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A MINISTRY OF IN-DEPTH EVANGELISM ASSOCIATES (IDEA)

EXPANDED STATUS OF CHRISTIANITY

COUNTRY PROFILE: BELIZE, 1980

by

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FIGURE 1: RELIEF MAP OF BELIZE



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STATUS OF CHRISTIANITY COUNTRY PROFILE: BELIZE

I. COUNTRY SUMMARY 1980

Located on the Caribbean coast of Central America, the nation of Belize is situated south of the Yucatan Peninsula and is bordered by Mexico on the north, Guatemala on the west and south, and the Caribbean Sea on the east. Belize is not only the smallest nation in Central America in terms of its physical size but also in terms of its population: only about 145,300 in 1980. The low average annual rate of population increase (1.9%) between 1970 and 1980 is due to the fact that one in eight Belizeans emigrated, mainly to the USA.

Although English is the official language of Belize, formally known as British Honduras, an English-based Creole (or Kriol) is widely spoken and is a distinctive part of everyday conversations for most Belizeans, especially in Belize City, the nation's largest city (about 40,000 inhabitants in 1980). Also, Spanish is common and is taught in primary and secondary schools in order to further develop bilingualism. About 80% of the national population in 1980 was multilingual.

Spanish is spoken as a mother tongue by the majority of the population (Yucatec Maya and Mestizos) in the Orange Walk and Corozal Districts, north of Belize City, and in the Cayo District in the west (Kekchí, Mopan Maya and Mestizos). In the southern Districts of Stann Creek and Toledo, there are people whose first language is Garifuna or Mopan Maya. [Garinagu is the plural form of the singular word "Garifuna" and is the collective name preferred by the representatives of this population in Belize today.]

Several hundred archeological sites in Belize attest to the presence of the ancient Maya civilization in this region, a civilization that flourished for more than a millennium but declined about 900 AD, prior to the Spanish Conquest of Central America in the 16th century.

Belize's modern cultural history clearly demonstrates that the country is a product of immigration. The proportion of foreign-born population in the country has consistently been high. According to the 1980 Census, 11% of the population were foreign-born, over half of which were from Central American countries. About 7,000 other immigrants were from the USA, Canada, United Kingdom of Great Britain (UK), the West Indies, India and other places, or did not list their country of origin.

The first European settlers in the region of modern Belize were called **Baymen**, who settled in the Belize City area in the 1650's. They were mainly English buccaneers and pirates in the Bay of Honduras who were trying to outmaneuver the Spanish rulers in Mexico and Central America. They discovered they could make a living cutting and selling logwood (used to make dye for the wool industry in England), and later mahogany, to their home country. Many of the first Baymen settled on what is now called the Northside of Belize City, where they controlled all affairs of municipal and national government through the Public Meeting.

It was the Baymen who established the slavery system in Belize in order to provide a work force for the logwood trade. The imported African slaves, acquired mainly from the British-controlled areas of the Caribbean, were not allowed to own land and had to depend on their slave masters for all their supplies, but they could associate with each other. Before the arrival of 2,207 slaves and freemen (former slaves) from the Miskito Coast (also known as the Mosquito Coast) in 1787, the Baymen of Belize numbered less than 800 and had fewer than 2,600 slaves. Although the British abolished slavery in 1838, the freed slaves were denied land at first (1838-1868), whereas Belizean slave owners received the highest compensation for emancipated territories at over 50 pounds. The

former slaves supported themselves by subsistence agriculture and by working for wages in the mahogany logging trade.

The British and Spanish engaged in frequent disputes over the territory even after the Treaty of Paris in 1763 established the former's rights to cut logwood in Belize. The Baymen were chased out of the territory by the Spaniards no less than four times between 1717 and 1780. Treaties in 1783 and 1786 gave Baymen more security; but only after the Battle of St. George's Caye in 1798, when the Baymen and their armed slaves defeated – with the help of several British naval commanders -- a Spanish naval force from Mexico, did the Baymen have full control of their settlement, which was affirmed by its admission to British Colonial status in 1863 as the Colony of British Honduras.

From an early date the settlers had governed themselves under a system of primitive democracy by Public Meeting. A constitution based on this system was granted in 1765 and this, with some modification, continued until 1840 when an Executive Council was created. The Crown Colony system of Government was introduced in 1871, and the Legislative Assembly by its own vote was replaced by a nominated Legislative Council with an official majority presided over by the Lieutenant Governor. Further constitutional advances came in 1954 with the introduction of universal adult suffrage and an elected majority in the Legislature; the ministerial system was adopted in 1961.

During the years from 1858 to 1861, the Honduras Land Titles Acts were passed to allow land in Belize to be sold without proven land title. The **British Honduras Company** began operations in 1858 -- its name was changed to the **Belize Estate and Produce Company** (known as BEC) in 1875 -- and became a major economic force in the country. In 1875, the BEC owned more than a million acres of land (one-fifth of Belize), which was 50% of the private land in the country. Except for a brief period in the 1870s when the BEC invested in sugar cultivation, its major activity has been forestry exploitation utilizing a cheap labor force. Its power was so great for a long time that the BEC controlled the government of Belize and manipulated the laws for its own economic advantage.

The Colony's first official census took place in 1861, which listed 14 zones of settlement and reported 40 nationalities among the total population of 25,635. In those early days, 30.5% of the population was identified as Creole (Mulatto, Zambo or African). The Spanish-speaking Mestizo population represented 38.1% of the total population, compared to 18.2% Maya-Kekchí, 7.6% Garifuna, 4.5% European and 1% other, including the influential White population with ties to Europe or the USA (Nicolait 1984:27).

About 100 years later, in January 1964, British Honduras became a self-governing Colony and was renamed "Belize" on June 1, 1973; it was the United Kingdom of Great Britain's (UK) last colony on the American mainland. Full independence from the UK was achieved on September 21, 1981, after delays caused by territory disputes with the Republic of Guatemala, which did not formally recognize Belizean independence. George C. Price became the new nation's first Prime Minister under the banner of the **People's United Party (PUP)** – founded in 1950 with a Christian Democrat ideology and devoted to achieving the political and economic dependence of the British colony. The other major political party today is the **United Democratic Party (UDP)**, created in 1973 with a Social Democrat ideology, led by Phillip Godson (formerly of the National Independence Party), Dean Lindo (formerly of the People's Development Movement) and Manuel Esquivel (formerly of the Liberal Party).

After Hurricane Hattie hit British Honduras in 1963, with winds of up to 190 mph and flooding that destroyed approximately 75% of the houses and business places in Belize City, the government promoted the building of a new capital city inland on higher ground. The chosen site, now known as Belmopan, is located on the Western Highway, near the Belize River, 51 miles west of the old

capital of Belize City that is located at near sea level on the Caribbean coast. The government was moved to Belmopan in 1970, and its National Assembly Building is designed to resemble a pre-Colombian Maya temple.

Today, the nation's economy is less dependent on forestry products and more dependent on exports of sugar, citrus, bananas, mangoes, rice, honey and other agricultural and fishery products, as well as on the growth of the tourism and garment (sewn from imported textiles) industries. One-third of the work force is employed in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, which generate about half of the gross national product. Sugar accounts for 60% of Belize's agricultural exports. Most of the food consumed nationally is produced by small farmers. Medium-sized Mennonite farms supply the country with dairy products, poultry and vegetables, and subsistence farmers produce most of the hogs for the national market as well as some corn, rice and beans for local markets. Large farms are oriented to produce export crops and beef cattle.

II. OVERVIEW OF STATUS OF CHRISTIANITY IN BELIZE: 1980

The country of Belize is predominantly a Christian nation (93.7%), according to the 1980 Census: 62.0% of the national population claimed affiliation with the Roman Catholic Church, 32.7% were affiliated with Protestant denominations, 1.2% were affiliated with other minority religions (Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, Bahai, Chinese religions, Jehovah's Witnesses, etc.), and 4.1% reported no religious affiliation or gave no answer.

A comparison of census data for 1970 and 1980 reveals that the smaller denominations have grown at the expense of the larger, more established, ones. Thus, the Roman Catholic, Anglican and Methodist churches have all shown decreases in affiliation of between 2% and 3%. The religious groups that have recorded the most increases in affiliation have been the Pentecostals, the Moravians and the Mennonites, the later by immigration and high birth rates.

Remnants of African Spiritism are acknowledged to exist among Belizeans of African or West Indian descent, called Creoles, who are predominately Protestant by heritage, although few attend church regularly. The Black Carib or Garifuna, an Indigenous people of mixed Indian and Negro origin (called sambos by the Spanish), are largely animist and constitute the largest non-Christian element within Belizean society. Nominal Christianity, both among Catholics and Protestants, characterizes most people of Belize.

III. ETHNIC GROUPS AND UNREACHED PEOPLES

3.1 CREOLES (40.0%, 1980 Census): NEGROES AND MULATTOS

The **Creole or Kriol** are descendants of African slaves (Negroes) who were brought, primarily from Jamaica, the West Indies and Nicaragua's Mosquito Coast, by British and other European settlers to cut down logwood and mahogany trees in British Honduras and ship wood products to foreign markets (ca. 1650-1850). Many slave owners engaged in sexual relations with female slaves, thereby created this new ethnic group (originally called mulattos).

In Belize, Creole is the standard term for any black person who is not Garifuna, or any person that speaks Creole as a first language. This includes immigrants from Africa and the West Indies (African-origin) who have settled in Belize and intermarried with the local inhabitants.

Historically, most Creoles are Protestants and were at least nominal members of the older denominations (Anglican, Methodist, Baptist and Seventh-day Adventist) that arrived in Belize prior

to the 1950s, or have become associated with some of the newer denominations, such as Pentecostal groups. However, some elements of **African Spirituality** (such as magic, shamanism and sorcery—elements of Obeah and Voudun) are still practiced in secret, especially among the older generation. Also present among the Creoles are small, but socially significant, **Black Muslim** and **Rastafarian** communities.

3.2 MESTIZOS (33.4%, 1980 Census)

The mixed Amerindian-Spanish population (called **Ladinos** in neighboring Guatemala) mainly lives in the northern lowlands and in the western regions of Belize, near the Mexican and Guatemalan borders. Although traditionally nominal Roman Catholics, growing numbers of Mestizos have responded to the message of the Gospel and become members of Protestant churches during the past two decades. The Nazarenes, Gospel Missionary Union, the Seventh-day Adventists and newer Pentecostal groups have grown considerably in the Orange Walk and Cayo Districts since the 1950s. However, the majority of the Spanish-speaking Mestizo population continues to practice a syncretistic "Cristo-paganism" with little understanding of Biblical Christianity. Between 1960 and 1980, 10,679 Mexicans and Central Americans (mainly Guatemalans) immigrated to Belize.

Since the taking of the 1980 Census, many refugees from El Salvador's civil war have arrived in Belize, especially from the war-torn departments of Cabañas, Chalatenango, San Vicente, La Libertad and Morazán. Although some sources estimated that there may be as many as 15,000 Salvadoran refugees in Belize, a recent study by USAID determined that only 1,585 Salvadorans are classified as "refugees" (as of mid-August 1983). Apparently, the flow of Salvadoran refugees into Belize has slowed or perhaps now stopped.

3.3 AMERINDIANS (9.5%, 1980 Census – includes the **Maya and Kekchí** peoples)

Most of the Amerindians in Belize are descendants of the ancient Mayan civilization, and are nominally Roman Catholic. In the south, **Mopan Maya** speakers migrate between the Petén Department of Guatemala and the Toledo District of Belize. The first large-scale immigration of the Mopan Maya occurred in 1886 to escape taxation and forced labor in Guatemala, which created new settlements in the Toledo District. Today, this ethnic group numbers about 5,500 in Belize, but the Mopan Maya evangelical community in Guatemala totals only about 120 people in three small churches. Both the Nazarenes and the Mennonites are known to have a few believers among the Mopan Maya in Belize, but the largest denomination among them is an independent Pentecostal group, known as the **Kekchí and Mayan Churches of Belize**. This denomination reported 15 congregations and about 750 believers in the Toledo District in 1978; however, these statistics include both Kekchí and Mopan Maya believers. The New Testament has been translated into Mopan Maya by Wycliffe-SIL. Sixteen New Testament stories and several tracts also are available in Mopan Maya, in addition to a hymnal.

The **Kekchí** (a non-Mayan group) live mainly north of Cobán in the Guatemalan Department of Alta Verapaz, but they are expanding into Izabal, Baja Verapaz and Petén Departments, and also into Belize. The first large immigration of the Kekchí occurred in the 1870s in order to escape enslavement by German coffee growers in Verapaz. More recently in Guatemala a Kekchí "people's movement" (mass conversions to Christianity) has occurred, where the evangelical population now numbers about 18,000 out of nearly 300,000 Kekchí. The size of the Kekchí population in Belize is given as 3,779 in the 1980 Census; their receptivity to the Gospel in Guatemala has apparently extended into Belize, where the Nazarenes also reported a people's movement among the Kekchí

and Mopan Maya in the southern lowlands. There, numerous Kekchí churches have been established, and some form part of the newly-organized **Kekchí and Mayan Churches of Belize (Pentecostal)**. The entire New Testament is available in Kekchí, along with a hymnal, several Old Testament books, and a dozen Gospel tracts.

The **Yucatan Maya**, numbering about 540,000, live in the Mexican states of Yucatan, Campeche and Quintana Roo, and in the districts of Orange Walk and Corozal in Belize. In 1847, the Maya in the Yucatan Peninsula revolted against the Spanish settlers (known as the Caste War, 1847-1904), which resulted in thousands of Maya and Mestizos fleeing south over the border into British Honduras. By 1861, the population of the Colony had grown to 25,635 (compared to 8,235 in 1841), with one-quarter of the people living in the northern district and most of these were Yucatan refugees. Whereas today an estimated 45,000 Yucatan Maya speakers are associated with evangelical churches in Mexico, there are only about 120 evangelical believers in Belize. Four small congregations have been established since 1958 in Corozal District by the **National Presbyterian Church of Mexico**, no doubt following up on some of their members who migrated into Belize. Rapid acculturation has taken place among the Yucatan Maya, and many are now fluent in Spanish; however, the older adults still prefer their native language. Parts of the New Testament were translated into Yucatan Maya in 1844, but the entire New Testament was not available until 1961 (revised in 1977).

3.4 BLACK CARIB - GARIFUNA (7.6% according to the 1980 Census)

The British Colonial Administration used the term **Black Carib** to refer to the Garifuna or Garinagu (**Garifuna** refers to both the people and language of the **Garinagu**), and to distinguish them from **Yellow** or **Red Carib**, who are Amerindian groups. Racially, the Black Carib are descendants of runaway African slaves who intermarried with the Red Carib Amerindians in the West Indies during the 18th century. The British deported about 5,000 Black Carib from the islands of Dominica and St. Vincent in 1797, and relocated them to the Bay Islands of the Bay of Honduras. From there the Black Carib gradually dispersed and established settlements along the northern coast of Honduras, south to Pearl Lagoon in Nicaragua, and north to the Livingston area of eastern Guatemala and into British Honduras in 1823 (celebrated as Settlement Day). Most Black Carib in Belize today make their living from fishing and subsistence farming near Punta Gorda and Stann Creek on the south coast, although some Black Carib have become teachers and businessmen, and a few are doctors and lawyers. An estimated 2,000 Black Carib live on Guatemala's eastern coast and about 10,600 in the southern coastal lowlands of Belize.

The Black Carib have maintained their separate identity despite the fact that physically they differ little from the Creoles. While retaining their own languages (men and women historically speaking separate languages), many Black Carib also speak English, and a growing number are learning some Spanish due to trading contacts with the Kekchí and Mopan Maya who live nearby. Generally, Black Carib do not marry outside their own ethnic group.

Most Black Carib are animists and few are practicing Christians, either Catholics or Protestants, although many are considered to be at least nominally Christian. However, their religious life is dominated by spirit worship, black magic and ceremonial dances of mixed African and Indian origin. Few Black Carib actively attend Protestant churches, even though some evangelical witness has existed among them since the 1830s, mainly by Methodists, Baptists and Anglicans have had schools and mission stations in their settlements. Other Protestant groups have worked among the Black Carib more recently, notably the Nazarenes since the 1960s. Portions of the Bible were first translated into Garifuna and "Waike" (Arawak) by a Baptist missionary,

Alexander Henderson, in the 1840s, while more recent translations have been done by Wycliffe/SIL linguists in Guatemala.

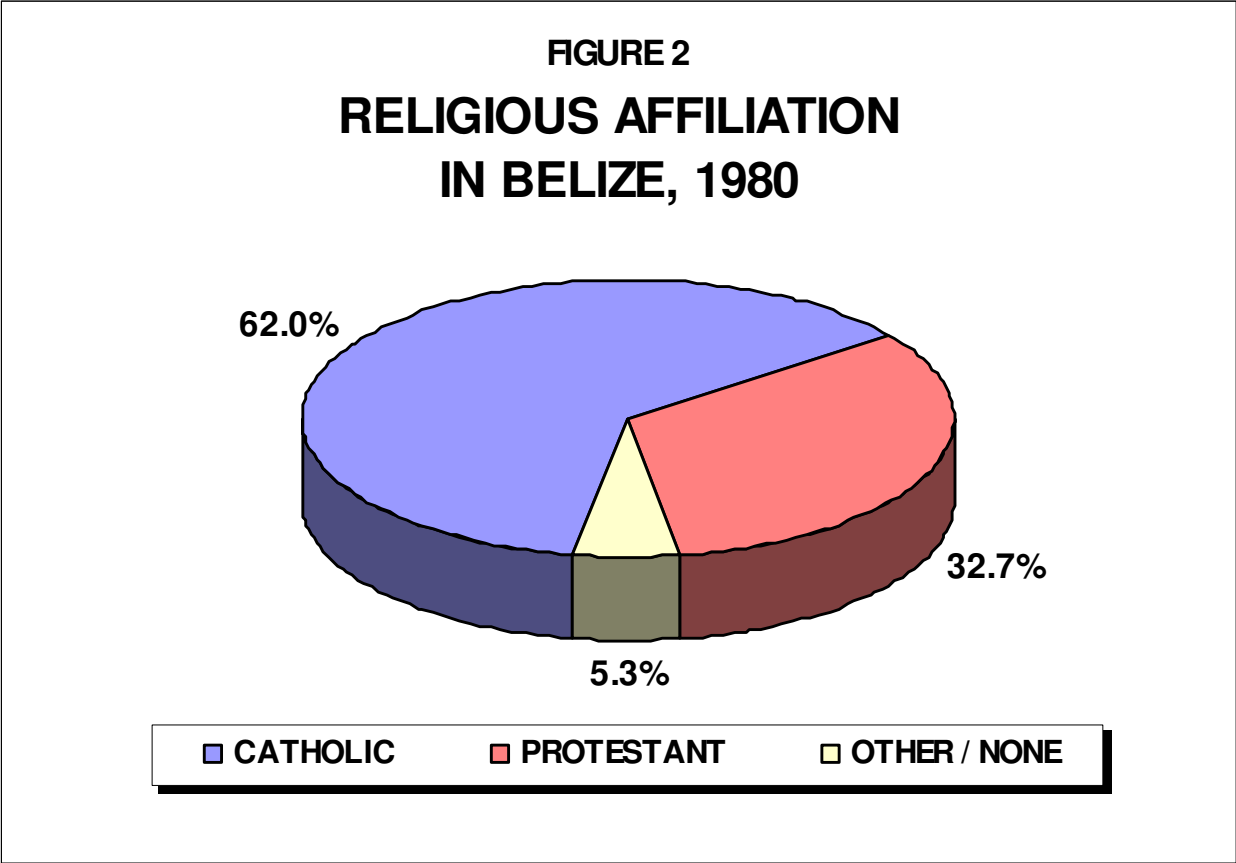
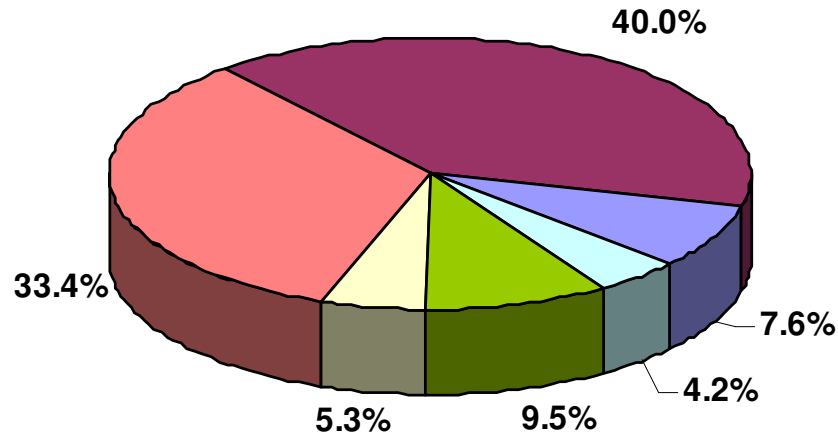
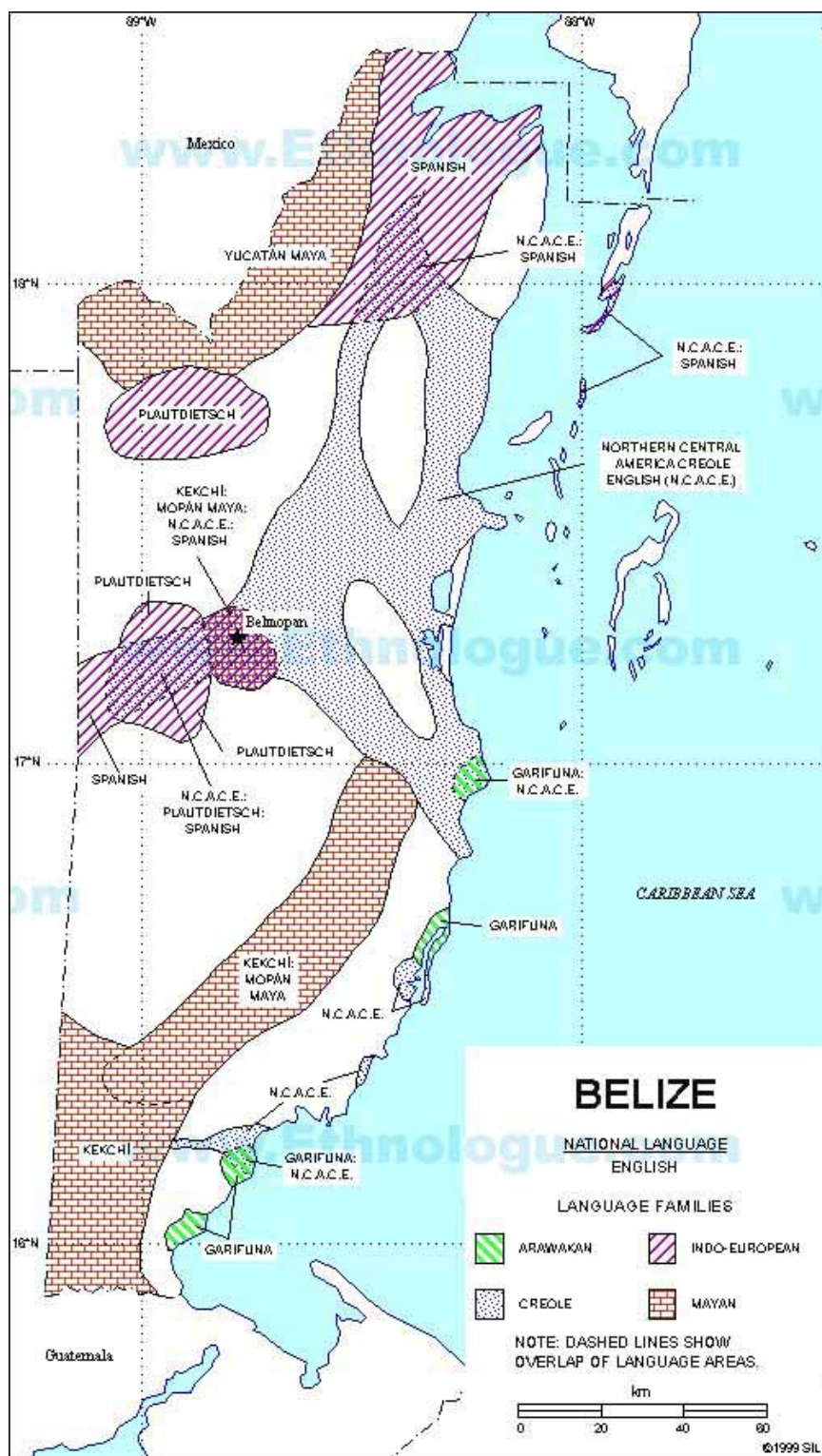


FIGURE 3
RACE-ETHNIC COMPOSITION
OF BELIZE, 1980



HISPANIC-MESTIZO	CREOLE	BLACK CARIB
WHITE	AMERINDIAN	OTHER / NOT STATED

FIGURE 4: MAP OF LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN BELIZE



3.5 OTHERS & NOT STATED (9.5%, 1980 Census):

3.5.1 WHITE EUROPEANS & NORTH AMERICANS (4.2%, 1980 Census)

People of many nationalities live in Belize, but Europeans and North Americans are especially present in the tourism industry, sports fishing and other commercial enterprises. Some of the North Americans (US and Canadian citizens) are missionaries or lay volunteers who serve with a variety of Protestant and Roman Catholic agencies, while others are members of the various Mennonite communities (5,647 in 1980). Between 1960 and 1980, 2,006 Europeans and North Americans immigrated to Belize, according to official census reports.

3.5.2 EAST INDIAN (2,997 or 2.1%, 1980 Census)

Between 1861 and 1891, indentured workers from India (called East Indians) were brought to Belize by large landowners, who hoped that the importation of these agricultural laborers would be as successful as in Trinidad and British Guiana. But only a small number of East Indians actually arrived in Belize, where they worked on the large sugar plantations in Toledo and Corozal districts. The 1891 Census lists only 291 persons living in the Colony who were born in India. Today, their descendants still grow rice in the Toledo District or other crops in Corozal District. Most are small-scale farmers, while others have become merchants. In 1980, there were two clearly discernible settlements: Calcutta in Corozal District in the north and Forest Home near Punta Gorda in Toledo District in the south. About 47% of this ethnic group lives in these two settlements and the rest live elsewhere, especially in urban centers: Corozal, Punta Gorda, Belmopan and Belize City. Although most of the descendants of the early East Indian immigrants no longer speak Hindi, now preferring to use Creole or Spanish, there are a small number of Hindi-speaking East Indian merchants who live in Belize City and Orange Walk Town, but they are relative newcomers and have no cultural ties with descendants of earlier East Indian immigrants. Although only 106 people listed **Hinduism** as their religious affiliation in 1980, many others probably have retained some of their **Hindu (or Buddhist, Jain, Sant Mat) beliefs** over the years, while others now attend Catholic or Protestant churches, mainly the Methodist Church.

3.5.3 CHINESE (200-300, 1980 estimate)

During the 1860s, indentured workers from China were imported to the Colony, but the venture was not very successful, with some dying from disease while others fled to live among the Amerindians of Yucatan. Descendants of these early Chinese immigrants still live in Belize, but most of the Chinese population today has arrived since the 1930s. Few have become Christians. The majority continue to worship their ancestors, while pursuing age-old cultural and religious traditions (**Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism**) and operating stores, restaurants and lottery sales. Between 1960 and 1980, 112 Chinese nationals immigrated to Belize. Most reside in Belize City, but at least a few Chinese families live in every major town.

3.5.4 SYRIAN-LEBANESE (170-200, 1980 estimate)

Some of the most successful businessmen in Belize are Syrians or Lebanese who have lived there for two or three generations. Although few in number, Syrians have fulfilled an important role in the community, along with Chinese merchants. Family ties are strong but little is known about their current religious beliefs: some are Arab Muslims (110) while others are Eastern Orthodox (Maronite) or Roman Catholic. Also, there are a small number of Palestinian immigrants and their descendants, including a leading Belizean politician—Mr. Said Musa.

IV. OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL CHURCHES

4.1 PROTESTANT CHURCHES

During the first century of Protestant influence (see Figure 5) in the British Colony of Belize, the Anglican Church was dominant. But it was not until 1815 that the first permanent Anglican place of worship was constructed, making St. John's Cathedral the oldest Protestant church in Central America. From 1776, when the first Anglican chaplain was sent to Belize by the **Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG)**, until the late 1860s, the **Anglican Church** was the Established Church of the Colony, supported by the government through public funding.

However, groups of **nonconformists or Dissenters (meaning non-Anglicans)** began arriving in British Honduras during the early 1800s, which led to a decline of Anglican influence. **English Baptist and Methodist missionaries** were sent to the Colony in 1822 and 1825, respectively, and **Scottish Presbyterians** arrived in Belize City during the mid-1820s. By 1856, the Protestant community of Belize City, where most of the inhabitants of the Colony resided, included 2,500 Anglicans, 500 Baptists, 500 Methodists and Presbyterians, in addition to 1,000 Catholics and 2,600 "others," out of a total population of 7,000 people of many races and nationalities (Dobson 1973:160).

It was not until the early 1900s that other Protestant groups began working in British Honduras. The **Seventh-day Adventists**, arriving in the Bay Islands of Honduras in the 1890s, sent out workers along the entire Caribbean coast of Central America from their base on the island of Roatan. Occasional visits were made to Belize by Adventist missionaries prior to the 1920s, but it was not until 1922 that the Belize Adventist Mission was formally organized. The **Salvation Army** of England arrived in 1913 but remained small and confined to Belize City. The **Church of the Nazarene** entered Belize from Guatemala in 1934 and began planting churches among the Spanish-speaking inhabitants of Benque Viejo in the Cayo District, near the Guatemalan border.

Nevertheless, in 1935, Protestant church life was still dominated by the Anglicans (composing 22% of the total population), the Methodists (14%), and the Baptists (3%), whereas the Catholic population had increased to 59% (see Table 7A and Grubb 1937:139-140).

Few new Protestant denominations entered Belize until the 1950s, undoubtedly because of the dismal prospects for church planting among the small, economically depressed population that had severely suffered the ravages of the Great Depression (1930s) and the Great Hurricane of 1931. The population of Belize only numbered 59,220 people in 1946. Between 1861 and 1935, most Protestant churches experienced declining memberships and struggled desperately for mere survival amidst the economic hardships of those difficult years.

The Pentecostal movement had its origin in Belize during the period 1901-1946. The first Pentecostal church (independent) was founded in Roaring Creek Village in 1912, followed by another in Belize City in 1938, known as the **City Mission** (affiliated with the **International Pentecostal Church**). However, the **Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee)** was the first Pentecostal denomination known to have sent workers to Belize; the Lintons arrived in 1944. Five additional Pentecostal groups started work there during the 1950s, including the **Assemblies of God** (1946), **Church of God in Christ (COGIC)** from Memphis, Tennessee (1953), the **Pentecostal Church of God of America** (1956), the **Church of the Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith** (1957). Most of these newer denominations formed churches among the Creole population, mainly in Belize District, while only a few had outreach to the Amerindian and Mestizo peoples.

FIGURE 5
**A CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM OF THE PROTESTANT MOVEMENT BY
 MAJOR TRADITIONS AND DENOMINATIONAL FAMILIES**

B1.0	OLDER LITURGICAL (CLASSICAL) TRADITION, 1517-1530
B1.1	Lutheran Family (1517, 1530)
B1.2	Reformed/Presbyterian Family (1523)
B1.3	Anglican/Episcopal Family (1534)
B2.0	EVANGELICAL SEPARATIST ("FREE CHURCH") TRADITION, 1521
B2.1	Anabaptist/Mennonite Family (1521)
B2.2	Baptist Family (1610)
B2.3	Pietist Family (1670)
B2.4	Independent Fundamentalist Family (1827)
B2.5	Holiness Family (1830s)
B2.6	Restoration Movement Family (1830s)
B2.7	Other Separatist churches
B3.0	ADVENTIST TRADITION, 1836
B3.1	Millerist Family that observes Sunday (1855)
B3.2	Millerist Family that observes Saturday (1850s)
B3.3	Adventist Church of God Family (1863)
B3.4	Other Adventist churches
B4.0	PENTECOSTAL TRADITION: 1901, 1906
B4.01	Apostolic Faith Pentecostal Family (1901)
B4.02	Pentecostal Holiness Family (1906)
B4.03	Name of Jesus ("Oneness") Pentecostal Family (1907)
B4.04	Finished Work Pentecostal Family (1910)
B4.05	Sabbatical Pentecostal Family (1930s)
B4.06	Healing/Deliverance Pentecostal Family (1947)
B4.07	Latter Rain Pentecostal Family (1948)
B4.08	Charismatic/Pentecostal Family (1950s)
B4.09	Shepherding Pentecostal Family (1968)
B4.10	Word of Faith Pentecostal Family (1970s)
B4.11	Other Pentecostal churches
B5.0	UNCLASSIFIED GROUPS
B6.0	PARA-CHURCH GROUPS/NON-DENOMINATIONAL GROUPS

FIGURE 6
**PROTESTANT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS FOR
 BELIZE BY TRADITIONS AND FAMILIES OF DENOMINATIONS: 1978**

TRADITION & FAMILY TYPE	NUMBER OF CONGREGATIONS	REPORTED MEMBERSHIP	PERCENT OF TOTAL
LITURGICAL TRADITION	31	4,195	25.5%
The Anglican Church	26	4,000	
Presbyterian Churches (2 groups)	5	195	
EVANGELICAL NON-PENTECOSTAL (SEPARATIST)	118	5,562	33.8
All Mennonite groups	37	1,909	
Methodist Church in the Caribbean & Americas	22	1,695	
Church of the Nazarene	18	632	
Belize Baptist Mission	6	333	
Association of Evangelical Churches of Belize (GMU)	12	326	
Christian Brethren Assemblies	5	323	
Church of Christ	1	191	
All others (Baptist, AME Zion, Friends/Quakers, Moravian, Salvation Army, etc)	12	243	
ADVENTIST TRADITION	40	3,997	24.3
Seventh-day Adventist Church	39	3,897	
Independent Adventist Church	1	100	
PENTECOSTAL TRADITION	64	2,656	16.2
Kekchi and Mayan Churches of Belize	15	746	
Church of God in Christ (Memphis, TN)	7	540	
Church of God (Cleveland, TN)	8	101	
Pentecostal Church of God of America	2	97	
Assemblies of God (Springfield, MO)	6	96	
City Mission (International Pentecostal Church)	1	50	
Church of the Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith	1	19	
Others (14 groups)	24	1,007	
UNCLASSIFIED GROUPS	5	36	0.2
TOTALS	258	16,801	100%

NOTES:

1. The total Protestant Membership of 16,801 in 1978 represented about 11.8% of the population, whereas the total Protestant Community in 1978 was estimated to be 43,562 (33.3%) of the total population of Belize, estimated at 131,000 in 1978 (see Figure 8A).
2. The statistics for 1978 were taken from Part I of the *Directory of Churches, Organizations and Ministries of the Protestant Movement in Belize*. San José, Costa Rica: IINDEPTH / PROCADES, 1979.

FIGURE 7
POPULATION OF BELIZE BY RELIGION: 1970 & 1980

TRADITION – FAMILY – DENOMINATION	1970 CENSUS	PERCENT	1980 CENSUS	PERCENT
ROMAN CATHOLIC	77,421	64.6%	88,587	62.0%
PROTESTANT	33,385	27.8	46,711	32.7
Liturgical Tradition	18,283	14.7	16,894	11.8
Anglican	17,783	14.3	16,894	11.8
All Presbyterians	500	.4	--	--
Free Church or Separatist Tradition	15,819	9.0	20,059	14.1
All Methodists	10,700	8.9	8,632	6.0
Moravian	13	.01	1,650	1.2
All Baptists	826	.7	1,228	.9
Christian Brethren	240	.2	--	--
Church of the Nazarene			1,598	1.1
Mennonite (all groups)	3,300	2.8	5,647	3.9
Other Christian (AMEZ, Nazarene, GMU, Salvation Army, etc.)	740	.6	2,519	1.8
Adventist	2,519	2.1	4,201	3.0
Pentecostal Tradition (all groups)	783	.6	4,342	3.1
Pentecostal (partial)	389	.3	3,237	2.3
Church of God (several groups)	414	.3	1,105	.8
TOTAL OTHER, NOT STATED AND NONE	9,129	7.6	7,570	5.3
OTHER RELIGIONS (included under NOT STATED below in 1970)			1,675	1.2
Chinese religions (Ancestor Worship, Buddhism and Taoism)				
Eastern Orthodox – Maronite Christians (Middle Easterners)				
Garifuna religion (Garínagu) - animism				
Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism and Sant Mat (East Indians)			106	.1
Islam (includes Black Muslim)			110	.1
Jehovah's Witnesses			1,459	1.0
Judaism				
Mayan religions (Kekchí and Maya) – Shamanism				
Obeah – Myalism – Voudun (Creoles)				
Rastafarian (Creoles)				
Catholic Popular Religiosity (Mestizos)				
NOT STATED (and NONE in 1970)	9,129	7.6	4,138	2.9
NONE			1,757	1.2
TOTALS	119,935	100%	142,847	100%

Source: Table D-11, "Population by Religion: 1960, 1970 and 1980," page 37 of *1980-1981 Population Census of the Commonwealth Caribbean: Belize*. Volume 3. Port of Spain, Trinidad: CARICOM, 1985.

Notable among the non-Pentecostal groups that arrived in Belize during the 1940s and 1950s were the **Christian Brethren** (1949) and the **Moravian Church** (1950s) from Jamaica; the nondenominational **Gospel Missionary Union** (1955), the **African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (AMEZ)** and the **Methodist Protestant Church** (both in the 1950s) from the USA; and several groups of **Mennonite colonists** from Mexico in 1958 who were followed by numerous other Mennonite groups during the 1960s, mainly from Canada.

The Mennonites were looking for new tracts of land suitable for farming. Special arrangements were made with the Belize government permitting the Mennonites to settle there and establish agricultural colonies, which have since made a vital contribution to the Belizean economy and diet.

During the 1960s, ten new denominations or independent churches began work in Belize, of which six were Mennonites and three were Pentecostal: the **Pentecostal Fellowship** was organized in 1962 in Ontario Village, Cayo District; **Elim Fellowship** (Latter Rain Movement) arrived in 1967; and the independent **Kekchi and Mayan Churches of Belize** were organized in 1968.

Also, the **Church of Christ** first arrived in 1967 when Luther Savage of the North American *cappella* Churches of Christ made a trip to the colony for the purpose of surveying the prospects for opening new work. Savage moved to Belize City in 1969. Jerry Jenkins and Herman King held gospel meetings in Belize in 1970. A congregation was established by Bob Hurd in Corozal in 1971 and Burney Levitt served this congregation until 1975. Other early pioneers in this new field were Jerry Westmoreland, Gilbert Trip and Kent Marcum. Students from Oklahoma Christian College, under the direction of Ron Beaver, began to conduct yearly campaigns in 1972. In 1973 the Church of Christ was officially incorporated in Belize.

In 1960, according to Taylor and Coggins (1961:74-77), the Anglicans represented 22% of the total population of Belize (90,505, 1960 Census), the Methodists 16.5%, the Baptists 3%, the Seventh-day Adventists 2.1% and other Protestants 4.2%, whereas the Roman Catholic population accounted for 54%.

In 1970, the Anglican community had dropped to 14.3% of the total population of 119,934 (1970 Census), the Methodists had declined to 8.9% and all other Protestant adherents represented 2.6%; Roman Catholic adherents represented 64.6%, which indicates that the Roman Catholic population had grown significantly between 1960 and 1970, mainly because of immigration from Mexico and Guatemala.

At least 15 new Protestant groups came to Belize during the 1970s, ten of which were Pentecostal. Most of them were from the USA, but four were Spanish-speaking groups from Guatemala or Mexico, and two groups were Mennonites. The **Friends United Meeting** (Quakers) arrived in 1975, the independent **Big Falls Baptist Church** was organized in 1975 (missionary Mike Willis), the nondenominational **Shield of Faith Mission International** began work in 1976, the first **Southern Baptist** missionaries arrived in 1977, and **Outreach For Belize** was established in 1977 by an independent Baptist missionary, John Collier.

Historically, the majority of Protestants in Belize have been Anglicans and Methodists, although most of them are non-communicants, which reflects an attitude of religious indifference. However, looking at the total Protestant membership by family types in 1978, excluding those who are inactive or nominal adherents, the **Liturgical Family of Churches** (in Belize, only Anglicans and Presbyterians are represented) accounted for 25.5% of all communicant members, whereas the **Evangelical non-Pentecostal Family of Churches** (Separatist or Free Church Tradition) totaled 33.8%, the **Adventist Family** 24.3%, the **Pentecostal Family** only 16.2%, and **Unclassified** 0.2% (see Figures 6, 7, 10 and 11).

Nevertheless, the most notable increases in Protestant Community since 1960 have been among the Pentecostals, increasing from about 550 in 1960 to 9,800 in 1978, with most of the

increase occurring since 1970 among a multitude of small Pentecostal groups. The Adventist community more than doubled between 1960 and 1970, from 1,056 to 2,519, but jumped to almost 12,000 by 1978 of which 3,897 were members. Among the Evangelical non-Pentecostal groups, both the Methodist Church and the Belize Baptist Mission showed a decline since 1960, while other groups reported slight to moderate gains, mainly among the Nazarenes, Gospel Missionary Union, Christian Brethren, the Church of Christ, and several independent Baptist groups. Of course the Mennonites have shown a large gain since 1960, but nearly all of its increase was due to the migration of Mennonites to Belize from Mexico and Canada. The chief exception to this pattern is the **Belize Evangelical Mennonite Church, related to the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities** that entered Belize in 1960, specifically to do mission work among the Spanish-speaking population. However its present total membership is only about 150 people in five small congregations. By 1978, total Protestant membership in Belize was estimated to be 16,801 distributed among 258 organized local congregations (churches and missions) – see Figure 6.

In addition, Figure 7 provides a comparison between the census data for 1970 and 1980 regarding religious affiliation, which reveals that those affiliated with the Protestant Movement in Belize increased from 33,385 in 1970 to 50,727 in 1980, which corresponds to 27.8% to 31.9% of the total population for the respective dates.

Figures 8A and 8B provide us with an historical overview of the growth of the Protestant Movement from 1790 to 1980, along with a comparison of the average annual growth rates (AAGR) and the decadal growth rates (DGR) for different periods. Figure 9 traces the establishment of the various denominations of the Protestant Movement in Belize from 1776 to 1980, sorted by their founding date.

Figures 10 – 14 are self-explanatory.

10.	PROPORTION OF PROTESTANT MEMBERSHIP IN BELIZE BY MAJOR TRADITIONS, 1860-1980 [100% CHART]
11.	PROTESTANT MEMBERSHIP IN BELIZE BY MAJOR TRADITIONS: 1978 [PIE CHART]
12.	GROWTH OF TOTAL POPULATION COMPARED TO PROTESTANT GROWTH IN BELIZE: 1935-1980 [SEMI-LOG SCALE]
13.	PROTESTANT MEMBERSHIP BY MAJOR TRADITIONS OF THE PROTESTANT MOVEMENT IN BELIZE: 13A. SEPARATIST TRADITION BY FAMILY TYPES, 1978 13B. PENTECOSTAL TRADITION BY FAMILY TYPES, 1978
14.	THE TEN LARGEST PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS IN BELIZE, BASED ON REPORTED MEMBERSHIP: 1978 [STACKED BAR CHART]

Although this overview of the Protestant Movement in Belize may sound encouraging to outside observers, the tragic reality is that many Protestants in Belize are nominal Christians who have lost their first love for Jesus Christ. Many of the older Protestant churches are almost empty now during services, with the faithful few only cheered by faint memories of bygone days when new believers enthusiastically embraced the risen Lord, and committed disciples of the Savior traveled near and far to take the light of the Gospel to the unconverted. Now, an awakening of Christian love and obedience is desperately needed among the Protestant churches of Belize, to demonstrate the power of the Gospel to change individuals, people groups (identified by race, language and subculture), and social structures.

FIGURE 8A
TABLE OF ESTIMATED PROTESTANT GROWTH IN BELIZE: 1790-1980

DATE	TOTAL MEMBERSHIP	NUMBER OF CONGREGATIONS	AVERAGE CONG. SIZE	SOURCES	ESTIMATED COMMUNITY	RATIO M:C	ESTIMATED % PROTESTANT	TOTAL POPULATION
1790				CENSUS				2,656
1832	1,200	48	25	HOLLAND	2,200	1.8	48%	4,550
1835	1,500	75	20	CENSUS	4,500	3.0	41%	11,121
1841				CENSUS				8,235
1861	3,424	137	25	CENSUS	13,689	4.0	53%	25,635
1871				CENSUS				24,710
1891				CENSUS				31,471
1901	3,748	125	30	CENSUS	18,740	5.0	50%	37,479
1911				CENSUS				40,458
1921	4,379	146	30	CENSUS	21,897	5.0	48%	45,317
1931				CENSUS				51,347
1935	5,611	160	35	GRUBB-HOLLAND	22,450	4.0	41%	54,744
1946	7,500	188	40	CENSUS	23,688	3.0	40%	59,220
1960	10,408	232	45	CENSUS & TAYLOR-COGGINS	31,850	3.1	35%	90,505
1970	14,776	246	60	CENSUS	33,385	2.3	27.8%	119,935
1978	16,801	258	65	HOLLAND	43,562	2.6	33.3%	131,000
1980	19,510	300	65	CENSUS	46,711	2.8	32.7%	142,847

NOTES:

1. Congregations include established churches and missions (or mission stations).
2. Ratio **M:C** = Protestant **M**embership to **C**ommunity Ratio.
3. The information to the right of **SOURCES** is based on the SOURCE cited; the information to the left of **SOURCES** has been calculated by the author based on existing historical records from denominational and other sources, such as Frederick Crowe (1850), Kenneth Grubb (1937) and Taylor-Coggins (1961).
4. All of the official Census data is taken from Table A2, "Population Size and Growth, 1790-1980," page 2, *1980-1981 Population Census of the Commonwealth Caribbean: Belize*. Volume 3. Port of Spain, Trinidad: CARICOM, May 1985.

FIGURE 8B
**TABLE OF ESTIMATED GROWTH RATES OF
 PROTESTANT MEMBERSHIP IN BELIZE: 1835-1980**

RANKING	GROWTH BY PERIODS	AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH RATES (AAGR)	DECADAL GROWTH RATE (DGR)
2	1835-1861 (26 yrs)	3.2	37.36
10	1861-1901 (40 yrs)	0.2	2.29
9	1901-1921 (20 yrs)	0.8	8.09
8	1921-1935 (14 yrs)	1.1	11.76
6	1935-1960 (25 yrs)	2.5	28.04
5	1935-1946 (11 yrs)	2.7	30.19
7	1946-1960 (14 yrs)	2.4	26.37
3	1960-1980 (20 yrs)	3.2	36.91
1	1960-1970 (10 yrs)	3.6	41.97
4	1970-1980 (10 yrs)	2.8	32.04
RANKING	SORTED BY GROWTH RATES	AAGR	DGR
1	1960-1970 (10 yrs)	3.6	41.97
2	1835-1861 (26 yrs)	3.2	37.36
3	1960-1980 (20 yrs)	3.2	36.91
4	1970-1980 (10 yrs)	2.8	32.04
5	1935-1946 (11 yrs)	2.7	30.19
6	1935-1960 (25 yrs)	2.5	28.04
7	1946-1960 (14 yrs)	2.4	26.37
8	1921-1935 (14 yrs)	1.1	11.76
9	1901-1921 (20 yrs)	0.8	8.09
10	1861-1901 (40 yrs)	0.2	2.29

NOTES: After examining the data in the above table, the challenge is to try to determine the reasons for growth and non-growth for Protestant membership for each of these periods, based on the historical evidence presented in the text of this profile:

- (1) The fastest rate of growth occurred during the period 1960-1970, in which Mennonite immigration accounted for most of the new members (see Figure 9).
- (2) The period 1835-1861 recorded the establishment of the Baptists and Methodists with strong efforts to evangelize and convert the unsaved, baptize new members and plant new churches, missions and preaching stations; the Scottish Presbyterians also arrived prior to 1861.
- (3) During the period 1960-1980, all of the existing denominations increased due to “biological growth” (births minus deaths = net population increase) as well as by their combined evangelistic efforts among the general population.

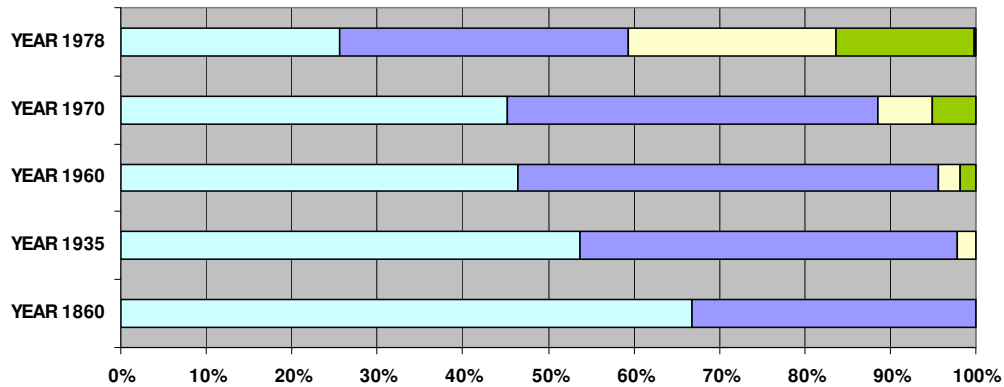
- (4) During the period 1935-1946, the total Protestant membership grew because of the evangelistic efforts of the new denominations that arrived in Belize after 1900: The Salvation Army (1913), the Seventh-Day Adventists (1922), the Church of the Nazarene (1934) and the Church of God of Cleveland, TN (1944) – see Figure 9.
- (5) On the other hand, the periods 1861-1901, 1901-1921 and 1921-1935 were characterized by slow Protestant membership growth among the Anglicans, Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists due to economic decline in the colony and general population losses due to emigration. The period 1861-1935 also witnessed the importation of “indentured workers” from China and India to help alleviate the labor shortage caused by the emigration of Creoles in the post-emancipation period (see 3.6.1 and 3.6.2).

FIGURE 9
A CHRONOLOGY OF HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF
THE PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS IN BELIZE: 1776-1980
(SORTED BY DATE OF ORIGIN)

CLASCODE	TRADITION – FAMILY – DENOMINATION	DENCODE	DATE
B1.3011	Society for the Propagation of Gospel in Foreign Parts (1701, London, England)	SPGFP	1776
B1.301	Anglican Church (1534, Bishop of Canterbury, London, England)	ANGC	1812
B6.102	British & Foreign Bible Society (1804, London, England)	BFBS	1818
B6.103	British Honduras Bible Society - Belizean Bible Society (1818)	BBS	1818
B2.23011	Baptist Missionary Society - BMS (1792, London, England; William Carey & friends)	BMS	1822
B2.23013	Belizean Baptist Missionary Society (was affiliated with BMS until 1850)	BBMS	1822
B1.2201	Presbyterian Church of Scotland (1567, Scotland; John Knox)	PCSCOT	1825
B2.3201	The Methodist Church (1739, England; John Wesley); Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas (1967, Antigua, West Indies)	TMC	1825
B2.32011	Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (1817, London, England)	WMMS	1825
B6.101	American Bible Society (1826)	ABS	1890
B2.23012	Jamaican Baptist Missionary Society (1842, Kingston, Jamaica)	JBMS	1893
B4.1100	Independent Pentecostal Christian Assembly in Roaring Creek Village, Cayo District	INDP	1912
B2.502	The Salvation Army (1878, London, England; William Booth)	TSA	1913
B3.201	Seventh-Day Adventist Church, General Conference (1863, Battle Creek, Michigan)	SDAGC	1922
B2.506	Church of the Nazarene (1895, Kansas City, MO)	CNAZ	1934
B4.1100	City Mission – International Pentecostal Church (Los Angeles, CA)	CMIPC	1938
B4.0202	Church of God (1907, Cleveland, TN; Ambrose J. Tomlinson)	COGC	1944
B4.0401	Assemblies of God, General Conference (1914, Hot Springs, AR)	AGGC	1946
B2.401	Plymouth Brethren Assemblies / Christian Brethren (1827, Plymouth, England; John N. Darby)	PBA	1949
B2.3102	The Moravian Church (1730s, Germany; Moravian Brethren)	TMC	1950s
B2.3204	African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (1801, Charlotte, NC)	AMEZ	1950s
B2.3214	Methodist Protestant Church (1940, Monticello, MS)	MPC	1950s
B4.02061	Church of God in Christ (1908, Memphis, TN; Charles H. Mason)	COGIC	1953
B2.799	Gospel Missionary Union (1892, Kansas City, MO)	GMU	1955
B4.04011	Iglesia de Dios Pentecostal, Misión Internacional (1916, Puerto Rico; Juan Lugo)	IDPMI	1956
B4.0410	Pentecostal Church of God of America (1919, Joplin, MO; John C. Sinclair)	PCGA	1956
B4.0399	Church of the Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith (1919, New York City)	CLJCAF	1957
B1.22104	National Presbyterian Church of Mexico (1872, affiliated with PCUSA)	IPNM	1958
B2.1104	Evangelical Mennonite Conference - Kleinegemeinde (1814, Steinbach, MB, Canada)	EMCH	1958
B2.1108	Rhineland (Old Colony) Mennonite Churches (1875, Winkler, Manitoba, Canada)	RMCH	1958

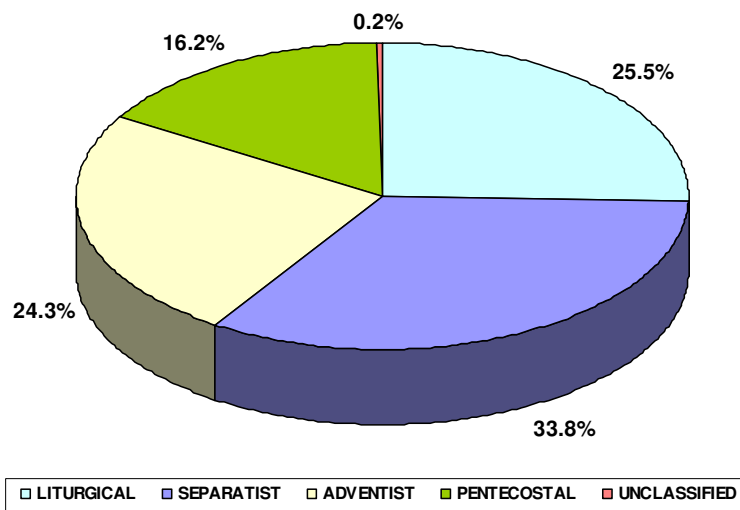
B2.1113	Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities (1914, Salunga, PA)	EMBMC	1960
B2.2314	Conservative Baptist Home Mission Society (1943, Wheaton, IL)	CBHMB	1960
B2.1303	Beachy Amish Mennonite Conference (1923, Plain City, OH) – Pilgrim Fellowship Mission	BAMC	1961
B2.1111	Church of God in Christ, Mennonite (1878, Moundridge, KS; John Holdeman)	CGCM	1962
B2.1301	Old Order Amish Mennonite Church (1862, Aylmer, Ontario, Canada)	OOAMC	1962
B2.1114	Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference (1937, Winnipeg, MB, Canada)	EMMC	1966
B4.0701	Elim Fellowship (Lima, NY; 1932, 1947)	ELIM	1967
B4.1100	Kekchí and Mayan Churches of Belize	KMCB	1968
B2.602	Christian Churches / Churches of Christ (1832)	CCCOC	1969
B2.1112	Somerfelder Mennonite Churches (1893, Manitoba, Canada)	SMCH	1970
B2.1403	Friends United Meeting (1863, Richmond, IN)	FUM	1975
B2.23051	Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (1845, Richmond, VA)	SBFMB	1977
B2.2316	Baptist Bible Fellowship (1940, Springfield, MO)	BBF	1979

FIGURE 10
PROPORTION OF PROTESTANT MEMBERSHIP
BY MAJOR TRADITIONS IN BELIZE, 1860-1978

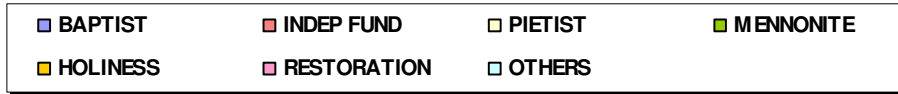
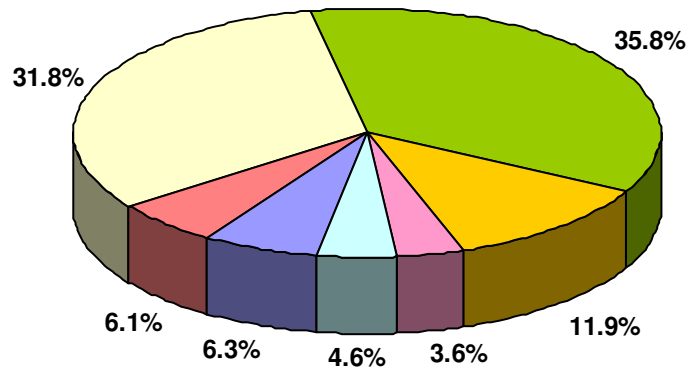


	YEAR 1860	YEAR 1935	YEAR 1960	YEAR 1970	YEAR 1978
UNCLASSIFIED	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
PENTECOSTAL	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	5.1%	16.2%
ADVENTIST	0.0%	2.2%	2.5%	6.4%	24.3%
SEPARATIST	33.2%	44.1%	49.0%	43.4%	33.8%
LITURGICAL	66.9%	53.7%	46.5%	45.1%	25.5%

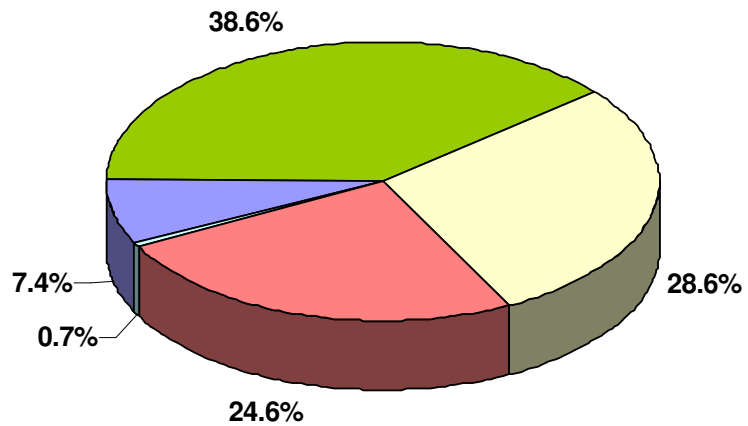
FIGURE 11
PROTESTANT MEMBERSHIP IN BELIZE
BY MAJOR TRADITIONS, 1978



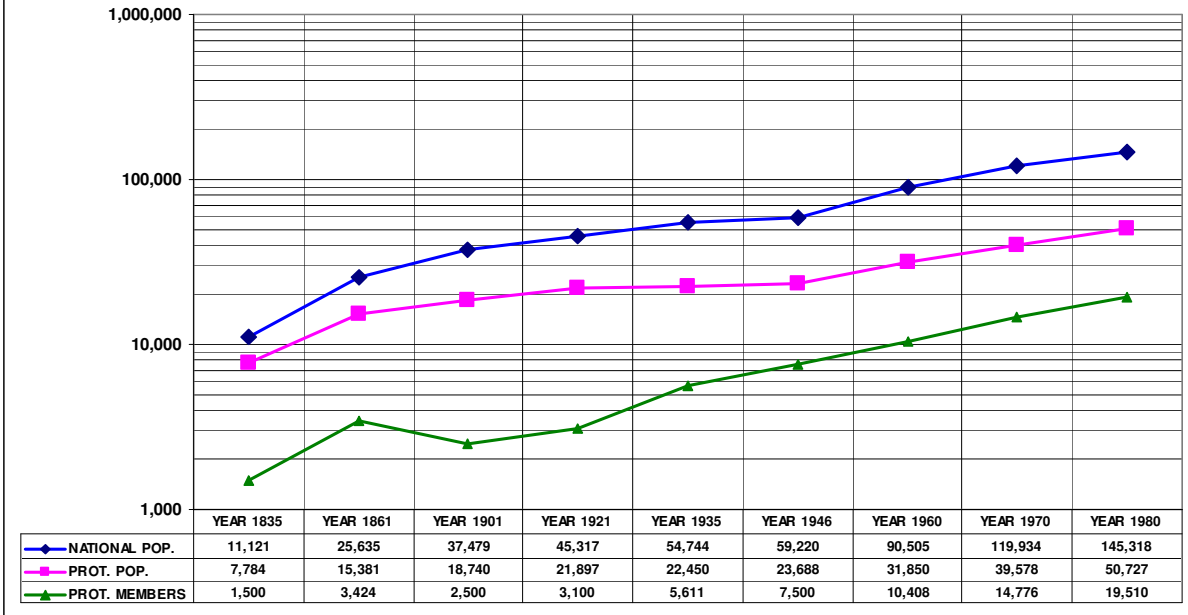
**FIGURE 12A:
PROTESTANT SEPARATIST MEMBERSHIP
IN BELIZE BY FAMILY TYPES, 1978**



**FIGURE 12B:
PENTECOSTAL MEMBERSHIP IN BELIZE
BY FAMILY TYPES, 1978**



**FIGURE 13
NATIONAL POPULATION GROWTH COMPARED TO ESTIMATED
PROTESTANT GROWTH IN BELIZE, 1835-1980**



**FIGURE 14
THE TEN LARGEST PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS
IN BELIZE BASED ON REPORTED MEMBERSHIP, 1978**

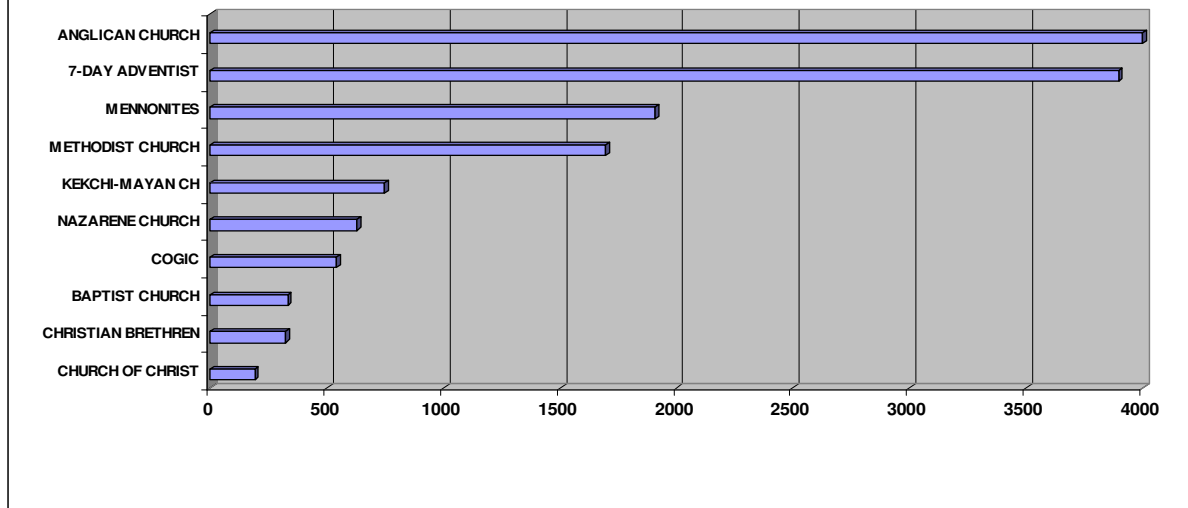


FIGURE 15: MAP OF DISTRICTS OF BELIZE



FIGURE 16
**GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF
 PROTESTANT CONGREGATIONS BY REGIONS AND DISTRICTS AND
 THE RATIO OF CONGREGATIONS TO POPULATION, 1980**

REGIONS & DISTRICTS (1)	POPULATION 1980	PERCENT OF POPULATION	NUMBER OF PROTESTANT CONGREGATIONS	PERCENT OF CONG.	PROPORTION OF CONGREGATIONS TO POPULATION
NORTHERN LOWLANDS	94,780	66.4	135	53.4	1:702
Belize District	49,831	34.9	78	30.8	1:639
Corozal District	22,211	15.5	23	9.1	1:966
Orange Walk District	22,738	15.9	34	13.3	1:669
SOUTHERN LOWLANDS	25,370	17.8	68	26.9	1:373
Stan Creek District	13,921	9.8	32	12.7	1:435
Toledo District	11,449	8.0	36	14.2	1:318
MAYAN HIGHLANDS	22,697	15.9	50	19.8	1:454
Cayo District	22,697	15.9	50	19.8	1:454
TOTALS FOR 1980 (2)	142,847	100%	253 (4)	100%	1:565
TOTALS FOR 1980 (3)	145,353	100%	258 (5)	100%	1:563

NOTES:

1. See map on previous page for the location of each District.
2. Total "tabulable population" at the time of the 1980 Census: 142,847.
3. Total "enumerated population" for the 1980 Census: 145,353.
4. Total number of Protestant congregations (churches and missions) located geographically by District in Part II of the *Directory of Churches, Organizations and Ministries of the Protestant Movement in Belize*. San José, Costa Rica: IINDEPTH / PROCADES, 1979.
5. Total number of Protestant congregations (churches and missions) reported to exist nationally in Part I of the *Directory of Churches, Organizations and Ministries of the Protestant Movement in Belize*. San José, Costa Rica: IINDEPTH / PROCADES, 1979.
6. Source: Table A-1, "Population Totals, 1980 Census," page 1; and Table B-6, "Population Density by Area, 1980," page 11 of CARICOM, *1980-1981 Population Census of the Commonwealth Caribbean: Belize*. Volume 3. Port of Spain, Trinidad: CARICOM, 1985.

Figure 16 provides us with an overview of the geographical distribution of the total population of Belize in 1980 compared to the distribution of Protestant congregations (churches and missions) by Regions and Districts of Belize (see map, Figure 15), based on an analysis of the *Directory of Churches, Organizations and Ministries of the Protestant Movement in Belize*. San José, Costa Rica: IINDEPTH / PROCADES, 1979. Here are some of our general observations:

(1) The proportion of Protestant congregations (churches and missions) compared to the geographical distribution of the population by Regions reveals that the Northern Lowlands has 53.2% of all the Protestant congregations and 66.4% of the total population, which means that the congregation-to-population ratio (1:702 = one congregation for 702 inhabitants) is higher for this region than for other regions of the country: 1:373 for the Southern Lowlands and 1:454 for the Mayan Highlands. The national average of Protestant congregations-to-population is 1:565 based

on the sample of 253 Protestant congregations that were geographically located by District and Region in Part II of the ***Directory of Churches, Organizations and Ministries of the Protestant Movement in Belize***. However, we were unable to locate geographically five congregations that were reported to exist by the various denominations in Part I of the Directory, for a total of 258.

(2) A similar comparison can be made at the District level within each Region and for all Districts of the country irrespective of Region. The greatest difference between the congregation-to-population ratios for all Districts is shown by Corozal District, which had 15.5% of the national population but only 9.1% of all Protestant congregations. In the Southern Lowlands, the two Districts (Stan Creek and Toledo) had a higher percentage of congregations than of the total population, which is reflected in the low congregation-to-population ratios; the same was true for the Mayan Highlands (Cayo District).

(3) Although all Districts in Belize had a relate low congregation-to-population ratio compared to other Central American countries where special efforts are being made to plant more new congregations in each geographical area (district, municipality and department or province) where the congregation-to-population ratio is greater than 1:1,000. In the case of Belize, the Northern Lowlands had the highest such ratio for the country, with 1:702, which is a reflection of the strong evangelical presence in Belize. However, in the Northern Lowland Region, the District of Corozal had the highest congregation-to-population ratio in the country, with 1:966. What this means is that, in comparison to all the Districts of Belize, the District of Corozal should be a priority area for new church planting among evangelical denominations, because this is where the greatest need exists for evangelization and church planting efforts. Orange Walk District (1:669) should be the next priority, followed by Belize District that has the nation's largest concentration of population, with 49,831, and a congregation-to-population ratio of 1:639.

In Figure 17, we can compare the geographical distribution of Protestant congregations (churches and missions) by Region and District and by Major Traditions of the Protestant Movement for 1980.

(1) **The Liturgical Tradition**, represented in Belize by the Anglican Church and two Presbyterian denominations (St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church and the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico) is highly concentrated in the Northern Lowlands Region (57.6%) and particularly within Belize District (34.5%), followed by the Southern Lowlands Region (30.3%) and particularly within Stan Creek District (24.2%).

(2) **The Separatist Tradition** (also called Free Church Tradition) also was heavily concentrated in the Northern Lowlands Region (56.4%), especially in Belize District (34.5%) and Orange Walk District (17.3%). In addition, the Separatist Tradition had a strong presence in the Southern Lowlands Region (26.4%): Stan Creek District (11.8%) and Toledo District (14.5%).

(3) **The Adventist Tradition** had the highest concentration in the Northern Lowlands Region (67.5%) compared to all other traditions. The Adventist presence was especially strong in Belize District (32.5%) and Corozal District (25.0%), followed by Cayo District (17.5%) in the Mayan Highlands Region and by Stan Creek District (12.5%) in the Southern Lowlands Region.

(4) **The Pentecostal Tradition** is less represented in Belize than in other Central American countries. Its strongest presence is in Toledo District (25.0%) of the Southern Lowlands Region and in Cayo District (25.0%) of the Mayan Highlands Region, followed by Belize District (23.4%) in the Northern Lowlands Region. However, in terms of regions, the Northern Lowlands had the highest concentration of Pentecostal churches with 26 (40.6%). Overall, the Pentecostal churches were the most evenly distributed throughout the country.

(5) There were three denominations (or independent churches) with a total of six congregations that we were unable to classify for lack of information: one in Belize District, one in Toledo District and four in Cayo District.

FIGURE 17
**GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF
 PROTESTANT CONGREGATIONS BY REGIONS AND DISTRICTS AND
 BY MAJOR TRADITIONS OF THE PROTESTANT MOVEMENT IN BELIZE: 1980**

REGIONS & DISTRICTS (1)	TOTAL		LITURGICAL		SEPARATIST		ADVENTIST		PENTE-COSTAL		UN-CLASSIFIED	
	# CONGREGATIONS	% CONG.	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
NORTHERN LOWLANDS	135	53.4	19	57.6	62	56.4	27	67.5	26	40.6	1	16.7
Belize District	78	30.8	11	33.3	38	34.5	13	32.5	15	23.4	1	16.7
Corozal District	23	9.1	4	12.1	5	4.5	10	25.0	4	6.3	--	-
Orange Walk District	34	13.3	4	12.1	19	17.3	4	10.0	7	10.9	--	-
SOUTHERN LOWLANDS	68	26.9	10	30.3	29	26.4	6	15.0	22	34.4	1	16.7
Stan Creek District	32	12.7	8	24.2	13	11.8	5	12.5	6	9.4	--	--
Toledo District	36	14.2	2	6.1	16	14.5	1	2.5	16	25.0	1	16.7
MAYAN HIGHLANDS	50	19.8	4	12.1	19	17.3	7	17.5	16	25.0	4	66.7
Cayo District	50	19.8	4	12.1	19	17.3	7	17.5	16	25.0	4	66.7
TOTALS FOR 1980	253 (2)	100%	33	100%	111	100%	40	100%	64	100%	6	100%
TOTALS FOR 1980	258 (3)	100%	33	100%	115	100%	40	100%	64	100%	6	100%

NOTES:

1. See map on page 25 for the location of each District.
2. Total number of Protestant congregations (churches and missions) located geographically by District in Part II of the *Directory of Churches, Organizations and Ministries of the Protestant Movement in Belize*. San José, Costa Rica: IINDEPTH / PROCADES, 1979.
3. Total number of Protestant congregations (churches and missions) reported to exist nationally in Part I of the *Directory of Churches, Organizations and Ministries of the Protestant Movement in Belize*. San José, Costa Rica: IINDEPTH / PROCADES, 1979.
4. Source: Table A-1, "Population Totals, 1980 Census," page 1; and Table B-6, "Population Density by Area, 1980," page 11 of CARICOM, *1980-1981 Population Census of the Commonwealth Caribbean: Belize*. Volume 3. Port of Spain, Trinidad: CARICOM, 1985.

4.2 ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Although the Roman Catholic Church was not officially present in British Honduras until 1851 when the first Catholic missionary arrived, by 1860 the Catholic Community in Belize City accounted for 15% of the total population. The arrival of the first resident Jesuit from Jamaica, Fr. Eustace du Peyron, in 1851 marked the permanent establishment of the Roman Catholic Church in Belize. The Holy Redeemer Cathedral was built – with massive columns of solid mahogany – in Belize City in 1858.

However, the growth of the Catholic Church in Belize prior to 1900 occurred chiefly among the Amerindian and Mestizo peoples in rural areas, and not among the Creoles in Belize City. Even as the early Protestant Churches in Belize grew mainly from the influx of West Indian migrants, so also the Roman Catholic Church there increased principally due to the arrival of Indian refugees from Yucatan who settled in the northern lowlands of Belize during the late 1840s, as well as from the migration of other Amerindian and Mestizo peoples from Guatemala after 1850.

The missionary zeal of the English Jesuits between 1869 and 1894, and of the American Jesuits from the Missouri Province (USA) since 1894, have strengthened the position of the Catholic Church in Belize, mainly among the Amerindian and Mestizo peoples. The **Vicariate Apostolic of British Honduras** was created in 1893 under Bishop Salvatore di Pietro, SJ, but it was not until 1956 that the **Diocese of Belize** (under Bishop David Francis Hickey, SJ) was established under the Archdiocese of Kingston, Jamaica. The Jesuits, aided by other religious orders, established schools and social ministries, in addition to parish churches, throughout the country among the larger ethnic groups.

Today, Roman Catholics predominate in every administrative district, with the exception of the District of Belize, where 55% of the population is Protestant and largely Creole. As the Mestizo and Amerindian segments of the population increase during coming years, along with a corresponding decrease in the proportion that is Creole, the size of the Catholic Community will tend to increase as well. (Note: In 1984, Bishop Robert Louis Hodapp, SJ, retired after 26 years as the last Jesuit bishop of Belize. The first Belizean-born prelate, Most Rev. Osmond Peter Martin, was appointed Bishop of the **Diocese of Belize City and Belmopan** at that time.)

There is little evidence that the **Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement** on the one hand, or that **Liberation Theology** on the other hand, has had much impact on the Roman Catholics of Belize.

V. FOREIGN MISSIONS

5.1 THE PROTESTANT MOVEMENT

Since its founding about 1638 (definitely by 1662), the thinly populated Belize Settlement was noted for its wickedness and immorality. Contemporary historians cited various "evil influences" in the Colony: the demoralizing effects of slavery; the presence of an idle military force, which consisted of two or three companies of the West India Regiment that protected the Colony from Spanish intrusions; the lack of churches and schools; the ungodly example set by unconverted Europeans (mainly English, Scotch, German and French) who were drawn to the Colony by greed; and the accompanying licentious behavior among the conglomerate population concentrated in Belize City that derived its livelihood from the logwood and mahogany trade.

Consequently, the arrival of chaplains and clergymen from the **Church of England (Anglicans)** and pastors and missionaries from **Nonconformist and Dissenter groups** (including Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians) brought Christianity to the Colony between 1776 and 1850.

5.1.1 The Church of England (Anglican Church) in all probability was present in Belize since the days when British buccaneers used the mouth of the Belize River as a base for plundering Spanish ships in the Caribbean Sea. There, among the more honorable buccaneers who frequently carried Anglican chaplains aboard their ships, and even among their lawless successors, the pirates of the Caribbean, who occasionally kidnapped people to evoke blessings upon their exploits and to comfort the dying, the Church of England was present. Thus, it is likely that Anglican chaplains, sponsored by the British colonists, existed among the scattered logwood settlements that dotted the coast of Belize during the late 1700s.

However, the first missionary of the Church of England's **Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG)** to serve in Belize, the **Rev. Robert Shaw**, was assigned there by the SPG in May 1776, after ministering for two years at the British settlement of Black River (Río Sico) on the Mosquito Shore in present-day Honduras. However, Shaw's term of service in Belize was cut short by a Spanish invasion in 1779, and Shaw was forced to seek refuge among British settlements on the Mosquito Shore, where he served until 1786. The public records make no mention of a permanent Anglican chaplain in Belize between the early 1780s and 1794. Ecclesiastical functions were carried out by the civil magistrates during this period.

In March 1794, the **Rev. William Stanford** was appointed as chaplain of the Belize settlement, which had developed into what became known as Belize Town (now Belize City). Despite early conflicts between the settlers and the superintendent of the Colony, Stanford later became a Police magistrate, which was a full-time administrative and judicial office in the local government and a very influential position. In 1803, public funds were approved to support the chaplaincy by resolution of the magistrates with the support of Stanford, who served as chaplain until 1809.

However, it was not until 1812-1818 that the first Protestant place of worship was constructed in Central America at Belize City, the **Cathedral of St. John the Baptist**. This 450-seat cathedral, built of bricks that the mahogany traders brought with them from England as ballast for their ships, became a landmark and a notable symbol of Anglican dominance in the Settlement.

The population of Belize Settlement grew considerably after 1786, when more than 2,000 people arrived from British settlements on the Mosquito Coast. These settlements were conceded to Spain in compliance with the Peace of Paris Treaty of 1783 (ratified in 1786) in return for concessions to British settlements in Belize. However, a few British subjects remained on the Mosquito Coast and the traditional friendship between the Miskito Indians and the British continued.

In fact, an informal protectorate was maintained by the British over the Mosquito Coast, with the Miskito kings voluntarily pledging their allegiance to Great Britain. Thus, it was befitting that George Frederick was crowned as the Miskito king in 1815 by the Rector of St. John's Cathedral, the Rev. John Armstrong; Robert Charles Frederick, a young Miskito prince who had been educated in Jamaica, was crowned at St. John's Cathedral in 1825; and his son, William Clarence, was baptized there in 1845, both by the Rev. Matthew Newport.

Until the middle of the 19th century, the Anglican Church was not only the **Established Church of British Honduras**, but was undoubtedly the most influential of the different religious bodies in the country. Anglican clergy played an important role in the hierarchical colonial society that was dominated by Belize Town. Between 1776 and 1810, Anglican chaplains were more involved in governmental affairs than in church business.

However, the arrival of the **Rev. John Armstrong**, who served as chaplain from 1812 to 1824, produced significant changes in the relationship between the Anglican Church and the

community at large. Armstrong had been strongly influenced by the Evangelical Awakening in England and he brought his evangelical enthusiasm with him, including his opposition to the slave trade and its abuses. Armstrong was aided in his efforts of social reform by Colonel George Arthur, who served as Superintendent of the Colony from 1814 to 1824. Arthur was also an evangelical Anglican with strong Calvinistic views. Together, Arthur and Armstrong launched a program to reform the colonial society, much to the disgust and displeasure of many of the settlers who were categorized as being drunkards, immoral, cruel to their slaves and allowing injustice to occur in their civil courts.

Armstrong wrote a pamphlet advocating the protection of slaves from oppression and cruelty by their owners, although it is recognized that, generally, the slaves in Belize were treated slightly better than in other British settlements in the Caribbean basin. It is clear that the economy, even the very existence of Belize Colony, was dependent upon slave labor, even though the Abolition Act of 1807 made it illegal for British subjects to engage in the slave trade. However, the various Abolition Acts did not put an end to slave-trafficking in the Caribbean until 1833, when special provisions were made to bring about the emancipation of the slaves. This removed many of the restrictions under which the Negro and mulatto population had long lived, and it set the stage for the development of a system of free labor in the British colonies. In 1832, the population of the Colony of Belize totaled about 4,550, which included 2,100 slaves, 2,200 free colored and Negroes, and less than 300 whites.

In addition to Armstrong's involvement in the anti-slavery movement, he rallied support for establishing a **Honduran Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS)** in Belize City that traces its origin to 1818. When Armstrong left the Colony in 1824, he relocated in Buenos Aires, Argentina, to become an agent for the BFBS, as well as serving as chaplain to the British residents there (see Canton, BFBS History, pp. 85, 331, Vol. II, 1904).

Armstrong's successor as rector of St. John's Cathedral was the **Rev. William Gerrard**, who served from 1822 to 1824. Gerrard was followed by the **Rev. Matthew Newport**, who served in Belize from 1824 to 1860 as rector of St. John's Cathedral. Newport, by contrast with Armstrong, was an traditional Anglican churchman (with High-Church views and liturgical practices) who believed in the historic orthodoxy of the Church of England (Anglican) as an independent body (since 1534) in the Western Roman Catholic tradition, but he recognized that the Church of England had become a Reformed body due to the influence of the Protestant Reformation as reflected in the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion (1563) and the revised Book of Common Prayer (1662). Moreover, Newport regarded the Belize Colony to be a bastion of the Protestant faith, since it was the only Protestant settlement on the American continent south of the USA at that time. Newport was present at the consecration of St. John's Cathedral by the Bishop of Jamaica, the **Rt. Rev. Christopher Lipscombe**, in April 1826, and he officiated at the coronation of Frederick, the Miskito king, and baptizing Frederick's son on a later occasion.

The Anglican Church in the Belize Settlement was officially incorporated into the Diocese of Jamaica in July 1824 under Bishop Lipscombe, no doubt in part due to steady growth in the number of Anglican church members in the Colony where 1,800 baptisms were recorded between 1812 and 1823. Apparently, at this time, Anglican chaplains considered it their foremost duty to minister to the majority population in Belize City, rather than risking the hazards of missionary life in the interior among the scattered, smaller settlements. In 1845, a second Anglican church, St. Mary's, was built on the northside of Belize Town with public funds.

Strongly protesting this use of public funds, however, was a group of **Scottish Presbyterians**, who later were allotted similar funds on July 24, 1850 for the construction of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Belize City. This congregation was affiliated with the (Presby-

terian) **Free Church of Scotland**. However, the Baptists and Methodists received no such help from the colonial government for the financial support of their respective churches.

Earlier, in 1836, a new Anglican school building was erected in Belize Town with aid from the SPG's Negro Instruction Fund, at the encouragement of Coronel Fancourt, the Colony's Superintendent, who also was instrumental in securing the services of an SPG missionary from Jamaica, the **Rev. Charles Mortlock**, in 1844, as well as a schoolmaster to provide for the education of the slaves who were now legally free.

After Newport's death in 1860, the **Rev. Robert Downtown** arrived in Belize City and served as rector of St. John's Cathedral until 1870, when he was replaced by the **Rev. Alfred Field** who served as rector of St. John's Cathedral until 1875.

However, new forces were at work in the religious life of the Colony, which led to significant changes and a decline in Anglican influence. The Anglican Church itself was torn by internal strife over secular interference in church administration, over forms of worship as expressed in the controversy between High and Low Church forms of worship, and over the legality of marriages and burials performed by nonconformist ministers. The more active missionary labors of the nonconformist groups, notably the Baptists and Methodists, who worked mainly among the slaves and freedmen, contributed to the declining strength of the Anglican Church. But the most important of the new religious pressures was caused by the influx of Mayan and Mestizo refugees from the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico into northern parts of the Colony during the late 1840s, most of whom were at least nominal adherents to the **Roman Catholic Church**. By 1856, the Catholic Church was firmly established as the second largest religious group in Belize City, while the Catholic population was predominant in the northern lowlands. Moreover, it was the missionary zeal of the English Jesuits, together with their willingness to abandon city comforts for the harsh life among remote villages of the Colony, which led to the growing strength of the Catholic Church in the late 1800s, mainly among the Mayans and Mestizos.

These factors led to the disendowment and disestablishment of the Anglican Church in British Honduras. In 1866, a committee on public expenditures reported that there was no good reason for Catholics, Baptists and Methodists to support the wealthier established churches. Accordingly, the Anglican Church and the Presbyterian Church were disendowed and, in 1872, were completely disestablished by public ordinance.

Nevertheless, the Anglican Church did experience some advances in Belize during the later 1800s. Beginning in 1862, plans were made by the Bishop of Kingston, Jamaica, to enlist the support of the SPG for establishing missionary outreach in the northern lowlands, where a population of 13,000 – mainly Yucatan Mayas and Spanish Mestizos – were largely without an evangelical witness. However, it was not until 1868 that the **Rev. A. T. Giolma** arrived in Corozal Town to begin this ministry. In response to further appeals by the Superintendent of the Colony, the SPG placed the **Rev. J. H. Geare** at Belize City in 1877, where the newer religious groups were prospering. Although legal marriages were rare among the Creole population, and most of the children were the fruit of common-law unions, nevertheless, even nominal Anglicans were careful to bring their infants to the parish priest for baptism. The **Rev. Augustus Sullivan** served as rector of St. John's Cathedral from 1875 to 1885, followed by the **Rev. Hugh Nethercott** from 1885 to 1890.

Early in 1880, the Anglican Church in British Honduras was organized as a separate diocese and **Bishop W. G. Tozer of Jamaica** was elected as its first Bishop. However, episcopal jurisdiction over Belize, which had been administered from Jamaica since 1824, reverted back to the Bishop of Jamaica the following year because Tozer was not able to assume this new office. It was not until March 1891 that **Archdeacon Henry Redmayne Holme of Antigua** was consecrated at Barbados as the first Bishop of British Honduras, making this the first instance of the consecration of an Anglican bishop in the West Indies. However, Bishop Holme was shipwrecked on his way to

Belize and arrived a dying man. Therefore, the Bishop of Jamaica again resumed charge of the Anglican Church in Belize, but he was soon successful in obtaining financial aid from England for the support of a new bishop for the Colony. The **Rev. George Albert Ormsby** was selected for the office and was consecrated in London in December 1893.

The new **Diocese of British Honduras** was expanded to include jurisdiction over the Anglican and Protestant Episcopal communities in Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and parts of the Republic of Colombia, including the states of Panama and Bolivia. However, at this time the Colony of British Honduras, with approximately 31,500 inhabitants in 1891, was the smallest part of his domain, physically about the size of Wales. Upon his arrival in Belize, Bishop Ormsby toured the length and breadth of the country and was challenged to make plans for new advances. By 1895, the Colony had been divided into eight mission districts to spearhead this advance, and by 1897 several new churches had been constructed, along with an intermediate school and training college for school teachers in Belize City; the number of Anglican clergymen in the entire diocese had grown from four to eighteen.

Especially noteworthy during this period was the work of the **Rev. J. F. Laughton** at Stann Creek among the Black Carib. Laughton, after acquiring knowledge of the Carib language, translated portions of the New Testament and of the Anglican Prayer Book. The Gospel of Mark in Carib was published by the BFBS in about 1898, a total of 1,538 copies in all. These were distributed throughout the Carib villages by Laughton and Mr. Castells, the BFBS agent for Central America, who had established his headquarters in Guatemala City in 1897. Apparently, Bishop Ormsby was instrumental in reviving the **Honduran Auxiliary of the Bible Society in Belize City** in 1893, and it was there that Castells relocated the BFBS's Central American Office in 1901. During this time, the Governor of British Honduras served as president of the Honduran Auxiliary of the Bible Society, while Bishop Ormsby occupied the post of Vice-President of the Society. The **Rev. Walter Crook** served as rector of St. John's Cathedral from 1903 to 1912, followed by the **Rev. George Henry Hogbin** from 1918 to 1931.

After Ormsby (1893-1908), several other bishops served the Diocese of Belize prior to the appointment of **Bishop Edward Dunn** in 1917 who administered the Anglican Church of Belize for 26 years and later became the Archbishop of the West Indies Province while continuing to serve the Bishopric of Honduras. Although, by 1927, Bishop Dunn had ten clergymen who served in six countries, there was still a shortage of pastors in British Honduras. In 1930, the Anglican Diocese of Derby, England, began to assist the work in Belize by sending the **Rev. Steven L. Caiger** (see Caiger 1949: *Honduras Ahoy!*) and, later, the **Rev. R. A. Pratt**. In 1931, a powerful hurricane devastated the Colony and caused tremendous damage to Anglican property. The SPG came to the rescue once again by making funds available from the Marriot Bequest.

Following his long term as Bishop (1917-1944), Dunn retired in Belize and served for many years as parish priest at the fishing village of Placentia, at the mouth of the Monkey River on the south coast; he completed his 80th birthday in August 1950. Bishop Dunn was followed by **Bishop Hughes** in 1944, and shortly thereafter by **Bishop Douglas Wilson** who had formerly served as an assistant bishop; and **Gerald Henry Brooks**, who previously served as Archdeacon of Nassau in the Bahamas, was consecrated as the eighth Bishop of British Honduras and Central America at St. John's Cathedral in July 1950 and began his term of service in Belize.

In 1947, part of the Diocese of British Honduras was transferred to US jurisdiction, under the **Missionary District of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Panama Canal Zone**, leaving only Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras under the care of the Diocese, in addition to Belize. However, this still included an area twice as large as England and Wales combined, which made the spiritual care of Anglican adherents extremely difficult with few priests and widely scattered congregations.

Throughout Central America, historically, the Anglican Church has ministered largely to the West Indian immigrant population and to an expatriate community of British and Americans, who mainly reside in the capital cities and in the Caribbean coastal towns. In Belize, the majority of Anglicans are English-speaking Belizeans of African descent, known locally as Creoles. Included in this social group are not only Negroes from Jamaica and other Caribbean Islands, but also native Belizeans who are descendants of British buccaneers and the womenfolk of various races and nationalities that accompanied them.

In many remote Belizean settlements in the southern lowlands and in Belize District, the Anglican church and school is the center of village community life. Many Anglican missions in these areas have been served by English laymen testing their missionary vocation, or by local catechists trained for the work and officiating in school and church under the direction of the Bishop and the educational authorities.

There are few Anglicans among the Mayan and Mestizo peoples of Belize, although some Black Caribs have been influenced locally by Anglican tradition through the efforts of priests and catechists in south coast villages. However, the center of Anglican Church life remains Belize City, dominated by St. John's Cathedral and St. Mary's Church.

In 1973, when the name of British Honduras was changed to Belize, the diocese became known as the **Anglican Diocese of Belize**. It is one of eight dioceses that constitute the Church in the Province of the West Indies (CPWI), which was formed in 1883. The Anglican Church in Belize is a member of both the Caribbean Conference of Churches (CCC), founded in 1973, and the Belize Christian Council (BCC), founded in 1978.

The size of the Anglican Community has gradually increased over the years, mainly due to natural population growth. From about 12,000 adherents in 1936, the number of Anglicans increased to 17,783 according to the 1970 Census, which also revealed that 67% of all Anglicans resided in Belize City and 90% in the Districts of Belize and Stann Creek. Estimates for 1978 showed about 4,000 communicants and 16,000 adherents among 26 organized churches and missions. The Anglican Church also operated 23 primary schools and two secondary schools throughout the country.

5.1.2 The first Baptist missionaries to Belize, the **Rev. and Mrs. Joseph Bourne**, arrived in 1822 under the auspices of the London-based **Baptist Missionary Society (BMS)**. The Bournes were aided by several Christian businessmen who previously had held Gospel meetings in private homes. Although Mrs. Bourne died within a few months of arrival, her husband labored on for 12 years, though not without many difficulties and much opposition. Being a nonconformist, Bourne received no encouragement from the secular authorities, nor any cooperation from the Anglicans, the Established Church. Baptists were especially disliked because of their strong anti-slavery convictions. Bourne, however, by 1825 had built a mission hall and minister's residence in Belize City, where a small congregation had been formed. The largest number of communicants reported by Bourne was only 21, including both white and colored parishioners. Bourne, after severing his relationship with the Baptist Mission over allegations of immorality, left the Colony in 1834.

Another Englishman, the **Rev. Alexander Henderson** (born in 1802), offered himself to the Baptist Missionary Society and sailed for Belize with his family in 1834, after Bourne's departure. Henderson, finding the work in a deteriorated condition, initiated an aggressive evangelistic ministry among slaves, soldiers and discharged prisoners in the poorer sections of Belize City. Nearly a year later, Henderson reported that the congregation had doubled in size, and that 200 children were enrolled in the Mission's day school.

Henderson also took the initiative for reorganizing the **Honduras Auxiliary of the BFBS** in 1836, which had been founded in 1818 by Armstrong, the Anglican chaplain. This committee no

doubt aided Henderson in his evangelistic ministry among the English-speaking Creoles, the Spanish-speaking Mestizos, and various Amerindian groups that spoke several languages.

About this time, a young Englishman immigrant, **Frederick Crowe** (born in 1819 to English parents while living in Belgium), became interested in Henderson's work, was converted and joined the Baptist Church. Crowe, with some formal education in English and French, became a teacher in the Baptist school and, later, served as an evangelist and missionary with the Belize Baptist Mission. Between 1841 and 1846, Crowe was a traveling agent for the **British Honduran Bible Society** and in 1843 became the first Protestant missionary to work in Guatemala. Although Crowe was expelled from Guatemala by the government in April 1846, he and Henderson, together with other helpers, distributed at least 2,000 Spanish and 500 English New Testaments during the mid-1840s.

After his return to Guatemala in April 1846, Crowe was imprisoned for contempt of court in Belize City because he conscientiously (he believed that the Scriptures prohibited it) refused to take an oath in a legal case, an attitude common among Dissenters. Crowe served an unprecedented five months (from 29 June to 4 December 1846) in a Belize prison. It was not until 1863 that the British Colonial Government passed an act that allowing an affirmation or declaration to be made instead of swearing an oath. Meanwhile, Baptists in Belize suffered occasional persecution because of their religious convictions.

When the work of the Baptist Mission began to expand into the interior of Belize among different ethnic groups, Henderson appealed to the Baptist Missionary Society for additional personnel. Henry Filpot arrived in 1838 but died in Belize only four months later. Two other missionary families also sailed for the Colony: the Wetheralls in 1839 and the Hoskens in 1841. However, Mr. Weatherall died aboard ship before reaching Belize, and the Hoskens left the Colony after only a few months due to health problems.

Nevertheless, under Henderson's leadership, the work expanded along the banks of the Belize River, where Baptist chapels were erected in several locations. During the 1840s, as the power of the Gospel spread among the emancipated slaves who had been freed in 1838, several individuals were converted that became faithful lay workers in the Baptist Mission. William Michael, a Black Carib tribesman, after attending the Mission school, became Henderson's assistant in translating the Gospel of Matthew into the Black Carib language (Garifuna); this Gospel was printed in 1847 by the Bible Society with the help of churches in Edinburgh, Scotland. Another worker, **John Warner**, formerly a drunken sailor who was left behind when his ship left port, became a teacher and schoolmaster at Crooked Tree and, later, a missionary on Ruatán in the Bay Islands of Honduras. These and other native preachers greatly aided the work of the Baptist Mission, which experienced notable growth during this period; many people were converted, and new churches were established in the interior of Belize.

Although the **Baptist Missionary Society** sent additional workers to help Henderson in British Honduras, this proved to have disastrous consequences. The new workers were **Mr. & Mrs. J. P. Buttfeld**, an experienced printer (but with little formal education) and his wife arrived from England in late-1844, and **Mr. and Mrs. Kingdon** (English BMS missionaries who had worked in Jamaica for 13 years) arrived from Jamaica in late-1845; but they all refused to work with Henderson because he practiced "closed communion."

Henderson was a **Particular or Strict Baptist**, and his denomination in England was so-called because it held to a doctrinal position known as Particular Atonement. The Particular view of the atonement is that Christ in His death undertook to save particular individuals, usually referred to as the elect. This position is often identified with Hyper-Calvinism. Some early Particular Baptist leaders in England were Benjamin Keach, Hanserd Knollys and William Kiffin. The terminology "strict" refers to the *strict* or *closed* position they held on membership and communion; they practiced a "closed communion" table, which was restricted to baptized believers.

This controversy not only created a division in the Baptist work in Belize, but also forced Henderson to resign from the Baptist Missionary Society in July 1845 (which was accepted by the Society in February 1846), and led to the subsequent departure of Buttfield in 1847 and Kingdon in 1850, the selling of the Society's property, and the withdrawal of the Society from Belize in 1850. Henderson, however, with the support of most of his former members, established an independent Baptist mission. After the departure of Buttfield and Kingdon, Henderson emerged as the uncontested leader of the Baptist movement and as General Superintendent of the **Independent Belize Baptist Mission**, now known as the **Baptist Association of Belize**. During 1847 Henderson began receiving additional financial and logistical support from the **Strict Baptist Convention** in England as a result of his promotional work there with Crowe during most of that year.

Historical note: Crowe left Belize for England in April 1847 with Alexander Henderson who returned later that same year after defending himself before the board of directors of the Baptist Missionary Society and visiting his supporters, but Crowe remained in England to do deputation work for the now independent Belize Baptist Mission. Crowe's previous experiences were recorded in *The Gospel in Central America*, written by Crowe and published in London in 1850. Sometime thereafter, Crowe returned to Belize and continued to work as a colporteur with the British and Foreign Bible Society, but he had a falling out with Henderson and was working independently of him in 1855. Crowe managed to accumulate a large supply of Bibles and New Testaments in English and Spanish, as well as a modest variety of Christian literature in many European languages, which he distributed among the multiethnic population of Belize, the Bay Islands, and the northern coast of the Republic of Honduras during 1855-1856. In early 1856 Crowe began a difficult journey from the Caribbean coast to the Pacific coast of Honduras that lasted about 15 months. In July 1857, Crowe wrote a letter to the American Bible Society while in the port of La Unión, El Salvador, and asked for ABS support for establishing a distribution center on the Pacific coast of Central America. He also requested that the ABS send him immediately a supply of the Scriptures in Spanish, which he desired to sell at the annual fair held in San Miguel, El Salvador, later that year. However, we have not found any further mention of Crowe in the historical records available to us. (Source: Escobar 2000:247-281)

In 1850, Baptist work in British Honduras included two organized churches, at Belize City and Crooked Tree, seven preaching stations, three-day schools, five Sunday schools, and a total of about 230 baptized church members (the Belize City church had 191 members). The work in Belize City was strengthened in 1850 with the construction of the **Queen Street Baptist Church**, which was pastored by Henderson from 1850-1879. This church building was the pride of Baptists in Belize until its destruction in the hurricane of 1931. In 1852, Henderson and his friends reactivated the old **Honduran Auxiliary of the Bible Society** to promote the distribution of the Scriptures in Belize and Guatemala through the use of colporteurs; an attempt was also made to translate parts of the Bible into Maya for the refugees from Yucatan. The Independent Belize Baptist Mission also supported Belizean missionary outreach in the Bay Islands of Honduras, through the ministry of **Mr. and Mrs. John Warner** who arrived on the island of Ruatán in May 1849.

Henderson continued to provide strong leadership for the **Independent Belize Baptist Mission** until the late 1870s. After the death of his wife in 1849, following 16 years of service in Belize, Henderson devoted himself to visiting the mission stations and training new leadership. However, Henderson soon remarried and raised four children in Belize City. Many of his later years were spent preaching and teaching at the Queen Street Baptist Church and Day School. His long ministry came to an end in 1879, when failing health forced him to retire.

Following Henderson's retirement, lay preachers **Isaiah Braddick** and **Joseph Kelly** provided leadership for the Baptist Mission until the arrival of the **Rev. David Waring** from England in 1881. Waring found the work in a general state of decline, but his energy and diligence soon inspired others to greater dedication and zeal.

However, Waring wisely sought help from other missionary agencies to strengthen the work in Belize and was successful in obtaining additional personnel from the **Jamaican Baptist Missionary Society (JBMS)**. **James Bryant** was sent to Belize in 1886 to serve as school-master and agent for the JBMS. The following year, Bryant was ordained by Waring and placed in charge of the Baptist Mission in Belize, whereupon Waring returned to England for furlough and died there in 1888.

Encouraged by Bryant, the JBMS assumed responsibility for the work in Belize at the invitation of the Independent Belize Baptist Mission in 1888. After inspecting the field, the JBMS sent the **Rev. and Mrs. Charles Brown** and their nephew, **Robert Cleghorn**, to the Belize Mission, where Brown served as superintendent and Cleghorn as his assistant. Another worker, James Nathaniel Anglin, who arrived from Jamaica the following year, became schoolmaster of the Baptist School in Belize City, thereby relieving Cleghorn for ministry among the river mission stations. This led to an expansion of the work and the recruitment of additional national workers. New chapels were erected in the Freetown District of Belize City and in the interior at Crooked Tree, Lemonal, Bermuda Landing, Thurton's Bank and Bomba Bank. Not only were new buildings constructed and old ones repaired, but the Baptist Church in Belize also experienced, under Brown's supervision, the baptism of scores of new believers and the opening of new mission stations in many parts of the Colony.

By 1901, the Belize Baptist Mission reported 353 baptized members and 1,324 adherents among nine organized congregations. Six Baptist schools were then functioning with 600 children enrolled. In addition to Brown and Cleghorn, the Mission was aided by a trained teacher from Jamaica, nine native teachers and eleven local preachers. There were few roads in the Colony in 1901, so that traveling was very slow and was accomplished either by small boat or horseback, which required much patience and a great deal of time. The strenuous nature of the work due to the difficulties of both travel and climate required youthful energy and good health on the part of these pioneer workers. Pastor Brown, old beyond his years and poor in health, resigned from the Mission and departed from Belize in November, 1901.

Cleghorn became the chief pastor and superintendent of the Baptist Mission in 1902. However, since further assistance from the JBMS was not forthcoming, Cleghorn found it necessary to form the **British Honduras Baptist Trust Association**, incorporated in Belize in January 1904. Help was requested from mission societies in England and Scotland, but there is little evidence that any financial aid was ever received from those sources.

Nevertheless, under Cleghorn's leadership the Belize Baptist Mission experienced a notable increase in new members between the years 1905 and 1914. For example, the Queen Street Baptist Church recorded the baptism of 166 new members during this period, mainly among young people. Youth work was enhanced by the formation of local branches of the **Christian Endeavor Society** that began in 1909 with 29 members and soon grew to 426. On the eleventh anniversary of the Society in 1920, Cleghorn addressed an overflow crowd of 500 young people at the Queen Street Church. Morning Bible classes were begun by Cleghorn in 1910, attended largely by young men, many of the whom became members of his church and who aided him in the work of the Mission, both financially and as workers. Youth camps and evangelistic campaigns were conducted at several locations with good results. At the beginning of 1914, the Queen Street Church and other chapels were seriously overcrowded and plans were made for expansion.

However, two major events occurred that seriously affected the Baptist Mission work, as well as that of all Protestant Churches in Belize. The first was World War I, from 1914-1918. Many young men from Belize served with British troops during the war, only to return home restless and unsettled to face unemployment and economic decline in the Colony. Consequently, many Belizeans emigrated to other countries, mainly the USA, hoping to improve their socio-economic

status. This trend was accentuated by the combined impact of the Great Hurricane of 1931 and the Great Depression of the 1930s that brought death and destruction and economic disaster to Belize. Destruction from the hurricane was greatest in Belize City, where most buildings were either destroyed or seriously damaged. Three Baptist church buildings were completely destroyed, while two others were badly damaged, along with schools and other Mission properties. The Baptists made arrangements with **St. Andrews Presbyterian Church**, established by a small group of Scotsmen in the 1850s, to hold services in their brick building--one of the few buildings in Belize City to escape destruction--where the Baptists continued to meet until the end of 1933, when the Queen Street Baptist Church was reconstructed. Over the next few years, other church and school buildings were repaired or rebuilt with assistance from government loans or contributions from abroad. However, some church buildings destroyed in the hurricane were simply abandoned, chiefly because these settlements were depopulated as the inhabitants moved to other localities on higher ground.

It was not until 1939 that Baptist work in Belize began to show evidence of renewed strength as witnessed by an increase in baptisms and church attendance. That was also the year that Cleghorn, celebrating his 50th year of service in Belize, wrote ***A Short History of Baptist Missionary Work in British Honduras (1822-1939)***, from which much of the foregoing account was taken.

5.1.3 Other Baptist Groups. Not much is known about Baptist history in Belize between 1940 and 1960. However, in 1961, the **Conservative Baptist Home Mission Society** was invited to work with the Belize Baptist Mission. The N.T. Dellingers arrived in the 1960s to supervise Baptist work in Belize, and, by 1978, that ministry consisted of six organized churches and 330 baptized members. During the 1970s, other Baptist groups initiated ministries in Belize, including the **Southern Baptist Mission** that arrived in Belize City in 1977 (**Mr. and Mrs. Otis Brady**) and two independent Southern Baptist missionaries who worked in the interior. In 1979, missionaries affiliated with the **Baptist Bible Fellowship** of Springfield, Missouri, began their ministry in Belize. According to the 1970 Census, the majority of the Baptists resided in the Districts of Belize and Stann Creek. Most Baptists in Belize are Creoles.

5.1.4 Wesleyan Methodists. The origin of Methodist ministry in Belize is attributed to a British merchant, **William Jeckel**, who came to Belize City in the early 1800s. Jeckel, in 1824, requested that the **Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society** send workers to Belize to aid the work already begun by Methodist laymen in Belize City, Burrell Boom and Freetown. Consequently, Methodist missionaries were sent to Belize by the Society: **Thomas Wilkinson** in 1825, **Thomas Johnston** in 1827, and **William Wedlock** in 1829.

Wilkinson, upon his arrival, found that the few Methodists in the Colony had been excluded from the sacraments by the small Baptist Church, pastored by Bourne; that the Anglicans resented his presence as a Methodist missionary and a dissenter; and that the small group of **Scottish Presbyterians** in Belize City was equally unfriendly. However, encouraged by the strong support of a small group of Methodist laymen, Wilkinson began to preach among the river-bank settlements and in the logging camps of the up-river country, rather than in Belize City. In spite of his initial success among the Negro work crews in the interior, who apparently welcomed his preaching, Wilkinson discovered that an effective itinerant ministry depended on having a base of operations in Belize City. However, a deadly fever took the life of Wilkinson after only a year and a half of service in Belize, but not before he was able to baptize 39 church members including 15 slaves and 22 freedmen.

William Wedlock and his wife arrived in Belize in March 1829 to take charge of the Methodist Mission, which by this time had not only suffered the loss of Wilkinson, but also of his replacement, Thomas Johnston, who arrived in 1827 and died six months later. Wedlock found only 10 freedmen attending the small Methodist chapel and proceeded to build up the congregation and the Sunday school. But it appears that his ministry was limited to the port city. When Wedlock left Belize for Jamaica in 1832 due to poor health, he left behind a congregation of 36 members, mostly free blacks and colored living in or near Belize City, although the Sunday attendance was considerably more, including 100 in Sunday school.

Although there was some hostility against early Methodist missionaries in the Caribbean, those in British Honduras escaped from being vilified and blamed for promoting unrest among the Negroes during this period. Here missionaries were normally given permission to preach on arrival in the Colony. The only question that created some difficulty was over the performance of the marriage ceremony. One of the early Methodist missionaries, Thomas Johnston, argued that many slave owners had refused permission for their slaves to marry. At that time Dissenters were allowed to baptize slaves but not to marry them, and known marriages performed by Dissenters were declared illegal unless solemnized by the Church of England. Although no restrictions were placed on missionaries regarding their freedom to preach, it was customary for them to present their credentials on arrival, whereupon the Magistrates gave them permission to reside and preach in the Colony. However, the English Marriage Act was passed by Parliament in 1836, which allowed Dissenters to perform marriages, and the West Indies colonies were urged to do likewise. Although this was soon done in the Crown Colonies, no such act was passed in British Honduras until 1852. It was only in 1951 that the Public Meeting passed an act allowing the Wesleyan, Baptist and Presbyterian ministers to officiate at the funerals of their own church members, with such permission extended to the Catholics the following year.

Meanwhile, **the Rev. James Edney** had succeeded the Wedlocks in 1832, and he carried the circuit through the crises of Emancipation in 1834 and into a fruitful period of expansion. Whereas the Methodists had little more than gained a foothold in Belize during the first nine years there, under Edney's leadership the circuit was enlarged to include out-stations at Mullin's River and Stann Creek, in addition to a few other preaching points along the river banks. As early as 1834, a Methodist chapel and school were serving the Black Carib population in the Stann Creek area where some 50 Black Caribs were regularly attending the Methodist school in 1838. But until 1840, Edney's only notable success was among the larger community in Belize City, where the Methodist congregation now included nearly 200 persons, among whom were many of the most respectable families in town. Edney quickly gained the respect and support of generous friends among the businessmen in Belize City, who aided the missionary in building a new chapel in town and in purchasing a boat that was used to visit settlements along the central and southern coast. Additional funds were also received from the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society for these projects. Beginning in 1845, when Edney made his first trip to Ruatán, a Methodist circuit was formed in the Bay Islands of Honduras that was supervised by the Methodist Mission in Belize.

However, the arrival of thousands of Mayan refugees from Mexico to the northern lowlands of Belize, due to a race war between the Indians and Mestizos in the Yucatan Peninsula, awakened the Methodist Church to the need for missionary outreach among the Mayans. At this time, 1848, the Belize Circuit was served by two missionaries and counted 350 baptized members, mainly in Belize City where a Methodist Day School was established and was served by an English schoolmaster. The Rev. Joseph Webster supervised the Methodist Mission from 1847 to 1851, but he was only able to acquire a limited knowledge of Spanish; his ministry among the Mestizos and Spanish-speaking Mayas was, therefore, limited.

Fortunately for the advancement of Methodism in British Honduras, **the Rev. Richard Fletcher**, formerly a missionary in West Africa, arrived in Belize in 1855 and became one of the little

known heroes of Methodist missionary history. During his first five years, Fletcher learned Spanish and gained a preliminary knowledge of Yucatec Maya, but it was not until 1864 that he preached his first sermon in the Mayan language. Fletcher's concern for reaching the Indians and Mestizos in the northern lowlands led him to select the town of Corozal as his base of operations. As early as 1856, this pioneer missionary was ministering to the spiritual and social needs of the refugee population in the Corozal area that numbered more than 10,000 people, although Fletcher did not relocate in Corozal until 1858.

At this time, the **Central America District of the Methodist Church** was formed, with headquarters at Corozal. Fletcher, the chairman of the District, was aided by **the Rev. Edward Daniel Webb**, who served in Belize for 14 years, from 1854 to 1870; and a third missionary, **George Sykes**, who arrived in 1858 and was sent to the Ruatan circuit. At its founding, the new District included 982 baptized church members: 600 in the Belize Circuit (including a congregation of Black Caribs at Stann Creek), 363 in the Ruatan Circuit, and 19 at Corozal.

Fletcher served the District for more than 20 years, mainly at Corozal where his chief work was accomplished. It was reported that "he held his ground amidst great opposition and labored among the Maya and Mestizos with great patience, humility, gentleness and self-denial," until poor health forced him to return to England in 1880, after a life-time of dedication to the Lord's work in three continents: Europe, Africa and Central America. During most of his ministry at Corozal, Fletcher labored alone, compelled by the demands of the circuit to be schoolmaster as well as evangelist and pastor. Fletcher ministered to Creoles, Spanish Mestizos and the Mayas in the logging camps and plantations in the northern lowlands, but he longed to evangelize across the border in Mexico and Guatemala, but he was not permitted to do so.

Although the fruit of his labors was not immediately apparent -- the Corozal Circuit numbered only 43 members in 1880 -- Fletcher's linguistic gifts greatly contributed to the furtherance of the Gospel in Central America. During this period, **Fletcher translated all the Gospels into Yucatec Maya**, adding a Catechism and Book of Prayers, and did work on a Mayan grammar that he was not able to complete. Based on Fletcher's work, the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) published the Gospels of Luke and John in Yucatec Maya during the 1860s, and in 1900 the Gospels of Matthew and Mark were printed in England under the supervision of the elderly Fletcher, still living at Hull in England. In all, 3,552 copies of the Gospels were printed in Yucatec Maya by the BFBS.

The Central America District made slow progress during the period 1860 to 1880 due to a variety of reasons. The American Civil War of 1861-1864 brought financial hardships and excessively high prices to British colonies in the Caribbean, including Belize. Simultaneously, the resources of supporters of the **Methodist Missionary Society in England** were strained by new commitments of the Society in Italy, China and India, areas of the world that were more appealing than some remote outpost closer to home.

Within the Central America District itself, a series of adverse circumstances brought discouragement to the missionaries and depleted their meager resources. Soon after Fletcher's move to Corozal in 1858, an epidemic of yellow fever broke out in Belize City that had tragic consequences for the Methodist Mission. Most of the missionaries contracted the disease and three did not survive: Mrs. Webb, who served with her husband in the Bay Islands at Ruatan; Mr. Sanders, a teacher and schoolmaster at the Methodist school; and Miss Sarah Beal, who had just arrived to take charge of girls' education, thus becoming the first martyr of the Women's Auxiliary to the Mission Society. The Belize Circuit suffered a heavy loss when a fire swept through the city in 1863, destroying both the Methodist chapel and school. In 1866, Edward Webb left the field due to broken health. The letters of Fletcher and Sykes in the mid-1860s bear witness to the acute distress and anxiety that they and the remaining workers experienced during this time of crisis. An overview

of the District shows that the total church membership increased only slightly between 1860 and 1870, from 985 to 1,060.

There was a decline in membership in 1870-1871 when hundreds of Belizeans, including many Methodists, migrated to Honduras to help build a railroad from Puerto Cabalero to San Pedro Sula, resulting in a depletion of Methodist congregations in Belize City and Corozal. **Edward Spratt**, who served the Belize Circuit from 1868 to 1872, visited Honduras to investigate the possibility of establishing Methodist work on the northern coast among the railroad workers. This field was subsequently occupied by the **Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society**.

Nevertheless, in British Honduras there were some encouraging signs in spite of all these difficulties. During the 1870s, Fletcher opened new stations in the northern lowlands beyond Corozal, chiefly at Orange Walk and Indian Church where evangelism was done among the Yucatan Mayas. In 1867, after the close of the American Civil War, a group of families from the defeated Southern States of the Confederacy formed an agricultural colony near Punta Gorda. Their township, known as Toledo, became a prosperous agricultural center where 12 sugar estates were established, each with its own mill. Among the colonists from Mississippi was the **Rev. Levi Pearce**, an ordained **Methodist Episcopal Church (South)** minister, who formed a Methodist congregation in the Toledo Settlement. This group established communication with the Wesleyan Methodists in the north, and the two sister organizations united to form the Toledo Circuit, which remained strong until about 1910 when members of the settlement began to drift back to the USA, and the Toledo Settlement virtually ceased to exist.

Toward the end of the 1870s, Methodist work improved in the Belize Circuit, where a second chapel was built in Belize City, but an outstanding accomplishment of this period was the growing work among the Black Carib in the Stann Creek area. After years of sporadic efforts among the Black Carib, noteworthy progress was at last made among them when a new chapel was built at this station, with the blessing of Black Carib leaders. In 1882, the Stann Creek Circuit numbered about 100 baptized church members among the Black Carib tribesmen. However, it was during the 1880s that the sugar plantations began to decline, which signaled trouble for the Toledo Circuit and for Methodist work in the Orange Walk area. Nevertheless, a chapel was constructed at Corozal in 1878-1879, where work continued among the Spanish-speaking population.

The Belize and Corozal Circuits were administered by **Edward Gibbens** and **William Atkin** after Fletcher's retirement and return to England in 1880. Gibbens became acting chairman of the District in January 1881, but it became necessary for him to leave Belize later that same year, and he was replaced by **Joel Peters**, who had 15 years experience in the West Indies. Peters, however, returned to Jamaica in 1883 and the chairmanship was passed to Atkin, who had taken Fletcher's place at Corozal. Atkin acquired a good knowledge of Spanish, often preaching three sermons in one day, and also administered the school in Corozal. Although a young man, Atkin apparently had a good grasp of the problems of the Honduran District and continued the policies inherited from Fletcher. After nine years in Belize, Atkin was transferred in 1886 to Jamaica, where he later became chairman of his district.

Nevertheless, a few additional workers for the Belize field were obtained by recruiting ministers from among the local lay school teachers, such as **George Alexander Frazer** and **Harwood Little**, and from the Missionary Society who sent **the Rev. James William Lord**. Lord arrived in 1881 and served until 1889, mainly on the Stann Creek Circuit, where he became its first appointee. This circuit included five stations along the south coast and was attended to mainly by boat. Lord returned for a second term in Belize from 1900 to 1910, when he became District Chairman. His mastery of Spanish allowed him to be of valuable service in Madrid from 1890 to 1894, and in Barcelona after 1916. Methodist work in Belize slowly advanced during the 1880s, aided by these leaders, to whose ranks was added **Thomas Nicholas Robert**, who had served for

six years in the District and became the first principal of Wesley College, a new Methodist High School that opened at Belize City in 1882. In addition to the recently established circuits at Toledo and Stann Creek, new circuits were formed at Orange Walk and along the Belize River during the 1880s.

Some discouragement was evidenced among the Methodist missionaries in British Honduras in the early 1880s, due to the subordination of the Honduras District to the Jamaican Synod. Peters, then Chairman of the Honduras District, and himself a former missionary to Jamaica, expressed his unqualified disapproval of this action. Apparently, Peters and his colleagues were unanimously opposed to the new organizational structure of the West Indian Conferences, due to long delays in communication. Regular sailings between British Honduras and Jamaica had terminated, which required that passengers and mail travel by boat via New York to reach their destination, a voyage of about four weeks. Therefore, at its own insistence, the Honduran District remained under direct British supervision, rather than continuing its association with the Western Conference, composed mainly of the Jamaican Districts.

Missionaries in Belize were also impatient with the duties of school teaching and administration that were imposed upon them and that kept them from devoting more time to evangelism and church planting in the interior of Belize, especially among the Spanish-speaking population. For years, Fletcher, Spratt, Gibbens and Atkins had advocated that the Missionary Society begin new work in Guatemala, Mexico and Spanish Honduras. However, the Society lacked both the manpower and the finances for this needed expansion. In the meantime, the missionaries were tied down to school responsibilities and implored the Society to find lay schoolmasters for Methodist schools in Belize. But the oppressive nature of the climate, the high cost of living in the Colony, and the low pay offered to schoolmasters were factors that discouraged prospective laymen and made the Society's task of recruitment very difficult. The involvement of the small missionary staff in school responsibilities no doubt hampered the advancement of the Belize Mission. Nevertheless, the District increased its membership by a fourth between 1880 and 1884, no doubt due to the zeal and self-sacrificing service of these pioneer workers whose letters reveal that they longed for a gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit and for the assistance of godly laymen who practiced their faith and who had a zeal for God.

After Atkins' return to Jamaica in 1886, the **Rev. William Tyson** was appointed as Chairman of the Honduras District and served in that capacity for five years. Tyson, who had gone to Jamaica as a missionary in 1846, and subsequently served in the South African Conference and for a time in English Circuits, was an experienced and discerning minister whose wisdom and love for people earned him a good reputation in Belize. Under his leadership, several new fields were opened, including the formation of the San Pedro Sula Circuit in Spanish Honduras led by **Owen Jones** and **Jerry Bunting**.

Tyson's removal in 1891 was followed by a period of discontent and unrest in the Honduras District. He left behind a small group of junior ministers who weren't without talent or promise, yet were young and did not form a well-matched team. Rather than using their energies for creative ministries, the missionaries were preoccupied with personal differences, wrangling and contention, and scandal involving the character of a young minister, which led to divisions and discouragement among the brethren. Under a succession of short-lived appointments to the chairmanship of the District, under whose administration numerous disputes and complaints were voiced to the Society in London, the progress of Methodism in Belize was seriously delayed at a crucial time that called for bold advance into the Spanish-speaking republics of Central America, where Evangelical work was almost nonexistent.

The growth of liberal political institutions, coupled with the decline of Roman Catholic influence during the 1880s, offered unprecedented opportunities for evangelical penetration into the neighboring countries from the Methodist base in British Honduras. The band of missionaries there

were eager to begin new ministries and occupy new stations across the Spanish borders, but new recruits for the Belize field were lacking, with the Society unable to even replace those who died, retired or were transferred for health reasons to other assignments. At this crucial moment that called for the strengthening of Methodist work in Belize and for advancement into Spanish-speaking Central America, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society experienced a serious crisis in the homeland that drastically lowered its income and curtailed all plans and hopes for advance. **This crisis was known as the Missionary Controversy of 1888-1890.**

In spite of these handicaps, several new workers were recruited and contributed significantly to the advancement of the Gospel in Belize. **Joseph Nowell**, known as one of the finest missionaries ever sent to the Caribbean, served the Belize field for six years, from 1888 to 1894, chiefly among the Black Carib tribesmen on the Stann Creek Circuit. Nowell, however, was forced by health problems to return to England. During the later 1890s, an able, colored schoolmaster of strong evangelical convictions, **Hezekiah McField**, became an itinerant Methodist preacher and had an effective ministry among the back-country woodsmen, who were notably difficult to reach with the Gospel. Although hindered by financial problems and internal turmoil during the 1890s, the Belize Mission showed a slight gain in membership, increasing by 150 members between 1891 and 1900.

Stability and progress were again resumed under the leadership of James William Lord, who returned to Belize in 1900 and became Chairman of the District. During his first term of service on the same field, from 1881-1889, Lord acquired a good command of Spanish and earned a good reputation because of his hard work on the Stann Creek Circuit, his estimable character, and his sound judgment and knowledge on the field. With his return to Belize, the condition of the District greatly improved. The new atmosphere of optimism and enthusiasm was aided by the official visit of Secretary Perkins from the Society in London, who inspected the state of affairs of the District in the spring of 1900, shortly before Lord's arrival. Consequently, misunderstandings were resolved, demoralizing policies abandoned, and the finances of the District were revised and guaranteed by more adequate budgeting by the Society, which generated new hope among missionary staff and local church leaders.

Although Lord was encouraged to make bold plans for extension into Central America and for the reoccupying of the San Pedro Sula field that had been abandoned, he had little time to accomplish his desires and few assistants to bridge the gap. Lord had brought two new missionaries with him from England in 1900, but shortly after their arrival, two other missionaries on the field were forced to return home due to broken health. Lord himself, although a seasoned veteran, had to abandon his labors in Belize and return to England in 1911 because of poor health. His two promising young assistants, H. Donald Spencer and Benjamin Chicken, both died simultaneously in 1912, thereby delaying all hope of advancement in the Belize Mission or in Central America.

In 1913, the **British Honduras District of the Wesleyan Methodist Church** numbered about 2,000 church members and was served by nine ministers, including three native Belizeans. Wesley College, which had been closed for some years previously due to staff shortages and financial problems, was reopened in 1907, following the appointment of a qualified schoolmaster. Education always held an important place in early Methodist missionary endeavors, which resulted in the founding of a number of schools, some dating back to the 1830s. **Wesley College, founded in 1881, is the oldest secondary school in Belize.**

The "Honduras District" historically included both British Honduras and the Republic of Honduras, which is predominantly Spanish-speaking. However, Methodist work in Spanish Honduras was centered in the Bay Islands and in a few towns along the northern coast where the English-speaking Creole population is concentrated. The history and development of Methodist

missionary work there will be treated in the chapter on Honduras, although Methodist work in Spanish Honduras has been administered under the Belize Mission.

After the withdrawal of the **Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society** from the western Caribbean in 1930, the Honduras District was operated as a sub-synod of the **Methodist Church in Jamaica** from 1932 to 1952, when its full District status was restored. In 1967, the Belize/Honduras District became a founding member of the autonomous **Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas**, with headquarters on the Island of Antigua in the West Indies.

The active membership of the **Methodist Church in Belize** declined between 1960 and 1978. In 1960, 1,800 members were reported, but by 1978 there were only 1,695 members among 15 organized congregations. In the same period, the total Methodist population decreased from 14,500 to 10,700, mainly due to the emigration of Creoles from Belize, which reflects the continuing problems associated with economic decline. Most Methodists in Belize are Creoles and have been since Methodist work began in the Colony. In 1970, the Methodist population was concentrated in two Districts: Belize District, where 71.4% of all Methodists lived, and Stann Creek District with 13.7%. In 1980, the Methodist Church in Belize operated 23 primary schools and one high school, Wesley College in Belize City.

The Methodist Protestant Church, with headquarters in Monticello, Mississippi, began work in Belize during the 1960s; in 1978, this group reported three small congregations: one each in Belize City, Sand Hill (Belize District) and San Lázaro (Orange Walk District). Also, by 1970, the **African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church** had work in Belize.

5.1.5 Presbyterians in Belize trace their origin to Scottish immigrants who arrived in the Colony during 1820s, along with the Baptists and Methodists. However, it was not until the 1850s that a permanent church building was constructed. A group of **Scottish Presbyterians** were allotted public funds on July 24, 1850, for the construction of **St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church** (a brick building) in Belize City. This congregation became affiliated with the (Presbyterian) **Free Church of Scotland**, who sent the Rev. David Arthur to Belize in 1850 and he served until his retirement in 1876. In 1905, the affiliation of St. Andrew's Church was changed to the (State Presbyterian) **Church of Scotland**.

For several decades, St. Andrew's Church had an intermittent life: sometimes it was closed (1903-1905), and for long periods it was pastored by Methodist (1914-1919, 1939-1953, 1955-1968) or Baptist ministers (1922-1923). In 1933-1934 an attempt was made to unite the Presbyterians with the Anglican Church, and in 1945 another attempt was proposed to unite with the Methodists; however, both times the church preferred to maintain its independence.

Until the mid-20th century, St. Andrew's Church was dominated by the European population in the capital city. In 1958, with the help of the National Presbyterian Church in Mexico, mission work started among the Mayan population in the northern part of Belize. It was mainly due to the ministry of Manuel Beltran, a Mayan evangelist from Mexico, that a few Mayan and Spanish-speaking congregations came into existence. Missionaries Tom and Helen Lacey arrived in Belize in 1970 to build on the work begun by Beltran. The first new church built was in Patchakan; the dedication of the building and the organization of the church occurred in April 1974 with a commission from the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico present. The Cristo Rey church followed in 1975 followed by San Jose, San Pablo, San Narciso, Louisville and Concepción. Later, new buildings were added or additions to the old ones, often replacing thatch buildings. (Note: In 1985 St. Andrew's Church in Belize City joined with these Mayan and Spanish-speaking congregations to form a provisional presbytery and on June 7, 1987, a **National Presbyterian Church** (with support from the **Presbyterian Church in America, Mission to the World**) was

established with three organized churches and 10 preaching points. In 1988 a ministry among the Chinese population was begun.)

5.1.6 At the beginning of **Seventh-Day Adventist** missionary work in Central America, the Republic of Honduras and the Colony of British Honduras were considered one field, known as the **Central American Mission of the Adventist Church**. In 1918, the name of this field was changed to the Honduras Mission, which reported a total membership of 267 in that year. However, in 1930 the two countries were separated administratively. **The Adventist Mission in British Honduras** was officially organized in 1922. By 1960, the Adventist Community numbered about 1,050, grew to 2,500 by 1970, and increased to about 12,000 in 1978. However, the communicant membership totaled only 3,897 in 1978. According to the 1970 Census, Adventists were concentrated mainly in the Districts of Belize (37.5% of all Adventists) and Corozal (34.5%).

5.1.7 The Church of the Nazarene entered Belize in the 1930s as an extension of their work in Guatemala. Two Mayan Indians, **Teodocio Tesucún** and **Encarnación Banos**, who were converted through Nazarene work in the town of Flores in the Petén Department of Guatemala, walked more than 60 miles through the virgin jungle of the Petén to reach the Belizean frontier town of Benque Viejo in Cayo District, where they preached and witnessed to the inhabitants in 1931.

Their report of openness to the Gospel in Belize led the Nazarene field supervisor, **Robert Ingram**, to visit Benque Viejo in 1932 to see the area for himself. With Ingram's encouragement, the Mission Council of the Church of the Nazarene decided to enter Belize as a new field of service.

However, the only workers who were available for this task were two elderly women, both of whom were veteran missionaries: **Miss Leona Gardner**, who served in Benque Viejo from 1934 to 1938, and **Miss Augie Holland**, who ministered in the same area from 1936 to 1943. Their duties included being midwife, nurse, carpenter, preacher, teacher, undertaker, spiritual counselor and church leader. Both served courageously in this remote post, but their strenuous daily round of activities, coupled with exposure to tropical diseases and heat, soon brought their task to an end. Knowing that their advanced ages -- Miss Gardner was already 70 at the time of her appointment -- meant that returning to Belize would be impossible after their furloughs, both women delayed as long as possible their return to the USA. Miss Gardner died a short time after returning home in 1938, but Miss Holland continued on the field until 1943, when she, too, left Belize and died shortly thereafter. Nazarene work in Belize in 1943 included several Sunday schools and a few scattered believers near Benque Viejo.

Beginning with the appointment of the **Harold Hamptons** in 1943, numerous other Nazarene missionaries have served on the Belize field, which was originally part of the Guatemala District of the Church of the Nazarene. **Joyce Blair**, also arriving in 1943, initiated a medical ministry in Benque Viejo that continued for many years. There, in 1947, the Holland Memorial Clinic was dedicated and was operated by Miss Blair. Educational work began with the arrival of the **Ronald Bishops** in 1944. At the end of that year, the **David Brownings** were sent to Belize City to begin a church planting ministry on the coast. Since 1946, Nazarene work in British Honduras has been administered separately from the work in Guatemala.

The next two decades witnessed a notable expansion of efforts by the Nazarenes in Belize. A training program for national workers was begun at **Fitkin Memorial Bible College**, built in 1950 at Benque Viejo under the administration of David Browning. By 1955, 11 Nazarene missionaries were serving in Belize, assisted by 22 national workers. Between 1946 and 1955, the work grew from seven mission stations, with about 300 members and probationers, to over 450 members in ten organized churches and seven preaching points. Nearly 300 children were enrolled in six Nazarene day schools. A general responsiveness to the Gospel was reported in many towns and villages. By

1966, the number of members and probationers totaled 456 among 16 organized churches and 11 missions.

However, a closer look at Nazarene growth reveals that, whereas the number of members and probationers increased only marginally between 1946 and 1966 (from 300 to 456), the number of organized churches and missions increased substantially (from seven to 27). The low net gain during this period may be due to emigration or to a failure to consolidate new believers into the life of local churches through baptism.

Nevertheless, the Nazarenes made noteworthy efforts among several ethnic groups through evangelism and church planting during the 1960s. A growing congregation of 56 new believers was established among East Indians at Saddleback near Punta Gorda, and a new preaching point was added among the Black Carib, also near Punta Gorda, where 49 new converts were led by **Mrs. Naomi Heman**, who ministered to the Black Carib in their own language (Garifuna). New ministries were also initiated among the Kekchí Indians by Nazarene missionary **Paul Beals**. While pastoring a church in Punta Gorda, Beals regularly visited dozens of Mayan villages in the interior of the southern region, where the heavy annual rainfall impedes all modes of travel -- by jeep, horseback, boat or foot. Beals was aided in this new outreach by Kekchí-speaking Guatemalans. Farther north, another new mission station was opened by Nazarene workers in Roaring Creek Village, near the site of the new capital, Belmopan. There, after a week of evangelistic meetings, a new congregation began with over 100 in attendance. At that time, no other church of any denomination was working in this village. Evangelistic tent crusades were held in many other locations, aided by young people from the USA in a program coordinated by the **Nazarene Evangelistic Ambassadors**.

Through the years, the Church of the Nazarene has developed a variety of programs to provide Christian education for the people of Belize. In the mid-1960s, three primary schools were operated with the assistance of 22 national workers. The **Nazarene High School**, established in 1964, was relocated to new facilities in Belize City a few years later; at that time, there were 82 students in three grades. Although the Bible College program in Benque Viejo was discontinued in 1965, prospective ministerial students were encouraged to attend the Nazarene Seminary in Costa Rica. Nevertheless, due to the continuing need for leadership training in Belize, a program of Theological Education by Extension (TEE) was developed for the multi-cultural and multi-lingual situation there. Whereas English is the official language of Belize and is taught in all schools, many use Spanish or an Amerindian language in daily conversation; however, few can write well in their mother tongue. Therefore, three extension centers were established throughout the country to offer various levels of training for pastors and Christian workers, many of whom were engaged in part-time secular work. Classes were taught either in Spanish or English.

Since the late 1960s, the **Church of the Nazarene in Belize** has been moving toward indigeneity. In 1966, **the Rev. Alvin Young**, a Belizean, was appointed assistant to the general superintendent. Under his leadership, Belizean pastors and laymen accepted greater responsibility towards the development of a nationalized, self-supporting church. The district superintendent since 1977, **the Rev. Onesimo Pot**, whose grandparents were converted by Nazarene missionaries during the 1930s, initiated bilingual services in Spanish and English in his church in San Ignacio near the Guatemalan border. He encouraged other pastors to do the same. Pot observed that many laymen were becoming more involved in the local church since Spanish began to be used, and he wisely organized them into small teams for evangelistic outreach in the local area. This sparked a revival among church members and a spiritual awakening among their unconverted neighbors, who began to open their homes for Bible studies during the week. Soon, many conversions were reported, and the church building became too small to hold the growing congregation. Some of the Bible studies and Sunday school classes were conducted in English,

while others were in Spanish, to meet the language needs of those attending. Hopefully, this new strategy of ministry will encourage other pastors and churches to take language and cultural differences into greater consideration as they seek to evangelize and disciple the peoples of Belize for Jesus Christ.

Another example of this strategy is that of **Tom Pound**, who moved to the Toledo District to work among the Mopan Maya and Kekchí Indians. These two language groups live in some two dozen villages scattered all over a large area of tropical rain forest in southern Belize. Here, a multi-lingual situation exists, since older peoples usually speak their Indian languages in addition to some Spanish, while the younger ones are learning to speak English in the public schools. After four years of visiting these isolated villages and winning friends among the people, Pound was able to organize five Nazarene churches. He attributes his success to a specific strategy that God blessed: Pound concentrated his evangelistic efforts on winning the key male leadership in each village, because the family unit is very strong, and the father is the head of the household. When these key community leaders were converted, they became the lay pastors in their respective villages. Pound established an Educational Center in a central location under local administration, where weekend training classes were offered for the growing number of new converts. Reports in 1978 seem to indicate that a "people movement" was occurring among Mopan Maya and Kekchí peoples in this region.

However, only 18 organized churches and missions were reported in 1978 by the Nazarenes in Belize, with 632 communicant members, although the total Nazarene community was estimated to be about 2,500. Nazarenes are mainly located in the Districts of Cayo, Stann Creek and Toledo.

5.1.8 The nondenominational Gospel Missionary Union (Kansas City, MO) sent their missionaries to Belize in 1955. **The Gordon Lees** settled in Belize City where they established the Yarborough Bible Church. In 1956, the Mission acquired a 20-acre tract of land about 30 miles from Belize City, where they opened a camping and conference center and a Bible school known as **Carol Farm**. Ministry was initiated among the Yucatec Maya in Orange Walk District in 1960, and a Christian bookstore was begun in Belize City a few years later. By 1978, there were seven organized churches and five mission stations with 326 baptized members.

5.1.9 The Anabaptist-Mennonite Movement began in the early 1500s in Switzerland, Holland and Germany, where religious persecution resulted in significant migrations of Mennonites to many continents and within many countries of the world. Mennonites first came to Belize between 1958 and 1962 from Mexico, where they had established agricultural colonies during the 1920s and 1940s, chiefly to preserve their unique way of life from the corrupting influences of modern society, and specifically to maintain the right to operate their own schools in their own language, the German dialect *Plattdeutsch* (also known as Low German).

In 1958-1959, two groups of **Old Colony Mennonites (Altkolonier Mennonitengemeinde)** moved from the State of Chihuahua in Mexico to Orange Walk District in Belize because of the difficulties with the Mexican government. In Belize, they created the Blue Creek and Shipyard Colonies. The Mennonite immigrants included 360 families, totaling 1,627 persons (including 775 children under 14 years of age). Later, a small group from Shipyard relocated to the town of Little Belize in Corozal District. Also, in 1959, a group of **Little Brotherhood (Kleinegemeinde) Mennonites** from Mexico established a colony at Spanish Lookout in Cayo District. Amish, Old Colony and Kleinegemeinde families settled in the Barton Creek Colony. After Hurricane Hattie devastated parts of Belize in 1961, several other Mennonite agencies helped with disaster relief, including the **Beachy Amish** who have continued to work in Belize. **The Mennonite Central**

Committee opened a trading center in Belize City in 1969 to help the new colonies both economically and socially.

Since that time, other Mennonite groups have arrived from Mexico, Canada and the USA. Some came to establish agricultural colonies, while others proposed to evangelize and plant churches among the Belizeans. An example of the latter is the **Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities** that sent their first missionaries, **Paul and Ella Martin**, in 1964. Two congregations were formed during 1964-1965, one in Belize City and another in Orange Walk Town. By 1978, five congregations had been organized with 122 communicant members, which are part of **Belize Evangelical Mennonite Church**. This church body is ministering to the Creoles in English, to the Mestizos and Maya in Spanish, and to the Black Carib in Garifuna in the Stann Creek District.

Thirteen Mennonite groups reported 37 organized congregations and 1,900 communicant members in 1978, with the total Mennonite Community in Belize numbering about 5,000. Most of these resided in the larger agricultural colonies at **Spanish Lookout** in Cayo District, and **Blue Creek** and **Shipyard** in Orange Walk District, while others were members of numerous smaller colonies located throughout rural Belize. Below is a list of the various Mennonite groups known to exist in Belize by location:

- (1) **Belize District:** Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, Mennonite Center, Belize City; Pilgrim Fellowship Mission (Amish Mennonite Aid / Beachy Amish Mennonites), Hattieville Village.
- (2) **Cayo District:** Beachy Amish Christian Community, Upper Barton Creek Colony; Barton Creek Mennonite Church, Lower Barton Creek Colony; Church of God in Christ, Mennonite, San Ignacio; Kleingemeinde Mennonite Church, Spanish Lookout Colony.
- (3) **Orange Walk District:** Belize Evangelical Mennonite Church, Orange Walk Town; Blue Creek Evangelical Mennonite Church, Blue Creek Colony; Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference (Sommerfelder), Blue Creek Colony; Rhinelander (Old Colony) Mennonite Church, Blue Creek Colony; Rheinlander (Old Colony) Mennonite Church, Shipyard Colony.
- (4) **Corozal District:** Rhinelander (Old Colony) Mennonite Church, Little Belize Colony.
- (5) **Toledo District:** Old Order Amish Christian Group, San José; Caribbean Light and Truth Mission, Punta Gorda.

The early Mennonite colonists signed a special agreement with the Belizean government that guaranteed them complete freedom to practice their distinctive beliefs and to farm within their closed communities. Under this special agreement, the Mennonites are exempt from military service and from paying compulsory insurance, although they are liable for all other taxes. The colonists paid all their own expenses for relocating to Belize, where they purchased property at an average of three Belize dollars per acre, land that would cost five or six times that much today. Although Mennonites hold nearly 150,000 acres, mainly in the Orange Walk and Cayo Districts, only a small portion of this land has yet been cleared and cultivated. However, the Mennonites have demonstrated that hard work and agricultural skills can transform unproductive bush into fertile farmland. Their produce and dairy goods have had a favorable impact on the economy and on the eating habits of the general population, particularly the inhabitants of Belize City, where nearly half of the population resides.

Mennonites operate their own schools with authorization from the government. A report on education in 1979 shows that Mennonite groups sponsored 39 primary schools and two secondary schools, almost exclusively for the educational needs of their own children. Mennonites operated two clinics and other medical assistance programs, in addition to the **Mennonite Center in Belize City** that offered a variety of services: a general store, a bookstore and reading room, meals and lodging, two-way radio contact with the colonies, etc. For more than ten years, the **Eastern**

Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities sponsored a volunteer service program, mainly for agricultural development projects.

Extreme conservatism contrasted with the more liberal views of other Mennonites have caused divisions among the colonists, and in some cases have led to the formation of new colonies a few miles away. There are two basic kinds of Mennonites in Belize. On the one hand, the traditional conservative wing rejects the modern world and its machinery. The conservative Mennonite colonies are distinctive communities within the Belizean state, which has caused some concern and criticism among their neighbors. To outsiders, Mennonites may appear totally unconcerned about politics and external community affairs, with no interest in seeking public office or even in using their right to vote. Along dusty roads in rural Belize, curious neighbors stare at blond German-speaking farmers wearing traditional clothes and at their neatly plowed fields and trim houses. For many Mennonite families, their migratory existence has temporarily halted amidst the hot, rolling hills and fertile valleys of central Belize. On the other hand, the progressive wing believes that Christians should be more involved in the contemporary world, have incorporated machinery and electricity into their lives, and are more active in sharing their faith with others. The latter wing is represented by the Belize Evangelical Mennonite Church and the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities.

5.1.10 Several other denominations in the Separatist (or Free Church) Tradition had begun work in Belize between 1913 and 1969:

- (1) **The Salvation Army** arrived in Belize City in 1913 but only reported three churches and 75 members in 1978.
- (2) The work of the **Christian Brethren** began in 1949 with the arrival of Mr. Roy Campbell (the son of Scottish parents of Jewish ancestry) from Jamaica; he served in Belize for 13 years and pioneered the work of the Christian Brethren movement (also known as Plymouth Brethren, establishing four churches; he spent another 13 years in Christian service, between Jamaica and Belize; however, in 1978, there were only five churches with a total of 233 members.
- (3) The **Church of Christ**, founded in Belize in 1969, reported one church with 35 members in 1978.

Note: The Restoration (Stone-Campbell) Movement was first introduced in British Honduras in 1967 when Luther Savage of the North American a cappella Churches of Christ made a trip to the colony for the purpose of surveying the prospects for opening a new work. Returning the next year, Luther Savage made further inspections while Jerry Jenkins and Monroe Steffins arranged for "Herald of Truth" broadcasts to be aired. Savage moved to Belize City in 1969. Jerry Jenkins and Herman King held gospel meetings in Belize in 1970. A congregation was established by Bob Hurd in Corozal in 1971 and Burney Levitt served this congregation for four years, until 1975. Other early pioneers in this new field were Jerry Westmoreland, Gilbert Trip and Kent Marcum. Students from Oklahoma Christian College, under the direction of Ron Beaver, began in 1972 to conduct yearly campaigns. **In 1973 the Church of Christ was officially incorporated in Belize.**

Source: <http://www.worldconvention.org/country.php?c=BZ>

5.1.11 The Pentecostal Family of Churches represents only about 16% of the total Protestant membership in Belize, and they were apparently slow to begin work there. Although only five organized Pentecostal denominations with about 200 members among them were to be found in Belize in 1960, the picture improved considerably by 1978 when 67 organized congregations reported 1,656 baptized members. However, the largest association of Pentecostal churches only

claimed 15 congregations and 750 members in 1978. This was the **Kekchí and Mayan Churches of Belize** that traces its origin to 1968.

In addition to a number of small, independent Pentecostal churches, predominantly located in rural areas or in small villages, only three major Pentecostal denominations were known to have work in Belize in 1978.

The Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee) sent their first missionaries, **Fred and Lucille Litton**, to Belize in 1944. In less than a month, the Littons organized a church of 14 members and a Sunday school of 50. However, in 1978, the total membership reported by eight small congregations was only 101 members [1982 = seven churches, 367 members].

The **Assemblies of God of Jamaica** (Evangel Temple in Kingston) sent the Rev. and Mrs. Malchus B. Bennett to Belize in September 1946 to begin missionary work. By 1949, several small congregations had been established in Belize City, Sand Hill, Stann Creek and Corozal. The arrival in 1951 of the Rev. and Mrs. Walter Clifford, who previously had served as missionaries in India and Ceylon for 20 years with the **Assemblies of God (Springfield, Missouri)**, brought experience and encouragement to their brethren in Belize. Later in 1951, the Cliffords established a Bible Institute in Belize City to train Christian workers. The mother church in Belize City, Bethel Temple, opened a primary school in 1953 under the administration of the Cliffords. That same year, the Rev. and Mrs. Andrew Spence arrived to assist in the Cliffords until 1955, when they left for Costa Rica. In 1954, after the arrival of the Rev. and Mrs. George Clark (who had previously served in El Salvador and Guatemala), the work in Corozal Town expanded among the Spanish-speaking population. In 1960, three churches had been organized with a total of 90 baptized members. However, the work was hindered by internal controversies in 1955 with Malchus B. Bennett and in 1969 with Lloyd Wright that led to the formation of two rival groups with a combined membership in 1978 of only a few hundred members. These divisions led to demoralization and decline in the work of the Assemblies of God in Belize: some of the talented Belizean and Jamaican pastors went to the USA and others became separatists; the number of national workers declined from 11 in 1969 to four in 1971; and the number of adherents declined from 480 in 1969 to 149 in 1971. In 1978, Missionary Edward Fairbanks, affiliated with the **Assemblies of God Division of Foreign Missions**, reported six organized churches and 17 preaching points, with a total of only 96 baptized members. The rival Bethel Assembly, pastored by Lloyd Wright, reported one church (formerly known as the Evangelistic Center, founded in 1951 and rebuilt in 1962) with less than 100 members. The independent Belize United Assembly, pastored by Ralph Clark, had one church (founded in 1976) with about 50 members. The later two groups are located in Belize City. **The Council of the Assemblies of God of Belize** was reorganized in 1980, under missionary superintendent Alver Rance who coordinated the work of the various churches in English and Spanish.

The Church of God in Christ (COGIC) traces its origin in Belize to 1953-1955, when Malchus B. Bennett left the Assemblies of God and became affiliated with the COGIC, an Afro-American denomination with headquarters in Memphis, Tennessee. However, after 25 years of labor, only five churches and two missions had been established by the COGIC, with 540 members, by 1978. Most of the members of this group lived in the Districts of Belize (54%), Orange Walk (19%) and Cayo (17%). The mother church in Belize City, Calvary Temple, operates a large primary school under the supervision of Bishop Bennett.

5.2 ROMAN CATHOLIC MISSIONS

The majority of new arrivals in the northern lowlands of Belize during the late 1840s were Mayan refugees from the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico who were nominal adherents to the Roman

Catholic Church. In 1848, the Mayas revolted against both the Mexican government and the large landowners who had oppressed them since the Spanish conquest, causing heavy losses of life and property for several years. The resulting Caste War in Yucatan between the Mayans and the Mestizos during 1847-1853 forced many Indians to flee across the border into British Honduras to escape persecution and death, a migration that led to the subsequent growth of the Catholic Church in northern Belize.

The first two Jesuit priests arrived in the Colony in 1851, sent by the Vicar Apostolic of Jamaica "to preach the faith and convert the heathen." By 1856, the Catholic population was already second in size to the Anglicans in Belize City. However, the increasing strength of the Catholic Church in Belize was not only due to the missionary zeal of the Jesuits, but also to their readiness to leave the comforts of the city and work in the remote and backward villages of the interior. There they found greater responsiveness among the Indians and Mestizos, than among the Creoles in the coastal settlements.

The growth of the Catholic Church in the Colony during the late 1800s led Pope Leo XIII to create the **Vicariate of Belize** in 1893. Although the English Jesuits, always few in number, were responsible for the early advances of the Catholic Church in Belize, after 1893, the Vicariate was administered by the American Society of Jesus from Missouri. It was not until 1956, however, that a Bishopric was created in Belize, but the Missouri Jesuits maintained their control of the Church.

Aiding the Jesuits were several other religious orders, notably the Pallotine Sisters, the Holy Family and the Sisters of Mercy. These priests and nuns extended the Catholic faith into the most inaccessible parts of the country and to every ethnic group, where they established churches, schools and social ministries.

The fruit of their labors is evident in the present position of dominance enjoyed by the **Roman Catholic Church in Belize**, which has increased from 59% of the population in 1935 to 65% in 1970. Catholics comprised at least 70% of the population in every district of the country in 1970, except for Belize District, where Catholics totaled only 44.4%. By 1980, however, the total Catholic population had decreased to about 58.5%, largely due to the recent growth of Protestant denominations working among Indians and Mestizos.

VI. MAJOR CHRISTIAN ACTIVITIES

6.1 ECUMENICAL ORGANIZATIONS

Although the **Protestant Council** has existed for many years, it includes only a few of the major denominations and is very limited in its activities. However, the **Belize Christian Council (BCC)**, organized in 1978, encompasses a wider range of Christian groups and maintains cooperative relationships with the **Caribbean Conference of Churches** and with the **World Council of Churches** through the Division of Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service. Members of the BCC include the Anglican Church (Province of the West Indies), the Methodist Church (in the Caribbean and the Americas), the Church of the Nazarene, the Church of God in Christ, the Presbyterian Church, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the Salvation Army and the Roman Catholic Church. This organization grew out of a common desire for greater unity among Christian churches and for programs that express the life and mission of the Church. Present ministries include an adult education program for the educationally and economically disadvantaged; a tutorial program for children and youth to help them complete primary and secondary educational requirements; a children's home; several pre-schools; and a social welfare program for poor families and disaster victims. **In 1981, the BCC was renamed the Belize Council of Churches.**

6.2 BASIC EDUCATION

The lack of public education in Belize during the early 1880s stimulated the early missionaries to set up schools for the inhabitants of the Colony. Although the first "free school" was established by the Public Meeting in 1807, the Anglican Church established its own school in 1814 as a ministry of St. John's Cathedral; the Baptists and Methodists started their own educational programs soon after their arrival during the 1820s. Although most of the early schools were located in Belize City, the Wesleyan Methodists were particularly successful in starting schools on their mission stations in rural areas, notably in the Stann Creek area among Black Carib. It was not until after the emancipation of the slaves that the government of the Colony began to assume greater responsibility for public education. In 1850, legislation was passed to provide for more schools and to make new regulations for education, including the formation of a Board of Education. But, primary and secondary education in Belize has been provided for historically along denominational lines, aided by government grants.

The present educational system is administered by the Ministry of Education through school managers who may be religious or secular authorities. Managers are responsible for the appointment and supervision of teachers under their direction, including transfers, suspensions or dismissals, and for all other matters relating to the establishment, organization and maintenance of their respective schools. Education at the primary level is free and compulsory for children between the ages of six and 14 years. In 1976, there were 166 denominational and 11 government primary schools with 32,200 pupils enrolled. At the secondary level, there were 18 denominational and four government schools with a total enrollment of 5,210 pupils. The state paid the full salaries of primary school teachers and met up to 50% of the cost of buildings, maintenance, furniture, textbooks and equipment of denominational schools, whereas each approved denominational secondary school received an annual basic grant in addition to other subsidies, depending on the size of the institution.

In 1978, there were 112 primary and eight secondary schools operated by Protestant denominations in Belize, with the Anglicans, Methodists, Mennonites and Adventists reporting the largest number of schools. The other denominational schools were operated by the Roman Catholic Church, particularly the Jesuits, who regarded education as a basic means of propagating the Gospel and of communicating Catholic social doctrine. As a consequence, most Catholics send their children to Catholic schools. The most prominent example of Jesuit influence was the role that the Jesuit-run secondary school, Saint John's College, played in preparing the leaders of the nationalist movement in the 1940s.

The denominational character of the educational system, however, has led to some fragmentation of vital resources and to a duplication of efforts among religious groups. During the early history of Belize, all education was in the hands of the churches. Of course, the churches were by no means reluctant to assume major responsibility for public education, since they regarded this as an essential part of their religious duties. However, in rural areas, Protestant and Catholic schools were often established side by side in small villages where only one school was needed. More recently, the government has exercised greater control over denominational schools and has made greater efforts to improve educational standards.

Denominational control of the schools also led to a more serious problem. Whereas the educational system ought to be a force for unity in the society, the denominational nature and control of schools has actually accentuated the social and cultural differences between groups. Many of the denominational schools have been staffed traditionally by foreigners, mainly American Jesuits in Catholic schools, and British or West Indians in the Protestant schools. Catholic schools have used American textbooks and have been more ready to embrace Latin American attitudes and to

welcome Spanish-speaking students, whereas Protestant schools have favored the British system of education and standards based on middle-class values and attitudes. More recently, the Mennonite colonies have introduced their own particular educational system that seeks to preserve their distinctive cultural values and language, either in English or German. Some observers point to the divisive nature of the present education system in Belize and view it as contradictory to recent government efforts to instill the different cultural groups with a sense of their common identity as Belizeans and to promote a national unity.

6.3 BIBLE TRANSLATION AND DISTRIBUTION

Although the British and Foreign Bible Society arrived in Belize as early as 1818, its work has been intermittent and its volume low. In spite of the high literacy rate in Belize, the distribution of the Scriptures, mainly in English, has not been noteworthy. However, an office of the Bible Society apparently existed in Belize City in the 1840s, because Frederick Crowe, a converted English seaman, served as a colporteur of the Society in Belize at that time, and as missionary in Guatemala from 1843 to 1846, under the sponsorship both of the Bible Society and of the Belize Baptist Mission. More recently, the Honduran Bible Society has supplied Belize with Christian literature from their San Pedro Sula office, with increasing demands for Spanish materials. A local committee related to the Bible Society exists in Belize City and a representative of the Gideons is also present.

Few efforts at Bible translation were made in Belize, mainly due to the large number of English-speaking people in the Colony since logging days. However, Alexander Henderson, an English Baptist missionary, is reported to have made translations of the Bible into the Black Carib (Garifuna) and "Waike" (Arawak) languages as early as 1850, and attempts were also made to translate the Scriptures into Mayan tongues. Little is known about these early translations, either as to the extent or quality of the work, but several books of the Bible were apparently printed in Garifuna. More recent translations into Garifuna have been done by Wycliffe Bible Translators in Guatemala. The entire New Testament has also been translated into the Mayan languages of Mopan and Yucatec and into Kekchí by Wycliffe and other translators working in Guatemala and Mexico. Hymnals, tracts, and Scripture portions and selections are also available in some of these languages. (See the Unreached Peoples section of the Belize Profile for more specific information on Bible translations.)

6.4 BROADCASTING

There are no Protestant radio stations in Belize, but several denominations sponsor programs on Radio Belize, operated by the government. Although most of these programs are aired in English, some Spanish broadcasting is also permitted under the sponsorship of the Church of the Nazarene and the Belize Evangelical Mennonite Church. Presently, no evangelical television programs are broadcast in Belize.

6.5 EVANGELISM

The impact of the 1858-1859 revival in the USA and Great Britain was felt immediately in the British West Indies among the emancipated slaves and their children. The revival in Jamaica was particularly strong, following the September 1860 awakening that began at a Moravian Chapel in Cornwall County. Although the movement's greatest intensity lasted only a couple of years, its impact was felt for a whole generation. In the Colony of British Honduras, news of the **Jamaican**

Revival led to a spiritual awakening during 1861-1862, particularly among the Methodists and Baptists.

The effects of a worldwide awakening between 1900 and 1910, particularly the **Welsh Revival** of 1904-1905, soon reached Jamaica, where thousands of conversions were reported during 1906. The impact of these events was felt in other West Indian islands, and also in British Honduras, where the Baptists and Methodists were again touched by revival. Robert Cleghorn, pastor of the Queen Street Baptist Church in Belize City, reported that the years 1905-1914 were "years of in-gathering," with 166 new additions to his congregation alone, mostly among young people. Beginning in 1910, daily Bible classes were held by the Baptists in Belize City, attended by large numbers of young men. High attendance was reported at camp meetings in Crooked Tree Village in May 1910. Soon, church buildings were too small to hold the crowds of people attending services in Belize City, and plans were made for constructing larger churches. However, the outbreak of World War I in 1914 brought an end to religious revival in Belize, as well as the beginning of a period of economic decline that continued for over 30 years.

Not until the 1950s were there signs of new spiritual life among the churches of Belize. In 1951, the **Rev. Efraim Alphonse** arrived in Belize City from Panama to hold a city-wide evangelistic campaign, sponsored by the Latin America Mission of Costa Rica. Alphonse, a noted Panamanian Methodist pastor and evangelist who had been a pioneer missionary among the Guaymí Indians in northwestern Panama, preached in a series of evangelistic meetings along the Caribbean coast, from Belize City in the north to Panama City in the south. Although this was a good beginning among the English-speaking population of Central America, Belize was bypassed during the decade of Evangelism-in-Depth campaigns of the 1960s, even though special meetings were held in Puerto Cabezas and Bluefields in Nicaragua, Puerto Limón in Costa Rica, and in several Panamanian cities among English-speaking West Indians.

Most evangelistic efforts in Belize have been denominationally oriented, with the exception of the Alphonse Crusade in 1951, when temporary interdenominational cooperation made united meetings possible. However, the fruits of mass evangelistic efforts have been notably limited in Belize, even along denominational lines, especially among the West Indian population that largely resides in Belize City. More recently, greater success has been reported by churches working among the Spanish-speaking and Amerindian populations, rather than among the Creoles. The Nazarenes, the Gospel Missionary Union and various Pentecostal groups have spearheaded new evangelistic efforts among non-Creoles, aimed at planting new churches.

During the late 1970s, chapters of the **Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship** and **Women's Aglow** were established in Belize City, where the Charismatic Renewal movement has kindled fires of love and unity among some Protestants and Catholics, mainly of the upper class.

6.6 LITERATURE

Christian literature is available in all the denominational schools which are operated by many churches in Belize. Since English is the national language, literature is most abundant in that language, although Spanish materials are also obtainable. Four Christian bookstores exist in Belize City, operated by the Adventists (Belize Adventist Book Center), the Anglicans (The Belize Bookshop), the Gospel Missionary Union (The Christian Literature Center), and the Mennonites (a book deposit is located at the Mennonite Center). Bibles are also distributed by local representatives of the Bible Society and the Gideons. Films are available from the Christian Brethren, the Mennonite Center, Outreach Ranch (operated by Outreach for Belize), and King's College (run by the Gospel Missionary Union). Correspondence courses for evangelism and Christian growth are offered to the public by at least six Protestant denominations.

6.7 SOCIAL CONCERN

A number of medical and social service programs are administered by Protestant agencies in Belize. In terms of medical work, Amigos Internacionales conducts a medical caravan ministry in Punta Gorda, the Mennonites maintain clinics in the Blue Creek and Spanish Lookout Colonies, the Nazarenes operate the Holland Memorial Clinic in Benque Viejo del Carmen, and the Adventists sponsor the Mundall Clinic in Santa Elena. Social service programs are operated by the Adventists (Ask Program), the Baptist Association of Belize (Self-Help Program), the Christian Social Council (various social welfare, educational and childcare programs), the Salvation Army (Farm's House, Grant's Home for Men, and Over Sixty Clubs), and the Mennonites (numerous internal social service programs in the colonies). Several Mennonite agencies sponsor agricultural and rural development ministries, mainly among the Mennonite colonies, although some help is offered to non-Mennonites. Since 1977, a new ministry called "Outreach for Belize," led by an independent Southern Baptist missionary, has worked in agricultural development at Outreach Ranch in the Cayo District, where assistance is given to local farmers.

Specialized ministries for children and youth also exist in Belize, in addition to numerous denominationally-operated primary and secondary schools. The Christian Social Council operates a Children's Home in Belmopan, and several nursery and pre-schools for children of working mothers in Belize City. The Christian Brethren sponsor a number of "Four F Clubs" (Faith, Fun, Fitness and Fellowship) for 11-13 year-olds as a special outreach to neighborhood children. Most denominations minister to children and youth through their church-operated programs, but at least eight Protestant groups also have special camping programs during the year. A few groups have permanent camp facilities in the Cayo District, where the Maya Mountains provide a cooler climate in contrast to the hot, humid lowlands.

6.8 THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

There are relatively few theological schools in Belize for the training of laymen or ministers. The Anglicans, Methodists and Baptists traditionally have sent ministerial candidates to Jamaica or Great Britain for advanced theological training, but since World War II, a number of theological institutions have come into existence in Belize. Although no theological seminary exists here, four denominations operate Bible institute programs in residence, and TEE programs are sponsored by the Nazarenes, the Conservative Baptists and the Southern Baptists.

The Nazarenes founded the Fitkin Memorial Bible College at Benque Viejo in 1950 to train pastors for Belize, but this college was closed in 1965 due to low student enrollment. Now, prospective ministerial students are encouraged to attend the Central American Nazarene Seminary in Costa Rica. However, the Nazarenes also developed a TEE program to meet the multi-language and multi-racial needs for leadership training in Belize at various levels: (1) continuing education for trained pastors, (2) special training for prospective theological students, and (3) in-service education for pastors with little or no formal Bible training. Instead of a central campus, courses are offered to part-time students at three regional centers. Other students are encouraged to take correspondence courses. Through this flexible program, theological training is offered at various levels and in several languages, according to the special needs of each student.

6.9 THE PROCADES CHURCH GROWTH STUDY OF BELIZE

Our research on Protestant church growth in Belize began on May 1-8, 1978, with a visit by Miguel Angel Suazo (director of the Guatemalan Bible Society and president of the PROCADES

coordinating committee in Guatemala) and Holland to make contact with Protestant church leaders in Belize and to discuss with them the possibility of conducting a national church growth study under the auspices of PROCADES. After preliminary discussions with interested parties, a PROCADES coordinating committee was established with the following members: coordinator, Mr. Daniel Ness, a missionary with the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities and director of the Mennonite Center in Belize City; the Rev. Gordon Lee of the Gospel Missionary Union; the Rev. Onesimo Pot of the Church of the Nazarene; Mr. John Collier of Outreach for Belize Limited; and the Rev. N. T. Dillinger of the Conservative Baptist Home Mission Society.

Daniel Ness conducted most of the interviews with denominational leaders as well as with pastors of many of the independent churches between May and November of 1978, but he was unable to finish all the scheduled interviews prior to his scheduled furlough in the USA. Holland returned to Belize from October 31 to November 2, 1978, to meet with Ness and collect all the data from the completed interviews and to determine how many interviews were still pending or incomplete.

The Rev. Otis Brady of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board agreed to conduct the remaining interviews before the end of the year. However, it was not until May of 1979 that all the pending interviews were finalized by Brady. Holland made a third trip to Belize from May 4-6, 1979, to meet with Brady and take all the completed interview forms back to Costa Rica for processing. A draft version of the ***Directory of Churches, Organizations and Ministries of the Protestant Movement in Belize*** was compiled by the PROCADES staff in San José, Costa Rica, in late 1979, but a correction version was not published until 1982.

By way of summary, this Directory includes information on 179 Protestant churches and 79 missions, for a total of 258 Protestant congregations, with a total estimated membership of 16,801 nationally. This is approximately 13.3% of the total population of Belize as of May 1979 (estimated at 126,000). The projected size of the Protestant Community (or total Protestant population) at that time was 49,338 or about 40% of the national population. The Directory lists the names and addresses of 53 Protestant groups (denominations and independent churches) in Belize, as well as the international headquarters address for each group (if any was reported).

This national survey of the Protestant Movement in Belize was the beginning of many years of research on Protestant church growth in this atypical Central American country for the PROCADES team. After examining all the available historical sources (see bibliography) and denominational records, the author began to compile this profile on the **Status of Christianity in Belize** during his 1980-1981 sabbatical in Pasadena, California.

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APPENDIX

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF PROTESTANT ORIGINS IN BELIZE (SORTED BY CLASCODE)

CLASCODE	TRADITION – FAMILY – DENOMINATION	DENCODE	DATE
B0.0	GENERAL PROTESTANT TRADITION (1517)	GENPRO	1776
B1.0	CLASSICAL PROTESTANT TRADITION (1517, were "Established Churches")	CLASPRO	1825
B1.100	LUTHERAN FAMILY (Martin Luther, 1517-Germany)	LUTH	
B1.200	REFORMED / PRESBYTERIAN FAMILY (1520s, Geneva, John Calvin)	REFPR	1825
B1.2100	REFORMED CHURCHES (Swiss, German, Dutch, French roots)	REFM	
B1.2200	PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES (Scottish roots, 1549; John Knox)	PRESB	1825
B1.2201	Presbyterian Church of Scotland (1567, John Knox)	PCSCOT	1825
B1.22104	National Presbyterian Church of Mexico (1872)	IPNM	1958
B1.2300	CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES (Puritan New England roots, 1620s)	CONGC	
B1.2400	OTHER REFORMED - PRESBYTERIAN - CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES	ORPCC	
B1.300	ANGLICAN - EPISCOPAL FAMILY (English roots, 1534)	ANGEP	1776
B1.301	Anglican Church (1534, Bishop of Canterbury, London, England)	ANGC	1812
B1.3011	Society for the Propagation of Gospel in Foreign Parts (1701, London, England)	SPGFP	1776
B2.0	PROTESTANT SEPARATIST ("FREE CHURCH") TRADITION (1520's)	PROST	1822
B2.1000	ANABAPTIST - MENNONITE FAMILY (German, French, Swiss & Dutch roots, 1521)	ANABMF	1958
B2.1100	MENNONITE CHURCHES (Germany 1520's, Bodenstein, Munstzer)	MENNC	1958
B2.1104	Evangelical Mennonite Conference - Kleingemeinde (1814, Steinbach, MB, Canada)	EMCH	1958
B2.1108	Rhineland (Old Colony) Mennonite Churches (1875, Winkler, Manitoba, Canada)	RMCH	1958
B2.1112	Somerfelder Mennonite Churches (1893, Manitoba, Canada)	SMCH	1970
B2.1111	Church of God in Christ, Mennonite (1878, Moundridge, KS; John Holdeman)	CGCM	1962
B2.1113	Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities (1914, Salunga, PA)	EMBMC	1960
B2.1114	Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference (1937, Winnipeg, MB, Canada)	EMMC	1966
B2.1200	BRETHREN CHURCHES (1526, Hans Hut, Moravia; Hutterites)	BRECH	
B2.1300	AMISH CHURCHES (Swiss origins, late 1600's)	AMISH	1961
B2.1301	Old Order Amish Mennonite Church (1862)	OOAMC	1962
B2.1303	Beachy Amish Mennonite Conference (1923) – Pilgrim Fellowship Mission	BAMC	1961
B2.1400	FRIENDS / QUAKER CHURCHES (1647, George Fox, England)	FRICH	1975
B2.1403	Friends United Meeting (1863, Richmond, IN)	FUM	1975
B2.200	BAPTIST FAMILY (English and Dutch roots, ca. 1610)	BAPTF	1822
B2.2100	ARMINIAN or GENERAL BAPTISTS (1611, England, John Smyth)	ARMGB	
B2.2200	SEVENTH-DAY BAPTISTS (1617, London, England)	SDBAP	
B2.2300	CALVINISTIC BAPTISTS (English roots, 1630's)	CALVB	1822
B2.23011	Baptist Missionary Society - BMS (1792, London, England; William Carey)	BMS	1822
B2.23012	Jamaican Baptist Missionary Society (1842, Kingston, Jamaica)	JBMS	1893
B2.23013	Belizean Baptist Missionary Society (was affiliated with BMS until 1850)	BBMS	1822
B2.2314	Conservative Baptist Home Mission Society (1943, Wheaton, IL)	CBHMB	1960
B2.2316	Baptist Bible Fellowship (1950, Springfield, MO)	BBF	1979
B2.23051	Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (1845, Richmond, VA)	SBFMB	1977
B2.300	PIETIST FAMILY (Roots in German Pietism, 1670s)	PIETF	1825
B2.3100	EUROPEAN FREE CHURCHES (1170s)	EFC	1950s
B2.3102	The Moravian Church (1730s, Germany; Moravian Brethren)	TMC	1950s
B2.3200	METHODIST CHURCHES (1739, England; John Wesley)	METH	1825
B2.3201	The Methodist Church (1739, England; John Wesley); Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas (1967, Antigua, West Indies)	TMC	1825

B2.32011	Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (1817, London, England)	WMMS	1825
B2.3204	African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (1801, Charlotte, NC)	AMEZ	1950s
B2.3214	Methodist Protestant Church (1940, Monticello, MS)	MPC	1950s
B2.3300	SCANDINAVIAN FREE CHURCHES (roots in 1830s Revival)	SCFCH	
B2.400	INDEP FUNDAMENTALIST FAMILY (England, Charles Darby, 1827)	INDFF	1949
B2.401	Brethren Assemblies / Christian Brethren (1827)	BA	1949
B2.500	HOLINESS FAMILY (Charles Finney, 1839)	HOLIF	1916
B2.502	Salvation Army (1878, England)	SA	1913
B2.506	Church of the Nazarene (1895, Kansas City, MO)	CNAZ	1934
B2.599	Gospel Missionary Union (1892, Kansas City, MO)	GMU	1955
B2.600	RESTORATIONISTS-CAMPBELLITES (1832, Campbells & Stone)	RESTC	1969
B2.602	Christian Churches / Churches of Christ (1832)	CCCOC	1969
B3.000	ADVENTIST TRADITION (1831, New York, William Miller)	ADVT	1922
B3.100	MILLERIST FAMILY (1860s, observes Sunday)	MILSU	
B3.200	MILLERIST FAMILY (1865, observes the Sabbath; Battle Creek, MI; Ellen White)	MILSA	1922
B3.201	Seventh-Day Adventist Church, General Conference	SDAGC	1922
B3.300	CHURCH OF GOD FAMILY (1860's)	COGFA	
B3.400	OTHER ADVENTIST CHURCHES - MOVEMENTS	OADV	
B4.000	PENTECOSTAL TRADITION (1901, Topeka, KS; Charles Parham)	PENT	1912
B4.0100	APOSTOLIC FAITH MOVEMENT (1901, Topeka, KS; Parham)	APFM	
B4.0200	PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS FAMILY (1901, Parham; 1906, Seymour)	PENHF	1944
B4.0202	Church of God (Cleveland, TN)	COGC	1944
B4.02061	Church of God in Christ (1908, Memphis, TN)	COGIC	1953
B4.0300	NAME OF JESUS ("ONENESS") FAMILY (1917, Los Angeles)	NOJF	1957
B4.0399	Church of the Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith (1919, New York City)	CLJCAF	1957
B4.0400	FINISHED WORK PENT. FAMILY (1910, Chicago, William Durham)	FINWP	1956
B4.0401	Assemblies of God, General Conference (1914, Hot Springs, AR)	AGGC	1946
B4.04011	Iglesia de Dios Pentecostal, Misión Internacional (1916, Puerto Rico; Juan Lugo)	IDPMI	1956
B4.0410	Pentecostal Church of God of America (1916)	PCGA	1956
B4.0500	SABBATICAL PENTECOSTAL FAMILY (1930s)	SABP	
B4.0600	DIVINE HEALING / DELIVERANCE FAMILY (1940s)	DHDF	
B4.0700	LATTER-RAIN MOVEMENT FAMILY (1948)	LRMF	1967
B4.0701	Elim Fellowship (Lima, NY; 1932, 1947)	ELIM	1967
B4.0800	CHARISMATIC-PENTECOSTAL FAMILY (1950's)	CHARM	
B4.0900	SHEPHERDING FAMILY (1960s: Basham/Mumford/Prince/Simpson)	SHEPM	
B4.1000	WORD OF FAITH FAMILY (1970s, Copeland/Price)	WOFF	
B4.1100	OTHER PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES, unclassified at this time	OPEN	
B4.1100	Independent Pentecostal church in Roaring Creek Village	INDP	1912
B4.1100	City Mission – International Pentecostal Church (Los Angeles, CA)	CMIPC	1938
B4.1100	Kekchí and Mayan Churches of Belize	KMCB	1968
B5.0	OTHER PROTESTANT CHURCHES: unclassified at this time	PRXX	
B6.0	PROTESTANT PARA-CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS	PPCO	1818
B6.1	INTERDENOMINATION SERVICE AGENCIES	INDE	1818
B6.101	American Bible Society (1826)	ABS	1890
B6.102	British & Foreign Bible Society (1804, London)	BFBS	1818
B6.103	British Honduras Bible Society - Belizean Bible Society (1818)	BBS	1818
B6.4	NON-DENOMINATIONAL MISSION AGENCIES & CHURCHES	NDMAC	

