously she was Executive Secretary of the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland Global Mission Network and Director of Development and Training in the Anglican Diocese of Worcester. She is a Lay Reader (Licensed Minister) in the Church of England and has served in local churches in urban, suburban and rural parishes. Holding two research based degrees from King's College London her current research interests are in the use and potential of Qualitative Research software in mission research and the development of partnership in Anglican world church relationships. She is an Honorary Lay Canon of Worcester Cathedral. Publications include *Telling Our Faith Story* (1999 and reprinted 2009), Grove Books and *Equipping Your Church in a Spiritual Age*, Church House Publishing, 2005. She is one of the two Co-convenors of the Foundations for Mission Study Theme for the Edinburgh 2010 World Mission Conference.

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Paul Rolph spent ten years as a science teacher and thirty years as a teacher educator ending his full-time career as head of a faculty of teacher education in a Church of England university college. Paul retired from full-time work in 1998. He took up part-time employment as a county ecumenical officer and as a university postgraduate supervisor of ministers of religion who are researching for a higher degree in pastoral

and empirical theology. Paul has a particular interest in drawing on his scientific background to develop empirical methods in the study of church and educational institutions. He researches relationships between well-being and spirituality and how they are, and might be, fostered by educational and religious institutions. Paul is currently a research fellow in theology. He is married to Jenny, a social psychologist, who has many years of teaching experience in higher education. They publish research papers jointly. Jenny and Paul have three married daughters and one married son and twelve grandchildren.

Nigel Rooms is Director of Ministry and Mission in the Anglican Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham, Associate Priest at Bestwood Park with Rise Park LEP and honorary Canon of Christchurch Cathedral in the Diocese of Mt. Kilimanjaro, Tanzania. He worked as Mission Partner in Tanzania for seven years in the 1990's developing an innovative Theological Education by Extension Course in Swahili, running an International congregation and building a new Church. He holds a Th.D in Missiology from Birmingham University (U.K.) and has research and other interests in contextual theology (particularly in England), adult theological education, leadership and ministerial formation and emerging church as well as theological foundations for mission. He is married to Karen, also a priest, and they have two teenage sons. They live in inner-city Nottingham where enjoys working on his allotment.

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