Missionary Aviation Fellowship (MAF)

Missionary Aviation Fellowship is an inter-denominational Christian mission which has served the Church and remote communities of Papua New Guinea for 52 years. MAF has 14 aircraft (four Twin Otters and 10 Cessna 206s) located at 11 bases around PNG.

MAF’s ministry is to provide aviation services for missions, churches and isolated communities, and so contribute to the mission of God’s Kingdom. MAF PNG Ltd has a multi-national staff of pilots, engineers and support staff, including 110 Papua New Guinean staff members.

While offering air transportation services to the community at large, including passenger movements and freight, MAF also offers subsidized rates for missions and churches. MAF also provides emergency medical evacuation transportation. For many rural communities in Papua New Guinea, whose only access to the outside world is by air, MAF is the only regular provider of air services. In 2003 it carried out 22,000 flights into 340 airstrips in PNG, carrying 63,000 passengers and 4.4 million kg of cargo, including building materials, local produce and store goods.

National Council of Pentecostal Churches (NCPC)

In 1979 the Pentecostal churches in PNG formed a national association of their own, although many of these churches were and are also members of the Evangelical Alliance. The NCPC has ceased to exist as such, but churches in this Pentecostal grouping include the following:

1. Amalgamated Local Churches (includes Finnish and Swedish Pentecostals)
2. Assemblies of God (including some breakaway groups such as Dynamic Tabernacle of Prayer, Dove Ministries, Valley Vision Center)
3. Apostolic Church
4. Bethel Pentecostal Tabernacle (links with CRC)
5. Bougainville Pentecostal Alliance
6. Christian Apostolic Fellowship (CAF)
7. Christian Fellowship
8. Christian Life Centre (CLC) (Some breakaway groups include: Port Moresby Family Church (part of Rhema Fellowship), Revival Flames Church, and Dunamis Tabernacle of Praise Church)
9. Christian Outreach Centre (COC)
10. Christian Renewal Bible Church
11. Christian Revival Crusade (CRC) (Breakaway groups include Covenant Ministries International (with links to Jonathan David in Malaysia), and Global Prophetic Ministries International)
12. Destiny Fellowship
13. Emmanuel Fellowship
14. Faith Fellowship
15. Foursquare PNG
16. Global Prophetic Ministries
17. Independent Christian Missions
18. Interdenominational Christian Fellowship
19. Life Revival Ministries
20. New Life Centre
21. One Way (from Foursquare)
22. Open Bible
23. Pentecostal Local Churches
24. Philadelphia (amalgamated with AOG, but not with Amalgamated Local Churches)
25. Potter's House
26. PNG Christian Fellowship
27. PNG Revival (from Apostolic Church)
28. Reform Bible Church
29. Rhema Fellowship
30. Soul Harvest Ministries
31. Rock Life Ministries
32. Save Our Soul Ministry International
33. United Pentecostal
34. Watchman Revival Ministries
35. Wewak Fellowship
Operation Mobilisation (OM)

Operation Mobilisation is an international interdenominational group operating in over 80 different countries around the world. It began in 1957, led by George Verwer and three friends who were Bible College students in USA. Operation Mobilisation came to PNG, sparked by the visit of the ship MV Doulos, in 1979. Between 1979 and 1987 Theresa Sese, Dave Skinner and Margaret Sete served on the MV Logos in India, Nepal and Pakistan, and on the MV Doulos. Operation Mobilisation was registered in PNG as a Missionary Sending Agency in 1991. The purpose of OM is to work in partnership with the PNG churches in challenging, training and helping the church to send out their PNG missionaries to contribute in cross-cultural missions. This is done through missions awareness programmes organized by local churches. There is also the training and preparing of recruits whose churches desire to send them out with OM-PNG. Missionary work involves evangelism, training, mobilising the church, literature distribution, relief ministry and practical skills. In 2004 OP-PNG had 10 Papua New Guinean missionaries working overseas: in Australia, Mozambique, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and the United Kingdom, with four serving on the MV Doulos. The present volunteer missionaries come from churches as diverse as the United, Lutheran, Foursquare, Baptist, Assemblies of God, and Bible Churches. They are expected to commit themselves to two or three years of service and to gather promises of financial support from their church, family and friends (K600 a month on the Doulos, and K800 for land teams).

**Papua New Guinea Council of Churches (PNGCC)**

The Melanesian Council of Churches was established in 1965 by Dr Ian Maddocks, dean of the faculty of medicine at the University of Papua New Guinea. Mindful of its objective of fostering greater Christian unity within Papua New Guinea, it did not officially align itself with the World Council of Churches, thus making it possible in 1969 to formally invite the Catholic Church to become a full member of the Council (Aerts 1991:83–84). It was also possible for certain church bodies to be members of both the MCC and the Evangelical Alliance, and for these two bodies to co-operate. The PNGCC is somewhat unique because of the inclusion of the Baptist Union and the Salvation Army, thus broadening the Council from just the so-called ‘mainline’ churches. After PNG independence the MCC changed its name to Papua New Guinea Council of Churches (PNGCC). The PNGCC serves to foster nationwide Christian unity. As of the year 2000 its member churches represent 64 per cent percent of the PNG population.

The PNGCC includes the following members and associate members:

**Members:**

1. Anglican Church
2. Evangelical Lutheran Church
3. Catholic Church
4. United Church
5. Salvation Army
6. Baptist Union of PNG
7. Gutmius Lutheran Church

**Associate Members:**

1. Church of the Nazarene
2. Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA)
3. Melanesian Environment Foundation (MEF)
4. Bible Society of PNG
5. Missionary Aviation Fellowship (MAF)
6. Kristen Press
7. World Vision of PNG
8. Life Line Port Moresby
9. Churches Education Council (CEC)  14. Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL)
10. Churches Medical Council (CMS)  15. Scripture Union of PNG
12. Melanesian Institute (MI)  17. Melanesian Association of Theological Schools (MATS)
13. Word Publishing

Papua New Guinea Evangelistic Association

The PNG Evangelistic Association was formed in 1985 by the Rev Sione Kami (United) and the Rev Bill Horton (Anglican). At present the Association is headed by the Rev. Sam Lowa of the United Church, with the crusade chairman being Pastor Joseph Walters. The Association was set up to bring together all the resources of the churches for an exchange of gifted people. Its purpose is to bring different groups of churches together (such as PNGCC and EA), to promote evangelism in PNG, to equip leaders to vocalize their faith so that they may then share the Gospel one to one wherever they are, and to network with evangelistic ministries around the world. The Association has also sponsored evangelists from overseas, such as Creflo Dollar, Prophet Jonathan David, and Don Clowers.

Port Moresby City Mission

The Port Moresby City Mission is a Christian not-for-profit community services charity. It is not affiliated with any particular church, but does get much support from the Pentecostal Foursquare Church in Port Moresby. Founder and Executive Director Larry George used to volunteer three nights a week at the Sydney City Mission. In 1985 he transferred to PNG as Manager of the Bank of South Pacific. He resigned his post in 1989 so as to work with wayward youth. In 1993 he started the Port Moresby City Mission to cater for homeless and rejected youth on the streets of the city. Since then over 5,000 youth have passed through the City Mission training programme. Bible studies and teaching are carried out on a daily basis and the residents attend daily devotions conducted by the Mission. Some young men and women have been sponsored to Bible School.

The City Mission programme takes young people on a journey from “brokenness to victory in Jesus Christ.” Those who join the programme are sent for a month to the New Life Vocational School/Farm at Bootless Bay near Port Moresby. There smoking and drinking are forbidden. The mission trains youth in agriculture, literacy, and screen-printing. Some who find employment live at the Koki headquarters of the City Mission.

In 1993 the City Mission expanded its operations with the opening of Haus Ruth (named after the deceased wife of founder Larry George), a women’s refuge and child abuse counselling centre at Ela Beach in Port Moresby (Kapi 2004:12). In 2003 the City Mission started a feeding programme for the children of the urban settlements. Many of these are fortunate if they get one meal a day. Every Thursday 400 to 600 young children are fed with a hot meal. In conjunction with the feeding programme the Mission has commenced a pre-school education programme which currently operates one day a week.

Three quarters of the City Mission’s funding comes from donations and fundraising within PNG and from donors in Australia and one quarter from the proceeds of its own projects. The Mission is expanding and is ready to open branches in Bougainville, Lae and Mt Hagen.
Religious Television Association (RTA)

The Religious Television Association of Papua New Guinea was formed in 1993. The founders were Bishop Paul Richardson of the Anglican Church, Archbishop Michael Meier of the Catholic Church, Pastor Piandui of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, John Taylor of EMTV and Fr Zdzislaw Mlak SVD. Members of RTA are the churches belonging to the PNGCC. Interested church groups or organizations can apply to become members through the RTA Board of Directors.

RTA aims to realize the potential of television for the evangelization and development of PNG by providing religious and development programmes for television and electronic media, by advising on policy issues relating to religious television, and by creating awareness among the churches about television and radio as tools for the religious, cultural, and social development of the country.

Scripture Union (SU)

In 1966 the Scripture Union was formed in PNG, building on the work done previously by Australians Claire Fowler and others. Fowler and a small publications committee continued their work by preparing Scripture notes called Light for Today in controlled English on a New Testament cycle. Pidgin notes called Kaikai Bilong Tude followed a year later to coincide with the release of the Pidgin New Testament. A schools committee led by Bruce King and Moyra Prince encouraged teachers all over the country to start Scripture Union groups. By 1968 25 out of 33 High Schools had SU groups. In 1975 PNG achieved independence and SU took on its first national staff worker, the Rev. John Kadibaba.

Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL)

In 1956 Jim Dean and Richard Pittman from SIL’s Philippines Branch came to PNG to establish a centre in the Aiyura Valley of the Eastern Highlands. The new centre was named Ukarumpa after the nearest location in the Gadsup language group, at that time not yet a village. Now the facilities at Ukarumpa have developed so that accommodation is provided for up to 850 residents.

SIL’s primary focus is on Scripture translation into vernaculars. SIL believes that evangelism is best accomplished through the Holy Spirit using the translated Word to change lives. Translations in the people’s languages also build a strong foundation for PNG’s churches so that people can withstand cultural and other pressures that threaten their vitality.

SIL members work alongside Papua New Guineans in all SIL departments, and some, for example the publications department, are operated entirely by national employees.

The aviation programme, headquartered at the Aiyura airstrip, provides a vital link with SIL’s translation and literacy work. Its mechanics maintain four Cessna 206s, two Cessna 402s, an Islander, a King Air and one helicopter (another was expected in 2004).

SIL members are volunteers who provide their own finances. (They are supported by their home churches, family and friends). SIL has worked in 338 language groups in PNG and has completed and dedicated 145 New Testaments. It is at present working in 204 language groups. PNG has over 230 endangered languages with 500 speakers or less, mostly in the Sepik and Madang Provinces. SIL is considering how to help revitalize these languages before they are lost. It seeks partnerships with other church and government groups that are committed to the same goals for the people of PNG, since the SIL plan is to complete translation work of the remaining languages by the year 2025.
Tertiary Students Christian Fellowship

The Tertiary Students Christian Fellowship started in PNG in 1967 after two students from the University of PNG had attended an Australian TSCF conference. They started a group of six at their university. Many university students had been influenced by the work of the Scripture Union in the high schools and the group expanded rapidly. By 1975, the year of PNG independence, there were 12 groups, and by mid 1977 there were 16, with 500 members. In 2004 the TSCF had groups in 44 tertiary institutions in PNG.

The fundamental principle of TSCF is that it is a fellowship of students reaching students. It aims to encourage evangelistic activities in tertiary institutions, assist members in Christian growth and faith, and encourage and promote training in leadership. In PNG, until the late 1980s, there were no paid staff workers, just volunteers and enthusiasm from students.

Word Publishing

Fr Frank Mihalic SVD started the Pidgin newspaper Wantok in 1970. The offices of the newspaper moved to Port Moresby in 1977, when it became Word Publishing Company, owned and operated by the four 'mainline' churches (Anglican, Catholic, Lutheran, United). At one time Word Publishing was producing a number of weekly publications in Pidgin and English. However, in 2003 due to financial constraints it was forced to scale down operations and to concentrate solely on Wantok newspaper. At the beginning of 2004 Wantok had a circulation of 7,000 papers, going to all parts of the country.

World Vision

World Vision is a non-profit Christian international humanitarian organization involved in relief and development work. In PNG it is an implementing agency and its main focus is on primary health, water and sanitation, micro-enterprise development, functional literacy and skills development, relief response and disaster preparedness in times of natural disasters, and agricultural extension. Previously the main source of funding was through a child sponsorship programme designed to bring general development to children, their families, and the communities in which they live. However, this programme has now been phased out in PNG and World Vision is trying to access government grants for its projects.

Young Men's Christian Association

The Young Men's Christian Association is a member of the world-wide YMCA. It is a voluntary association of volunteers who are concerned with the training and good upbringing of young people in their communities. The Australian YMCA came to establish the YMCA in PNG in 1963. There are two centres in PNG, in Lae and Madang. Areas of focus in PNG include hostel accommodation for young men and women, and elementary schools.

Young Women's Christian Association

The Young Women's Christian Association is a member of the world-wide YWCA, a volunteer movement by and for women and girls. It began in PNG in Port Moresby in 1962 with the assistance of the Australian YWCA. The first hostel opened in Port Moresby in 1966, with further branches opening later in Goroka, Lae and Tabubil. Special areas of focus include hostels, literacy, rehabilitation programmes for women prison inmates, vocational school, child care, pre-schools, dressmaking, arts and crafts, sewing, cooking, and health.
Youth With a Mission (YWAM)

YWAM is an international, interdenominational movement of Christians dedicated to presenting Christ to people and to mobilising as many as possible to help in this task. It came to PNG in 1968 with Tom Hallas and Kalafi Moala. Their work was described as mainly intercession and spiritual warfare. In 1983 David and Kathleen Tabor set up a permanent presence in PNG and officially registered YWAM as a mission organization. Through its ministries young people from PNG have evangelized their own nation and have also been overseas to witness to their faith in Australia, New Zealand, USA, China, Hong Kong, Macau, Spain, Germany, France, Irian Jaya, Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, Canada, India, Nepal, and Bangladesh. In 2004 there were three YWAM centres in PNG, with a total of 35 staff.

Theological Education

In Papua New Guinea there are over 20 theological colleges and seminaries that are members of the Melanesian Association of Theological Schools. Seven offer degree-level courses: Catholic Theological Institute, Christian Leaders Training College, Jubilee Bible College, Martin Luther Seminary, Newton Theological College, Pacific Adventist University and Rarongo Theological College.

Catholic Theological Institute, formerly known as Holy Spirit Seminary, is one of four Catholic seminaries in the country. It began in 1963 at Kap near Madang and moved to Bomana near Port Moresby in 1968. Entrance is with grade 12 or its equivalent. Today Catholic Theological Institute has 159 residential students and 14 external students (including seven women). It grants a Diploma in Theology or a Bachelor of Theology degree after six years of study.

Christian Leaders Training College began in Banz, Western Highlands, in 1964, sponsored by the Evangelical Alliance churches. Today it has 80 fulltime students, 45 part-time students, 120 students in part-time studies at their urban centre, 120 on internship, and 4,000 students through extension studies. Students entering with matriculation may gain a B.Th degree after five years of study.

Jubilee Bible College is the national Christian leadership and ministry training centre of the Assemblies of God Church of Papua New Guinea. The College was started by the Australian Assemblies of God Missions in 1983. Originally known as Port Moresby Bible College, Jubilee Bible College exists primarily to train, equip and upgrade pastors, church workers and lay leaders. The College also exists to serve as a Pentecostal resource centre for the national church. The College has 25 students and offers courses leading to a Certificate of Biblical Studies, a Diploma of Biblical Studies and a Bachelor in Ministry degree.

Martin Luther Seminary is one of four Lutheran seminaries in PNG. The Seminary began in 1966 as part of Balob Teachers College, as a joint venture between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of New Guinea and the Missouri Lutheran Synod. It began with 65 students. However, in 2004 there were only 19 students, due to costs and a perceived need to prepare pastors for rural ministry. Entrance is with grade 12 or grade 10 plus work experience. After five years students graduate with a Diploma or a Bachelor's degree in Theology.

Newton Theological College began in Dogura under Bishop Newton in 1936. After the disruption of World War II it began again at Dogura in 1952. In 1976 Newton College moved to Popondetta and was formally consolidated on its present site there in 1981. In
2004 it had 21 male students pursuing a four-year course of study and formation leading to either a Certificate or Diploma in Theology.

Pacific Adventist University is one of three theological institutions run by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It started classes on a site near Port Moresby in 1984 and was granted University status in 1997. In 2004 there were 54 students studying for the BA in Theology (30 from PNG and 22 from other parts of the Pacific). In 2003 there were 22 studying for the MA in Theology.

Rarongo Theological College began as the Methodist Theological College under Ron Williams in 1962, and continued as the United Church theological college after that church was formed in 1968. Students follow a six-year course leading to a Bachelor of Divinity degree. The Bachelor of Theology was introduced in 2004. As of 2004 there were 72 male students and one lecturer's wife enrolled in the theology programme, and 68 women (students' wives) enrolled in the women's programme.

There are also many Bible schools and other training programmes operated by the churches throughout PNG. The Western Highlands has 14 seminaries and Bible Colleges. Some provinces have more (e.g. Morobe), others less (e.g. Milne Bay). However, taking 14 as an average would mean a number in the vicinity of 250 Bible Schools and seminaries in PNG as a whole. All 19 provinces of PNG have many seminaries and Bible Colleges. They will not all be listed here, but as an example, below are the institutions in just one province: the Western Highlands Province.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Seminary/Bible School</th>
<th>Name of Church running the school</th>
<th>Approx. number of students</th>
<th>Level of Entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian Leaders Training College</td>
<td>Interdenominational (Evangelical Alliance)</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>Grade 10 for diploma. Degree in relevant disciplines with Church approval and recommendation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nazarene Bible College</td>
<td>Nazarene Church</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>Grade 6 for Certificate course. Grade 10–12 for Diploma in Theology or Bachelor's in Theology. (Master's is done in Singapore)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Revival Bible School</td>
<td>Christian Revival Church</td>
<td>10–20 each year</td>
<td>Grade 6 or above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aviamp Bible School</td>
<td>Christian Apostolic Fellowship</td>
<td>15–20 each year</td>
<td>Grade 10 or above and English entry test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Shepherd College Fatima</td>
<td>Catholic Church</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>Grade 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layman Training School for SDA Districts within the province</td>
<td>Seventh-day Adventist</td>
<td>16–20 each year</td>
<td>3 months training. Director sets entry requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wesleyan Bible College and Theological extension.</td>
<td>Wesleyan Church</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Grade 8–10. Theological extension courses are given in Pidgin by tutors in respective churches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Seminary/ Bible School</td>
<td>Name of Church running the school</td>
<td>Approx. number of students</td>
<td>Level of Entry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerina Evangelist College (Lower Jimi)</td>
<td>Anglican Church</td>
<td>12 each year</td>
<td>Grades 6–8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timil Waghii Bible College and Theological Education by Extension</td>
<td>Evangelical Brotherhood Church</td>
<td>8 married and 10 single students. Up to 1,000 in extension courses</td>
<td>Grade 6 or more. For extension courses literacy is required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutheran Highlands Seminary (Ugipeng)</td>
<td>Lutheran Church</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>Grade 10 or Grade 8 if enough space.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following churches have Bible Colleges about which no information could be obtained:
1. Lutheran Church: Lutheran Church College Banz
2. Assemblies of God: Highlands Region Bible College
3. PNG Bible Church: PNG Bible Institute
4. Christian Outreach Centre

The following churches had Bible schools or colleges in the Western Highlands Province in the past but closed them recently:
1. Christian Life Centre – Christian Life Centre Bible School (Hagen town)
2. Baptist Church – Baptist Theological College of PNG (Baiyer River).

AN OVERVIEW OF THE ECUMENICAL SITUATION IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The churches in PNG are fragmented into different groups and smaller circles within each group. The four main groups are: the Papua New Guinea Council of Churches (PNGCC), the Evangelical Alliance (EA), the Pentecostals, and ‘Others’. These groups are not exclusive. For example, the Salvation Army is a member of both the PNGCC and the EA, and several of the Pentecostal churches such as the Apostolic Churches, Assemblies of God, and Christian Life Crusade, are members of the EA. There is little enthusiasm shown for the week for ‘Christian Unity’ held each year.

In the analysis of statistics in the section on the Religious Situation in PNG, I noted some of the challenges faced in trying to get accurate figures for the membership of any one church. Government census figures are often inaccurate both in numbers provided and in classification of the churches. There are other factors to consider also. For example, how active does one have to be to be considered a church member? Some people are born into a church, but as adults are not active, yet remain nominal members because there is no exit strategy. Some are adherents of a church because their family acts as a sphere of influence. Other churches count only adult baptized members and not unbaptized children. Some people might belong to more than one church at any one time, for example, a mainline church and a Pentecostal fellowship. Hence a certain amount of estimation is required if one is to try at all to provide figures and percentages.

Of the four main groups, the PNGCC group would include about 3,200,000 people or approximately 62 per cent of the population. The EA group would include about 750,000 people, or 14 per cent of the population. I estimate that there would be about 1,000,000
people in PNG worshiping with Pentecostal-type churches, which represent 19 per cent of the population. Other groups such as Independent Baptists, some of the Bible and Holiness churches, Seventh-day Adventists, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and so on, might amount to 500,000 people or 10 per cent of the population. The figures for the first two groups are fairly accurate. Those for the latter two groups are estimates. The combined percentages amount to more than 100 per cent because, as noted before, there is an overlap with some churches belonging to more than one group.

There are also circles of co-operation within each group. For example, within the PNGCC group the Anglican, Catholic, Evangelical Lutheran and United Churches co-operate closely in a number of joint ventures such as the Melanesian Institute and Word Publishing. Anglican, Catholic and Lutheran dialogue is continuing. In 2003 the Anglican, Catholic, and Evangelical Lutheran Churches signed an official agreement recognizing one another's baptism.

In 1970 the Catholic and Anglican Churches set up a “Joint Commission of the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches in PNG.” There were 14 meetings extending over three years. In 1986 the Anglican Synod at Dogura passed a resolution to seek closer union with the Roman Catholic Church. Catholic-Anglican dialogue has continued and shows an advanced stage of co-operation. In 2003 Anglicans and Catholics signed a Covenant to seek a visible unity. ‘Consultations’ continue – a consultation being a meeting to discuss issues that can be presented to the bishops of the churches at their formal gatherings. Plans are underway for some Anglican seminarians to attend classes at the national Catholic theological college (CTI).

There are also co-operation and joint ventures within the EA group. Most members of that group support and send members for training at the Christian Leaders Training College (CLTC). However, their secretariat is not as established or as active as that of the PNGCC, which has an office in Port Moresby with several full-time staff members.

Pentecostal churches seem to show the highest tendency to fragment. Their umbrella organization, the Melanesian Council of Pentecostal Churches, is dormant. Nevertheless, there is co-operation, for example, in sending members for training in other churches' Bible schools, or in joint sponsorship of evangelists from overseas. In addition, recent times have seen the development of 'Fellowships' which intentionally do not use the name 'church' so as to be open to members of various churches.

Some of the churches in the fourth group avoid ecumenical relations and prefer to remain independent. The reason given is that they do not wish to co-operate with other churches whose theological views they consider to be wrong. For example, Independent Baptists see the Bible and faith as a means of salvation and this prevents them from co-operating with churches that consider sacraments as a channel of God's grace. In the 'Other' group one also finds sub-groups such as 'Bible' Churches (including the Open Bible Church, Faith Churches, and the New Tribes Mission), and churches of the 'holiness' type (represented by the Nazarene Church and the Christian Brethren).

Pentecostal churches may be divided into two main groups: Classical Pentecostals, such as the Assemblies of God, and Oneness Pentecostals, such as the United Pentecostal Assemblies. Oneness Pentecostals accept baptism in the name of Jesus only. Mainly because of their doctrinal differences, these two groups of Pentecostals tend to operate independently. Within the Classical Pentecostals sub-groups one finds three main circles: Apostolic, Baptist, and Holiness or Methodistic. Apostolic Pentecostal churches came out of the Welsh Revival
of 1904 and stress a hierarchy of modern-day apostles, prophets and other charismatic officials. Baptist Pentecostals, represented by churches such as the Assemblies of God, teach a 'two-crisis' experience of conversion and sanctification through baptism in the Spirit. Holiness Pentecostals, represented by churches such as the Foursquare Church, teach a 'three crisis' experience of conversion, sanctification, and baptism in the Spirit. These doctrinal similarities and differences tend to influence co-operation between the different Pentecostal groups.

Some provinces of PNG have provincial councils of churches. However, these tend to be councils in name only, and when do they meet the main interest appears to be how to divide up funds provided by the Provincial government.

In some provinces, particularly in the major towns, there are 'ministers’ fraternities' where ministers, pastors and priests have an opportunity to meet together. If one group appears to dominate, then others will tend not to appear at meetings. For example, in Port Moresby the Pentecostal group dominates and pastors from mainline churches are less regular in their attendance at the monthly meetings. In Goroka, however, there is broad representation at the weekly meetings.

A significant area of co-operation exists between the churches is in Councils such as the Churches Education Council and the Churches Medical Council. Almost half the education and health facilities in PNG are administered by the churches. Members from various churches with vested interests in educational or health facilities gather to plan, budget funds, and represent their interest before the Government.

Non-Christian faiths such as Buddhism, Islam and Hinduism have few followers in PNG. Some leaders of churches belonging to the PNGCC have publicly supported the principle of freedom of religion in the country, and there are ongoing efforts at dialogue between the different faith traditions.

**Outlook and Summary**

The data given in the sections above is indicative of a situation of rapid change in the ecclesial demography of PNG today. Just why this is occurring is fertile ground for debate and continued study. From the writer's enquiries, it appears that people do not leave mainline churches principally on theological grounds, but most often for quite personal reasons: cure of an illness after prayer, a dream, the desire not to have to care for pigs, anger against members of the church, particularly priests or pastors, or trying to resolve marital problems. Some would like to return to their original church but feel ashamed. Nevertheless, the movement is not all one way. One Enga woman told of how she decided to become a Catholic after visiting the Holy Land and being impressed by the Catholic presence there.

Some researchers propose that mainline churches should establish better dialogue with Melanesian traditions (Mantovani 1995:38), and devote more attention to the magical and milleniall components of Melanesian traditional religion (Zocca 1995:91ff). Mainline churches tend to promote a rational view of human progress and development, and do not give much urgency to the final coming of God’s Kingdom.

This study has sought the opinions of many people across the spectrum of churches and church groups, and some of the responses are outlined in the following two sections: opinions of theological students, and of others — mainly church leaders.
Opinions of Theological Students

In an effort to gauge the opinion of young educated members of the mainline churches towards other schurches and religious groups, the writer conducted a survey with a questionnaire in five theological colleges: Catholic Theological Institute (CTI), Martin Luther Seminary (MLS), Newton College (NC: Anglican), Rarongo Theological College (RTC: United), and Sacred Heart Seminary Rapolo (SHS: Catholic). Of the 189 theological students responding to the questionnaire, 180 were male and 9 female. The denominational breakdown is as follows: Anglican 11, Catholic 107, Lutheran 12 (Evangelical Lutheran 10, Gutnius Lutheran 2), United 56, ‘Other’ 3. All except 3 are PNG nationals. (It would be revealing to conduct a second survey to gauge the opinion of young educated members of other churches and religious groups towards the mainline churches, but this has yet to be done.)

The first three questions enquired about the respondents’ general perceptions of other churches: Pentecostal churches such as AOG and CLC (Question 1), Seventh-day Adventists (SDA) (Question 2), and Mormons (LDS) and Jehovah’s Witnesses (Question 3). The percentages of ‘Quite Positive’ responses are shown in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question 1 (Pentecostal)</th>
<th>Question 2 (SDA)</th>
<th>Question 3 (LDS and Jehovah’s Witnesses)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CTI</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLS</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTC</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHS</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table illustrates how the students’ opinions differ in their perceptions of the different churches, from a more positive perception of Pentecostal churches to less positive for SDA and still less positive for Mormons and Jehovah’s Witnesses. A low score does not necessarily mean that the alternative was only negative as some students checked the ‘No Opinion Formed Yet’ option. Noticeably, students from Newton College claim to have more positive perceptions than those of other colleges.

How do the students see the impact of these other churches and religious groups (henceforth ‘other churches’) upon their church? (Q4) Most respondents feel threatened by these other churches because they compete with them for people’s allegiance. They are said to ‘steal sheep’ from the fold of the established churches and to split congregations. However, some could also see positive outcomes, for example, that the other churches have already helped to bring about welcomed changes in worship styles in the mainline churches. One respondent from MLS noted how the other churches play a reforming role because they are more disciplined and because they encourage more caring relationships among their followers. Another student from MLS responded,

The impact they are having on my church is both positive and negative. The positive outcomes are that they are challenging systematic and institutionalized errors embedded in the church. Also they have adapted to revolution and change in the spiritual dimension of today's situation. However, they are not all perfect. The error here seems to stem from disorderly and chaotic religious worship, including fragments of cults and mysticism.
In terms of the impact of the other churches on society and the communities (Q5), many respondents felt that they bring about rivalries and divisions within families, clans and villages. Underlying these divisions is a change to a more individualistic lifestyle. One student from SHS commented, “In my area, these new groups never participate in community work; they do things individually, which is not a Melanesian characteristic.” Respondents also noted how these other churches do not respect traditional customs and values. A student from CTI noted, “They belong to the Melanesian community, but act as foreigners condemning Melanesian community values. They only believe in their church community and so form new church tribes.” However, one student from MLS felt that in not embracing local traditions these other churches are “preparing the people to be part of the global world.”

What are the reasons for the attractiveness and consequent growth of these other churches? (Q6). The comments by a student from SHS were echoed by many respondents, “For me, the most obvious reason is that these churches are more alive and create a sense of enthusiasm. They find a means to attract more people to join them and one of the means is through music, secondly, the way they preach.” People are attracted to the lively worship and the preaching that touches them emotionally. A respondent from NC commented, “We are living in a world of feeling now, and not a thinking world. They make the people feel about religion rather than think.”

Another theme coming through strongly is that these other churches are meeting people’s desire for freedom; freedom of young people to make friends and to get married with less concern for the burden of the tradition of giving a large ‘bride-price’ payment; freedom from certain cultural responsibilities like compensation payments; freedom (of pastors) to be their own boss. Respondents also mention prosperity—both material and spiritual. Some people feel they gain more spiritually by becoming members of these other churches. Others benefit materially through support for school fees, connections for getting employment, or even tours of the Holy Land.

A respondent from MLS was of the opinion that these other churches are filling a spiritual gap left by the mainline churches.

Most of the mainline churches serve the urban congregations and leave behind the ones in the settlements, compounds and rural areas. Therefore, the new sects take this responsibility to preach to the lost and to help them. The new sects are growing in numbers by serving the lost in the areas in which the mainline churches’ ministries are not very effective.

How have the mainline churches responded to the challenge posed by the other churches? (Q7). A student from RTC commented that he comes from an urban church in the capital city, Port Moresby, where they have learned to work along with other churches such as Pentecostals and Seventh-day Adventists. Others commented, however, that they do not relate to the other churches because “they say we are unholy and look down on us.”

The majority of respondents were critical of their church’s response, saying that there is a lot of talk and complaining, but little action. A student from SHS commented, “My church is too slack in trying to get back those who are already taken away. The Catholic Church is also lacking trust in itself. It is not doing anything to try and help Catholics be more secure in their faith.” Another Catholic student from CTI wrote, “There is no response because catechists are ill-equipped and priests only come for masses on Sundays.” The question elicited many comments along similar lines, e.g., “So far the Catholic Church has done nothing but continue to carry on her old traditions. We only concentrate on saying
Mass and giving sacraments. We need to move on and be engaged in really attending to the pastoral needs of the people.” “The time has changed and we have to change in the church too.” Catholics are not the only ones critical of their church. A Lutheran from MLS commented, “Generally our church is still sleeping. We have an office for Renewal Movements in the church, but no real programme to respond to these challenges. I am afraid in some years’ time the church will be there in name only.”

Some students noted how the Catholic Church has responded by forming charismatic groups. Anglicans have tried this also, but with mixed results. The former bishop of one Anglican diocese promoted the charismatic movement, but this caused division and conflict between liberals and traditionalists in the diocese. Some churches try to respond through education. New biblical approaches to teaching and preaching are seen as positive. A CTI student was less enthusiastic about history courses. He noted that the church is living in the past anyway, so rather than history courses there is a more pressing need for courses that speak to people’s present-day situation.

How should the mainline churches respond? (Q8). Some respondents wanted to take a legalistic approach, pressing the government to pass legislation to limit some other churches. However, the majority of those answering the questionnaire took a conciliatory approach. One RTC student noted that before anything else, the mainline or ecumenical churches should ensure that they are united. Then it might be possible to dialogue with other churches. A respondent from RTC commented, “I think working with them and establishing proper dialogue with them will help us understand their motives, teaching and doctrines.” A student from SHS wrote, “We should not disregard them as foreign, but meet them and dialogue in a fraternal way. Moreover, we may share what they lack and we may learn what they have that is positive to enhance our faith and vice versa. We must be open.” Someone from MLS noted that it is better “to be part of them rather than excommunicating them.” Another from the same college wrote, “We need to see God in a big picture—the way that God sees us, not our contrived and tiny limited way in which we view God. In doing this so we will embrace a true and genuine Christianity and a broader sense of religion.”

Some responding to the question noted the importance of improving the standard of liturgy and of preaching. Some suggested forms of evangelization involving “going out and preaching in the streets just like them.” Other suggestions included a better use of mass communications such as TV and radio, youth rallies, capitalizing on the spiritual gifts that the mainline churches possess, and particularly a better use of human resources in the involvement of lay members of the church. One student from MLS commented, “I think people need a group or a church which cares.”

In responding to questions 9–11, students noted many social problems such as corruption and the breakdown of the social order. Many are convinced that the social problems are a result of the breakdown of the family and cultural traditions. One noted that we have to address the issue of “power churches” that attract people in situations of gross poverty and abuses of power.

Those responding to the questionnaire noted how the world is changing, influencing people in the direction of new forms of consumerism and entertainment. One student from MLS commented that “we must not run along with these changes, but walk with confidence and with reason. Globalization is science’s answer to those wanting a satisfying life. Religious revivalism is the theological answer to those looking for satisfaction in modern terms. But simplicity of life is a source of hope and happiness in the face of a complex modern society.”
However, it is unclear whether simplicity of life is possible in the face of rapid cultural change. The values associated with the traditional men’s house or women’s house are becoming a thing of the past. Values such as hospitality, reciprocity, community, and caring for the elderly, need to be promoted by the churches lest these values be swept away in the face of a modern individualistic value system.

Finally, how have the mainline churches dealt with revival movements in their midst? It appears that the four mainline churches have responded differently to such movements. A student from CTI commented,

“We have a ‘Diwai Kros Muvmen’, Legion of Mary, and the charismatic movement. The Church puts them all together but treats them differently. Sometimes the movements are in conflict with each other. These movements are good, for the church cannot remain static. It has to move so that the faith of the Christians can be renewed. The church encourages such movements so long as they abide by the norms of the church.”

The Catholic Church has generally encouraged the charismatic movement within the church, though some leaders take a cautious stand, seeing such forms of worship as foreign to the Catholic Church. In some cases the movement appeared to get “out of control”, particularly among the youth, and parish priests moved in to establish some sort of order. A student from SHS commented, “There are many of these movements happening in the diocese but the church is not co-operating well with these groups. There is no proper spiritual direction given, and as a result some of these groups have tried to become their own church.”

The charismatic renewal has caused some tension within the Anglican Church. A student from New Caledonia wrote,

“The charismatic movement is great in the Anglican Church but there has arisen an attitude of suspicion which springs from ignorance rather than an attitude of understanding. Due to lack of awareness, the very movements that should have become an opportunity for ministry in the church have become a problem. There is division between the bishops, priests and Christians over these issues.”

The United Church has been less accommodating to renewal and charismatic movements. Some students from RTC commented, “My church does not allow this type of worship.” “We should remove the people involved.” “These movements are simply misleading people with wrong doctrines of faith as they are full of religious pride. They need proper counseling and teachings before it’s too late.” One United Church student commented, “The Church is beginning to accept renewal movements, but it must be taught in a way that it appears as a blessing to the church from God and not something else.”

The Lutheran Church has created a special office for dialogue with renewal movements. Some Lutheran students commented on how renewal and charismatic movements create a vital and inspiring atmosphere in the church. Others noted how the renewal movements do not follow the order of worship, and have “thrown everything out the window.” Benefiting from the office for dialogue with renewal movements, some have learned that praise in worship is not a monopoly of renewal movements—that one finds it in the Book of Psalms, and that such expressions are not a threat, but a message to the mainline churches about what has been lost and stands to be regained.
Other Opinions

Irorir and Krieg in the Lutheran office for Dialogue with Renewal Movements are of the opinion that there is need for a ‘Theology of Relationship’ in the Lutheran Church (and other mainline churches). By this they mean a theology that will show that God is with people, because the Church is with people in the joys and sorrows and struggles of their daily lives. “If God can do it, who are you to sit down in your office and lock yourself up!” (Igorir and Krieg 2003, interview by author).

Similar sentiments have been expressed by several of those interviewed who have converted from a mainline church to another church. Josephine Lokain moved from the Catholic Church to the CLC. When interviewed she said, “My new church has helped me a lot to come closer to God and to know more about Him. It has helped me in my life generally to live a life that is more respectful with my family members as well as my church members” (Lokain 2003, interview by author).

Some converts related their conversion to a new relationship with the Word of God. Regina Mabia, who was Catholic and later joined the AOG, and now the COC, puts it as follows: “When I actually went and joined the Pentecostal church I started to see the importance of the Bible. I started to treasure the word of God in the Bible and it became my daily thing. I had to do it, read the word and then pray and I started to see a lot of things changing in my life” (Mabia 2002, interview by author). Jason Moriarty of the Churches of Christ puts it bluntly, “People are getting tired of Catholicism, Lutheranism and Anglicanism and they just want to study the Bible and find the truth for themselves” (Moriarty 2002, interview by author). However, Bishop Denny Y Ririka explains how it is difficult for people to oppose those who claim to be preaching the Word.

People go and join other churches for so many reasons. In many parts of the country anyone, as long as he spends two or three weeks learning the Bible, can go down to his village and start a church or a group and nobody stops him. The community cannot stop him because he is talking about the Bible. Nobody has anything to say against someone who talks about God, which is good, but then that person is dividing his family and community (Ririka 2003, interview by author).

Bob Brown, a former Catholic, who joined the Tokarara Christian Fellowship (and is now on mission overseas), is of the opinion that changes in church allegiance are part of the changing times. “In my understanding God brings in new wineskins for different times of history, and as soon as the old wineskin gets too rigid it is time for a new wineskin” (Brown 2002, interview by author). Igorir and Krieg see it in terms of people looking for a better life, and that includes a renewed life, which might well be found in a new church. Certainly the Pentecostal message includes a promise of security and a new life of love, joy and peace. For people in Papua New Guinea, spiritual and material ‘prosperity’ are seen together. Some who join Pentecostal churches say they have gained a new spiritual dynamism to face their fears, anxieties, and the changing world. David Thiele, on the faculty of Pacific Adventist University, admits that SDA Church growth may at times have something to do with upward mobility. “The church has a reputation for good quality education institutions, good quality health institutions and good employment prospects because of that good reputation” (Cole and Thiele 2002, interview by author).

Some lament that new churches tend to promote forms of Western-oriented Christianity at the expense of PNG values. According to Rex Kaikuyawa, the Pentecostal-Charismatic
movement came as part of modern changes. The United Church’s "hope for contextualizing the Christian faith and practice was dashed at the onslaught of modernization and, more lately, globalisation. It was painful for the church leadership because they felt that the rate of change was too fast for them" (Kaikuyawa 2001: 52). Kaikuyawa sees the church leadership facing important choices: whether to remain conservative and see a split in the church, or to "adopt more Pentecostal-Charismatic tendencies and bid farewell to the people’s much valued culture and identity for a more Western oriented identity" (Kaikuyawa 2001: 62).

Those who have joined Pentecostal churches often see their move as a way of freeing themselves from aspects of culture that they believe were enslaving them, such as spirit-caused illness. Peter Solomon, who was a Catholic and is now a leader in the Christian Outreach Centre, says that while music attracts young people and makes them happy, older people are more attracted by signs and miracles. He notes that when people are sick they generally do not go to a priest for prayer. Rather they go to the pastor of a church such as the COC.

When you share with them, talk to them and you pray with them they feel something going through their bodies, which, I would not know, is maybe God’s power. And they say, 'You prayed over me and I felt different. I will come and see you again.' And then they will come saying, 'I like your way of worship.' And then the following Sunday they are there. The majority of these people have seen the power of God and the miracles that He has done (Solomon 2002, interview by author).

Summary

What are the reasons for the attractiveness and consequent growth of the newer churches? A good number of respondents commented that these churches are more alive and create a sense of enthusiasm not found in many of the established churches. Music and preaching styles add to an atmosphere that many people, particularly youth, find attractive. Some people feel that these other churches are meeting people’s desire for freedom; the freedom of young people to make friends and to get married with less concern for the burden of giving a large ‘bride-price’ payment; freedom from certain cultural responsibilities like compensation payments; the freedom (of pastors) to be their own boss. Respondents also mention prosperity—both material and spiritual. Some people feel that the new churches are filling a spiritual gap left by the mainline churches. Others benefit materially through support for school fees, or connections for getting employment. Franco Zocca makes the point that according to census figures it seems that women are more likely to be attracted to the non-mainline churches (Zocca 2004:64).

The churches that are growing quickly in PNG tend to have what could be termed a charismatic approach, coming from a worldview quite different from the Western scientific one. Prophecy is an everyday reality, and exorcism, faith-healing and dream-visions are commonplace. In PNG, despite modernization, most people are open to ‘signs and wonders’. They find similarities between their world and the world of the Bible. Thus there is great interest in manifestations of the miraculous through the power of the Spirit, especially in healing and deliverance ministries. When they experience God’s presence in their lives people have a sense of liberation from fear and fate. Theirs is not a God of the poor, so much as a Saviour whose Spirit can overpower forces of evil, both spiritual and social. This is the salvation people are searching for, whether within the mainline churches or elsewhere.
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