

CIU number: 144378

North American Mission Agencies in Poland: A Study in “Partnership”

By

Randy Hacker

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in Intercultural Studies

Dr. Michael Barnett

Department of Intercultural Studies

Summer 2013

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores relationships between North American missionaries and Polish churches in Poland. The research draws from published descriptions of Polish church history and missionary accounts to build a preliminary picture of partnership. Online surveys of missionaries and Polish church leaders, as well as interviews of church leaders, form the foundation for the assessment of partner relations in Poland. Best practices in partnership documents are assessed, as are Polish and North American perspectives on the state of missionary/church relations in Poland. The research demonstrates several patterns and barriers in partnership, and the thesis concludes with recommendations for missionaries and Polish church leaders.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	viii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Need for the study and research problem	2
Supporting questions and scope and limitations	3
Key terms and initial review of previous literature	4
Research Methodology	8
Thesis Organization	11
Schedule	12
II. HISTORY OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN POLAND, WITH A SPECIAL FOCUS ON PARTNERSHIP WITH NORTH AMERICAN MISSIONS.	13
Beginnings of Christianity in Poland	13
Beginnings of evangelicalism in Poland	20
Evangelical Growth and Struggles	23
North American missions present before the fall of communism	29
North American missions since 1989	36
III. PARTNERSHIP EVALUATION.	42
Survey of North American Missionaries in Poland	45
Survey and Interviews of Polish Church Leaders	56
IV. TOWARD BETTER PARTNERSHIPS: PATTERNS, BARRIERS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.	69
Evaluation Patterns	72
Barriers	75
Ten recommendations for missionaries in Poland	78

Six recommendations for Polish partners	83
---	----

APPENDIX

A. SURVEY OF NORTH AMERICAN MISSIONARIES	86
B. SURVEY OF POLISH CHURCH LEADERS	89
C. LIST OF PROTESTANT CHURCHES IN POLAND	92
D. MISSIONARY DESCRIPTIONS OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE NATIONAL DENOMINATION	95
E. MISSIONARY DESCRIPTIONS OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH A LOCAL CONGREGATION	97
F. MISSIONARY DESCRIPTIONS OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR PRIMARY POLISH PARTNER	99
G. MISSIONARY DESCRIPTIONS OF BIGGEST CHALLENGES TO PARTNERSHIP	101
H. MISSIONARY QUESTIONS FOR POLISH CHURCH LEADERS	105
I. POLISH LEADERS' DESCRIPTIONS OF MISSIONARY RELATIONSHIPS WITH NATIONAL DENOMINATION	107
J. POLISH LEADERS' DESCRIPTIONS OF MISSIONARY RELATIONSHIPS WITH A LOCAL CONGREGATION	109
K. POLISH LEADERS' DESCRIPTIONS OF PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH MISSIONARIES	110
L. POLISH LEADERS' DESCRIPTIONS OF BIGGEST CHALLENGES TO PARTNERSHIP	112
M. POLISH LEADERS' QUESTIONS FOR MISSIONARIES	115
N. HELPS FOR MISSIONARIES TO POLAND	117
 BIBLIOGRAPHY	 119

TABLES

1: Original BEE mission agencies	35
2 Mission Agencies in Poland since 1989.....	39
3 List of mission agencies in survey.....	45
4 List of Polish denominations represented in survey of missionaries	46
5 Missionary reasons for choosing to work with a Polish group.....	47
6 Missionary initiation of relationship with Polish partner.....	48
7 Number and types of partnership agreements - missionary responses.....	49
8 Selected missionary responses regarding their relationship with the national denomination	50
9 Selected missionary responses regarding their relationship with local Polish churches	50
10 Selected missionary responses regarding their relationship with Polish partners.....	51
11 Barriers in developing partnerships with Polish churches.....	52
1 Best practices in partnership agreements, according to missionaries	53
2 Biggest challenges to partnership according to missionaries	54
3 Questions from missionaries for Polish leaders.....	55
15 Denominations represented by Polish church leaders.....	56
4 Number of missionaries with whom Polish leaders had worked.....	56
17 Reasons for choosing to partner with a missionary.....	57
5 Reasons for initiating relationship with missionary	58
19 Partnership agreements with missionary.....	58
20 Assessing the state of partnership.....	60
21 Survey responses from Polish leaders regarding missionary's relationship with Polish denomination	62

22 Interview responses from Polish leaders regarding missionary's relationship with Polish denomination	62
23 Survey responses from Polish leaders regarding missionary's relationship with local churches	62
24 Interview responses from Polish leaders regarding missionary's relationship with local churches.....	63
25 Survey responses from Polish leaders regarding missionary's relationship with individual leaders.....	63
26 Interview responses from Polish leaders regarding missionary's relationship with individual leaders.....	64
27 Barriers to initiating partnership with a missionary	64
28 Best practices in partnership agreements, according to Polish leaders	66
29 Biggest challenges to partnership according to Polish leaders	67
30 Questions from Polish leaders for missionaries	67
6 Protestant Denominations in Poland	92
32: Missionary descriptions of their relationship with the national denomination	95
33: Missionary descriptions of their relationship with a local congregation	97
34: Missionary descriptions of their relationship with their primary Polish partner.....	99
35: Missionary descriptions of biggest challenges to partnership	101
36: Missionary questions for Polish church leaders	105
37: Polish leaders' descriptions of missionary relationships with national denominations (from survey).....	107

38: Polish leaders' descriptions of missionary relationships with national denominations (from interviews).....	107
39: Polish leaders' descriptions of missionary relationships with the local church (from survey)	109
40: Polish leaders' descriptions of missionary relationships with the local church (from interviews).....	109
41: Polish leaders' descriptions of personal relationships with missionaries (from survey).....	111
42: Polish leaders' descriptions of personal relationships with missionaries (from interviews).	111
43: Polish leaders' descriptions of biggest challenges to partnership (from survey).....	113
44: Polish leaders' descriptions of biggest challenges to partnership (from interviews).....	113
45: Polish leader's questions for missionaries (from survey).....	115
46: Polish leader's questions for missionaries (from interviews).....	115

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to convey my gratitude to my Columbia International University professors who encouraged, corrected and guided me through the process of writing this thesis. Dr. Michael Barnett, my thesis mentor, shared significant amounts of helpful criticism, without ever seeming critical. Dr. Marc Canner, my reader, seemed to notice every typo, including those in Polish! Dr. Ed Smither guided me through the most difficult part of the process: deciding what to study, and preparing the proposal and first chapter.

My supervisors at WorldVenture frequently encouraged me to finish my master's degree. The missionaries on our Poland team were the first to take my online survey – even noticing quickly that it was “broken!” Thankfully, they let me know just as quickly, so the survey could be fixed before anyone else took it.

I would not have been able to write this thesis without the participation of missionaries to Poland and Polish church leaders. I have not met some of the missionaries that participated in the survey, and yet they were willing to share their opinions with someone from a different agency and denomination. I am especially grateful to the Polish leaders who trusted me enough to be very frank in their evaluations when I interviewed them. I wish I could name them, and celebrate their sincerity, but I promised anonymity. You know who you are! *Dziękuję Wam serdecznie, i niech Was Bóg błogosławi!*

I finished this thesis a day after the twenty-first anniversary of one of the greatest events in my life. Thank you, Kaye. I can't begin to list all of the things I can thank you for, but for now – thanks for letting me clutter up the kitchen table for three months.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The first modern North American missionaries began to arrive in the late 1970s, with the majority moving into Poland after the fall of communism in 1989. The mission I serve with, WorldVenture, arrived in 1988, and this year (2013) we celebrate 25 years in Poland. It was a celebration of that milestone that prompted me to consider doing a historical study of missions in Poland.

Often, it seemed the missionaries came with a preconceived agenda and strategy, yet a good number of them partnered with the established church in evangelism and leadership development. Those partnerships were both formal and informal, and some missionaries seemed to not be interested in partnership at all. Sometimes the relationships were open and transparent, but often they faced competing agendas and unspoken expectations. Although missionaries frequently arrived with agendas set in North America, no one serves in a vacuum. The Poles expected certain attitudes and assistance from the North Americans who arrived to serve with them, and these expectations were not always met.

I am analyzing methods of North American missions in Poland because I want to understand how Poles responded to these methods, and how we can be more effective in our efforts. I am especially looking at the relationships between North American missionaries and the Polish evangelical churches.

Need for the study

As far as I know, no one has ever done an in-depth study into the partnership experiences between missionaries and Polish churches. There are anecdotes that include both success stories and abysmal failures in the partnership relationships, but I have not yet seen a study that combines our experiences, both Polish and North American, leading toward any helpful conclusions.

A study that can research Polish and North American experiences and reflect qualitatively on those experiences can help all of us serving in Poland to better understand our relationships with one another. In addition, some of the questions used could help us better articulate expectations of one another. The study will be done in both Polish and English, with the hope that both Poles and North Americans can benefit from the findings. As we all look at our perceptions of one another, hopefully we will be able to come to greater understanding of one another, and more complete partnership in the building of God's Kingdom in Poland.

Research problem

My goal is to analyze the strategies and methods of North American mission agencies in relationship to the national churches, and how the churches responded. My hypothesis is that partnership, even fractured, has caused more effectiveness. However, I want to remain open to the possibility that partnerships between Polish churches and North American missionaries were not the best practice for building God's Kingdom in Poland. Although I hope to find some examples of what is detrimental to partnerships, my primary aim is to look for best practices.

Supporting questions

In an attempt to answer that primary question, several supporting questions will be helpful:

1. Why did the agencies choose to work with whom they worked with and why did the church seek the help of these missionaries? If the rationale for those choices can be understood, we can better understand each party's expectations of the other.
2. How would the missionaries characterize their relationship with the church or churches, and how would the churches describe theirs with missionaries? Hopefully, in an anonymous survey, both churches and missionaries will share honest reflections on these sometimes difficult relationships.
3. What were the methods of relating to one another? If we can combine the findings from questions 2 and 3, we ought to be able to see some common trends that may help us identify detriments to partnership, as well as best practices.
4. How did the relationships between missionaries and the existing church contribute to the advance of the gospel?
5. How did the relationships between missionaries and the existing church contribute to developing national leaders? Again, we are looking for some best practices here, but also support for the hypothesis that partnership promotes effectiveness.

Scope and limitations

Although I believe it will be worthwhile to do similar studies in other countries, and then compare results, this study will be limited to Poland. The scope of a study that includes other

countries would be much too broad to handle in a single thesis. Because Poland has historically had a much lower number of missionaries than most countries, it serves as a good starting point.

The study is also limited to North American missions. There are not many missions from outside North America working in Poland, so they could be included. However, data would be limited from such sources and I think that the cultural values shared by mission agencies from the United States and Canada are different from those shared by missionaries from Brazil, Korea, or the Philippines. These differences would undoubtedly have an effect on expectations and partnerships. Hence, the study will be limited to mission agencies from North America. I will attempt to survey every North American missionary who has ever worked in Poland. I would estimate this number as several hundred. However, realistically, I will hope for at least forty responses to an online survey. I would like to see a cross-section of denominations represented, and I would like to see a stronger representation of early missionaries who stayed long-term.

The questions asked of missionaries will be limited to the supporting questions listed above. In addition, as I interview Polish leaders, I will limit the interview to the supporting questions, and the Polish responses to the American survey results.

Key terms

Partnership: any kind of formal or informal working relationship between a missionary and a church. I am not focusing only on formalized, documented partnerships, but any time a church or missionary had expectations of working together.

Initial review of previous scholarship

Very little research seems to have been done on the specific topic of the relationship between North American missionaries and the Polish evangelical church. There are a number of likely reasons for this: the older evangelical churches were started by missionaries from Europe, primarily Germany; the occupation of Poland by Germany in World War II and Soviet Russia from 1945-1989 made it extremely difficult for North American missionaries to work or even live in Poland from 1939 to 1989; the size of the evangelical church (0.15% of the entire population); and the small number of missionaries from North America. North American missionaries are referred to, somewhat incidentally, in some histories of evangelical churches. Therefore, much of what we might learn from extant literature must be gleaned from articles that are focused on entirely different topics.

There was a brief and intense period of growth for Protestants between World Wars I and II. Among the Baptists, Zbigniew Wierchowski lists several American missionaries who contributed to this growth in his article “Between the Wars: Golden Years for Polish Baptists.”¹ However, Wierchowski continues to say that “the help received from the USA led to the Baptist community being known in some quarters as ‘a church run by Americans’.”² According to him, many commentators in the inter-war period identified the Baptists as a “very dangerous sect” that, with the help of American missionaries, was trying to compete with the Catholic Church and destroy the unity of Poland.³

1. Zbigniew Wierchowski, “Between the Wars: Golden Years for Polish Baptists,” *Baptistic Theologies*, Prague: IBTS, 1:1, (Spring 2009): 90-93.

2. *Ibid.*, 92.

3. *Ibid.*

The Pentecostals were also characterized by a much stronger German influence than American. However, Gajewski and Wawrzyniuk do refer to Jan Pindor, a Polish Lutheran minister who visited the U.S. and met with D. L. Moody and R. A. Torrey.⁴ As a result, he contacted other European holiness movements, and began to publish literature.⁵ They also mention a wave of American and Canadian emigrants who came to Poland in the 1920s, some of whom had “received a charismatic experience.”⁶ Although the authors do refer to the Pentecostal church of Poland maintaining contact with the American Assembly of God, among others,⁷ after the 1920s they do not refer to any other North American influence in the Polish Pentecostal church.

Currently, there are a number of significant barriers to being a missionary in Poland and *not* working with a registered church. Halina Grzymała-Moszczyńska describes these in her article on “Proselytism in Poland.”⁸ These exist to keep “New Religious Movements” and dangerous cults from entering Poland.⁹ In essence, North American missionaries must work in some kind of partnership with an existing, registered church.

It is much easier to find articles by North American missionaries about their experiences in Poland. Among these are three from *Alliance Life* magazine, written by Christian and Missionary

4. Wojciech Gajewski and Krzysztof Wawrzyniuk, “A Historic and Theological Analysis of the Pentecostal Church of Poland,” *The Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association*, Vol. XX, (2000): 33.

5. Gajewski and Wawrzyniuk, 33.

6. *Ibid.*, 34.

7. *Ibid.*, 35.

8. Halina Grzymała-Moszczyńska, “Proselytism in Poland,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 36:1-2 (1999): 111-112.

9. *Ibid.*, 112.

Alliance missionaries in Poland. The first, by Larry Boss, describes his family's first days in Poland, and some of the difficulties they faced in starting a new life.¹⁰ Kevin Kutcel discusses the necessity of working together, and a partnership agreement between C&MA and the Church of Christian Fellowship.¹¹ Finally, Sheri Torgrimson writes about her friendship with Sylwia, and how that friendship helped Sylwia become a friend of Christ.¹² Lawrence Jones wrote a case study about a Youth with a Mission project in Poland titled "An American Pentecostal Mission to Poland in 1989."¹³ There is also a very brief article in the *Christian Standard* about a partnership project to open a Leadership Training Center in Poland.¹⁴

Agnieszka Tennant, a writer with *Christianity Today*, gives a lot of credit for her conversion to a "red-headed Californian" who taught her English in 1992, in Gdańsk.¹⁵ Significantly, David Scott wrote about Karol Wojtyła (Pope John Paul II) and his invitation to Campus Crusade to come work with the Light and Life Movement in Poland in the late 1970s. One of his articles appeared in *Fides et Historia*¹⁶ and another in *Christianity Today*¹⁷ in 2005.

10. Larry Boss, "We Are in Poland," *Alliance Life*, vol. 128, (November, 1993): 14-15.

11. Kevin Kutcel, "Growing a Unified Church in Poland," *Alliance Life*, vol. 134, (May, 1999): 20-21.

12. Sheri Torgrimson, "The Cross, Culture and Friendship," *Alliance Life*, vol. 136 (July, 2001): 28-29.

13. Lawrence N. Jones, "An American Pentecostal Mission to Poland in 1989," *Christianity and Hegemony: Religion and Politics on the Frontiers of Social Change*, Ann Arbor: Berg, 1992: 273-301.

14. "Missions Cooperate on Poland Project," *Christian Standard 1993*, vol. 128, (January, 1993): 3.

15. Agnieszka Tennant, "The Ultimate Language Lesson," *Christianity Today*, (December, 2002), <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2002/december9/1.32.html> (accessed May 2, 2013).

16. David Hill Scott, "Evangelicals and Catholics Really Together in Poland, 1975-1982," *Fides Et Historia*, vol. xxxiv, no 1, (January, 2002): 89-109.

17. David Scott, "The Pope We Never Knew : the Unknown Story of How John Paul II Ushered Campus Crusade into Catholic Poland," *Christianity Today*, (May, 2005): 34-38.

In *History Makers*, (published first in Polish as *Twórcy Historii*) a collection of stories of Polish church plants, North American missionaries do appear, but in secondary roles. This book's purpose was to "show the first-fruits of God's work in Poland,"¹⁸ so the authors (I was a planner and editor) intentionally avoided stories where Americans figured prominently.

Research methodology

My research is descriptive in nature. "Descriptive research generally serves to *develop* theory."¹⁹ I want to explore the historic relationships between North American missionaries and the national church in Poland, and based on that exploration, see some common patterns and explain why those relationships have looked the way they have. Based on the patterns and potential explanation of those patterns, I hope to be able to suggest some corrections in those relationships, and some possible "best practice" methods.²⁰

I have already begun, with questions put to an "ad hoc" focus group made up of veteran missionaries in Poland. This group served as a sounding-board to test the value of my topic and potential of my proposed methodology. This group includes a mix of American and Canadian missionaries from a broad evangelical spectrum, representing a wide range of potential involvement with the national church. I asked them where, among all the possible questions we could ask those who have been missionaries in Poland since the fall of communism; they rank the question of the relationship between missionaries and the national churches. Although a

18. Paul Haenze, foreword to *History Makers: Church Planting Vision for the 21st Century*, edited by Paul Hostetler, Skórzewo: ASCP Polska, 2008, 11.

19. Edgar J. Elliston, *Missiological Research Design*, Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2011, 68.

20. Elliston, 68. My description is based on Elliston's: "As one has described what has been or is true in a situation and then provides an explanation of the phenomena, theory is developed. Often one continues in the development of the related theory to show from the patterns of what has been described how to predict what is likely to occur in the future and to suggest basis for action based on the description of the phenomena." 68.

number of other potential questions were raised, there was unanimous consensus that the question of the missionary/national church relationship would be one of the primary issues in a historical case study of North American missionaries in Poland.

I will continue with a review of the existing literature, looking for common characteristics of the missionary/church partnerships. This literature will include academic articles, but will also draw from published personal testimonies and reports that may shed light on the relationship between a missionary and national church partners.

The primary tool of my research will be a questionnaire given to North American missionaries who have served or are serving in Poland. This questionnaire will address all of the supporting questions, and will be sent to as many missionaries as possible. There will not be an age or gender demographic component, but there will be a denominational affiliation component of the questionnaire to help ascertain which partnerships were developed on the basis of denominational affiliation. My goal will be to have forty online questionnaires completed.

Concurrently with the questionnaires, I will conduct interviews of Polish leaders from all the primary evangelical denominations in Poland. Although, in the case of the interaction of Campus Crusade with the Roman Catholic Church, it may be worthwhile to interview Catholic leaders as well, most North American missionaries seem to have worked exclusively with evangelical churches. The interviews should include at least fourteen leaders, two each from the seven major evangelical denominations. These leaders will probably all be married males – the profile of the overwhelming majority of evangelical denominational leaders in Poland.

After conducting the questionnaires and interviews, and identifying some patterns, I hope to return to the focus group with my findings. In this way, as a group we may see other patterns, but

also identify some best practices and barriers to effective ministry. This interaction with the focus group will help validate some of my findings, and help me interpret some of the data.

The questionnaire used in the survey of North American missionaries can be found in Appendix A. The first three questions of the questionnaire are not meant to be used to cross-check the other questions. In other words, I am not looking to discover which agencies or churches had the best relationships, but rather common patterns that show up in a statistical analysis of all the questionnaire responses. It might be possible to do a comparison of the missionary responses with interviews of the Polish leaders, but I would need to be careful to maintain anonymity in such a comparison. It seems that it would be more anonymous to compare the statistical patterns from the missionary questionnaires with the statistical patterns from the leaders' interviews.

Concurrently with the questionnaire, I will interview Polish leaders, asking the reverse of the questions above. I will not record the interviews, in case they say something negative about a specific person, but I will take notes on the interview questionnaire. The questionnaire for Polish leaders is included in Appendix B.

Anonymity and confidentiality will be assured. The missionaries will not be asked for their names, and I plan to do the questionnaires through an online survey that should protect their anonymity. However, the question about mission agency will lessen that anonymity, so I will need to assure them that that question is only for statistical purposes, and leave the question optional. I will not include the agency name, or the answer to question 3, in anything other than a general list of all agencies and denominations. For the Polish interviewees, I will explain to them what I am doing and why, and allow them to not participate, if they do not want to. I will not

include their name or denomination in any reporting of the interviews, beyond a general list of denominations that responded.

For both the missionaries and national leaders, I will share my results with them, if they request it. Both groups will be presented with informed consent letters. The answers from the surveys and interviews will be treated anonymously. Only their answers to my proposed questions will be relevant for my thesis, so any other data that would identify them will be deleted.

Risks are expected to be minimal, assuming I **don't** share any potential personal criticism with the subject of the criticism. There is no question that asks for specific details, although respondents could choose to write something in, or say something during an interview that may be a personal criticism. There could also be some discomfort answering a question, but the informed consent letter advises participants of their right to discontinue the study at any time. I do intend to share my tabulated findings with any participants who ask for them, and the project itself could benefit the Polish church by improving the working relationships between outsiders (missionaries) and insiders (the Polish church).

Thesis organization

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: History of the Evangelical Church in Poland, with a special focus on partnership with North American Missions

Chapter 3: Partnership Evaluation

Chapter 4: Toward Better Partnerships: Patterns, Barriers, and Recommendations

Schedule

I will begin inviting missionaries to take the survey online as soon as I receive approval from the Columbia International University Independent Review Board, hopefully before the end of May. At the same time, through June, I will conduct my interviews with Polish leaders. By the end of June, I hope to have enough surveys completed, and all of the interviews. Final write-up can then take place over the first two weeks of July, with an anticipated completion date of July 15.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORY OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN POLAND, WITH A SPECIAL FOCUS ON PARTNERSHIP WITH NORTH AMERICAN MISSIONS

The evangelical church in Poland is relatively young, with most denominations arising in the early part of the twentieth century. However, Christianity has been present in Poland for over one thousand years. This chapter will present a short history of Christianity in Poland, especially the rise of evangelicalism, and use precedent literature to describe the influence of North American missionaries on the growth of evangelical Christianity in Poland.

Beginnings of Christianity in Poland

In Roman times, the land of today's Poland was settled by the "Polans," a Western Slavic tribe that was never conquered by Rome. The Western Slavs had a common language and religion. This religion was "based on much the same pantheon as other Indo-European cults, worshipped through objects in nature – trees, rivers, stones – in which they were held to dwell, and less so in the shape of idols, or in circles and temples. . . . What set the *Polanie* apart from their sister peoples were their rulers, the *Piast* dynasty established in Gniezno at some time during the ninth century."²¹

The nation of Poland was founded in 966 A.D. when King Mieszko I, a Piast king, was baptized into the Western Latin rite. This decision meant that Poland remained Roman Catholic when some of its southern and eastern neighbors went with the Eastern (Orthodox) Church. Being Roman Catholic also meant an inclination toward Rome and the West, rather than toward

21. Adam Zamoyski, *Poland: A History*, London: HarperPress, 2009, 3.

Constantinople and the East. As a result, religious, cultural and political ties integrated Poland with its Western neighbors, Austria and the German states, as well as with Lithuania when it also chose Catholicism. Norman Davies, the author of the preeminent history of Poland in English, gives backhanded praise to Mieszko I, “Of all his feats . . . none but his baptism was [sic] permanent. By this one act, he brought his people into the world of western culture and Latin literacy. . . . He started the recorded history of the Poles which has continued without a break from that day to this.”²²

Although Mieszko I was recognized by Otto I, the Holy Roman Emperor, as king of the new Christian state, the young nation struggled at first to be taken seriously. Mieszko did all he could, however, to bring Poland under the authority of the Roman Pope, partially in an attempt to counterbalance the German Holy Roman Emperor. Mieszko’s son, Bolesław the Brave, gained the most from the papal contacts, however, through the martyrdom of a foreign missionary, Adelbertus.

Adelbertus (originally named Vojteh) was a Bohemian prince who had been sent by Pope Sylvester I to evangelize the Prussians. The Prussians lived on the Baltic seacoast, east of the Vistula River, to the north-east of Bolesław’s kingdom. In 996, “Bolesław received him with due honors before sending him on his way. The Prussians made short work of putting the missionary to death. On hearing the news, Bolesław sent to Prussia and bought the remains of the monk for, allegedly, their weight in gold. He then laid them to rest in the cathedral at Gniezno”²³

22. Norman Davies, *God’s Playground: A History of Poland*, vol. 1: *The Origins to 1795*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1984, 4.

23. Zamoyski, 5.

As a result of Bolesław's generosity, the Pope made Gniezno an archbishopric, effectively separating Poland from the ecclesiastical authority of the German states. "Bolesław brought together one of the largest states of Europe of his day and sought to strengthen the royal authority at the expense of the local magnates. He encouraged missionaries."²⁴ However, after Bolesław's reign, the populace revolted against the church, in large part as a rebellion against royal authority: "Churches and monasteries were burned and bishops and priests were either driven out or killed. While the work of Bolesław was never completely undone, for several generations the Christianity of the country was on a low level."²⁵

Although the Church contributed to the growth of Poland as a nation, Christianity itself continued to compete with the old Slavic paganism. In fact, the church seemed to have a much more significant influence on "educational and even political activities"²⁶ and much less on religious activities. "Pagan cults survived the official conversion of the country in 966, and the next two centuries witnessed several major revivals, during which churches were burnt and priests put to death."²⁷

This was a common problem for the Slavs. Most of them struggled to accept Christianity and give up their pagan beliefs. "Christianity was the price that had to be paid to escape the fate of their more obdurate fellow Slavs to the west, such as the Wends, who kept faith with the pagan ways and suffered one murderous Christian onslaught after another, until they lost their gods,

24. Kenneth Scott LaTourette, *A History of Christianity: Vol. 1: To A.D. 1500*, Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 1975, 394.

25. Ibid.

26. Zamoyski, p. 15.

27. Ibid.

their independence and their identity. “²⁸ For many, Christianity was simply one more burden placed on them by their ruler.²⁹

However, the Church continued to expand throughout the new country. In spite of persecution and revivals of folk paganism, by the year 1200 there were 1000 parishes, by 1300, 3000, and in 1500 there were already 6000 Roman Catholic parishes in the country.³⁰ In other words, about 1000 new parishes were added each year through the first six centuries of Poland’s existence. Through this early period, the Church began to unify the Polans into a nation – the Poles.

In the 1400s, Poland strengthened ties with its northeastern neighbor, Lithuania. As a result, pagan Lithuania also became Christian. The two nations were immediately forced to defend themselves against the Teutonic Knights, a monastic order established in Prussia to conquer the pagan tribes of Lithuania. The political conflict against the Teutonic Knights and alliance with Lithuania strained relations with Rome, however.

The Union of Lublin in 1569 created the Commonwealth of Poland-Lithuania, a nation-state that for nearly two hundred years was among Europe’s largest countries. Poland considered itself a bulwark against Baltic pagans, Orthodox Russians, and later, Muslims from the east and south. The role of King Jan III Sobieski in turning back the Ottomans at Vienna (1683) was crucial in stopping the Muslim advance into Europe.

28. Jerzy Lukowski and Hubert Zawadzki, *A Concise History of Poland*, Cambridge University Press, 2006, 8.

29. Ibid.

30. Zygmunt Pawłowicz, *Kościół i sekty w Polsce [Church and sects in Poland]*, Gdańsk: Stella Maris, 1996, 41. Throughout this paper, translations from Polish, unless otherwise noted, are my own.

Throughout Europe the first half of the sixteenth century was characterized by the religious upheaval of the Protestant Reformation. Although the Polish King resisted the Reformation at first, the cities with higher German populations began to turn toward Protestantism. In other parts of the country, however, Luther's teachings "met with little response."³¹ "Calvinism was another matter. . . . The democratic spirit of Calvinism which placed the lay elder on a par with the minister could hardly fail to appeal to the instincts of the *szlachta* [aristocracy], while the absence of pomp and ceremony from its rites made it a pleasingly cheap religion to support."³² The eastern part of Poland became progressively more Calvinist, and by the 1550's there was a Protestant majority of the gentry in Parliament.³³ "By 1572, the Senate provided a similar picture. Of the 'front-bench' seats, thirty-six were held by Protestants, twenty-five by Catholics and eight by Orthodox."³⁴

A Polish-Lithuanian branch of the Jesuit order was formed in 1545, and the counter-Reformation began to slow the growth of Protestantism in Poland. The Jesuits at first focused their efforts on providing education for the children of the Protestant aristocracy. Poland remained a relatively tolerant society, with large numbers of Jews, Orthodox, pagans and even Moslem Tatars holding positions of prominence. However, wars with Protestant Sweden, especially the Deluge³⁵ (1655-60), led to a marked change in Polish tolerance, including the banishment of the Arian Brothers, one of the smaller Protestant groups, and the death penalty for

31. Zamoyski, 63.

32. Ibid.

33. Pawłowicz, 42.

34. Zamoyski, 63.

35. The "Deluge" (Flood) was one of three short wars with Sweden in the 1600s. This war gained its name because Sweden very quickly conquered all of Poland – "flooding" it.

conversion from Catholicism. The valiant defense of the monastery of Jasna Góra in Częstochowa during the Swedish Deluge, and the legends surrounding the icon of the Black Madonna, housed in the monastery, greatly assisted in the process of counter-Reformation in Poland.

It was during this period that a Polish “folk Catholicism” was established. The historian Adam Zamoyski comments on the rise of this folk Catholicism:

This was influenced by the lack of large cities, the agrarian character of the aristocratic-peasant culture, common and strong religious experiences enhanced by pilgrimages (to Jasna Góra, Ostra Brama and others), building of Calvaries (Kalwaria Zebrzydowska), richly expanded paraliturgy (services, processions) and art (the baroque style in churches). In spite of crises and wars, the nation and society thanks to the Church was strengthened in its culture, combining Christian elements with Polish traditions and customs.³⁶

After King Jan Sobieski, the Commonwealth of Poland-Lithuania progressively lost power and territory. During the 150 years from 1650 to 1800, Poland fought wars against Sweden, the Ottomans, the Ukrainian Cossacks, and Russia. Through the 1700's, Poland's stronger neighbors—Russia, Prussia, and Austria—progressively annexed more and more Polish territory. Eventually, in 1795, Poland was partitioned among those three Great Powers, and disappeared from the map of Europe.

During the period of these Partitions (1795-1918), the occupying countries attempted to control the Church. The Polish Church was forbidden to have contact with the Apostolic See, and bishops were installed who were loyal to the occupiers. Russia dissolved monastic orders, seized church property, censored sermons, and in 1870 decreed that the liturgy had to be said in Russian. However, the Church's position only strengthened among the general populace and

36. Zamoyski, 42.

became even more of a national symbol. “With the lack of a government structure, churches became symbols and centers of remembrance, of Polish and religious life.”³⁷

A religious patriotism developed, and was one of the causes for several “uprisings” against the occupiers. “Papal instructions in 1795 ordered the Polish hierarchy to cooperate with the occupiers and let the foreign rulers administer ‘this-worldly affairs.’”³⁸ The Apostolic See even condemned the uprisings in 1794 and 1830.³⁹ The Church, the unifier of Poles in their national identity and struggle for a return of independence, was not supportive on the global stage. Polish writers romanticized the struggle as “Polish Messianism” and referred to Poland as “Christ for the Nations.” “Messianism held that the ‘resurrection’ of an independent, democratic Poland would demonstrate the triumph of freedom and justice over tyranny and oppression, and usher in a new era of peace, justice, and international brotherhood among the nations of Europe.”⁴⁰

Perhaps the logical outcome of this tension between a loyal, unifying folk Polish Church and the lack of national independence and support from the Vatican would be a Polish Catholic Church. In 1900, the Polish National Catholic Church was founded, as a result of disagreements with Rome – however, not in Poland, but in Scranton, Pennsylvania. Unable to come to agreement with the local bishop over building ownership and the rights of the Polish minority in the Scranton parish, in 1898 a group of Polish Catholics sent a plea to the Vatican for help. However, the plea was not answered as they hoped, and they decided to leave the Roman Catholic Church and join the Old Catholic movement. A number of Polish Catholic churches

37. Zamoyski, 43.

38. Grzymała-Moszczyńska, 96.

39. Zamoyski, 273.

40. Joel Burnell, *Poetry, Providence and Patriotism: Polish Messianism in Dialogue with Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2009, xvii.

were begun in Poland after independence was regained. Their doctrines are similar to those found in the Roman Catholic Church, although they only accept the first seven church councils, and disagree with the following: primacy and infallibility of the Pope; indulgences; cult of relics; celibacy of the priesthood; confessions; and the immaculate conception of Mary.⁴¹ The denomination was at its largest in 1961, numbering over 80,000. Today, there are approximately 20,000.⁴²

Beginnings of evangelicalism in Poland

As mentioned earlier, Lutheranism and Calvinism grew rapidly in Poland during the 1500s. Lutheranism became more identified with the northern cities, Prussia, Silesia, and the German minorities. Calvinism was accepted by the majority of the aristocracy in the mid-1500s. However, the upheavals of the 17th and 18th centuries helped the counter-reformation to be very effective. During the Partitions, as Poles turned more and more to the disenfranchised Church for national identity, other groups dwindled. Calvinist churches remained, but by the middle of the 1800s, there were almost no Calvinists left.

The Quakers, Anabaptists, and Mennonites were all present in Poland during the 1500s. “Anabaptists seeking refuge from persecution in Germany appeared in various areas of the country in the 1530s; and in 1551 Dutch Mennonites set up a colony on the lower Vistula.”⁴³ The Quakers had a colony but were expelled in 1660, and “set sail for America.”⁴⁴ The Mennonites

41. Pawłowicz, 87.

42. Główny Urząd Statystyczny [Central Statistical Office], *Wyznanie religijne, stowarzyszenia narodowościowe i etniczne w Polsce 2009-2011*, [Churches, denominations as well as national and ethnic associations in Poland 2009-2011], Warsaw: Statistical Publishing Establishment, 2013, 42.

43. Zamoyski, 64.

44. *Ibid.*, 126.

especially were influential in the region around Gdańsk. The Mennonites remained until the Partitions of the late 18th century, when they slowly were assimilated into the larger Polish and German populations.

Although there doesn't seem to be an unbroken connection between the Anabaptists or Mennonites and the Baptists, the Baptist movement began in Poland at about the same time the Mennonites were emigrating to the United States and Canada. The first Baptist churches were organized by German missionaries in Prussian Poland in Elbląg, in 1844, and in Szczecin and Wrocław in 1846. In Russian Poland, Gottfryd Fryderyk Alf formed the first Baptist congregation, in 1858. At first, the Baptist congregations were primarily German.⁴⁵ In the 1920s, a growing number of Poles became Baptists, and until 1939, there were two sister denominations, German and Polish Baptists.

The Pentecostal movement in Poland began in two areas, as a result of separate influences. In the West, in German Silesia and Pomerania, groups of German Lutherans began to gather together to pray. This movement was a “reaction to the fossilized bureaucratic Protestant church.”⁴⁶ The Lutheran minister Jan Pindor visited the United States and met evangelists Dwight Moody and Charles Finney.⁴⁷ The first Pentecostal church, independent of the Lutheran Church, was established in 1910,⁴⁸ in Cieszyn, on the Polish-Czech border. This new denomination was known as the Federation for Resolute Christianity (*Związek na Rzecz*

45. Katarzyna Jarosz, “Baptist Mission in Poland in the 19th century as an Example of Contextualization,” *Journal of European Baptist Studies*, 6:2, 2006, 36.

46. Michał Tymiński, *Kościół Zielonświątkowy w Polsce* [The Pentecostal Church In Poland], Cieszyn: Misja Życia, 1999, 28.

47. Gajewski and Wawrzeniuk, 33.

48. Tymiński, 28.

Stanowczego Chrześcijaństwa or, since Cieszyn was in the Austrian Partition of Poland, *Bund für Entschiedene Christentum*). “In contrast to Classical Pentecostals from the United States, they believed that speaking in tongues was not a necessary initial sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.”⁴⁹

In eastern and central Poland, in the Russian Partition, repatriates from America began evangelistic work after World War I.⁵⁰ Tymiński lists a number of repatriate missionaries. In eastern Poland, they have Polish last names: Kraskowski, Niedźwiecki, and Leonowicz. In central Poland, the missionaries are German: Herbert, Schmidt, and Bergholc.⁵¹ Gajewski and Wawrzyniuk, citing Tomaszewski, list an American, William Felter, who “led a very effective work in central Poland where he opened the American British Relief Commission supported by different mission organizations from USA and Great Britain.”⁵² Gustaw Herbert Schmidt, appointed as an Assembly of God missionary to Poland, founded a Bible Institute in Gdańsk.⁵³ By 1938, there were 20,000 Pentecostals in over 500 churches.⁵⁴

Another repatriate, Konstanty Jaroszewicz, helped established the Church of Christ in Poland. He was born in the Białystok region, but emigrated to the United States, where he was born again and baptized in 1912. After graduating from Johnson Bible College in Knoxville,

49. Gajewski and Wawrzyniuk, 34.

50. Ibid., 31.

51. Ibid.

52. H.R. Tomaszewski, *Wyznania typu ewangeliczno-baptystycznego wchodzące w skład Zjednoczonego Kościoła Ewangelicznego w latach 1945-1956*, [Denominations of the evangelical-baptist type in the formation of The United Evangelical Church in the years 1945-1956], Warsaw: Słowo i Życie, 1991, 33 in Gajewski and Wawrzyniuk, 33.

53. Gajewski and Wawrzyniuk, 35.

54. Tymiński, 32.

Tennessee, he was sent back to Poland as a missionary pastor by the Christian Church, in 1921.⁵⁵

Jan Bukowicz, born in Poland in 1890, left for the U.S. as an eighteen-year-old. He received Christ and was baptized in 1911. After finishing Moody Bible Institute in Chicago and the International Bible College in Minneapolis and serving for several years as an evangelist to Slavs in the U.S., he returned to Poland, also in 1921.⁵⁶

Together with Jerzy Sacewicz, who had remained in Poland, Jaroszewicz and Bukowicz were able to start several churches that became the Church of Christ in Poland. By 1926, there were 30 churches in the denomination.⁵⁷

Evangelical Growth and Struggles

Poland regained its independence in 1918, and until 1939, all the Polish churches grew quickly. The Roman Catholic Church established the Catholic University of Lublin in 1918 and was able to sign a concordat with the Vatican in 1925. Between the two World Wars, Poland was an ethnically and religiously diverse society. In 1939, there were 35 million citizens of Poland, of which 65% were Roman Catholic, 10% Greek Catholic, 12 % Orthodox, 3% Protestant and 10% Jewish.⁵⁸ However, the ruling National Democratic Party saw the Church as the “protector of Polish identity. . . . The Party was anti-Semitic, racist and intolerant of minorities. At the same time it strongly resisted the spreading of Soviet Communism and atheism in Poland.”⁵⁹

55. Paweł Bajko, *Z dziejów Kościoła Chrystusowego w Polsce* [From the acts of the Church of Christ in Poland], Bel Air, MD: Polish Christian Ministries, 2001, 18-19.

56. *Ibid.*, 23.

57. *Ibid.*, 27.

58. Pawłowicz, 43.

59. Grzymała-Moszczyńska, 96.

As seen in the previous section, the Pentecostal and Church of Christ denominations really began during the inter-war period, as well. The first local assembly of the Church of Evangelical Christians was begun in 1909, and the denomination was founded in 1923. The Pentecostal Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith was founded in 1929, and the Methodist Church was started during the period between the wars.⁶⁰ Dr. Pasak also refers to the YMCA and YWCA working in Poland during this time.⁶¹

Zbigniew Wierzchowski claims that evangelical churches “made a significant impact on Polish society”⁶² in the period after World War I. He describes it as a “period of renewal and revival for Polish Baptists.”⁶³ In part, Baptists grew because they began focusing on helping the society around them, and in part they grew because of help from the West, especially the United States. This help included repatriates from the United States such as Karol Strzelec who returned to Poland in 1919 as a missionary with the Northern Baptist Convention⁶⁴ and W. Peretiatko, who returned in 1925.⁶⁵ The Northern Baptist Convention was able to help start a publishing house, *Kompas* (Compass), and a newspaper, *Nowe Drogi* (New Ways).⁶⁶ The Northern Baptist

60. Zbigniew Pasak, “Wspólnoty ewangelikalne we współczesnej Polsce,” [Evangelical fellowships in contemporary Poland] in *Ewangelikalny Protestantyzm w Polsce u Progu XXI Stulecia*. [Evangelical Protestantism in Poland at the Threshold of the 21st Century], Tadeusz Zieliński, ed., Warsaw: WBST and Katowice: Credo, 2004, 15-16.

61. *Ibid.*, 14.

62. Wierzchowski, 86.

63. *Ibid.*

64. *Ibid.*, 90-91.

65. *Ibid.*, 91.

66. Wierzchowski, 91.

Convention and German Baptist Churches of North America were also able to provide significant financial help for the Baptists to rebuild after World War I.⁶⁷

Support from America was clearly beneficial, but it was also at times problematic. The help received from the USA led to the Baptist community being known in some quarters as 'a church run by Americans'. Some Poles started to believe that the Baptist churches' main aim was to receive money. One Roman Catholic newspaper, *Gazeta Koscielna*, spoke in 1932 of a Baptist called Gitlin, who was described as a Jew from Ukraine, and a citizen of the United States, but who lived in Warsaw. . . The article, which had a strong anti-Jewish tone, went on to say that people were being shown “a few movies to hook them” and at the end of meetings children were given “clothing and candies.”⁶⁸

After World War II, another article was written about the Baptists claiming they were a dangerous sect, backed by rich people from America and bent on destroying the Catholic Church and Polish unity. “There were both advantages and disadvantages to receiving help from America.”⁶⁹

By the time World War II began, the two Baptist denominations (German and Slavic) numbered about 15,000, and had a seminary, publishing house and five Christian newspapers printed in four different languages.⁷⁰ However, all of the churches were about to be decimated.

67. Wierzchowski, 92.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid., 92-93.

70. Ibid., 100.

During World War II, the Nazis treated the Catholic Church as part of the opposition. One-fifth of the clergy died, many in concentration camps, and churches were destroyed.⁷¹ 6.3 million Poles were killed, including 3 million Jews. Before World War II, Poland was 65% Roman Catholic, but shortly after the war, 97% identified themselves as Catholic. In large part, this was due to the extermination of the Jews, and the shifting of Poland's borders. In the east, lands that were strongly Orthodox became part of Russia. The east had also been a stronghold for all evangelical denominations. After the war, Germans (frequently Protestant) were expelled. Pentecostals went from 20,000 in 1939 to 3500 in 1945,⁷² and the Baptists suffered a similar fate.

Under the Stalin regime, in the first few years of Communist Poland there was significant persecution of the church. Church leaders, both Catholic and Protestant, were jailed, many times for no reason. The Catholic Church solidified its position, however, as the “representative of the people” in opposition to the political system. For many Poles, this was an extension of nationalistic support from the Church during the Partition periods, and the Messianism mythology from the 19th century. Bogdan Tranda, a Reformed pastor from Warsaw, writing just a year after the fall of communism, praises the Roman Catholic Church for playing “a crucial role not only in the process of undermining and overthrowing the communist system, but above all in the constant struggle against the destructive forces of the system.”⁷³ He goes on to suggest that non-Catholic churches may not have adequately appreciated the role of the Church as “an umbrella that protected them from the downpour of false values.”⁷⁴

71. Grzymała-Moszczyńska, 96.

72. Tymiński, 32.

73. Bogdan Tranda, “The Situation of Protestants in Today’s Poland,” *Religion in Communist Lands* 19:1–2 (Jun, 1991): 37–44, 37.

74. *Ibid.*, 38.

The Roman Catholic Church in Poland became the “civil religion” of Poland.⁷⁵ In Halina Grzymała-Moszczyńska’s article on “Proselytism in Poland,” she uses the following description of civil religion: “Civil religion is a mixture of religious elements, national and political symbols that are important throughout the country’s history.”⁷⁶ She adds that:

The fact that Poland was deprived of its independence for almost two centuries was an important factor in the creation of civil religion in Poland. The institution of the church and its hierarchy and clergy encouraged religion to be the primary institution transmitting national values against the will of foreign rule. The church extended its influence over interpreting the situation of the country by labeling the foreign powers evil and immoral. The Roman Catholic Church represented not only supernatural values but also, at the core, the meaning of real Polish values.⁷⁷

Polish approval of the Church as the defender of Polish ideals was more based on political expediency and history than on the “actual acceptance of the principles of the faith by Poles.”⁷⁸ The Church served as the opposition against the foreign occupiers in the Partitions, and as the opposition against the Communists. This began to change when a Pole was elected Pope. Pope John Paul II utilized the Polish “Christ for the Nations” mythology to work against the Communist system. In fact, he extended the idea to be that of the Christian world “from the Atlantic Ocean to the Ural Mountains, with Poland playing the chief role.”⁷⁹ His idea was never realized, but his usage of the Polish mythology helped support the Solidarity movement and the fall of Communism. According to Dr. Joel Burnell, who described modern Polish Messianism and the way it influenced Pope John Paul II,

75. Grzymała-Moszczyńska, 98.

76. Grzymała-Moszczyńska, 98. She bases this description on Robert Bellah’s introduction of civil religion in *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditional World*, New York: Harper and Row, 1970, 168-189.

77 Ibid.

78. Zbigniew Stachowski, “The Polish Church and John Paul II’s Evangelization Mission in Slavic Countries,” *Religious Studies and Theology*, 27:1, (2008), 116.

79. Ibid., 124.

Poland was envisioned as the champion of freedom, the bulwark of Christianity, the innocent victim of tyranny, the “Christ of the nations” whose political life had been sacrificed for their redemption. Poland would rise again to lead the nations into a new era of Christianity, not claiming superiority over them but living with them as equals and serving them as brothers. . . . This vision is the heart of Polish Messianism, which interpreted the past, gave meaning to the present, and shaped the future. . . . Messianism was at once a movement of spiritual renewal, a nation-building myth, and a socio-political program.⁸⁰

Most evangelical churches, with the exception of the Baptists, formed one denomination, the Union of Evangelical Churches, in 1947. This Union included the Evangelical Christians (Evangelical Free), the Church of Resolute Christians (Pentecostals), the Church of Free Christians (Brethren), the Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith (Pentecostals), and the Church of Christ. These final two were forced by the authorities to join in 1952 and 1953.⁸¹ The idea of the Union was first advanced by the churches, but the Communist authorities adapted the idea to gain control over the churches. Unlike some other communist countries, most evangelical churches were registered with the government, with no significant “underground church.”

In the decade before the fall of communism in 1989, the government began to allow denominations to leave the United Evangelical Church. The Free Christians registered as an independent denomination in 1981 and the Church of Christ left the United Church in 1982.⁸² The United Evangelical Church disbanded in 1988, and most of the larger evangelical denominations were registered separately in 1989.⁸³ From 1953 to 1981 there were only two evangelical denominations, Baptists and the United Evangelical Church, and four other Protestant denominations: Lutherans, Evangelical Reformed, Evangelical Methodist, and

80. Burnell, 4.

81. Tymiński, 34.

82. Pasak, 15.

83. Ibid., 16.

Seventh Day Adventist. By 1989, there were fifteen separate evangelical denominations. By 1998, there were an additional sixty-six registered evangelical groups.⁸⁴

North American Missions present before the fall of communism

In spite of the sometimes overwhelming difficulties facing North American missionary activities in communist Poland, a few agencies were able to assist the Polish Church. In chronological order, these included Slavic Gospel Association, Polish Christian Mission, Campus Crusade for Christ and Youth with a Mission. Toward the end of the 1980s, Biblical Education by Extension, involving missionaries from several agencies, became involved in training leaders in Poland.

Slavic Gospel Association helped Polish leaders and assisted with camp work, but this was almost exclusively limited to workers from the United Kingdom. One exception was Bill Kapitaniuk, a Ukrainian Canadian worker with Slavic Gospel Association. He visited Slavs in displaced persons camps after World War II and from his base in France, he visited a number of Communist Slavic countries, including Poland, and using his own printing press, produced “tens of thousands of Christian books for adults and for children.”⁸⁵

Polish Christian Ministries began in 1954, when Paweł Bajko became the director of the newly opened Department of Missions in Eastern Christian Institute, Orange, New Jersey. In 1959, the headquarters was moved to Eastern Christian College, Bel Air, MD, and in 1992, it was registered as an independent agency.⁸⁶ The agency focused on providing Bibles and other

84. Pasak, 42-44. Dr. Pasak lists each evangelical group with the date it was registered.

85. John Birnie, *Great Oaks from Little Acorns: The Origin and Development of SGA [UK]*, Eastbourne, East Sussex: Slavic Gospel Association, 2010, 32-33.

86. Bajko, 73.

Christian literature for churches aligned with the Church of Christ, paying for leaders to study in the United States, buying equipment for these churches, bicycles and later automobiles for pastors, and a Polish language radio program *Głos Ewangelii* (Voice of the Gospel). The mission helped build churches, camps, and the Christian Bible Institute in Warsaw. In addition, the agency continues to pay the salary for Polish pastors and provides financial assistance for pastors' widows.⁸⁷

By far the most well-known American agency in Poland during the communist years was Campus Crusade for Christ, known at first as “Agape” in Poland, and later as *Ruch Nowego Życia* (New Life Movement). In the beginning, Campus Crusade worked closely with *Ruch Światło-Życie* (Light and Life Movement).

Father Franciszek Blachnicki founded the “Oasis movement” in 1954. In 1976, the movement took the “Light and Life” name.⁸⁸ From the beginning, the Father Blachnicki looked for ecumenical contacts.⁸⁹ Oasis focused on camp or “oasis” experiences for young Catholics in Poland. In 1975, a young Polish American exchange student from Chicago, Joe Losiak, attended an Oasis camp, and told workers how he had come to Christ through the work of Campus Crusade. Joe returned to the U.S., and told his Crusade friends about the Oasis movement.⁹⁰ In 1976, ten Americans came from Campus Crusade to explore the Oasis retreats, and Father Blachnicki invited Campus Crusade to work with the organization. In this he was supported by

87. Bajko, 74-81.

88. In Poland, “oasis” and “light and life” are interchangeable names for the movement Fr. Blachnicki founded.

89. Dariusz Cupiał, *Na drodze ewangelizacji i ekumenii: Ruch Światło-Życie w służbie jedności chrześcijan* [On the road of evangelism and ecumenism: The Light-Life Movement in the service of Christian unity], Lublin: KUL, 1996, 17.

90. Scott, *Fides Et Historia*, 93.

his good friend, Karol Wojtyła, the Cardinal of Krakow.⁹¹ Bill Bright met Father Blachnicki, calling him the “Martin Luther of Poland.”⁹²

David Scott claims that “a single Polish monograph, Dariusz Cupiał's *Na Drodze Ewangelizacji i Ekumenii*, is the only published investigation of the Light and Life/Campus Crusade relationship.”⁹³ Cupiał published his work as a doctoral dissertation in the Ecumenical Studies Department of the Catholic University of Lublin, and professors in the department were also not aware of any Polish publication that explored the partnership. However, as one professor stated, “we only publish the best dissertations, and his was one of them.”⁹⁴

Cupiał describes a number of ways in which Campus Crusade helped and influenced the Light and Life Movement. The “Four Spiritual Laws” were translated into Polish,⁹⁵ “prayer was enlivened,”⁹⁶ and the “Ten Basic Steps toward Christian Maturity” were adapted and utilized.⁹⁷ In addition, thanks to Campus Crusade, the movement became familiar with the biblical ideas of “new birth, everlasting life, new and old man, obedience to the Word [and] . . . principles of

91. Scott, *Christianity Today*, 34-35.

92. Cupiał, 181. This is a copy of personal letter, signed by Bill Bright, on Crusade letterhead and written in 1985, praising Father Blachnicki. Dariusz Cupiał includes the letter, among many others, in the appendices of his dissertation.

93. Scott, *Fides et Historia*, 90.

94. Sławomir Pawłowski SAC, interview by author, Lublin, Poland, June 18, 2013. Dr. Pawłowski is a professor in the Ecumenical Studies Department of the Catholic University of Lublin.

95. Cupiał, 45.

96. *Ibid.*, 65.

97. *Ibid.*, 86.

Christian growth, [that were] based on building one's prayer life, meditation on God's Word, preparedness to share a testimony of faith, and building Christian community."⁹⁸

Dr. Cupiał only briefly mentions the *Jesus* film, but indicates that Campus Crusade provided one hundred copies of the movie, plus fifty projectors.⁹⁹ Esther Peperkamp continues the description of the *Jesus* film project, and indicates that Polish was one of the first languages into which the film was translated.¹⁰⁰ The film was shown in churches, universities and homes. Blachnicki's goal was to show the film in every church in Poland, in hopes that 20 million Poles would see the movie and attend the evangelism retreats.¹⁰¹

However, the *Jesus* film became part of the issue that eventually led to a separation of Campus Crusade from the Light and Life movement. The Polish newspaper *Życie* said the film distorted the gospel and called Campus Crusade a sect.¹⁰² Martial law was declared in Poland in 1981 while Father Blachnicki was out of the country, and he was unable to return, eventually dying in Germany in 1986. Campus Crusade lost the presence of its most influential supporter.¹⁰³ In addition, Campus Crusade workers were accused of evangelizing on their own, outside the authority and structure of the Light and Life organization.¹⁰⁴

98. Cupiał, 85.

99. *Ibid.*, 82.

100. Esther Peperkamp, "Being a Christian the Catholic Way: Protestant and Catholic Versions of the Jesus Film and the Evangelization of Poland," *Postscripts* 1:2-3 (August, 2005), 356.

101. *Ibid.*, 358.

102. *Ibid.*, 352. In Polish, the word *sekta* can be translated either as "denomination" or as "cult," but it usually has a pejorative connotation. In the case of the newspaper article, the meaning was decidedly negative, and Campus Crusade was referred to as a cult.

103. Cupiał, 88.

104. *Ibid.*, 89.

Dr. Cupiał also suggests that the Polish Secret Police negatively affected the ability of the Light and Life movement to work with the American Campus Crusade.¹⁰⁵ Scott indicates that the Communists had a special section devoted to suppressing the movement.¹⁰⁶ Earlier suggestions that Campus Crusade represented a “Baptist infiltration”¹⁰⁷ of Light and Life, although denied by both the movement and an independent commission called to investigate the allegations, negatively affected the cooperation.

Youth with a Mission (YWAM) was also able to partner with the Light and Life movement. The first group came in 1976, seeking to help youth from evangelical churches organize a Bible camp. After arriving in Poland, they decided they needed to broaden their ministry. While hiking in the Tatra Mountains, a worker with YWAM coincidentally met a group from the Light and Life movement, and the group invited YWAM to visit the Light and Life headquarters.¹⁰⁸

Father Blachnicki and Light and Life asked YWAM to organize a *Szkoła Uczniów Chrystusa* (School of Disciples of Christ), and a *Szkoła Animatorów Diakonii* (School of Service Facilitators),¹⁰⁹ based on the “Discipleship Training School” model.¹¹⁰

Dr. Cupiał praises YWAM for influencing the Light and Life Movement to a more existential, subjective experience of God, a deeper sensitivity to mankind’s needs, a better

105. Cupiał, 89.

106. Scott, *Fides et Historia*, 98.

107. Scott, *Christianity Today*, 36.

108. Cupiał, 94.

109. *Ibid.*, 99.

110. *Ibid.*, 105.

understanding of the gifts of the Spirit, and a greater desire to know God and follow His will in every of life's situations.¹¹¹

Eventually, YWAM met the same fate as Campus Crusade. Although YWAM was able to maintain contact with Light and Life somewhat longer than Crusade, after 1983, it was no longer invited to organize Bible conferences.¹¹² The agency continued to work in Poland, sending small teams for short-term work. In 1989, Poland was the first Soviet bloc country to give permission to a YWAM "Go-Team" to enter the country and publicly perform street theater.¹¹³ This was a team of 20 young people from all over the world, although seven of them came from one church in Fresno, California.¹¹⁴ The team did street drama, prayer walking, and finished with a "miracle crusade" with evangelist Christopher Alam. Between 1500 and 2000 people attended the final crusade.¹¹⁵

One of the effects of Campus Crusade's presence in Poland was the opening of doors for other missions to enter. Dennis Legg, one of the first missionaries with WorldVenture in Poland, thanked Campus Crusade: "We all, all missionaries, who have come since 1989, owe an incredible debt of gratitude to Campus Crusade."¹¹⁶ The Leggs had arrived in 1988, along with Mark and Priscilla Young, and Campus Crusade staff helped them get apartments, language teachers, visas, and connections with church leaders.

111. Cupiał, 100-102.

112. Ibid., 106.

113. Lawrence N. Jones, "An American Pentecostal Mission to Poland in 1989," 275.

114. Ibid., 275-277.

115. Jones, 280, 283, 293.

116. Dennis Legg, "25 years of WorldVenture in Poland," address, Książ Wielki, April 20, 2013.

The Youngs and Leggs worked with Biblical Education by Extension. BEE was begun in 1979 in order to help train Christian leaders from European communist countries. The following twelve organizations were involved in these countries:

Table 7. List of original BEE mission agencies

Grace Community Church of Sun Valley California	The Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society
East European Bible Mission	European Christian Mission
Campus Crusade for Christ	International Teams
The Navigators	Open Doors
Operation Mobilization	Slavic Gospel Association
Taking Christ to the Millions	

Source: Hans Finzel, email message to author, June 23, 2013. Dr. Finzel was a missionary with Conservative Baptist Foreign Missionary Society, working with Biblical Education by Extension, and later was president of WorldVenture.

Several sources refer to Operation Mobilization (OM) in Poland, but other than a conference in Brzegi where George Verweer was invited by the Light and Life movement to speak,¹¹⁷ no other mention is made of OM's work in Poland. In addition to this conference, Pastor Ryszard Pruszkowski refers to the music groups *Continental Singers*, *Living Sound*, and *Celebrant Singers* as working with the Light and Life Movement in Poland.¹¹⁸

Zbigniew Pasak, in his article describing contemporary evangelical fellowships in Poland, mentions Rodger Stenger, who started the "Mission of Grace" Church in Krakow in 1985.¹¹⁹ However, most North American missionaries arrived after 1989, after the fall of communism.

Although there were workers' strikes against the government in 1956, 1968 and 1970, they were localized. In June 1976, widespread protests against the communist government began. October 16, 1978, Cardinal Karol Wojtyła was chosen Pope. In July 1980, protests in Lublin

117. Cupiał, 37.

118. Ibid., 180.

119. Pasak, 21.

spread to the rest of the country, including Gdansk in late August, and the Solidarity movement began. The strikes caused the Polish government, under pressure from Russia, to proclaim martial law in December 1981. The 1980s brought more repression against the underground workers' movements, but eventually, as a result of numerous factors, including the Solidarity movement, the support of Pope John Paul II, perestroika of Mikhail Gorbachev, and pressure from the West, especially the United States and Ronald Reagan, communism in Poland surrendered to democracy.

North American Missions since 1989

After the fall of communism, the Roman Catholic Church became much more active in the political arena. Interestingly, this political agenda had some unintended results related to the expansion of non-Catholic religions. In 1990, only 55% of Poles agreed that the Roman Catholic Church "acted in the best interests of the nation."¹²⁰ A year earlier, opinion polls had shown a 92% confidence in the Church.¹²¹ In the first years after the fall of communism, there were few restrictions on Protestant churches and missions. Compared to the difficulties under communism, missionaries now faced fewer barriers in residing and serving in Poland. "After the opening of the borders new religious ideas were propagated by many missionaries from various western religions, including representatives of diverse streams of evangelicalism."¹²²

120. Grzymała-Moszczyńska, 103.

121. Nate Anderson and Leah Seppanen Anderson, "Under Reconstruction: How Eastern Europe's Evangelicals are Restoring the Church's Vitality," *Christianity Today*, (October, 2005), 73.

122. Pasak, 19. Dr. Pasak footnotes this statement, referring to Larry Jones' article on an "American Pentecostal Mission In Poland," with no page number. Jones is primarily describing a single short-term team that went to Poland for a few weeks in the summer of 1989, although the team itself is diverse, and multi-ethnic. Perhaps Dr. Pasak is simply providing one example of a "diverse stream of evangelicalism."

One of these diverse streams included fundamental Baptists, who were able to register a church near Warsaw in 1996, and have since started a handful of other independent Baptist churches in Poland.¹²³ Another branch of this “diverse stream” includes the Christ is King Church, planted in 1999 by Jeff and Ann Bullock, serving with Every Nation ministries.¹²⁴

Several missionaries with the Christian and Missionary Alliance came to Poland in the 1990s, and they tell their stories in various issues of *Alliance Life*. The articles by Sheri Torgrimson¹²⁵ and Larry Boss¹²⁶ are personal testimonies of God working in and through them. Kevin Kutcel refers to the Bosses planting an international church in Warsaw, and to Ken and Becky Dunkerley, serving in Sandomierz. Kutcel especially focuses on the necessity for partnership, however, and describes a partnership document between C&MA and the Church of Christian Fellowship in Warsaw. “The C&MA does not want to build its own tower in Poland. We believe God is creating a church-planting movement that involves many peoples and groups, and we desire to be a part of it.”¹²⁷

In the late 1990s, several missionaries in Poland formed a Polish “Facilitation Team” with the Alliance for Saturation Church Planting (ASCP). The Alliance was formed to facilitate church planting in the former communist countries of Eurasia.¹²⁸ In Poland, their task was to

123. Pasak, 22.

124. Ibid., 39. Dr. Pasak incorrectly identifies the agency as the Morning Star foundation. The church web site lists the Bullocks as founding pastors, and indicates that they served with Every Nation. http://www.chk.org.pl/kim_jest/kim_historia.html.

125. Torgrimson, 28-29.

126. Larry Boss, 14-15.

127. Kutcel, 20-21.

128. The Alliance for Saturation Church Planting, “Who We Are,” <http://www.alliancescp.org/who.html>, accessed June 21, 2013.

“train people who are planting churches, to promote a Polish church planting movement, to organize seminars and provide counsel concerning church growth, and to study the current state of Polish churches.”¹²⁹ The Polish team was made up of missionaries from Greater Europe Mission (GEM), TEAM, Christian and Missionary Alliance, International Mission Board (IMB), and the Evangelical Free Church of America (ReachGlobal). Later, Conservative Baptists International (WorldVenture), Pioneers, European Christian Mission (ECM), and Fellowship of Evangelical Baptists International (FEBI) joined the team.

In 2008, Paul Hostetler, a missionary with Pioneers, and with the guidance and support of the ASCP team, gathered eighteen testimonies of Polish church plants into a book, *History Makers*. The testimonies are from Polish church planters, and focus on their work. However, several North American missionaries are mentioned as having key roles in the lives of the church planters.

These missionaries include Kurt Kula, who influenced Adam Byra;¹³⁰ the Dunkerleys, who assisted Adam in Sandomierz;¹³¹ the Youngs and Leggs, with CBI (WorldVenture), who taught Bible courses in Krakow;¹³² Michael Green, with the Second Baptist Church in Krakow;¹³³ a mission team from Grass Valley Church in California who helped start the Pentecostal church in Kluczbork;¹³⁴ unnamed missionaries with SEND and CBI who helped Jerzy Kurzępa plant the

129. Paul Hostetler, ed. *History Makers: Church Planting Vision for the 21st Century*, Skórzewo: ASCP Polska, 2008, 208.

130. *Ibid.*, 20.

131. *Ibid.*, 21.

132. *Ibid.*, 132.

133. *Ibid.*, 133-134.

134. *Ibid.*, 140.

New Hope Baptist Church in Wrocław;¹³⁵ and a training event organized by TCMI (Training Christians for Ministry International Institute) which impacted the life of Mariusz Socha, a church planter in Szczecin.¹³⁶ TCMI is also mentioned in a brief article in *Christian Standard*, along with Polish Christian Ministries and Global Missionary Radio Ministries, working together to winterize a camp so that it could be used as a Leadership Training Center.¹³⁷

Although the number of missionaries in Poland seems to be down from the 1990s,¹³⁸ North American missionaries are still working in Poland, and new missionaries are still coming. The following North American agencies are known to have worked in Poland since 1989:

Table 8. Mission Agencies in Poland since 1989

Campus Crusade	Youth with a Mission	Operation Mobilization	CBI (WorldVenture)
Pioneers	Avant Ministries	Greater Europe Mission	TEAM
ABWE	Every Nation Ministries	Josiah Venture	Navigators
International Mission Board	European Christian Mission	Evangelical Free Church of America (ReachGlobal)	Christian & Missionary Alliance
Christian Associates	International Messengers	Slavic Gospel Association	International Teams
Church Resource Ministries	Presbyterian Mission Agency	Fellowship of Evangelical Baptists International	Foursquare Missions International
Great Commission Ministries	In Touch Mission International	Anabaptist International Ministries	Baptist Bible Fellowship International
Wycliffe Bible Translators	Calvary Chapel	Baptist World Missions	Operation Mobilization
Commission to Every Nation	Assemblies of God World Missions	Global Ministries – United Methodist Church	Greater Grace World Outreach
InterVarsity	Adventures in Missions	Polish Christian Ministries	Bible League International

135. Ibid., 148.

136. Ibid., 99.

137. “Missions Cooperate on Poland Project,” *Christian Standard* (January, 1993), 3.

138. Władysław Dwulat, General Secretary of the Polish Evangelical Alliance, says that there are about 120 foreign missionaries in Poland today, down from about 180 ten years ago. Władysław Dwulat, address given at the celebration of 25 years of WorldVenture in Poland, Książ Wielki, April 20, 2013.

Although North American missionaries have been able to be of significant assistance, especially since the fall of communism, the relationships between missionaries and the Polish church have not always been positive and effective. In part, this may be due to the Polish Messianism described earlier, and distrust of outside, especially Western, influences. A British missionary “recalls that the Polish believers at first ‘kept them at arm’s length,’ wary as always of western brands of Christianity.”¹³⁹

Scott Klingsmith interviewed a number of Polish leaders for his dissertation on Eastern European mission sending movements. He says that the leaders had three different answers to the question of the influence of Western missionaries on the Polish missions sending movement: 1. Missionaries modeled the life of a person “willing to make great sacrifices to help people of other countries;” 2. They had absolutely no effect, with the exception of one British missionary, Malcolm Clegg; 3. They have had a great positive effect, especially SEND and WorldVenture missionaries.¹⁴⁰ He quotes one missions leader as saying:

From one side, I appreciate foreigners coming here. Others wanted to do what Polish people could do. Missionaries depended on translators. Usually these were pastors or other church leaders who could do ministry themselves. They expected we would help them voluntarily. We had families, kids, needs.¹⁴¹

Dr. Klingsmith shares some of the criticisms these leaders had of missionaries:

Polish leaders reported being treated like cheap labor, of having to translate for outsiders when they were capable of preaching and teaching themselves, of feeling manipulated or watching others be manipulated by the promise of money or the threat of losing money. They

139. Birnie, 41-42.

140. Scott Klingsmith, *Missions Beyond the Wall: Factors in the Rise of Missionary Sending Movement in East-Central Europe*, Nürnberg: VTR Publications, 2012, 128-129.

141. *Ibid.*, 130-131.

saw missionaries living at a much higher level than they could, and saw how much more it cost a missionary to live in Poland than it did for them.¹⁴²

An evaluation of the existing literature regarding the level and effects of partnership between North American missionaries and Polish churches indicates some positive aspects, but also a number of problems. Dr. Klingsmith reported a few of these problems for contemporary missions in Poland, but even in the inter-war period, Zbigniew Wierzchowski indicated that “support from America was clearly beneficial, but it was also at times problematic.”¹⁴³ A desire for effective, God-honoring service encourages both Polish leaders North American missionaries to explore issues of partnership, to understand how to work together more effectively, and to learn how to avoid some of the errors of the past.

142. Klingsmith, 131.

143. Wierzchowski, 92.

CHAPTER 3

PARTNERSHIP EVALUATION

As seen in chapter 2, cooperation between Polish evangelical churches and North American missionaries produced some positive results. Some of the evangelical denominations were begun by Polish expatriates returning from America. Between the World Wars, the numbers of evangelicals grew rapidly, in part because of assistance from American missions. However, Communism drastically limited the opportunities for cooperation between the Polish church and North American churches. Only a few missions were able to assist the Polish church, and in most cases not until the end of the 1970s, when Poles were beginning to more openly revolt against the communist authorities.

Since the fall of communism, many more agencies and missionaries have come to live and serve in Poland. An increase in the number of missionaries allowed increased possibilities for growth, but it also meant increased potential for misunderstandings and other problems in partnership. A study of partnership between North American missions and the Polish church seems to be well overdue. This exploration of partnership will likely help all of us better understand some of those misunderstandings, and help us to avoid some of the errors of the past.

I began my evaluation of Polish-American partnerships by informally asking a group of veteran missionaries from several missions and denominations the following question: If you were to do a thesis on North American missions in Poland, what would you focus on? There were a number of responses, but the idea of cooperation between missionaries and the Polish church was a common theme. So I asked: If you were to do a thesis on missions in Poland, where

would you rank partnership? All the missionaries I asked indicated it would be one of the top issues they would like to understand better.

I then developed two questionnaires, one for North American missionaries, and another for Polish church leaders.¹⁴⁴ A veteran missionary from Christian Associates helped me redact the questionnaire, and a Polish student from our church corrected my Polish questionnaire. The questionnaires are nearly identical in order to compare answers between each group. In addition to the questionnaires, I interviewed the Polish leaders, so that they would have an opportunity to speak more broadly on the topic of partnership, and be less limited by my questionnaire. I invited thirty-nine missionaries to both take the survey online and invite other missionaries to participate. I asked fifteen Polish church leaders to both take the survey and allow me to interview them.

The online missionary survey ran for forty days, from June 9 to July 13, 2013. Forty-two missionaries began the online survey, and forty completed it. One of the optional questions in the survey requested the name of the mission agency represented by each respondent. Based on those answers, several¹⁴⁵ of the missionaries who took the survey were not personally invited by me – in other words, they were “second generation” invitees.

Of the fifteen Polish church leaders, eleven took the online survey, and I interviewed nine of them. The Polish survey ran from June 17 to July 9, 2013. Unfortunately, the timing of this research (June – July) hindered my success rate, as many of the Polish leaders were on vacation, or even out of the country.

144. Appendix A: Survey of North American missionaries. Appendix B: Survey of Polish church leaders.

145. The question is optional, so I cannot give a number with certainty, but it appears that at least six respondents have no relationship with me.

I expected the following issues to be hindrances in the surveys, especially of Polish leaders, with the added element of a personal interview:

1. Potential lack of anonymity: Every participant signed an informed consent letter, and I promised anonymity to the Polish respondents. I kept any personal data that might identify them separate from their responses by using only a numbering system: PL 1, PL 2, etc.
2. Personal reaction to me. I attempted to involve leaders from the larger evangelical denominations and include a mix of national and local leaders. I personally know most of the leaders I interviewed, and although I do not know of any conflict between us, their personal reaction to me cannot be overlooked. Based on my status as a foreigner, a missionary, or a potential “competitor” from a different denomination, they could have given me somewhat different answers than they might give another Pole. However, as we will see in the final section of this chapter, they provided a quite frank assessment of the state of cooperation between Polish churches and North American missionaries. If they did say less than they might otherwise, they still said plenty.
3. Unwillingness to admit failure. I expected that it might be difficult for both Poles and North American missionaries to admit to having “failed” in the area of partnership. Some of the respondents may have had that difficulty, but there were a number who seemed too willing to mention ways that they had seen partnership damaged through unmet expectations, misunderstandings or offenses.
4. Willingness to talk about others. In a study such as this, it is necessary for one party to talk about the other. No study of cooperation would be complete otherwise. I did fear that either the Poles or Americans would not wish to be “too harsh” and speak negatively

about someone else, or – probably worse – that some might use the opportunity to speak very negatively and personally about other fellow servants. I do not believe that happened. Although names were mentioned a couple of times (deleted by me in the final version), they were almost always in positive situations. Some significant errors in partnership were stated, in a very frank manner, usually without data that might identify the offending party.

Survey of North American Missionaries in Poland

Question 1 of the survey was the informed consent letter, and an option to choose yes/no to begin the survey. Question 2 was the optional question of mission agency. Missionaries from the following agencies completed the survey:

Table 9. List of mission agencies in survey

Anabaptist International Ministries	International Messengers
Avant Ministries	International Messengers Canada
Baptist Bible Fellowship International	Josiah Venture
Christian Associates International	None (missionary with no agency)
European Christian Mission International	Pioneers
Fellowship International	Polish Christian Ministries
Foursquare Missions International	ReachGlobal
Great Commission Ministries	SEND International
Greater Europe Mission	The Christian and Missionary Alliance
in touch mission international	WorldVenture

Question 3 asked how many missionaries with each agency had served in Poland, beginning in 1990. This was also an optional question, and after eliminating duplicates, where more than one respondent was from a given agency, the indicated number of missionaries with these agencies since 1990 is between 270 and 310, with the largest group (40) representing Anabaptist International Ministries. Of course, some respondents counted short-term missionaries, while others did not. Also, several of the agencies indicated in Table 2 from chapter 2 were not

represented in the survey. An educated guess would suggest just over 300 long-term missionaries who have served in Poland at some point since 1990, but this would only be an estimate.

The next question asked if respondents had worked with a Polish church. Of the forty-one respondents still participating, two responded that they had not. The online survey was structured in such a way that a “no” response sent the respondent to question 13, regarding barriers in developing a partnership with Polish churches. All those who answered “yes” continued to question 5, another optional question about the Polish denomination that respondents had partnered with. As shown in the table below, many missionaries evidently worked with several denominations. Of the thirty-nine respondents, thirty-seven answered this question, with the following results:

Table 10. List of Polish denominations represented in survey of missionaries

Baptists:	32
Church of Evangelical Christians:	11
Pentecostal Church:	9
Brethren Church:	8
Christian Church:	6
Church of God in Christ:	3
Independent or non-denominational:	3
Church of Christian Evangelical Faith:	3
Church of God:	2
Roman Catholic Church:	2
Lutheran:	1
Methodist:	1
Episcopalian:	1

The high number of missionaries working with the Baptist Union could simply reflect the fact that I serve in a Baptist church in Poland, and hence the majority of my missionary contacts are through the Baptist Union. I intentionally contacted as broad a range of missionaries as I could, but this overrepresentation might have been unavoidable. However, after I saw a trend

building in the surveys, I contacted two leaders from other Polish denominations. They indicated that they also thought more missionaries had worked with the Baptist Union since 1990 than with other denominations.

The Baptist Union represents approximately 4900 Poles, the Pentecostal Church 22,000, and other evangelical denominations named in the survey are between 600 and 4200 each.¹⁴⁶ If the number of missionaries that have worked with the Baptist Union is really that much higher than the number of those working with other denominations, this seems to be a significant overrepresentation.

In Question 6, respondents were asked to rank the reasons for choosing to work with a particular denomination. Since participants were asked to rank the reasons, with one being most important, the following table should be understood to show that the lower number indicates greater importance.

Table 11. Missionary reasons for choosing to work with a Polish group

Answer Choices	Average Number	Number of Responses
I had a personal relationship with a partner from this group	2.09	35
Theological similarity to me/my organization	2.69	32
This group had goals similar to mine	2.73	33
My supervisor encouraged/required me to work with this group	3.52	23
North American mission encouraged/required me to work with this group	3.57	23
Denominational affiliation	4.42	24

The most important reason was a personal relationship with a partner. Thirty-five respondents chose this as a reason, with nineteen listing it as the most important reason, and

¹⁴⁶. See Appendix C for a list of all Protestant denominations in Poland, with membership totals, and an estimate of evangelical population.

another eight selecting the same response as second-most important. The least important reason was denominational affiliation. Twenty-four out of thirty-nine respondents selected this as a reason, but only one chose it as most important, and three as second-most. Eleven of the twenty-four respondents chose denominational affiliation as their least important reason for choosing to work with a Polish group.

Question 7 asked “which statement best describes the initiation of your relationship with a Polish church?” The following responses were given:

Table 12. Missionary initiation of relationship with Polish partner

Answer Choices	Responses
I personally initiated a relationship with a local congregation or leader.	17 (43.59%)
A local congregation or church leader requested my assistance, not really my agency’s.	8 (20.51%)
A local congregation or church leader requested assistance from our mission agency.	5 (12.82%)
The national church denomination requested assistance from our agency.	2 (5.13%)
Our mission agency requested partnership with the national church organization.	1 (2.56%)
Other (listed below)	6 (15.38%)
I was on a church plant team, the team leader had been connected with [a Polish pastor]	
There was a mutual requesting of partnership	
Unknown	
Involved with a ministry of the church – Baptist	
Initially our agency, but I built many relationships, intentionally across denominational lines, and at various levels have partnered or cooperated with all the Polish denominations, including Catholic [fellowships]	
My former team leaders became acquainted with a national leader who wanted to start work in this area and invited us to join him. When I joined the team, the relationship with the church was already in place.	

Within these responses, seventeen of the thirty-nine respondents (and two of the “other” comments) demonstrated that a personal relationship was the primary reason for initiating a partnership with a Polish church. This would support the conclusion from Question 6, where nineteen chose “personal relationship” as the most important reason.

Question 8 asked respondents to describe their relationship with a Polish church based on a partnership document. The largest number of respondents indicated that they have a personal agreement with a local church or leader, but eight of the thirty-nine have no official agreement. This question will provide a point of comparison with Question 14 regarding best practices, and with the responses from Polish leaders in the second survey.

Table 13. Number and types of partnership agreements - missionary responses

Answer Choices	Responses
I had/have a partnership agreement with a local congregation or church leader	14 (35.90%)
I had/have no official agreement with a national church or leader.	8 (20.51%)
Our agency had/has a partnership document with the denomination.	4 (10.26%)
I had/have a partnership agreement with the denomination	2 (5.2613%)
I did/do not work with a Polish church.	0 (0%)
Other (listed below)	11 (28.9%)
I work directly with my European director who is also my partner and Polish Pastor.	
We have no partnership, but plan to have one with a church/leader.	
I minister at all churches who ask me	
No official document other than an invitation for visa purposes	
agreement with local congregation and denomination	
our agency has a partnership agreement with the local congregation/church leaders	
Agreement by word of mouth	
we are sister churches	
No formal partnership agreement ever written, just verbal commitment	
Unknown	
I have a partnership agreement with a local congregation/leader but it isn't an official written agreement. I also receive my residency invitation letter through the local church	

A rating scale was used in Question 9 to assess how respondents would evaluate the state of their partnerships with Polish churches. Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with statements describing their partnerships with Polish churches. The answers from this question are displayed along with the answers from Polish Church leaders in the next section. This allows for a comparison of perceptions.

The next three questions asked respondents to describe their relationships with the national denominations, local churches, and individual Polish leaders. The full responses are given in Appendices D, E, and F, and some of the more significant responses are as follows:

Regarding the relationship with national denominations:

Table 14. Selected missionary responses regarding their relationship with the national denomination

Very open ended - I can get as much help as I am willing to ask for. I can also be as independent as I want to be. Overall the relationship is good for me and the denomination.
I have worked with 3 different ones ([Church of Evangelical Christians], independent, Baptists), and the issue of trust is always an issue, not often spoken out clearly but clearly hard to understand. Trust takes a long time to develop, and is too often connected with money or "what you can bring".
We are definitely partners...though I serve under a national leader he often looks to me for input and advice. And I of him. Fellow pastors are working together to encourage and help one another to serve better. I'm one of the team.
Virtually non-existent. My relationship is solely with the local pastor.
We officially work for a local church which provides us with residency permits. Other than that, we are pretty much on our own to start a new church- there is very little interaction between us and them. However, we couldn't be here without them.

A significant number of responses indicate that there was little or no relationship. Where there was a relationship with the national denomination, it was more likely to be viewed favorably, but there were a handful of negative comments, especially regarding the lack of trust in the relationship.

Regarding the relationship with local churches:

Table 15. Selected missionary responses regarding their relationship with local Polish churches

Very good, but it did not develop into what I had anticipated. It appears that they never really intended that I have any real authority in the local church.
The local congregation is happy that we're here and generally supportive but not very involved with us.
In general very good.
Adversarial

In these responses, there was a significantly higher percentage of positive responses. There still were indications of conflict or misunderstandings, but the majority of respondents had a relationship with a local church, and it was a positive one.

Regarding the relationship with their primary Polish partner:

Table 16. Selected missionary responses regarding their relationship with Polish partners

Hidden agendas
We work well together
Healthy, always can be improved, mutual trust and respect.
We are good friends that greatly esteem one another...but he also greatly values my insight & experience in Poland & sees it as a help to equipping his Polish pastors.
It was rather business-like. We did not share a mutual accountability which must exist within a true leadership community.
Personal friendship, mutual trust and respect. Former student(s) of mine.
Was full of trust, until my Polish partner betrayed that trust

Here as well, there was a high percentage of positive responses. Most of the respondents had a good relationship with their Polish partners. Considering the stated importance of personal relationships in initiating a partnership, these responses are not surprising. There still are indications of conflict, however, as shown in the final response above.

Question 13 asked about barriers in developing partnerships with national churches. The two respondents who indicated in question 4 that they had not worked with a Polish church returned to the survey at this point. Similar to question 6, a lower number indicates greater importance.

Table 17. Barriers in developing partnerships with Polish churches

Answer Choices	Average Number	Number of Responses
Differences in ministry philosophy/vision	2.06	36
Differences in methods	2.59	32
Differences in theological convictions	3.95	22
Polish national denomination restrictions	4.35	23
Mission agency restrictions	4.59	22
My fear of being taken advantage of	4.75	24
The Polish church's fear of being taken advantage of	4.82	22
Personal conflict with a Polish leader	4.86	22
Sending church and supporters restrictions	6.11	19

There was a significant difference between the first two reasons and the rest. Differences in ministry philosophy/vision and in methods seemed to be the primary barriers when building a partnership, with differences in theological convictions the sole element in the next tier of barriers. Five elements had a close spread in responses, from “Polish national denomination restrictions” to “personal conflict with a Polish leader.” It may be a bit surprising that personal conflict is second from last in this list of barriers, but considering that the question is asking about partnership development, rather than continuation, perhaps there is no surprise. At the beginning of a relationship, there is less likelihood of conflict, and less risk and loss in ending a new relationship as opposed to one that has already existed and in which time, energy, resources and emotions have already been significantly invested. This question also allowed comparison with the responses from Polish church leaders.

Question 14 asked about best practices regarding partnership agreements and declarations of expectations, philosophy and vision, and methods. The question read: “Which of the following would you consider to be ‘best practices’ in developing a partnership with national churches? (Check all that apply).” The largest number of responses suggested a written declaration of

common expectations, followed by a declaration of philosophy and vision. Including the “all of the above” responses, both practices were approved by a majority of respondents. This was another question that should be compared to the responses of Polish leaders. In addition, the comments in the “other” field were interesting and helpful.

Table 18. Best practices in partnership agreements, according to missionaries

Answer Choices	Responses
A written declaration of common expectations	17 (42.5%)
A written declaration of common ministry philosophy and vision	14 (35.0%)
A written partnership agreement between a local congregation/leader and each missionary	11 (27.5%)
A job description for the missionary, agreed to by the national church/organization	10 (25.0%)
A written partnership agreement between the agency and denomination	4 (10.0%)
A written description of common methods	4 (10.0%)
All of the above	8 (20.0%)
Other (listed below)	12 (30.0%)

I think information is power. The more information and open communication between both parties would be most helpful. But very important is the trust between both parties and the freedom to serve how God created both parties to serve.

Mutual trust and respect (i.e. Relationship)

A job description from the local congregation

(Continued)

I've found that writing things can be good but that doesn't guarantee that it will happen. The "best practices" is to come in complete humility to serve & learn from the nationals. Building a relationship founded on trust & love opens many doors...even in the midst of conflicts. When you have proven yourself to serve with a pure heart THEN comes the written descriptions, expectations, etc.

Support and accountability to experienced mission leaders.

I find that cultural perceptions, expectations, forms, etc. are often invisible difficulties. This is true from their perspective too, as they see us through a different grid than we see them. Relationship is paramount. Formal agreements at whatever could help, but if the minds don't meet in terms of real cross-cultural understanding, then difficulties will persist. As to best practices, I tend to think agreements with a lot of latitude for the missionary is important. I would also put more emphasis on spiritual life and if I used an agreement such as the previous imply, I would want frequent evaluation happening so relationship is not sacrificed on the altar of expectations.

In my opinion the word partnership refers to being equals. It is my opinion that as a missionary I am not equal to the Polish nationals, but rather I come under them to serve. While some of the above things may be helpful, I believe that a missionary should be flexible to always following the vision of the national leadership and simply be there to serve and support. The best practice for partnerships is to simply be willing to serve faithfully in any task that is given and not to be overly concerned about job descriptions, philosophy and vision, and common methods. While these may be important the best practice will always be that of the servant.

Table 18. Best practices in partnership agreements, according to missionaries

Attend the church for 1-2 years. Prayerfully participate and observe what God is already doing amongst the congregation. Serve wherever possible. Earn the right to speak up about church ministry, etc. Then, introduce new ideas, strategy, etc. based on what they feel needs are and proceed with their approval. Poles are not keen on job descriptions and written declarations in the way North American missionaries understand them. We should not expect such a document but after becoming accepted as one of the congregation, a missionary can ask questions and make suggestions that would lead to developing these sorts of Western documents.

Agreements based on specific ministry initiatives. avoidance of missionaries being local church staff

A clear understanding of the end goal of the mission, not a list of activities

Real relationship, mutual accountability

All of these are obviously written by agencies or people that study missions but have no real concept how missions work. We went and began to work directly under [a Polish pastor]. Too many agencies go with their own agendas and try to establish themselves, often times disregarding what is best for the nationals that they went to serve. We came to Poland 12 years ago, began working directly under the direction of a Polish pastor. And while working in the country of Poland, we saw the need for the poor. From there we also started a foundation that we officially registered with the country and began to hire national Christian professionals to work with us as we served in Poland. Today we are in over 6 cities and have probably about 40 national employees. so, in my opinion, the above is written for someone studying missions but has no idea what missions on the field is actually like---when meeting the needs of the nationals.

Question 15 asked: What are the biggest challenges to partnership with Polish churches and church leaders? The full range of answers can be found in Appendix G, but some answers are listed below:

Table 19. Biggest challenges to partnership according to missionaries

I think the biggest challenge for the American missionary is defining his/her role as a missionary. Is a person called to the field only to be a "helper" in a national church, or are they called to something more (training and teaching of future leaders, actual church planting, etc.)
Polish! :)
Humility on all sides Their lack of vision, fear or unwillingness to try new, innovative methods, pessimistic outlook, insecurity and wanting to "be in control".
lack of vision, lack of trust, PRIDE, PRIDE (one for each side), lack of language acquisition, lack of the Holy Spirit's leading (each side on this one too), lack of prayer, etc. Other than the language, the rest are just our own sinful natures on both sides - PRIDE!
Cultural differences and language
First, uneven and unspoken expectations. Evidenced by the comment by a Polish denominational leader saying "Sometimes you ask for one thing hoping to get something else." Second, the challenge of the strong "we" culture -here is no room to self-differentiate.
Funding from the West skews against those missionaries/agencies which do not bring resources into the partnership.
Criticism - Examples of missionaries who come and don't do a whole lot or those that think

Table 19. Biggest challenges to partnership according to missionaries

they know it all - It leaves a bad taste
Many missionaries coming and going, missionaries lack of language proficiency, missionaries not doing the work themselves, too much time on computers, and living above the standards of nationals.
Respecting each other's God-given vision, passion and giftedness and incorporating them into a common vision and plan for working together.
Much time and tea are needed to forge good partnerships. The partners need to be realistic about what can actually be done in terms of ministry and to not try to do too many things that will be done, at the end of the day, pretty poorly and without much fruit.
Differences in culture, methods and vision
missionary attitudes/expectations/language/lack of humility church attitudes/expectations/lack of humility

The final question of the survey asked the following: "What, in your opinion, should I ask Polish leaders when I interview them about relationships with North American missionaries?"

The full range of responses is in Appendix H. A few are listed in the following table:

Table 20. Questions from missionaries for Polish leaders

How can we serve you better? Are North American missionaries needed if so what qualities and character would you like to see in missionaries the come to the field?
In partnering with North American missionaries in what ways did you incorporate the vision, passion and giftedness of the missionaries into your overall vision and strategy? What did you learn from partnering with missionaries that would make a partnership more effective?
Ask them to be really honest about how missionaries have helped or not in the past and how they can genuinely help in the days ahead.
What expectations they have from us and if we are being helpful to them and the Polish church.
All these same questions vice versa These same questions. Also how North Americans can do a better job at partnership with them. For most missionaries, they really do want to serve & be effective.
Describe a positive experience and what made it positive; a negative experience and what made it negative. What principles should guide these relationships?
How can we help? What should be avoided? Limitations in time. Don't assume they want help from missionaries.

Survey and Interviews of Polish Church Leaders

As in the survey of North American missionaries, Question 1 included an informed consent letter, and asked respondents if they agreed to take part in the survey. Question 3 asked if

respondents had worked in cooperation with North American missionaries. All eleven respondents answered “yes” to both questions.

Question 2 asked respondents to identify their denomination. This question was optional, but everyone responded.

Table 21. Denominations represented by Polish church leaders

Baptist Union	3
Christian Church	3
Pentecostal Church	2
Church of Evangelical Christians	1
Lutheran Church	1

In Question 4, the Polish leaders were asked how many missionaries they had worked with. There was a broad range, but the numbers were (for me) surprisingly high. This could reflect the fact that most respondents were leaders in their denominations, with many years of service.

Table 22. Number of missionaries with whom Polish leaders had worked

3
Many – 20-30?
6
5
5
Long-term with 2, short-term with dozens over 25 years.
More than 10
With 4 couples
50
Hard to say. About 4-8
A dozen or so

Question 5 attempted to rank the reasons for the Polish leaders choosing to partner with a missionary. These responses can be compared with the North American responses from Question 5 of the first survey. As in the North American survey, a lower number means higher importance:

Table 23. Reasons for choosing to partner with a missionary

Answer Choices	Average Number	Responses
I had a personal relationship with this missionary.	1.60	10
The missionary had goals similar to mine.	1.89	9
Denominational affiliation	2.67	3
My denomination encouraged/required me to work with this group.	3.00	2
Theological similarity to me/my church	3.25	4
North American mission encouraged/required me to work with this group.	3.33	3

The first two responses were significantly more important than the rest. A personal relationship and similar goals were the primary reasons for initiating a partnership with a missionary. This was also evidenced by the number of responses received for these two reasons. The other four reasons were ranked in importance, from most to least, but there was not quite as great a difference between them. During an interview, one leader came back to this question and added: “Personal relationships are definitely most important. I would also add – coincidence, or even accident, perhaps better to say, the leading of the Spirit, and Providence.”

In the survey of missionaries, a personal relationship was also definitely most important, followed by theological similarity, and then similar goals. Supervisor or mission agency encouragements/requirements were in the next tier, with denominational affiliation being the least important reason.

Personal relationships were rated most important by both groups, and similar goals were also important for both. However, one significant difference between the groups was the importance of denominational affiliation.

Question 6 asked, “Which statement best describes the initiation of your relationship with a missionary?” The responses overwhelmingly affirmed the influence of personal relationships. It is interesting to note that according to these eleven leaders, none of the Polish churches or leaders requested assistance, but rather the initiative came from the North Americans.

Table 24. Reasons for initiating relationship with missionary

Answer Choices	Responses
The missionary initiated a relationship with a local congregation or leader.	8 (72.73%)
The North American mission agency requested partnership with the church.	1 (9.09%)
The national church denomination requested assistance from a mission agency.	0 (0%)
A local congregation or church leader requested assistance from the mission agency.	0 (0%)
A local congregation or church leader requested the assistance of a certain missionary.	0 (0%)
Others (shown below)	2 (18.18%)
Mission proposed individual partnership in the development of youth program relationships	

Question 7 focused on partnership agreements or descriptions. The question was: “Which statement best describes the relationship between the church and missionary?” Respondents had the following choices:

Table 25. Partnership agreements with missionary

Answer Choices	Responses
The missionary had/has no official agreement with a national church or leader.	4 (36.36%)
The local church or leader had/has a partnership agreement with a certain missionary	3 (27.27%)
Our denomination had/has a partnership document with the mission agency.	2 (18.18%)
Our denomination had/has a partnership agreement with at least one certain missionary	1 (9.09%)
The missionary did/does not work with a national church.	0 (0%)
Other (Shown below)	1 (9.09%)
Personal relationships	

It seemed from these responses that a missionary commonly works with a church or leader without any clear definition of cooperation. If an agreement existed, it was likely to be on a more local, relational basis than an official document involving the North American agency or the Polish national denomination.

A rating scale was used in Question 8 to assess how these Polish leaders would assess the state of partnership between them or their churches and North American missionaries. Several statements were made, and leaders were asked to state whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement. With this scale we can begin to compare the ways that missionaries and Polish leaders perceive their partnerships. A total of 38 missionaries and 11 Polish leaders answered all the questions.

Table 26. Assessing the state of partnership

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The missionary's partnership with the national church is well-defined.	9.09% (1) 7.89% (3)	45.45% (5) 36.84% (14)	36.36% (4) 50% (19)	9.09% (1) ^a 5.26% (2)
The missionary's expectations for the national church and national leaders are well-defined.	18.18% (2) 5.26% (2)	54.55% (6) 42.11% (16)	27.27% (3) 50% (19)	0 2.63% (1)
The missionary's expectations for the national church and leaders are being met or exceeded.	9.09% (1) 7.89% (3)	63.64% (7) 52.63% (20)	18.18% (2) 39.47% (15)	9.09% (1) 0
The missionary's expectations for the national church and leaders are frequently disappointed.	0 5.26% (2)	27.27% (3) 39.47% (15)	72.73% (8) 50% (19)	0 5.26% (2)
The national church's expectations of the missionary are clearly defined.	27.27% (3) 5.26% (2)	45.45% (5) 28.95% (11)	27.27% (3) 57.89% (22)	0 7.89% (3)
The missionary meets or exceeds my expectations.	27.27% (3) 13.16% (5)	63.64% (7) 60.53% (23)	9.09% (1) 21.05% (8)	0 5.26% (2)
The missionary disappoints my expectations.	0 0	9.09% (1) 10.53% (4)	63.64% (7) 55.26% (21)	27.27% (3) 34.21% (13)
The missionary's relationship with the national church and leaders is characterized by trust.	27.27% (3) 31.58% (12)	54.55% (6) 52.63% (20)	18.18% (2) 13.16% (5)	0 2.63% (1)
The missionary is accountable to the national church, local congregation, or a national leader.	36.36% (4) 18.42% (7)	27.27% (3) 39.47% (15)	27.27% (3) 34.21% (13)	9.09% (1) 7.89% (3)
The missionary's partnership with a national church helps him/her serve better.	54.55% (6) 39.47% (15)	36.36% (4) 36.84% (14)	9.09% (1) 23.68% (9)	0 0
The missionary's partnership with a national church helps the church better fulfill its mission.	72.73% (8) 23.68% (9)	18.18% (2) 63.16% (24)	9.09% (1) 13.16% (5)	0 0
Our partnership contributes to the advance of the kingdom of God.	81.82% (9) 44.74% (17)	9.09% (1) 44.74% (17)	9.09% (1) 10.53% (4)	0 0
Our partnership enables better evangelism than we could do separately.	81.82% (9) 34.21% (13)	9.09% (1) 52.63% (20)	9.09% (1) 13.16% (5)	0 0
Our partnership enables better development of leaders than we could do separately.	45.45% (5) 28.95% (11)	36.36% (4) 52.63% (20)	18.18% (2) 15.79% (6)	0 2.63% (1)
If I had a "do-over," I would develop a partnership with a missionary.	72.73% (8) 55.26% (21)	18.18% (2) 31.58% (12)	9.09% (1) 13.16% (5)	0 0

^a Note: In each cell, the top number refers to Polish leaders, and the bottom to missionaries.

In this set of responses, we can see that partnership and expectations were frequently not clearly defined. Fifteen out of thirty-eight missionaries disagreed with the statement "The

missionary's expectations for the Polish church and leaders are being met or exceeded," and similarly, seventeen agreed that "The missionary's expectations for the national church and national leaders are frequently disappointed."

The Polish leaders seemed to look somewhat more positively at the partnerships. They were more likely to say that the church's expectations of the missionary were clearly defined and that the missionary met or exceeded those expectations. They were also less likely to claim that the missionary disappointed those expectations. The two groups had very similar perspectives regarding the partnership being characterized by trust – both groups overwhelmingly agreed that it is – as well as the importance of the missionary being accountable to a local church or leader.

Twenty-nine missionaries and ten Polish leaders agreed that "The missionary's partnership with a Polish church helps him/her serve better," thirty-three and ten agreed with the statements "The missionary's partnership with a Polish church helps the church better fulfill its mission," and "Our partnership enables better evangelism than we could do separately," thirty-one and nine that it "enables better development of leaders than we could do separately," and thirty-four and ten thought that "Our partnership contributes to the advance of the kingdom of God." Thirty-three missionaries and ten Polish leaders would have such a partnership again if they had a chance for a to do so again. These final statements indicate a positive evaluation of the efficacy of partnerships, even with the difficulty of unclear and unmet expectations.

Questions 9, 10 and 11 asked leaders to describe the missionary's relationship with the national denomination, local assembly, and with the Polish leaders personally. These questions were answered in the online survey, but I also used them in the interviews with each leader. Survey responses and notes from the interviews are found in Appendices I, J and K, but some of the highlights are listed in each of the following sections.

Missionary's relationship to the national denomination:

In the surveys, the majority of the responses were positive. A few examples are given here:

Table 27. Survey responses from Polish leaders regarding missionary's relationship with Polish denomination

Very good
It's moderately advanced
In my experience, missionaries were loyal toward the denomination
Lacking in interdependence
Varied depending on missionary and denomination

When interviewed, the Polish leaders gave significantly longer answers, and mentioned some of the problems that are commonly part of the relationships between missionaries and Polish denominations. Below are two examples, but several others are listed in Appendix I.

Table 28. Interview responses from Polish leaders regarding missionary's relationship with Polish denomination

There are missionaries who come with their rules that often don't work in Slavic countries.
There are missionaries who listen and try to help and do not force their own agenda.
It is important that a missionary be cognizant of the fact that he should be under the authority of a denomination. He has support from his mission, but he shouldn't think more highly of himself than he ought to think. 1 Thessalonians 1 applies here – Paul's example. It is good if there is transparency. He should communicate his vision. Others might not have that vision, but he might be able to share the vision with others.

Missionary's relationship with the local church:

When asked about the missionaries' relationship with the local church, Polish leaders were a bit more positive. "Good" became "very good."

Table 29. Survey responses from Polish leaders regarding missionary's relationship with local churches

Very good
Is based on common effort and good relationships
Missionaries supported the work of the local church, especially in mission and evangelism.
Two trained leaders. Missionaries built relationships with church members
The missionary's plans did not fit in with the church's plans
Varied, this probably depends on the missionary

The Polish leaders had some excellent advice for missionaries, however. They indicated that missionaries need to remember that they are here to serve, and they should work to build relationships in the local churches. Missionaries also need to make sure their style of life is similar to the Polish style, and work to have their partnerships well-defined.

Table 30. Interview responses from Polish leaders regarding missionary's relationship with local churches

The independence of missionaries is sometimes a problem. The question is, how much should the missionary assimilate into a Polish church. If he is part of the church, he has a better chance to be effective in working together. He should demonstrate loyalty. Poles are not able to work closely with independent contractors. The missionary should build close relationships.
The relationships are usually good, up until the time that they run out of ideas. The relationship is good, until conflict arises about their work or place in the local church. The missionary forgets that he is on a mission - he is here to serve, to help
Some live in such a way as to promote jealousy. Nice cars and apartments, frequent trips to restaurants, etc. It is especially important to live like others live. Romans 12 is our rule, here.
Good, especially with missionaries who have been here a long time. But many times missionaries, even those who are here for years, are continually outsiders, and their lifestyle is different. The relationships between the mission agency and Polish institution should be more defined. Especially in conflict situations, the missionary can just say "I don't work for you."

Missionary's relationship with individual leaders:

The next question asked the leaders to describe their own relationships with missionaries. In these responses, there was not a single negative description in the surveys, and only one "neutral." Nearly all were very positive:

Table 31. Survey responses from Polish leaders regarding missionary's relationship with individual leaders

Very good
It's very good. Frequent contacts and exchange of information
Toward me, missionaries were loyal and we were connected by friendship and trust
Rather good and partnering

A few examples from the interviews:

Table 32. Interview responses from Polish leaders regarding missionary's relationship with individual leaders

Depends on the missionary, on “chemistry,” on personal wishes. I value the fact that someone goes on a mission. I respect that. In the beginning, it is difficult to deal with the cultural differences or the expectations from the mission agency. It would be good, if the agency allowed them more flexibility. Opportunities to serve quickly after arriving are good. Many missionaries came right after the fall of communism, but the agencies and missionaries didn’t know what to do, and missionaries burned out. It’s too bad that missionaries are going to other countries now, because I think we need them even more now. Their experience is very valuable. We need their strategies and ability to work against the chaos here, to lead good schools, and courses. They could help the most now by passing on their know-how to Polish leaders.
Good, very good. Encouraging. Teaching. Humbling. Even when it was difficult, when there was conflict, it turned out well in the end – for both sides.
Sincere, close friendships. The relationships began with sharp conflict, because of cultural differences. The missionary tried to force American rules, without explaining why. One missionary inspired me. With another couple, I had a very warm relationship.
The relationships were varied. Some were my mentors. We had a deep friendship – beautiful. Other relationships were more accidental, and those relationships never became that deep. In my city, a group of missionaries had their own services, went on trips together, etc. On the hand this was positive, for them, but on the other hand it seemed they were always leaving the Poles out of their group. Sometimes missionaries don’t submit to the rigor that Poles must.
When I needed encouragement, I met a couple from the U.S. They were a great help and encouragement. They were a spiritual help for me. What I do today, I do thanks to them. They left Poland, but I still have a relationship with them. This is a lifelong relationship.

Barriers in developing partnership with missionaries:

The next question asked “Which of the following were barriers for you in developing a partnership with a missionary/missionaries?” The answers are listed in the following table:

Table 33. Barriers to initiating partnership with a missionary

Answer Choices	Responses
Mission agency restrictions	7
Differences in ministry philosophy/vision	7
Differences in methods	4
Differences in theological convictions	2
The missionary’s fear of being taken advantage of	2
Personal conflict with a missionary	1
Polish national denomination restrictions	0

Answer Choices	Responses
The Polish church's fear of being taken advantage of	0
Other	0

The North American missionaries had a slightly different list, with “differences in ministry philosophy/vision” and “differences in methods” significantly outranking the other responses. The missionary’s list then went as follows, with a narrow spread between the third and the eighth responses: “Differences in theological convictions;” “Polish national denomination restrictions;” “Mission agency restrictions;” “My fear of being taken advantage of;” “The Polish church’s fear of being taken advantage of;” and “Personal conflict with a Polish leader.”¹⁴⁷

Comparing these two lists, it is notable that the Poles ranked “mission agency restrictions” much higher than the North Americans. I would assume that the missionaries know the restrictions put on them better than the Poles do, but the overwhelming perception (7 out of 11 Polish respondents) is that these restrictions are barriers to cooperation. Could it be that the Poles are more willing to blame an unknown organizational headquarters in North America for the problems with partnership? Or should their perception of the problem be taken into account, and policies changed to allow for missionary flexibility and cooperation? The North Americans listed Polish denominational restrictions as more of a barrier than mission agency restrictions, while none of the Poles saw restrictions from the Polish church as a barrier to cooperation.

Interestingly, both the missionaries and the Polish leaders identified the missionary’s fear of being taken advantage of as a slightly more significant barrier than the Polish Church’s fear of

147. The missionaries had more one more response option that the Polish leaders did not have: “Sending church and supporter restrictions.” I did not include that in the list for the Poles, under the assumption that the Polish leaders may not know about those restrictions. As it was, this response ranked much lower than any other in the North American list.

being taken advantage of. For both groups, differences in theological convictions were a potential barrier, but not among the most significant barriers. Thankfully, although personal conflict was identified by both groups as a barrier, it ranked quite low in both lists.

Question 13 presented a list of “best practices” in partnership agreements, and asked which ones should be recommended.

Table 34. Best practices in partnership agreements, according to Polish leaders

Answer Choices	Responses
A written declaration of common ministry philosophy and vision	6
A written declaration of common expectations	4
A written partnership agreement between a local congregation/leader and each missionary	3
A written partnership agreement between the agency and denomination	3
A written description of common methods	1
A job description for the missionary, agreed to by the national church/organization	0
All of the above	2
None of the above	1
Other (shown below)	1
Good relationship between the local church and the missionary.	

For the North Americans, the largest number of responses suggested a written declaration of common expectations, followed by a declaration of philosophy and vision. Including the “all of the above” responses, both practices were approved by a majority of respondents. The majority of the Polish leaders, including the “all of the above” responses, listed the same two best practices as most important, although the order of the two was reversed.

In the penultimate question, the Polish leaders were asked to identify the greatest challenges for partnership between Polish churches and North American missionaries. The full text of the

responses from the survey and interviews are listed in Appendix L. In the survey responses, the majority listed “understanding Polish culture” as the greatest challenge. During the interviews, language and culture continued to be mentioned as significant challenges, but some other issues were mentioned as well:

Table 35. Biggest challenges to partnership according to Polish leaders

Frequently, missionaries are well-trained theologically. But not always very well-trained to learn language and culture. Americans know what they want to do, and do it. There are organizations that have a “wonderful plan for Poles.” They have greater difficulty than those that have a plan, but invite others to join, or those who come alongside Poles, and help them with their vision. Organizations that concentrate on results or “the next best model” are not as helpful. The best are those who came to live, and who learn the language well.
Cultural differences. Poland has a specific tradition. It’s hard to bring in new traditions. This is more obvious in Catholic Poland. Everything that has happened in Poland since the 19 th century has been connected to the Catholic Church. Protestants are seen as German. Evangelicals are seen as Western, American. The knowledge of evangelicalism is growing, but it is not very common in the Polish awareness. Agencies have a difficult time, because the results are small. Evangelicalism is not growing, nor is the quality really getting any better. It’s a good question – has the cooperation between Polish churches and North American missionaries really helped? In the 90’s, yes. Now, not so much.
The language barrier. Cultural barrier. Those who have larger problems with the language, or less of a desire to learn it have problems entering Polish culture. If you can’t learn the language, you can’t learn the culture.

The final question asked “What, in your opinion, should we ask missionaries when we interview them about relationships with national churches?” My hope is that all missionaries to Poland who read this chapter will look at Appendix M, and carefully consider these questions from our Polish brothers in ministry. Many of the responses were similar to the following:

Table 36. Questions from Polish leaders for missionaries

Do they agree to be “Jews for the Jews, and for the Poles, become Polish?” Are they ready to accept a standard of life that fits the community they want to reach with the Gospel? Are they ready to willingly submit to restrictions (sometimes as a result of the spiritual immaturity of the people they serve) in order to fulfill the ministry they received from God?
About their motivation. Verifying that motivation. That they would ask themselves: “What is the goal of my ministry?” “Does it serve the growth of the Kingdom in Poland?” Ask about their love for Poland and Poles. We are not easy recipients. Unconditional love is necessary. That they would ask: “Do we really minister to others? And do we really want to?”

Many of the interviewees asked this question: “Are they really ready to serve? Are they committed to adapting to Poland, to its culture, language, mentality? Are they ready to submit to a Polish standard of living?” Unfortunately, a few of the interviewees shared stories of missionaries who were not that ready or committed. I did not include these stories, because of personal information that might identify someone, but the examples demonstrated the Polish viewpoint that missionaries should be ready and committed to sacrifice, service and submission.

In the final chapter, I will develop some conclusions from the surveys and interviews, and present some recommendations for better partnership between North American missionaries and the Polish church. The majority of these recommendations will be designed for missionaries, but since cooperation involves more than one side, some of the recommendations will be for the Polish church and leaders.

CHAPTER 4:

**TOWARDS BETTER PARTNERSHIPS: PATTERNS, BARRIERS, AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the surveys of North American missionaries and Polish church leaders, both overwhelmingly indicated that their partnership had allowed both missionaries and churches to serve better and fulfill their mission, to advance the Kingdom of God, and to evangelize and train leaders better. However, growth statistics for the Polish church do not seem to confirm this.

When the problem of the dynamism of Polish evangelicalism is considered, the natural thing is to reach for the statistical yearbook of the Central Statistical Office. Analyzing data from 1990-2001, we do not see any basic changes. Over the past years, there did not exist any sudden numerical growth. However we can even see, in a few examples, a tendency to decline. Of course, we should note that with such small numbers, the relative growth in certain cases might be quite significant; however, in the wider context they do not change the overall state of Polish evangelicalism. In 2001, the largest Christian confessions of evangelical provenance together numbered a little over 42,600 members, of which Pentecostal movements together number 23,900. These are just hundredths of percentage points, in comparison to the number of inhabitants of our country.¹⁴⁸

Zygmunt Pawłowicz, writing in 1996, includes official statistics from 1989 in some of his descriptions of Polish evangelical churches. Using his numbers, we can see what, if any, growth has occurred between 1989 and 2011.¹⁴⁹ The Church of Free Christians (Plymouth Brethren) is listed by Pawłowicz as having 1780 members.¹⁵⁰ The Central Statistical Office shows them with

148. Gajewski, "Dynamics of Evangelical Protestantism," in *Ewangelikalny Protestantyzm w Polsce u Progu XXI Stulecia*. [Evangelical Protestantism in Poland at the Threshold of the 21st Century], Tadeusz Zieliński, ed., Warsaw: WBST and Katowice: Credo, 2004, 88-89.

149. Appendix C lists all evangelical churches as of 2011, with memberships.

150. Pawłowicz, 100.

approximately 3500 members in 1989, but shrinking to 2861 in 2011.¹⁵¹ The Baptist Union had 6158 members in 1989¹⁵² and 4864 in 2011.¹⁵³ The Methodists had 4250 members in 1989¹⁵⁴ and 4352 in 2011.¹⁵⁵ Pawłowicz lists the Pentecostal church as having about 12,000 members¹⁵⁶, whereas in 2011 it numbered 22,429.¹⁵⁷

The Central Statistical Office's report includes graphs with approximate numbers of members in each church. The numbers shown on the graphs are not precise, but only a handful of evangelical churches are shown as growing since 1989: the aforementioned Pentecostal Church, the Church of God in Christ (from approximately 500 in 1989 to 4140 in 2011),¹⁵⁸ the New Apostolic Church (from approximately 1000 to 5161),¹⁵⁹ and the Fellowship of Christian Churches (from about 2500 in 1989 to 4252).¹⁶⁰ The remaining evangelical denominations have not experienced much growth, and many have declined. Interestingly, some of the graphs indicated that many churches grew between 1989 and 2001, but have since declined. As far as I

151. *Wyznanie Religijne, Stowarzyszenia Narodowościowe i Etniczne w Polsce 2009-2011* [Churches, Denominations as well as National and Ethnic Associations in Poland 2009-2011], Central Statistical Office, Warsaw, http://www.stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbcr/gus/oz_wyznania_religijne_stow_nar_i_etn_w_pol_2009-2011.pdf, 64.

152. Pawłowicz, 84.

153. *Wyznanie Religijne*, 88-89.

154. Pawłowicz, 86.

155. *Wyznanie Religijne*, 61.

156. Pawłowicz, 98

157. *Wyznanie Religijne*, 72.

158. *Ibid.*, 70-71.

159. *Ibid.*, 81-82.

160. *Ibid.*, 83-84.

have been able to determine, very few missionaries have worked with the Church of God in Christ or the New Apostolic Church.

Does this mean that missionaries who have only been able to freely work in Poland since 1989 have not really contributed much to the growth of the church in Poland? Does this mean Poland would be better off if missionaries from the West had not come to “help?” There may be some Polish leaders who would agree, but all of the leaders I interviewed were thankful for assistance from the West. Any consideration of the remaining needs in Poland quickly leads to the conclusion that help is still greatly needed. With less than 0.15%¹⁶¹ of the population evangelical, with only a few training centers for Christian workers – and most with declining numbers of students – the needs in Poland are sometimes overwhelming.

These needs prompted one of the Polish leaders that I surveyed to say: “It’s too bad that missionaries are going to other countries now, because I think we need them even more now. Their experience is very valuable. We need their strategies and ability to work against the chaos here, to lead good schools, and courses. They could help the most now by passing on their know-how to Polish leaders.” These same needs, combined with the very small evangelical church and low numbers of missionaries, caused Poland to be ranked first in one list of countries with the highest need for “pioneer missionaries.” Marten Visser, writing in 2004, used what he called the “N-Formula” to identify which countries had the greatest need. He calculated his formula from the number of evangelicals in the country multiplied by the number of missionaries.¹⁶² Basing his data on *Operation World* (which at that point listed Poland as 0.2% evangelical and with 168

161. Fifteen hundredths of a percent - .0015 of the total population. See Appendix C for more detail.

162. Marten Visser, “Where Are Pioneer Missionaries Needed? The N-Formula,” *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, 40:2, 220-227.

missionaries); he includes a table with Poland at the top of the list for need for pioneer missionaries.¹⁶³ As I demonstrate in Appendix C, the evangelical percentage of Poland is closer to 0.15%, and the number of missionaries seems to be down from the number in the article. The needs in Poland are still great, and help is still needed.

Scott Klingsmith addresses the question of whether missionaries are still needed in Eastern and Central Europe in his book on mission sending movements that have originated in this part of the world. After identifying the role of Western missionaries in the rise of these sending movements, he makes a recommendation to the Western Church:

The way to promote missionary sending in ECE [Eastern and Central Europe] is not simply to send more missionaries, in the hope that they will model missionary life and thus encourage new missionaries. More important is to send better missionaries, not simply more missionaries. In fact, most churches in ECE are not looking for more missionaries from the West. They are looking for special kinds of missionaries, people who can partner with them and offer expertise in areas they have not developed yet and who can model servanthood and sensitivity.¹⁶⁴

In order to help produce “better missionaries,” especially in partnership with Poles, in this chapter we will look at some of the patterns that surfaced through the surveys and interviews, identify some of the barriers for effective cooperation, and propose some recommendations that should help our partnerships become even more fruitful.

Evaluation Patterns

Several patterns of responses can be observed through the surveys and interviews. These patterns can be analyzed to identify possible trends in the way North American missionaries and

163. *Ibid.*, 223. Poland is listed as the second neediest country, but the country with the greatest need is not shown in the table, nor identified in the article.

164. Klingsmith, 195.

Polish church leaders look at partnerships. In addition, any significant differences in responses can demonstrate potential barriers to partnership, or problems in communication.

The first pattern I identified through the surveys was that a large number of missionaries have partnered with the Baptist Union. This survey pattern was validated by Polish leaders, and could be a problem, especially if the general Polish society still identifies Baptists as American, as Wierzchowski alluded to in his “Golden Years of Polish Baptists.”¹⁶⁵ Missionaries who do work with the Baptist Union will need to be careful to limit the extent to which Baptist churches begin to look American, rather than Polish. In addition, other missionaries may want to explore partnerships beyond the Baptist Union.

The next pattern, clearly seen both in the missionary and church leader surveys, was that of the importance of personal relationships. In most instances, a partnership was initiated on the basis of a personal relationship, rather than an organizational agreement. As one Polish church leader emphasized, “Poles are not able to work closely with independent contractors. The missionary should build close relationships.”¹⁶⁶ These relationships can be assisted with partnership agreements and organizational alignment, but these last two cannot replace the personal aspect of two or a few working closely together, sharing common goals and vision, agreeing on methods, and building friendships.

Next, we can see that many missionaries (21%) do not have any written agreement with a Polish church, denomination, or leader. However, of the written agreements that do exist, 36% are with a local church or leader. The Polish responses were similar, although the numbers were reversed. According to them, 36% of missionaries do not have an agreement, and 27% have an

165. See Chapter 2.

166. Appendix J

agreement with a local church or leader. In this case, with the missionary sample size (41) much higher than the Polish church leader sample size (11), it seems likely that the numbers from the first survey are more reliable. However, for both surveys, these answers were the two most common, and the point is still valid. If there is an agreement, it is most likely with a local church or leader. Of course, this observation reinforces the conclusion that personal relationships are vital.

The next patterns are seen in the ratings scale that uses descriptions of partnerships to compare the responses from missionaries and Polish leaders. First, the missionaries were more likely than the Poles to think of partnerships and expectations as not being clearly defined. In my opinion, this perception could be due to the Polish ability to function more ably in unclear or chaotic situations. North Americans seem to need clearer definitions, and may struggle more when their role is not clearly defined. Secondly, the Polish leaders were more likely than the missionaries to say the missionaries exceeded their expectations, and less likely to say the missionaries disappointed their expectations. In other words, the missionaries judged themselves more harshly than the Polish leaders did.

A third pattern in the ratings scale was the agreement by both groups that their relationships were characterized by trust. This observation was a comforting surprise for me. Although I had hoped that most responses would indicate trust between the North Americans and Poles, it was encouraging to see that over 80% of both missionaries and Poles agreed that the relationship is characterized by trust.

Fourth, an overwhelming majority affirmed the benefit of partnerships in advancing the Kingdom, evangelism and training, and achieving the church's and missionary's goals. In spite

of the challenges and failures in partnership that were identified later in the survey, partnerships seem to be a desire for both sides overall.

The next identifiable pattern is that the missionary's relationships are progressively stronger along a continuum of Polish denominations, local churches, and individual leaders. Once again, we can see the importance of personal relationships, rather than organizational agreements.

Both the Poles and North Americans agreed that the best partnership agreements were those that stated a common understanding of ministry philosophy and vision, and of expectations. The order of the two was reversed by the missionaries, but the same two responses gained a majority. The missionaries saw a written partnership agreement between the missionary and local church or leader and a job description for the missionary as significantly more important than the Polish leaders did. This may reinforce the observation that North Americans need more definition in their roles.

Barriers

In the surveys, one question specifically asked about barriers to cooperation, with a list of potential responses. In that question, the missionaries chose "differences in ministry philosophy/vision" and "differences in methods" as the top two barriers. Those same responses were in the top three for the Polish leaders, but their first response was "mission agency restrictions." The Poles could be blaming organizations for strategies or choices made by individual missionaries. The missionaries could also use their agency as a scapegoat when they make a choice they know will be unpopular with their Polish partners. Whatever the reason, the responses demonstrate the need for clear, honest communication of agency expectations early in the relationship. One Polish leader commented that he thought missionaries with larger agencies

had more restrictions from the home office than did those with smaller agencies which were frequently characterized by more flexibility. This evaluation could be an encouragement for larger agencies to move toward more flexibility, and allow more strategic decisions to be made at a local level.

Most of the barriers to partnership are identified in the question regarding the challenges to partnership between Polish churches and North American missionaries. The Polish language was identified as a significant barrier by both missionaries and Polish leaders. Learning or understanding Polish culture was another common problem that both missionaries and Poles agreed upon. Cultural differences and language difficulties significantly affect communication. Even when the words might be understood, the connotative and cultural meaning of what is said may be quite differently understood by the two groups. This communication barrier affects the definitions of roles, expectations, vision and methods, and evaluation of results – success or failure.

Scott Klingsmith quotes one Polish missions leader who was frustrated by missionaries who did not learn Polish:

From one side, I appreciate foreigners coming here. Others wanted to do what Polish people could do. Missionaries depended on translators. Usually these were pastors or other church leaders who could do ministry themselves. They expected we would help them voluntarily. We had families, kids, needs. (JM)¹⁶⁷

Another barrier, mentioned both by missionaries and Polish leaders, occurs when North Americans come to Poland with a preconceived plan. One Polish leader called this “American colonialism,” but missionaries also identified this as a problem. “Americans come to Poland

167. Klingsmith, 130-131.

believing that they have the answers to missions. What they lack is the ability to understand that Poland is not America. And churches are not American churches.”

Another barrier identified by several Polish leaders, and at least one missionary, occurs when missionaries live above the lifestyle of Poles. Even on an average missionary salary, most North American missionaries earn more money than the average Pole.

Polish leaders reported being treated like cheap labor, of having to translate for outsiders when they were capable of preaching and teaching themselves, of feeling manipulated or watching others be manipulated by the promise of money or the threat of losing money. They saw missionaries living at a much higher level than they could, and saw how much more it cost a missionary to live in Poland than it did for them.¹⁶⁸

The challenge is to live below our means, in a lifestyle that identifies with Polish people, and does not set us apart. The economic situation in Poland is changing quickly, and the differences in salaries are becoming smaller, but the barrier still remains.

Other significant barriers included differences in vision, various understanding of methods, the lack of maturity in the Polish church (referred to by Polish leaders and North American missionaries), missionaries who have “left a bad taste,” and the lack of training for missionaries in learning language and culture.

One very significant barrier is pride – on both sides. In the survey, one missionary said this: “The biggest challenge in my opinion is overcoming my own pride. . . . As Paul writes, ‘knowledge puffs up.’ . . . I believe the missionary can influence, but only out of humility and a history of faithfulness.” Another said: “PRIDE, PRIDE (one for each side) . . . Other than the language, the rest are just our own sinful natures on both sides – PRIDE!” North Americans,

168. Klingsmith, 131.

with their history of strong evangelical churches, awakenings and revivals, religious freedom, and superlative educational institutions are proud of what they can bring to Poland. Poles, with their long history of Christianity, of resistance and opposition against Nazism and Communism, of suffering and faithfulness are proud of what they have been able to preserve. Both perspectives are justified, but humility is necessary to serve together.

On the negative side, numerous examples were given of missionaries who did not model such humility and willingness to learn. These missionaries refused to learn the language and the culture, and did not try to understand the religious and historical context of the country. . . . Some foreign missionaries used money indiscriminately, and attracted people with less than pure motives, or pulled people from established churches.¹⁶⁹

Recommendations

In consideration of the patterns and barriers we saw in the survey responses, as well as the historical study of evangelicalism in Poland, I have several recommendations for missionaries in Poland and for Polish church leaders partnering with missionaries. My primary focus has been to discover areas that could assist missionaries in partnership with Poles; but no partnership is unidirectional, and several of the Polish leaders asked me for a copy of this thesis when finished. So, my original intent to only write recommendations for missionaries has been expanded to include our Polish partners. Some of the recommendations will naturally be the same for both groups.

Ten Recommendations for Missionaries in Poland:

1. Pray. At first, I wrote this recommendation last, as it did not really arise through the surveys or historical study. One missionary did include lack of prayer and lack of the Holy Spirit's leading in his list of barriers to partnership. This truly is a spiritual battle, and the enemy would

¹⁶⁹. Klingsmith, 177.

love to see our friendships and partnerships damaged, in order to slow the advance of the Kingdom. We need to pray for God's leading, for love for Polish people and the Polish church, for humility, and for protection from misunderstandings and unresolved conflict.

2. Focus on personal relationships. This recommendation was mentioned a number of times during the surveys. Organizational agreements may serve a valuable purpose of clarifying expectations, but they cannot replace spending time with a partner, praying, working, crying, playing, and learning together. Poles seem to value these relationships more than North Americans do, although the issue might be a common one for missionaries in every part of the world, coming from their home culture, living as strangers in a strange land, and struggling for years to "fit in."

3. Learn Polish. This recommendation was included by most of the Polish leaders, and many of the missionaries. Learning Polish is vital to building relationships and to any level of communication. Increasing numbers of Poles are proficient in English, so the temptation may be even greater to serve without learning Polish, but Polish is still necessary for most deep conversations about values, expectations, philosophy and vision. Of course, not everyone has equal abilities in language learning, but the Polish leaders also indicated that they honored the missionary who was obviously trying to learn, even if Polish proved to be very difficult. In Appendix N, I include several aids for learning Polish.

4. Work to understand Polish culture and values. Although much of one's understanding of cultural values occurs once the language has been learned, there are some resources that present Polish perspectives. I listed a number of these in Appendix N. In addition, a missionary can learn quite a bit by working through an ethnographic survey of his Polish acquaintances. I also listed

some guides for ethnographic surveys in Appendix 14. However, probably nothing replaces asking and listening, learning through conversations what our Polish fellow servants think and believe.

5. Choose to live a similar lifestyle. A couple of the Polish leaders used this terminology: “become Poles for the Poles.” Although it may be unlikely that a missionary is wealthy by American standards, sometimes our choices, especially early in ministry, make us appear very wealthy to national Christians. Renting larger homes than Poles have, buying a new car, new furnishings and electronics, taking what seem to be exotic trips and vacations can all give the impression of wealth. Some Poles have begun to change their opinions, having themselves spent time living away from their homeland, and seeing Polish salaries increase much faster than Western salaries. However, Poles still seem to like to think of Poland as a poor country, with great needs, and much suffering.¹⁷⁰ We missionaries need to make choices that reflect a desire to live at a similar level.

6. Become a student of Polish history. This recommendation could be listed with the recommendation to understand Polish culture and values. Of course history and culture are interdependent. However, I think Polish history deserves to be treated independently. Poland was Christianized 500 years before Christopher Columbus landed in the New World. The millennium of Polish history has been characterized by nearly every possible experience a nation could have: struggling nation-state; powerful near-empire – one of Europe’s largest; multi-ethnic, multi-religious commonwealth; democratic revolution – second only to the United States, historically; annihilation by more powerful neighbors; resurrection; occupation and near destruction in World War II; Russian occupation and communism; democratic revolution – again; and fast economic

170. This seems to be part of the “messianic myth” mentioned in Chapter 2.

recovery. Evangelical missionaries should also be familiar with Protestant history in Poland. The evangelical church in Poland is newer than that in the English-speaking world, but evangelicals here have a proud history of faithfulness in the face of incredible opposition.¹⁷¹

7. Respect Polish denominations. This recommendation may seem a bit strange for my American readers. For many American evangelicals, denominations are probably becoming less important. I am not advocating “denominationalism” in Poland, where the church brand becomes more important than the Kingdom of God. We North Americans can help challenge the Polish church to avoid such denominationalism, but not at the cost of criticizing the existence of the evangelical denominations in Poland. When we study the history of the Church in Poland, we see that Polish evangelicals paid a very high price for the very existence of a church that reflected their beliefs and practices. We need to know and respect the history of the groups we choose to partner with.

8. Avoid great promises. One Polish leader said: “We hear many wonderful promises, but the actions don’t agree later.” Sometimes missionaries have been guilty of promising cash or that an amazing method developed somewhere else that is guaranteed to work in Poland. These types of promises damage more than just the relationship immediately affected. Other partnerships between foreign missionaries and Polish workers suffer from the lack of trust engendered through such abuses. Missionaries can and should promise to be honest, humble, to listen and learn, and to not patronize. We cannot promise success, however. We should be very careful promising money, as well, in order to avoid impure motives on the part of the recipients, and failure in trust when the money does not materialize.

171. As seen in Chapter 2.

9. Communicate. Communication is the heart of relationship building, and is necessary for partnerships. Several missionaries identified the lack of communication as one of the primary barriers in partnership with Polish workers. What should be communicated? Short answer—everything. If in doubt, talk about it. We need to communicate expectations, philosophy of ministry, our vision for ministry, what kind of methods we would like to employ, our theological viewpoints, how we see our roles working out. We can boldly communicate all of these, and we do not need to fear that Poles will disengage because they might disagree. However, we also must work to listen. Poles will need to communicate all of the above issues with us, and we need to remember that they are the experts on their country, its cultural values, potential success rates of methods, and viewpoints of other Poles. Certainly there will be new methods and ideas that we can propose, that may be appropriate for Poland – but there are also likely to be Polish methods and ideas that never occurred to us.

10. Have a humble posture of service. The attitude and skill of listening arises from this heart posture towards others. Several Polish leaders suggested that I ask missionaries about their commitment and calling, that I ask missionaries, “why are you here?” In the conversations, this was not intended as an indication that we have no reason to be here, and that we should go home. Rather, the question was meant to be an affirmation of our calling. Did we come here to serve? Did we promise to love Poland and Poles? Do we still have those attitudes? One leader referred to 1 Thessalonians 1 as our example. There, Paul reminds his friends that they knew “how we lived among you for your sake.”¹⁷² In Chapter 2, Paul describes his ministry as “gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God, but our lives as well, because you had become so dear

172. 1 Thessalonians 1:5 *The Holy Bible, New International Version*, International Bible Society, 1984, used by permission of Zondervan Publish House, Grand Rapids, MI.

to us.”¹⁷³ Paul set the example for all other missionaries to follow, and we can strive to do the same in Poland.

Six Recommendations for Polish partners:

1. Pray. Polish partners should also pray for protection from the enemy, for God’s leading, for humility, and for guidance through misunderstandings and conflict. You can also continue to pray for more love toward Poland, Polish people, and the Polish church. In addition, as you develop partnerships with Westerners, I would recommend praying for God to test your motives, and to pray for humble servants who will minister alongside you.

2. Focus on personal relationships. Of course, this recommendation may be unnecessary, as Poles already tend to focus more on relationships. Help the missionaries build relationships – with you, but also with others. Take the initiative to spend time with the foreigner, and to introduce her to other Poles.

3. Assist missionaries with learning Polish, understanding Polish culture, and studying Polish history. Of course you have many other responsibilities, and cannot focus your entire attention or time on training Westerners who want to serve in your country. Many times, no one even asked you beforehand if you wanted a missionary in your city or church. However, the time you do invest may bring a significant return on your investment. You are a great resource for missionaries who really do want to learn, who are ready to listen, and realize that you are invaluable. This role should not be abused by missionaries, but when you help them, you help the partnership function much better, and may contribute to the growth of God’s Kingdom.

173. Ibid., 1 Thessalonians 2:7.

4. Demonstrate clarity of vision. This recommendation also arises from the responses by missionaries in the survey. A few suggested that “lack of vision” (on the Polish side) is one of the barriers to partnership. Lack of vision is certainly not limited to Polish leaders and North American missionaries could remind themselves that this criticism might be frequently made in American and Canadian churches, as well. Even if you feel your vision is too small, or too big, communicate your dreams and philosophy with outsiders who wish to partner with you. By doing so, you may find someone who shares a similar vision.

5. Communicate. The preceding recommendation leads naturally to this one of communication. Communicate vision, philosophy, methods, expectations, perspectives on Polish culture, theological viewpoints. If you wish to build effective partnerships, communication is absolutely necessary. In light of the communication barrier that already exists due to language differences and differences in our cultural filters, even more communication is required.

6. Retain responsibility. North Americans may come with big ideas, big plans, and big pockets. The temptation may be to allow them to work to realize their vision. However, most missionaries do not stay for their entire lives. The majority may not stay longer than a few years. In the end, Poles are responsible for Poland. Missionaries may be a great help, but they are not able to complete replace Polish servants, nor should they.

Recommendations for Further Study

Several areas of further research presented themselves during this study. Similar surveys could be utilized in other countries, especially in Eastern Europe, to identify patterns that may be similar throughout the region. A broader range of surveys would more likely allow for discovery of a wider range of good practices in partnership. Although there have been some surveys of

evangelical churches in Poland to identify common vision, philosophy, goals and methods of effective churches, these results are not widely disseminated or available. Such information could be very helpful for the Polish evangelical community, and for outsiders who come to work alongside.

Conclusion

Most missionaries to Poland and indigenous Christian leaders agree that Poland is a very difficult place to minister, a place where results do not come quickly, where spiritual immaturity seems to be rule, where discouragement becomes a common trap for servants. Unfortunately, the task becomes even more difficult when we are unable to work together. I was heartened to hear from Polish leaders that in most cases, partnership with Western missionaries had been a significant source of encouragement. Missionaries and Polish leaders alike identified a number of barriers, but identifying these problems is the first step toward eliminating them. With God's help, and humility from both sides, we can make our partnerships even better than before. As we do so, perhaps our example will be copied by the rest of the Church, and Poland will become a place of spiritual harvest and maturity, a place of encouragement, and a place that sends effective missionaries to other countries.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY OF NORTH AMERICAN MISSIONARIES

1. What agency do you/have you served with? (optional, for statistical control purposes)
2. Since 1990, how many North American missionaries with your agency have served in Poland?
3. Have you worked with a Polish church?

_____ yes _____ no

If no, the survey sends the respondent to question 12.

4. What national church group have you partnered with? (for statistical purposes)

Pentecostals (KZ)	Evangelical Church (KECh)
Church of God	Baptists (KChB)
Brethren Church (Wolnych)	Church of God in Christ
Christian Church (WKCh)	Church of Evangelical Christian Faith (KChWE)
Other _____	

5. Why did you choose to work with this group? Choose the best answer. If more than one applies, put a number by each answer in order of importance, with 1 being most important.

_____ Denominational affiliation
 _____ Theological similarity to me/my organization
 _____ North American mission encouraged/required me to work with this group.
 _____ My supervisor encouraged/required me to work with this group.
 _____ I had a personal relationship with a partner from this group.
 _____ This group had goals similar to mine.
 _____ Other _____

6. Which statement best describes the initiation of your relationship with a national church?

_____ The national church denomination requested assistance from our agency.
 _____ Our mission agency requested partnership with the national church organization.
 _____ A local congregation or church leader requested assistance from our mission agency.

_____ A local congregation or church leader requested my assistance, not really my agency's.

_____ I initiated a relationship with a local congregation or leader.

_____ Other _____

7. Which statement best describes your relationship with a national church?

_____ Our agency had/has a partnership document with the denomination.

_____ I had/have a partnership agreement with the denomination.

_____ I had/have a partnership agreement with a local congregation or church leader.

_____ I had/have no official agreement with a national church or leader.

_____ I did/do not work with a national church.

_____ Other _____

8. Choose the response from the choice below that best reflects your reaction to each of the following statements.

SA = Strongly Agree	A = Agree	D = Disagree	SD = Strongly Disagree			
			SA	A	D	SD
My partnership with the Polish church is well-defined.			SA	A	D	SD
My expectations for the Polish church and national leaders are well-defined.			SA	A	D	SD
My expectations for the Polish church and leaders are being met or exceeded.			SA	A	D	SD
My expectations for the Polish church and leaders are frequently disappointed.			SA	A	D	SD
The Polish church's expectations of me are clearly defined.			SA	A	D	SD
The Polish church indicated that I met or exceeded its expectations.			SA	A	D	SD
The Polish church indicated that I disappointed its expectations.			SA	A	D	SD
My relationship with the Polish church and leaders is characterized by trust.			SA	A	D	SD
I am accountable to the national denomination, local congregation, or a Polish leader.			SA	A	D	SD
My partnership with a Polish church helps me serve better.			SA	A	D	SD
My partnership with a Polish church helps the church better fulfill its mission.			SA	A	D	SD
Our partnership contributes to the advance of the kingdom of God.			SA	A	D	SD
Our partnership enables better evangelism than we could do separately.			SA	A	D	SD
Our partnership enables better development of leaders than we could do separately.			SA	A	D	SD
If I had a "do-over," I would develop a partnership with a Polish church.			SA	A	D	SD

9. How would you describe your relationship with the national denomination?

10. How would you describe your relationship with the local congregation?

11. How would you describe your relationship with your primary Polish partner (person)?

12. Which of the following were barriers for you in developing a partnership with national churches? (Check all that apply)

- Mission agency restrictions
- Sending church and supporter restrictions
- Polish national denomination restrictions
- Differences in theological convictions
- Differences in ministry philosophy/vision
- Differences in methods
- Personal conflict with a national leader
- My fear of being taken advantage of
- The national church's fear of being taken advantage of
- Other _____

13. Which of the following would you consider to be "best practices" in developing a partnership with national churches? (Check all that apply)

- A written partnership agreement between the agency and denomination
- A written partnership agreement between a local congregation/leader and each missionary
- A written declaration of common ministry philosophy and vision
- A written description of common methods
- A written declaration of common expectations
- A job description for the missionary, agreed to by the national church/organization
- Other _____
- All of the above
- None of the above

14. What, in your opinion, are the biggest challenges to partnership with Polish churches and church leaders?

15. What, in your opinion, should I ask Polish leaders when I interview them about relationships with North American missionaries?

APPENDIX B

SURVEY OF POLISH CHURCH LEADERS:

1. What denomination are you with? (for statistical purposes)

2. Do you or have you worked with North American missionaries?

_____ yes _____ no

If no, go to question 11.

3. How many missionaries have you worked with?

4. Why did you choose to work with them? Choose the best answer. If more than one applies, put a number by each answer in order of importance, with 1 being most important.

- _____ Denominational affiliation
- _____ Theological similarity to me/my church
- _____ North American mission encouraged/required me to work with this group.
- _____ My denomination encouraged/required me to work with this group.
- _____ I had a personal relationship with this missionary.
- _____ The missionary had goals similar to mine.
- _____ Other _____

5. Which statement best describes the initiation of your relationship with a missionary?

- _____ The national church denomination requested assistance from a mission agency.
- _____ The North American mission agency requested partnership with the church.
- _____ A local congregation or church leader requested assistance from the mission agency.
- _____ A local congregation or church leader requested the assistance of a certain missionary.
- _____ The missionary initiated a relationship with a local congregation or leader.
- _____ Other _____

6. Which statement best describes your relationship with this missionary?

- _____ Our denomination had/has a partnership document with the mission agency.

- _____ Our denomination had/has a partnership agreement with at least one certain missionary.
 _____ The local church or leader had/has a partnership agreement with a certain missionary.
 _____ The missionary had/has no official agreement with a national church or leader.
 _____ The missionary did/does not work with a national church.
 _____ Other _____

7. Choose the response from the choice below that best reflects your reaction to each of the following statements.

SA = Strongly Agree	A = Agree	D = Disagree	SD = Strongly Disagree	
	SA	A	D	SD
The missionary's partnership with the church is well-defined.	SA	A	D	SD
The missionary's expectations for the church and Polish leaders are well-defined.	SA	A	D	SD
The missionary's expectations for the church and Polish leaders are being met or exceeded.	SA	A	D	SD
The missionary's expectations for the church and Polish leaders are frequently disappointed.	SA	A	D	SD
The Polish church's expectations of the missionary are clearly defined.	SA	A	D	SD
The missionary meets or exceeds my expectations.	SA	A	D	SD
The missionary disappoints my expectations.	SA	A	D	SD
The missionary's relationship with the church and Polish leaders is characterized by trust.	SA	A	D	SD
The missionary is accountable to the denomination, local congregation or leader.	SA	A	D	SD
The missionary's partnership with a Polish church helps him/her serve better.	SA	A	D	SD
The missionary's partnership with a Polish church helps the church better fulfill its mission.	SA	A	D	SD
Our partnership contributes to the advance of the kingdom of God.	SA	A	D	SD
The partnership enables better evangelism.	SA	A	D	SD
Our partnership enables better development of leaders.	SA	A	D	SD
If I had a "do-over," I would develop a partnership with a missionary.	SA	A	D	SD

8. How would you describe the missionary's relationship with the national denomination?

9. How would you describe the missionary's relationship with the local congregation?

10. How would you describe the missionary's relationship with you?

11. Which of the following were barriers for you in developing a partnership with a missionary/missionaries? (Check all that apply)

- Mission agency restrictions
- Polish national denomination restrictions
- Differences in theological convictions
- Differences in ministry philosophy/vision
- Differences in methods
- Personal conflict with a missionary
- The missionary's fear of being taken advantage of
- The national church's fear of being taken advantage of
- Other _____

12. Which of the following would you consider to be "best practices" in developing a partnership with missionaries? (Check all that apply)

- A written partnership agreement between the agency and denomination
- A written partnership agreement between a local congregation/leader and each missionary
- A written declaration of common ministry philosophy and vision
- A written description of common methods
- A written declaration of common expectations
- A job description for the missionary, agreed to by the national church/organization
- Other _____
- All of the above
- None of the above

13. What, in your opinion, are the biggest challenges for partnership between Polish churches and North American missionaries?

14. What, in your opinion, should we ask missionaries when we interview them about relationships with national churches?

APPENDIX C

LIST OF PROTESTANT CHURCHES IN POLAND

Table 37. List of Protestant Denominations in Poland

Church	Members (2011)
Lutheran Church	61738
Pentecostal Church	22429
Seventh-Day Adventist	9654
Church of The Proclaimer of Good News	5500 ^a
New Apostolic Church	5161
Baptist Union	4864
Evangelical Methodist	4352
Fellowship of Christian Churches	4252
Church of God in Christ	4140
Evangelical-Reformed	3488
Church of Free Christians (Plymouth Brethren)	2861
Free Bible Students Association	1976
Evangelical Christian Church	1886
Church of Christ	1706
Christian Pentecostal Fellowship	1588 ^b
Laymen's Home Missionary Movement	1457
Church of Christian Evangelical Faith	1040
Evangelical Brotherhood Church	630
Church of God	601
Evangelical Pentecostal Fellowship	547
Church of Seventh-Day Christians	479
Association of Christian Churches (Plymouth Brethren)	448
"Canaan" Christian Center	241
Unitarian Universalist Community	224
Bible Students Association	215
"Agape" Evangelical Church	193
Christian Church in the Spirit of Truth and Peace	190
Christian Fellowship "Wrocław for Jesus"	180
Christian Evangelical Fellowship	150
Assembly of Resolute Christians	144
Upper Room Church	120
The Church in Wodzisław Śląski	110
Christian Church "Arka"	103
Church of God (Seventh Day)	84
Life-Center Ministries	70
"The Lord is the Standard" Christian Center	70
Christian Assembly of Poland	55
Assembly of Evangelical Christians in the Spirit of the Apostles	50
"New Wave" Christian Center	50

Table 37. List of Protestant Denominations in Poland

Church	Members (2011)
Pentecostal Church (Jordan and Horeb)	50
Seventh-Day Adventist Reform Movement	42
Bible Baptist Church	36
Church of Jesus Christ in Werbkowice	30
Reformed Church of Seventh-Day Adventists	29
“Jesus is Lord” Bible Center	29
Assembly of the Gospel of Grace	25
“Jesus Lord” Christian Fellowship	24
“Jerusalem” Evangelical Assembly	17
Total	137828^c

Source: *Wyznanie Religijne, Stowarzyszenia Narodowościowe i Etniczne w Polsce 2009-2011*, [Churches, denominations as well as national and ethnic associations in Poland 2009-2011], Central Statistical Office, Warsaw. http://www.stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbcr/gus/oz_wyznania_religijne_stow_nar_i_etn_w_pol_2009-2011.pdf. (accessed July 14, 2013). Some of these denominations would not necessarily be considered Protestant, but I used the Polish government’s definition, without otherwise challenging it.

^aThis church was a fictitious organization formed to defraud the Polish government, but has not yet been de-legalized. It had no more than a few dozen members, most of whom were from the famous “Pruszkowski” mafia and are now in prison. (“Ustawa na Pokuszenie” [Law of Temptation] *Newsweek*, April 6, 2003, <http://polska.newsweek.pl/ustawa-na-pokuszenie,23568,1,1.html> updated August 9, 2011, accessed July 10, 2013).

^b Data from 1994

^c I subtracted 5500 (The Church of the Proclaimer of Good News) from the total.

Definitions of “evangelical” in Poland are fluid and debated¹⁷⁴, but one total could exclude only Seventh-Day Adventist and Bible Student groups¹⁷⁵, the Lutheran Church and the Universalist Unitarian Church. This yields a total of 57,150 evangelicals. In 2011, the population of Poland was 38,512,000.¹⁷⁶ Therefore, the evangelical percentage of Poland in 2011 was 0.148%. Another count in 2001 included only Baptists and the churches that had been a part of

174. Tadeusz Zieliński refers to this problem of defining Polish evangelicalism in “Wprowadzenie: Pytanie o przyszłość ewangelikalizmu polskiego,” [Introduction: questioning the future of Polish evangelicalism], in *Ewangelikalny Protestantyzm w Polsce u Progu XXI Stulecia*, 9-10.

175. These groups are more likely to be considered cults, or not evangelical.

176. Concise Statistical Yearbook of Poland, p. 116

the United Evangelical Church, with a total of 42,600.¹⁷⁷ *Operation World* cites the number of evangelicals in Poland as 95,416 (0.3%);¹⁷⁸ however, no source is given for this figure. Most missionaries and church leaders in Poland that I have discussed this issue with over the past fourteen years challenge *Operation World*'s estimate of evangelical population in Poland, and place the number at less than 60,000. This would be in agreement with the Polish Central Statistical Office's data.

177. Wojciech Gajewski, "Dynamika ewangelikalizmu polskiego. Krytyczne spojrzenie z uwzględnieniem perspektywy pentekostalnej," [Dynamics of Polish evangelicalism. A critical look taking into account the Pentecostal perspective], in *Ewangelikalny protestantyzm*, 88.

178. Jason Mandryk, *Operation World*, Colorado Springs, CO: Biblica Publishing, 2010, p. 690

APPENDIX D

MISSIONARY DESCRIPTIONS OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE NATIONAL DENOMINATION

Table 32. Missionary descriptions of their relationship with the national denomination

Great relationship and have had no problems
I am in a learning curve of discovering the mentality of our leadership and seeking for up building ways to invest in our group.
Not deep or close, but we can work together, trust each other, and have similar goals: sharing the gospel, encouraging Christians.
We had no relationship with the national denomination.
Good. We partnered a lot in the first two years, now we have “left the nest” so to speak, so the partnership has decreased.
There wasn’t a national denomination for the church we partnered with.
Not much contact at this point. Much more in the past.
Very open ended – I can get as much help as I am willing to ask for. I can also be as independent as I want to be. Overall the relationship is good for me and the denom.
I have worked with 3 different ones (KECh, I, Baptists), and the issue of trust is always an issue, not often spoken out clearly but clearly hard to understand. Trust takes a long time to develop, and is too often connected with money or “what you can bring”.
We are currently moving into working with a new church/denomination
We are definitely partners...though I serve under a national leader he often looks to me for input & advice. And I of him. Fellow pastors are working together to encourage & help one another to serve better. I’m one of the team.
Virtually non-existent. My relationship is solely with the local pastor.
We officially work for a local church which provides us with residency permits. Other than that, we are pretty much on our own to start a new church- there is very little interaction between us and them. However, we couldn’t be here without them.
I have been in less contact with the national denomination (of recent), but in contact with the local and all is good. Even debriefed with a local pastor and all seems well.
We have good contacts within the denomination, but not an official working relationship with them.
Fantastic. We are partners with perhaps the greatest leader in Poland, [name deleted]. We are directly responsible to him. He is on the board of directors of the foundation we started, and we are his direct sister church.
I have joined the denomination officially as a missionary. This does not interfere with my status as a missionary with [my agency].
We did not have very much contact with any national denomination
no relationship
I do not think the denomination would call my assisting a church a relationship. Beyond this, regional leadership may not be pleased with me because the church elders and I would not acquiesce to what would be easiest in a situation.

Table 32. Missionary descriptions of their relationship with the national denomination

I do not know how we were affiliated on the national level with the denomination.
I didn't have a relationship with the national denomination, just the local church and sometimes regional.
Cordial, but completely different vision, no trust, no real relationship
My relationship with the national denomination is very strong. I am working with the 40 churches in our denomination through trainings, conferences, preaching, and building trust relationships. I have a very close relationship with the Bishop of our denomination [name deleted] and am very much involved as a servant to what he needs done and sees as priorities for the denomination.
Distanced but better. We stopped working in exclusive partnerships and started working with pastors and churches we had similar goals with. We
I do not have a relationship with the national denomination outside occasionally voting on issues as a member of the local church.
Our relationship is good.
Very good regional relationships and with local churches that we serve but on a national level the relationship is weak.
Relationships with the different Polish denominations that we partnered with was always cordial and marked by trust as far as I know
I do not have a relationship with the national denomination.
Disappointing
I don't currently have one, but would like to be involved in serving under their leadership.
Very loose connection
My main ministry is with an interdenominational school. I attend a Baptist church, which is fine.
Cordial but not close at national level (lack of contact, autonomy of local churches, seldom in Warsaw).
Somewhat lacking in trust
Personally or as a mission team? Question is not really clear. The team leadership probably has a good relationship but other missionaries as individuals didn't necessarily even know the national denom leadership.
It was impactful and built on relationships.

APPENDIX E

MISSIONARY DESCRIPTIONS OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH A LOCAL CONGREGATION

Table 33. Missionary descriptions of their relationship with a local congregation

Excellent
We have very little fellowship. We meet for Sunday service, but otherwise see each other possibly once a week at a Bible study. There is very little community experience, so I would say fairly shallow relationships.
I feel that we're needed and appreciated here, but there is also a need for the Polish believers to stand on their own feet and find their own way forward, without depending on us. That is slowly happening; I'd say it's moving in the right direction.
We worked alongside the local church. Only one church member was involved in our ministry.
Good. I know many members of the Baptist Church, and we have a good relationship.
Warm! We were welcomed, accepted, included in all aspects of church life and now have life-long friendships.
Primarily involved in one ministry in the church – social outreach.
Great. Mutual respect and support without over control.
Local congregation has been always a different picture than working with leaders. Local believers have, I think, shown real appreciation of missionaries working along them. We have had a good experience with serving, teaching and loving local believers, and is I think the best way to develop trust among them and with Poland.
We are moving there in 2 weeks (but it is good from afar) – my husband has been learning polish in Krakow
I have my own church but my church is seen as one of the churches that are an equal part of the larger church body.
Very good, but it did not develop into what I had anticipated. It appears that they never really intended that I have any real authority in the local church.
The local congregation is happy that we're here and generally supportive but not very involved with us.
See the previous - but in general very good.
We are part of the family, part of the leadership team. It's not a perfect relationship and sometimes we get frustrated but overall it's worth it.
Fantastic. They are perhaps some of our best friends and partners. We do not only work with local congregations...but congregations throughout the country. In fact, one of the polish men that became a believer through our church is now a pastor [personal data deleted]. . . . and [another pastor] is also the national director of our foundation. And [another pastor] is our city director of our foundation. We have GREAT relationships with congregations around the

Table 33. Missionary descriptions of their relationship with a local congregation

country.
I am by title an elder in the church, but I function more like an assistant pastor.
Good
We had very close relationships with the three denominations in our town and the Pastors. The Pastors met often at our home for a meal and prayer
Good. They are happy we are here. I do not know that they all completely understand what we do, but most of them are glad we are here.
It was a positive relationship, but my role was not defined by the local congregation. More definition came from my team leader.
It was a partnership with my local team of missionaries from my agency. I didn't have much of a say in who we partnered with, it was expected. Sometimes it felt like we were dragging the local church along with us because they lacked any direction or goals but I hear the church is now taking initiative where it wasn't before.
We have a very good relationship. During my first several years here, I was able to serve and learn without being vocal in church issues. It is clear that church members see me as one of their own rather than as someone who has come to tell them what they should do or to offer a Western ministry strategy. We do not have an official contract or strategically defined expectations of one another. We worship, pray, and serve together. I try to encourage them and bring testimonies of what the Lord has been doing. I do not have an official leadership role nor do I seek such a role. I am a member of the congregation who is a full-time Christian worker. My highest goal is to serve others through the church and to learn from them. My future hopes or expectations are that we will continue to work together with the goal of seeing churches started in areas where none currently exist.
With the local congregation my relationship is very strong. I am currently overseeing the discipleship focus of our church, [name deleted], and have been for the past year. The relationship with the pastor is one that is built on trust and friendship and I believe partly it is because I am a missionary and not a national. He feels no threat to open up and confide in me in ways that he may not with other national leaders. I am involved in leading the Young Adult ministries as well as preaching and teaching. My desire is to simply be a servant of the church who is seen as faithful and so far I believe that has been the case.
It was better at the end.
Adversarial
We are quite close. We have become part of the church body not just Missionaries.
We have over 20 years of serving local fellowships and I believe we have a very good level of trust and mutual respect.
Good and mutually supportive
I have a good relationship with the local congregation.
Disappointing
I was a member of the local congregation and participated in the same ways Poles did.
Excellent
I have cooperated in a women's ministry that is connected with a church. Good ministry.
Close relationship. Strong and regular involvement in everyday life of church, board member, preaching more or less regularly, home groups, projects.
Very close, and based on trust
ok but not close. It's difficult to form close relationships in many Polish Protestant churches.

Table 33. Missionary descriptions of their relationship with a local congregation

I was very involved with my local congregation. I was part of its leadership and served in my local context through it.

APPENDIX F

MISSIONARY DESCRIPTIONS OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR PRIMARY POLISH PARTNER

Table 34. Missionary descriptions of their relationship with their primary Polish partner

The best relationship anyone could ask for
I will mention my pastor here, so I would say there are some good experiences but with some difficulty in communication.
We trust and appreciate each other.
Very positive. Mutual respect. The primary purpose is to encourage one another.
Great.
I didn't have a Polish partner.....my husband was one of the elders that gave leadership to our church.
Stable.
Mutual respect and support.
That person was aware of a great need among his church and invited us. But it turned out that we had to "work" for him and be under a dictatorial leadership, as the congregation was. It helped to learn the leadership culture in church, and though we could serve, it did not help us to do it with joy and trust. I fell at times that those inviting us are looking for "free workers" to do their job, not to implement a better vision of ministry for their church.
Good, but hard long distance, and he only speaks polish and my husband is learning polish (so challenging but good)
We are good friends that greatly esteem one another...but he also greatly values my insight & experience in Poland & sees it as a help to equipping his Polish pastors.
It was rather business-like. We did not share a mutual accountability which must exist within a true leadership community.
He pays us each month. We communicate when there are questions about paychecks. He's always kind and respectful, but they are not too involved with us on a regular basis.
Good, but do to my sphere of work today, not as engaged because I am often elsewhere on the Continent.
The primary partner has varied. Right now we have a very close personal and working relationship with our closest partner. Honest exchange and supportive.
[name deleted] FANTASTIC. He is our immediate supervisor and sounding board. He is also on our foundation's board, and my husband and [he] are partners.
Good relationship. Trusting and working as a team.
Very good
good
Very good. In the past five years we have seen God work in his life and he has grown from an infrequent attending member to become the head elder of the church. Under his leadership the church has been redirected and is not moving in the right direction.

Table 34. Missionary descriptions of their relationship with their primary Polish partner

It was positive. There was trust, but a general lack of direction as to what I was to do, though that may have been hesitance that came from me internally.
Was never just one group but always the partner relationships were good with the various individuals and denominations
My pastor and I work very well together. We share a vision of seeing people come to Christ resulting in church growth and new church plants in towns where none currently exist. We seek to meet that goal by whatever means we have available. We work together but often independently of each other to meet our goal. The pastor would love to have more missionaries from my organization or from others join us so that the work can expand. Personally, his family has been a great source of encouragement to me and we are very close. I have been discipling their daughter for four years and it has been wonderful to see her growing and taking on ministry responsibilities.
It is very good in a mentoring and working way. Because of my relationship with [name deleted] I have been able to see and hear a lot of what is going on throughout the churches in Poland. I have had speaking and serving opportunities and have currently been asked to oversee our Life on Life Missional Discipleship Movement which we will be taking into each of the churches within our denomination and hopefully outside of our denomination. My involvement has allowed me to have a good reputation and is helpful in allowing my Polish partner to focus on his areas of strength.
The last relationship was good
Hidden agendas
We work well together
Healthy, always can be improved, mutual trust and respect.
The primary Polish partner that our team had a relationship wanted us to be there but never involved the church in the decision making, consequently the church wasn't on board with a lot of what he wanted to do with us.
I don't have a primary Polish partner.
Good
They were the leader of a ministry I assisted with.
Very good
Good.
Personal friendship, mutual trust and respect. Former student(s) of mine.
Was full of trust, until my Polish partner betrayed that trust
Good but it's a parachurch ministry.
It was very purposeful and relational. We worked together as a team and it was built on trust.

APPENDIX G

MISSIONARY DESCRIPTIONS OF BIGGEST CHALLENGES TO PARTNERSHIP

Table 35. Missionary descriptions of biggest challenges to partnership

My answers go both ways...from missionary to Nationals and from Nationals to missionaries. The biggest challenges would be closed communication, fear of sheep stealing, and unrealistic expectations.
For sure different mentalities, also there is often a lack of understanding (in my experience of what should happen after evangelism, conversion and baptism
Finding authentic ways of working together. Polish leaders tend not to be very accountable; they tend to be lone rangers.
The church is distant from the Catholic culture and often attacks and drives away those we are trying to reach.
At the beginning, language of course. But I think having different visions can be difficult. Trying to combine a Polish way of thinking and a North American way of thinking can be difficult to harmonize.
I think the biggest challenge for the American missionary is defining his/her role as a missionary. Is a person called to the field only to be a "helper" in a national church, or are they called to something more (training and teaching of future leaders, actual church planting, etc.)
Polish! ☺
Funding from the West skews against those missionaries/agencies which do not bring resources into the partnership.
Their lack of vision, fear or unwillingness to try new, innovative methods, pessimistic outlook, insecurity and wanting to "be in control".
To have a partnership that truly connects with a better vision and ministry for leading and teaching the church. I am not sure at times if Polish leaders really feel they need help in ministry and are ready to relate with us in trust and common learning. Need of money and the desire to have an "international" connection can be tricky and a source of conflict and jealousy between pastors.
Communication! (Cross culturally, language wise and even when you can communicate in the same language... still communication!)
My own thoughts of what it should be like...basing my expectations on my North American models. My greatest successes & freedoms have come when I have listen to the Lord, learned from Him what He has intended for the specific people I'm working with & to obey. I think that it is difficult at times to maintain a biblical perspective/practices when the culture (even within the church) may encourage ungodly behavior (lying, cheating, etc.)
Cultural differences and the barriers those differences bring about.
Lack of communication within the Polish churches. We speak to one leader and assume that they are passing along our information to others, but usually they aren't. Later we find out that other leaders and most members have no idea what we're doing here.
Lack of vision, lack of trust, PRIDE, PRIDE (one for each side), lack of language acquisition,

Table 35. Missionary descriptions of biggest challenges to partnership

lack of the Holy Spirit's leading (each side on this one too), lack of prayer, etc. Other than the language, the rest are just our own sinful natures on both sides – PRIDE!
The cultural underpinnings of methodology and vision are deeper than originally thought. So there have been many surprises even though we have been here a long time.
Americans come to Poland believing that they have the answers to missions. what they lack is the ability to understand that Poland is not America. and churches are not American churches. and ways to share the gospel and reach individuals differ than ways in America. many teams come with 5 year goals, which, in my opinion, is just silly. if you want to come and work with a national church and spend 1-5 years there---gREAT! but if you believe you are going to waltz in and start a congregation from scratch in 5 years in a foreign land, then you have no concept of the country of Poland. i don't find partnership with polish churches difficult. i guess my only other answer would be---the language.
Adequate focus on God's heart, the Spiritual life, and the vision God has for the world (all of what I just wrote needs a lot more explanation as it is not a judgment on the Polish church or the missionaries). I write this because the cross-cultural issues impacting partnership are not easily grasped or understood. I also wrote this because the Church (notice the capital letter) and mission agencies are functioning in the context of Enlightenment/Modern paradigms and God seems to be really mixing that up and moving toward grand change in the way we do church and structure Kingdom Communities. The Enlightenment/Modern influences (I know we are in Postmodernism) color this but unconsciously and there seems to be an underlying cry for something more, something that touches life and that actually experiences God's impact. Worldview in the West seems to be a significant hindrance to the advancement of the Kingdom of God and if that is correct than we have to begin to address underlying, unspoken assumptions and bring them to fore. So Modern Context with the emphasis on the Empirical Life (observed, physical, and material) in Worldview seems to radically detract to the fundamental basis of all reality which is the living and Triune God and our experience of Him. Since I can only see a portion of this window, this may not make total sense. Biggest Problem: The portions of our Worldview that we are not conscious of.
Cultural differences and language
churches may not observe the need for missionaries
1) Missionaries who come with "the program" or with an expectation that field work is primarily for his/her own spiritual development, or with an understanding, however unintended, that God is going to begin working when he/she arrives on the field. 2) Overcoming the culture of church membership in Poland where church is something to attend for the purpose of receiving fulfillment, of emotional needs, financial needs, or of spiritual obligation. Perhaps this has been passed down from Polish Catholic church culture, or from leadership more interested in control or in covering their own sins, or from a lack of understanding the role each and every member has in spreading the kingdom.
The difficulty of developing leaders who will lead the Church and how to navigate in partnership with the Polish churches and leaders. If the Baptist church was willing to have females as leaders (pastors), I think the mission may be able to spread a little further, though this does not solve the issue around the desire to have more men within the church.
Criticism – Examples of missionaries who come and don't do a whole lot or those that think they know it all – It leaves a bad taste
Respecting each other's God-given vision, passion and giftedness and incorporating them into

Table 35. Missionary descriptions of biggest challenges to partnership

a common vision and plan for working together.
First, uneven and unspoken expectations. Evidenced by the comment by a Polish denominational leader saying “Sometimes you ask for one thing hoping to get something else.” Second, the challenge of the strong “we” culture –here is no room to self-differentiate.
Humility on all sides
Lack of motivation on the part of the Polish church. Many have just existed, and to them, the fact that they are still there after 50 years or more is a victory for them. If they have a church building, it is even more ingrained in them that they don’t have to do anything more. Instilling in them that we need to have a heart for the lost and go find them and bring them was very difficult; they seemed to think that people would come because they have a building. Sometimes it felt like we were hitting our heads up against a wall. They youth were receptive though and would be the ones most likely to participate or initiate ministry outreaches.
Many missionaries coming and going, missionaries lack of language proficiency, missionaries not doing the work themselves, too much time on computers, and living above the standards of nationals.
The biggest challenge in my opinion is overcoming my own pride. There are cultural things that are done differently, ministry things that can be challenging, and visions/perspectives that we have which many Polish churches and leaders do not have. Sometimes it is related to experiences and other times to education, but as Paul writes, “knowledge puffs up.” Sometimes it is challenging to go into a church “partnership” and simply serve without trying to take control. In a country like Poland in which many evangelical denominations exist, the challenge of the missionary is not changing the church or leader...but changing himself. Slowly I believe the missionary can influence, but only out of humility and a history of faithfulness.
Much time and tea are needed to forge good partnerships. The partners need to be realistic about what can actually be done in terms of ministry and to not try to do too many things that will be done, at the end of the day, pretty poorly and without much fruit.
Differences in culture, methods and vision
missionary attitudes/expectations/language/lack of humility church attitudes/expectations/lack of humility
It takes a long time to develop the kind of relationship & trust needed for a quality partnership with Poles, and not all North Americans have the patience to wait and work at it (and learn the language well). Poles see us hurrying to get into ministry and partnership, are suspicious of motives and attitudes, and may be reluctant to fully engage in the partnership until they see that the missionary is here to stay, genuine and someone they want to partner with.
Go-go attitude of North American missionary versus the sit back and see what happens attitude of Polish leaders
Polish ideas of what a missionary is, lack of vision for missions on the side of the Polish church (there are some good in-country initiatives but little interest in concepts like 10/40 window etc.). Western missionaries too often come in with programs that don’t fit Polish realities and are often unwilling to adapt those programs. It takes a long time to develop trust and relationship here (sometimes missionaries are thrown at the local church or ministry in it without any consultation with those people. The pastor has a missionary but the people he/she is supposed to work with often look at the missionary and think “and who are you?” There is often a lack of communication of expectations and evaluation. I once asked a pastor/denominational leader “what do you want to see from my ministry in a year? What

Table 35. Missionary descriptions of biggest challenges to partnership

changes/differences etc.?” He looked at me said nothing – he had no ideas.
Expectations – either too high or too low. Personal history of national leaders in working with missionaries.
Language barrier and building trust
Expectations. Cultural differences. Church backgrounds. Not the same in home country and in Poland. Personalities.
Culture. The missionary needs to understand leadership and relationships in the Polish context.

APPENDIX H

MISSIONARY QUESTIONS FOR POLISH CHURCH LEADERS

Table 36. Missionary questions for Polish church leaders

Please ask them what positive work have they accomplished together for the cause of Christ with North American Missionaries. Ask them how missionaries can better strengthen their churches so that Polish Nationals can plant other churches.
What is your vision that you see the missionaries contributing to?
What do Polish churches need from N.A. missionaries? How can authentic partnerships develop? How can Polish leaders develop more accountability?
What should missionaries do more of? What should they stop doing?
1. Are North Americans truly helping? Or do Poles feel pressure to partner with them since the higher-ups in the Union tell them to?
What do you feel is the role of the American missionary? Where can the American missionary best be used to advance the gospel in Poland?
Why would they like a partnership? What are their expectations? Do they have a time frame in mind? If they've already had one or more partnership, what would they do differently in the future?
How we can better serve the Polish church in humility and cooperation. How they can give better direction and support for us.
What was their first thought(s) when a NA missionary came to them to offer help in his context (church or denominational)? What were HONESTLY their inward (maybe unspoken) expectations from this possible partnership? How do you think NA missionaries have helped or have "destroyed" ministry of churches around them? Do you think money was a big issue for them to be trusted or not?
expectations, past disappointments
What makes the best/worst missionary? Do they feel the missionaries they have worked with have understood them (Polish people)? How long would they estimate it takes for the average North American missionary to be trusted? If there was one thing a missionary could do to earn their trust what would that be? Do they feel that North American missionaries are a help or hindrance? Why or why not?
What is their primary purpose in wanting to work with missionaries? What do they hope to gain? What do they hope to give?
Frequency of Contact. Content of conversations. Feel of the relationship. Attention giving to spiritual life in the relationship. Transparency of discussion in relationship. Vulnerability with regard to emotions, spiritual life, struggles, -- how vital is the relationship and does it go to the heart. Or is it functional only. More could be said. I also think this question needs to be simplified.
What, in your opinion, is the purpose of North American missionaries?
What makes a good missionary - Spirit or credentials? What would help you work better with missionaries? What would be the ideal missionary for you? [personal message deleted]
In what way could N. American missionaries best support their work?
yes
1) How can current missionaries improve their relationship with the church so that they can better work with the church to fulfill its role in spreading the kingdom? 2) What should new missionaries do/avoid doing in order not to repeat the mistakes of their predecessors? 3) What should foreign missionaries understand about the church in Poland?

Table 36. Missionary questions for Polish church leaders

How can they help you the most? Is our presence a help or hindrance? Would having a job description for each missionary, as defined by the local church, be beneficial in developing the partnership?
All these same questions vice versa
What positive experiences have you had with North American Missionaries, and what contributed to those experiences? What reservations would you have about working with a North American Missionary? In what ways have N.A. Missionaries served your church, and in what ways would you like them to? If you could describe your ideal church, what would it look like and how could a missionary help you create it?
In what ways could they help the missions/missionaries be better partners? Where can they imagine partnering with others (sending workers out of Poland) in missions?
What kind of friendships have they been able to build?
How can we serve you better? Are North American missionaries needed if so what qualities and character would you like to see in missionaries that come to the field?
In partnering with North American missionaries in what ways did you incorporate the vision, passion and giftedness of the missionaries into your overall vision and strategy? What did you learn from partnering with missionaries that would make a partnership more effective?
Ask them to be really honest about how missionaries have helped or not in the past and how they can genuinely help in the days ahead.
What expectations they have from us and if we are being helpful to them and the Polish church.
Describe a positive experience and what made it positive; a negative experience and what made it negative. What principles should guide these relationships?
These same questions. Also how North Americans can do a better job at partnership with them. For most missionaries, they really do want to serve & be effective.
What their barriers are to partnering with NA missionaries as in the questions you asked us in this survey.
How can we help? What should be avoided? Limitations in time. Don't assume they want help from missionaries.
What builds healthy cooperation, working relationships and friendship? What hinders or detracts from building such relationships? How can missionaries help you reach the goals and mission you and your church (organization) have set?
In what ways have missionaries hindered the church in growing and in what ways have missionaries contributed to its growth?
What kind of people do they want and need to partner with? What are their expectations of us? Are those expectations being met? What kinds of problems have they had with missionaries? What has worked well for them in partnering? What have western missionaries brought to their joint ministry? What have their relationships with missionaries meant to them? Are missionaries from different countries different to work with, ex. harder, easier etc.? What do they think about American "programs"/agendas? Ask some direct questions about money and funding. Why do they partner with missionaries - what are the benefits? Problems?
Do they trust us?

APPENDIX I

POLISH LEADERS' DESCRIPTIONS OF MISSIONARY RELATIONSHIPS WITH NATIONAL DENOMINATION

Table 37. Polish leaders' descriptions of missionary relationships with national denominations (from survey)

Rather good. They try to adept to the goals of the local church and they help realize a common vision.
average quality of relationships
Very positive, helpful, encouraging
Good
Good
Very good
It's moderately advanced
In my experience, missionaries were loyal toward the denomination
lacking in interdependence
varied depending on missionary and denomination
contract

Table 38. Polish leaders' descriptions of missionary relationships with national denominations (from interviews)

There isn't always a relationship. If there is, it is very weak. More likely to be a relationship with a specific local church or pastor, than with a denomination. The denomination is more likely to simply serve to approve. Missionaries should try to have better relationships with the denominations. To have fruitful relationships.
Different ways. In the '90s, they were very good. Many missionaries helped. Later, the relationships were not as good. Especially, they weren't precisely defined, especially between Polish and American organizations. Especially their goal – why are they here? They have been helpful for Poland. Especially important is cooperation with Polish institutions, in order to craft a common front in Poland. A missionary may be effective but isn't always looked at as critically. An example is "evangelicalism." "Evangelicalism" did not arise from Poles. "Evangelicalism" is not Polish.
There are missionaries who come with their rules that often don't work in Slavic countries. There are missionaries who listen and try to help and do not force their own agenda.
It is important that a missionary be cognizant of the fact that he should be under the authority of a denomination. He has support from his mission, but he shouldn't think more highly of himself than he ought to think. 1 Thessalonians 1 applies here – Paul's example. It is good if there is transparency. He should communicate his vision. Others might not have that vision, but he might be able to share the vision with others.
At the beginning, there was no relationship, because our church wasn't in a denomination. The relationship was based on partnership, close, common searching for goals, that are goals for the

<p>Table 38. Polish leaders' descriptions of missionary relationships with national denominations (from interviews) church in Poland. Sometimes, missionaries have their own goals, and they aren't always goals for the whole church, or local assembly. This is how it was with mission agencies before, but it is better now.</p>
<p>It is rather based on task, instead of denominationalism. There might be involvement in the structure, but not always. Sometimes there is independence. There is a strong stigmatism – “he belongs to us.” Sometimes, with short-termers, there is the question, “Why are they here? What are they doing?” It looks more like a cultural exchange. They came – and they left.</p>
<p>Relationships are varied. In part, wonderful relationships, better even than with Polish people. Some missionaries hide out, and it is difficult to find them. They have their rules from their agency, not from Poland. I have more positive than negative experiences. It is a question of the faith community they were raised in – were they independent, or did they learn how to work together and build relationships. Building relationships is very important.</p>
<p>Very occasional. From our denomination I haven't had any close contacts.</p>
<p>I don't have a lot of experience. Generally, positive. Since 1998, one couple has been a very positive influence, and left a good impression. I had good contacts with representatives from the U.S. under communism, as well. They opened doors. I've had other friends since 1993, or that served from 1994-1998. They also left a good impression. This helped build a good base for others.</p>

APPENDIX J

POLISH LEADERS' DESCRIPTIONS OF MISSIONARY RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE LOCAL CHURCH

Table 39. Polish leaders' descriptions of missionary relationships with the local church (from survey)

Profitable for the local fellowship. Serve for the good of the fellowship.
Average quality of relationships
Correct and positive
Adequate for the role they filled
Very good
Very good
Is based on common effort and good relationships
Missionaries supported the work of the local church, especially in mission and evangelism. Two trained leaders. Missionaries built relationships with church members
The missionary's plans did not fit in with the church's plans
Varied, this probably depends on the missionary
Partnership

Table 40. Polish leaders' descriptions of missionary relationships with the local church (from interviews)

Depends on the local church and the missionary. Usually, it is more a specific relationship with a person
More likely to be short-term. They may come and do great teaching or camps. Not for long. I remember one who came, invited by the local church. From the Polish point of view, the local church does a better job building a relationship. It is better to build it with a local church.
Good, especially with missionaries who have been here a long time. But many times missionaries, even those who are here for years, are continually outsiders, and their lifestyle is different. The relationships between the mission agency and Polish institution should be more defined. Especially in conflict situations, the missionary can just say "I don't work for you."
It is good to adapt to the people with whom you serve. To the place and the people. Some live in such a way as to promote jealousy. Nice cars and apartments, frequent trips to restaurants, etc. It is especially important to live like others live. Romans 12 is our rule, here. This might be a dilemma for missionaries, pastors, and other believers. It is necessary to spend time with people.
Similar to denominations, but the relationships are more with specific people. The missionary becomes a part of a local church. This was my experience, but I know it isn't always like this. The independence of missionaries is sometimes a problem. The question is, how much should the missionary assimilate into a Polish church. If he is part of the church, he has a better chance to be effective in working together. He should demonstrate loyalty. Poles are not able to work closely with independent contractors. The missionary should build close relationships.
One missionary's work led to a split, to a revolution, even. The relationships are usually good, up

Table 40. Polish leaders' descriptions of missionary relationships with the local church (from interviews)

until the time that they run out of ideas. The relationship is good, until conflict arises about their work or place in the local church. The missionary forgets that he is on a mission - he is here to serve, to help
A little better than with the denominations. If someone is involved in a local church, the cooperation is better. I know one example of a language school and a local church. The two ministries needed to separate. The maturity of the leaders from both sides was important. It can be a problem when Poles don't feel needed anymore. It is good if a missionary can work and influence the whole country, but it is probably better when he can be closely connected with a local church, and can be submissive to the church.
They are able to visit many churches. Positive relationships. They are on the front lines, and do a lot of good. On our board, we have two missionaries, and we work well together.
The same as with the denominations

APPENDIX K

POLISH LEADERS' DESCRIPTIONS OF PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH MISSIONARIES

Table 41. Polish leaders' descriptions of personal relationships with missionaries (from survey)

Very good. I did not meet with a bad example. They were an encouragement and help for me
Varied relationships – difficult to use a single definition
Close, sincere, relationships of close friends.
sincere, close friends
Very good
Very good
It's very good. Frequent contacts and exchange of information
Toward me, missionaries were loyal and we were connected by friendship and trust
Rather good and partnering
Very good
Friendship (not close)

Table 42. Polish leaders' descriptions of personal relationships with missionaries (from interviews)

I tried to build closer relationships with missionaries. Some of the missionaries tried to build them with me, some didn't. I think some were afraid they would have to work more. Their jobs were defined by their agencies, not by the Polish church. It depends on the agency and their expectations.
Depends on the missionary, on "chemistry," on personal wishes. I value the fact that someone goes on a mission. I respect that. In the beginning, it is difficult to deal with the cultural differences or the expectations from the mission agency. It would be good, if the agency allowed them more flexibility. Opportunities to serve quickly after arriving are good. Many missionaries came right after the fall of communism, but the agencies and missionaries didn't know what to do, and missionaries burned out. It's too bad that missionaries are going to other countries now, because I think we need them even more now. Their experience is very valuable. We need their strategies and ability to work against the chaos here, to lead good schools, and courses. They could help the most now by passing on their know-how to Polish leaders.
Similar to denominations and local churches. Depends on the mission agency and its policies.
We had similar interests beyond ministry. It is good to have time to plan together. It is good to communicate on the same frequency.
When I needed encouragement, I met a couple from the U.S. They were a great help and encouragement. They were a spiritual help for me. What I do today, I do thanks to them. They left Poland, but I still have a relationship with them. This is a lifelong relationship.
Good, very good. Encouraging. Teaching. Humbling. I would continue to work with

Table 42. Polish leaders' descriptions of personal relationships with missionaries (from interviews)

missionaries, and build new relationships. Even when it was difficult, when there was conflict, it turned out well in the end – for both sides. There was a building of relationships and other possibilities.
85-90% very positive memories. The problems were rather because of personalities. Both sides must yield space for ministering and thinking differently. It isn't always in reality the way the missionary or the Pole thinks it is. As long as God is glorified. I have experienced encouragement and understanding from missionaries.
The relationships were varied. Some were my mentors. We had a deep friendship – beautiful. Other relationships were more accidental, and those relationships never became that deep. In my city, a group of missionaries had their own services, went on trips together, etc. On the hand this was positive, for them, but on the other hand it seemed they were always leaving the Poles out of their group. Sometimes missionaries don't submit to the rigor that Poles must.
Sincere, close friendships. The relationships began with sharp conflict, because of cultural differences. The missionary tried to force American rules, without explaining why. One missionary inspired me. With another couple, I had a very warm relationship.

APPENDIX L

POLISH LEADERS' DESCRIPTIONS OF BIGGEST CHALLENGES TO PARTNERSHIP

Table 43. Polish leaders' descriptions of biggest challenges to partnership (from survey)

The ability to search for God's will, in a local church, and to be flexible, in order to do it.
American colonialism
Language, culture
Learning culture, understanding the needs and expectations
Developing a common vision that serves to grow the church in Poland
For the missionary to learn the cultural context – although we are inundated with Western culture, we want to build ministry that is culturally relevant
Cultural differences, including lifestyle choices. Agency rules that don't fit the Polish reality.
Common goals and methods of realizing them
Interdependence, value for both sides
Cultural differences, lack of clarity of vision from North American mission agencies for Polish churches.
The continually changing Polish reality, and increasingly higher expectations of missionaries

Table 44. Polish leaders' descriptions of biggest challenges to partnership (from interviews)

Cultural differences. Language. Customs. Some mission agencies are more sensitive than others. Larger agencies seem to be less sensitive than smaller ones. For the larger agencies, the agency seems to be more important than local relationships.
Cultural challenges. Sometimes the Polish church and Americans say or write the same thing, but the cultural filter changes the understanding. In the Polish church, we do a lot with hard soil – someone comes along from the outside and says, “wow, come on, we can do this. We have cash. We can do it!” This can be encouraging, but we have learned to keep our distance from this. But we do need the greater vision. This is not a result of a lack of humility, but because of the cultural filters. For instance, when a Pole says “I have no money,” it means something different from when a Western European says it, or when an American says this.
Frequently, missionaries are well-trained theologically. But not always very well-trained to learn language and culture. Americans know what they want to do, and do it. There are organizations that have a “wonderful plan for Poles.” They have greater difficulty than those that have a plan, but invite others to join, or those who come alongside Poles, and help them with their vision. Organizations that concentrate on results or “the next best model” are not as helpful. The best are those who came to live, and who learn the language well.
The language barrier. Cultural barrier. Those who have larger problems with the language, or less of a desire to learn it have problems entering Polish culture. If you can't learn the language, you can't learn the culture. Cultural sensitivity. These aren't huge problems, but it makes

Table 44. Polish leaders' descriptions of biggest challenges to partnership (from interviews)

cooperation easier. We also are different in our work style in church. Missionaries are used to certain things. It may be frustrating for them because of the differences.
The need for good communication, and frequent meetings.
The cultural context. The goal for which the missionary came. His vision and what he wants to teach people. Working together, thanks to experiences and being impartial. His vision – why did he come? To do his own thing, reach his own goal? There is also an expectation that he will help, include financially
Understanding in what place the Polish church is. Not just politically and economically. A commonly understood answer to the question “How Christian really is this country?” Especially referring to the Roman Catholic Church in Poland. Is it really Christian? A common understanding of the missionary’s role here. What is his main role?
Cultural differences. Poland has a specific tradition. It’s hard to bring in new traditions. This is more obvious in Catholic Poland. Everything that has happened in Poland since the 19 th century has been connected to the Catholic Church. Protestants are seen as German. Evangelicals are seen as Western, American. The knowledge of evangelicalism is growing, but it is not very common in the Polish awareness. Agencies have a difficult time, because the results are small. Evangelicalism is not growing, nor is the quality really getting any better. It’s a good question – has the cooperation between Polish churches and North American missionaries really helped? In the 90’s, yes. Now, not so much.
Patience – most needed from those who are the most mature. Especially if things are going too slowly. The question of “multiplication” is an odd question here. Simple “addition” would be wonderful.

APPENDIX M

POLISH LEADERS' QUESTIONS FOR MISSIONARIES

Table 45. Polish leader's questions for missionaries (from survey)

Are they able to be servants?
Ask about their readiness to conform to Polish work condition, and Polish quality of life.
Cooperation with pastors
Why are they in that specific church? What is their role? What kind of plans and vision do they have?
Ask about their deepest motivations and love for the country in which they serve.
Do they agree to be "Jews for the Jews, and for the Poles, become Polish?" Are they ready to accept a standard of life that fits the community they want to reach with the Gospel? Are they ready to willingly submit to restrictions (sometimes as a result of the spiritual immaturity of the people they serve) in order to fulfill the ministry they received from God?
Are they ready to adapt themselves to the cultural and intellectual realities in this country?
Czy czujecie się akceptowani przez zborowników? Do you feel accepted by church members?
How much do they feel a part of the agency, and how much a part of the church?
What is the vision they want to complete? Can they adapt to the church's vision, or are they dependent, and how much so, on their agency?
Calling to ministry, and practical preparation, whether learning culture, language, customs, and the like.

Table 46. Polish leader's questions for missionaries (from interviews)

About their calling. Their awareness of their calling. Their readiness to learn their place in cooperation with local leaders.
What is their vision? How long do they want to be here? We hear many wonderful promises, but the actions don't agree later. A frequent question for missionaries: What are they really doing? Sometimes it seems that they aren't doing anything.
Are they prepared for change? Do they have an inflexible plan?
When and what do they want to see? Many missionaries come with a plan, it doesn't work, they stay too long, and blame everyone else and circumstances for the fact that they came, didn't fulfill their vision, and left without seeing it accomplished.
About their motivation. Verifying that motivation. That they would ask themselves: "What is the goal of my ministry?" "Does it serve the growth of the Kingdom in Poland?" Ask about their love for Poland and Poles. We are not easy recipients. Unconditional love is necessary. That they would ask: "Do we really minister to others? And do we really want to?"
Are they ready to adapt to the Polish reality? Are they ready to identify with Poles? Are they ready to become Poles for Poles? Are they able to learn the language, thinking and life style of Poles? How well-prepared are they professionally as missionaries? How well prepared are they to be especially effective workers? I am amazed at retirees who come as missionaries, but they

Table 46. Polish leader's questions for missionaries (from interviews)

lack competence.
Why here? Why did you come here? A vision of the end – what would you like to leave behind you when you leave Poland? A renewing of their vision, what tasks do they want to accomplish?
About the level of their commitment. What is their attitude and devotion? Is it a short-term or a long-term commitment? Do they want to build relationships? If it is short-term, then be clear about your intentions, for instance if it is just for one project. If it is long-term, build relationships. Poles lack the pragmatism that Americans have.
What is their commitment like? I know people who have come and are prepared to live until death here, to spend their entire lives here. How much can a person give of their heart for another nation? To what extent are they able to identify with Poland? What is their call? Sometimes no one knows what the role of the missionary is. The agency and the church may have expectations, but what does he have in his heart? Maybe it is to do whatever is necessary, whatever the church wants. But maybe he has his own vision in his heart.

APPENDIX N

HELPS FOR MISSIONARIES TO POLAND

Language Helps:

There are Polish language schools in most of the larger cities in Poland. Below is a partial list:

Warsaw and Sopot: The Centre for Polish Studies. <http://www.learnpolish.edu.pl/>. This school offers a wide range of options, including an e-learning course.

Krakow: School of Polish Language and Culture of the Jagiellonian University http://www.plschool.uj.edu.pl/en_GB/. This is probably the most well-known Polish language school, and I believe trained most missionaries who arrived before 1995.
International School of Polish Language and Culture. <http://www.polishcourse.org/>
Varia Polish Language Center <http://www.varia-course.com/>

Lublin: The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin (KUL) School of Polish Language and Culture <http://www.kul.pl/the-school-of-polish-language-and-culture,11638.html>. This school trained a large number of missionaries between 1995 and 2005. Many missionaries still consider it to be the best.

Poznań, Wrocław, Gdańsk, Łódź, and other major cities: Most large universities now have a School of Polish Language and Culture. KUL and Jagiellonian are probably the oldest, most respected programs, but many options now exist.

Histories of Poland:

Davies, Norman. *God's Playground: A History of Poland, vol. 1 and 2*. New York: Columbia University Press. 2005. This is a huge work – each volume is 600 pages. However, it is considered to be the best English language history of Poland. If you can, use the 2005 edition. Davies originally wrote *God's Playground* in 1984, but he included additional chapters in further editions, to cover the fall of communism and end of the twentieth century. If you plan to spend your career in Poland – be familiar with this book.

Zamoyski, Adam. *Poland: A History*. London: Harper Press. 2009. I bought Zamoyski's history to use with this thesis, and I'm glad I discovered it. Easy to read, well-researched, short enough to finish in under a month (unlike Davies'); this history is the one that you must read, even if you just serve in Poland for a few months.

Sources for Cultural Studies:

Eurostat. <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/eurostat/home>. The home for everything official and statistical about the countries in the European Union.

Eurobarometer http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm. Public opinion analysis sector of the European Union.

World Values Survey. <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/> Comparative analyses of global political and sociocultural change.

Polish Central Statistical Office: http://www.stat.gov.pl/gus/index_ENG_HTML.htm.

University of Finance and Management, Council for Social Monitoring.
<http://www.diagnoza.com/index-en.html>. Social diagnosis in Poland, including values and beliefs. Most reports are in Polish.

I did an ethnographic study in Poland in 2011. The study can be accessed from my web site:
<http://missionsineurope.com/2013/04/04/ethnographic-study-of-poland-i/>.

Sokol, Laura Klos. *Shortcuts to Poland*. International Publishing Service. 2005. (Second Edition)

Miller, Stuart. *Understanding Europeans*. Avalon Travel Publishing. 1996. (Second Edition).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

“Christian Bible Institute Established in Poland in Conjunctions with TCM International.”

Christian Standard (May, 1993): 18.

“Missions Cooperate on Poland Project.” *Christian Standard* (January, 1993): 3.

Wyznanie Religijne, Stowarzyszenia Narodowościowe i Etniczne w Polsce 2009-2011 [Churches, Denominations as well as National and Ethnic Associations in Poland 2009-2011], Central Statistical Office, Warsaw.

http://www.stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbcr/gus/oz_wyznania_religijne_stow_nar_i_etn_w_pol_2009-2011.pdf. (accessed July 14, 2013).

Anderson, Nate, and Leah Seppanen Anderson. “Under Reconstruction : How Eastern Europe’s Evangelicals Are Restoring the Church’s Vitality.” *Christianity Today* (October, 2005): 72-77.

Bajko, Paweł. *Z dziejów kościoła chrystusowego w Polsce*. [From the acts of the Christian Church in Poland]. Bel Air, MD: Polish Christian Ministries. 2001.

Birnie, John. *Great Oaks from Little Acorns: The Origin and Development of SGA [UK]*. Eastbourne, East Sussex: Slavic Gospel Association (UK) Ltd. 2010.

Boss, Larry. “We Are in Poland.” *Alliance Life* (November, 1993): 14-15.

Burnell, Joel. *Poetry, Providence and Patriotism: Polish Messianism in Dialogue with Dietrich Bonhoeffer*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications. 2009.

Cupiał, Dariusz. *Na drodze ewangelizacji i ekumenii: Ruch Światło–Życie w służbie jedności chrześcijan* [On the road of evangelism and ecumenism: The Light–Life movement In the service of Christian unity], Lublin: KUL, 1996.

- Davies, Norman. *God's Playground: A History of Poland, vol. 1: The Origins to 1795*. New York: Columbia University Press. 1984.
- Gajewski, Wojciech and Krzysztof Wawrzeniuk. "A Historic and Theological Analysis of the Pentecostal Church of Poland." *The Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association*. Vol. XX, (2000): 30-48
- Gajewski, Wojciech. "Dynamika ewangelikalizmu polskiego. Krytyczne spojrzenie z uwzględnieniem perspektywy pentekostalnej." [Dynamics of Polish evangelicalism. A critical look taking into account the Pentecostal perspective]. In *Ewangelikalny protestantyzm w Polsce u progu XXI Stulecia*. [Evangelical Protestantism at the Threshold of the 21st Century]. Warsaw: WBST and Katowice: Credo. (2004): 83-95.
- Grzymała-Moszczyńska, Halina. "Proselytism in Poland." *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*. Vol. 36. Nos. 1-2. (Winter-Spring 1999): 94-115
- Hostetler, Paul. *History Makers: Church Planting Vision for the 21st Century*. Skórczewo: ASCP Polska. 2008
- Jones, Lawrence N. "An American Pentecostal Mission to Poland in 1989." in *Christianity and Hegemony: Religion and Politics on the Frontiers of Social Change*. Ann Arbor: Berg. (1992): 273-301
- Klingsmith, Scott. *Missions Beyond the Wall: Factors in the Rise of Missionary Sending Movements in East-Central Europe*. Nürnberg: VTR Publications. 2012.
- Kutcel, Kevin. "Growing a Unified Church in Poland." *Alliance Life May* (May, 1999): 20-21.
- LaTourette, Kenneth Scott. *A History of Christianity, vol. 1: Beginnings to 1500*. Peabody, MA: Prince Press. 1975.

- Mandryk, Jason. *Operation World: The Definitive Prayer Guide to Every Nation*. Colorado Springs, CO: Biblica Publishing. 2010.
- Pasak, Zbigniew. "Wspólnoty ewangelikalne we współczesnej Polsce." [Evangelical fellowships in contemporary Poland]. In *Ewangelikalny Protestantyzm w Polsce u Progu XXI Stulecia. [Evangelical Protestantism in Poland at the Threshold of the 21st Century]*. Zieliński, T.J., ed., Warszawa: WBST and Katowice: Credo. (2004): 13-48.
- Pawłowicz, Zygmunt. *Kościół i sekty w Polsce*. [Church and Sects in Poland]. Gdańsk: Stella Maris. 1996.
- Peperkamp, Esther. "Being a Christian the Catholic Way: Protestant and Catholic Versions of the Jesus Film and the Evangelization of Poland." *Postscripts* 1, no. 2-3 (August 1, 2005): 351-374.
- Scott, David Hill. "Evangelicals and Catholics Really Together in Poland, 1975-1982." *Fides Et Historia Winter 2002* (January 1, 2002): 89-109.
- Scott, David. "The Pope We Never Knew : the Unknown Story of How John Paul II Ushered Campus Crusade into Catholic Poland." *Christianity Today* (May 1, 2005): 34-38.
- Stachowski, Zbigniew. "The Polish Church and John Paul II's Evangelization Mission in Slavic Countries." *Religious Studies and Theology*. Vol. 27. No. 1 (2008): 115-125
- Tennant, Agnieszka. "The Ultimate Language Lesson." *Christianity Today*. (December, 2002). <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2002/december9/1.32.html>. (accessed May 2, 2013).
- Torgimson, Sheri. "The Cross, Culture and Friendship." *Alliance Life* (July 1, 2001). 28-29.
- Tranda, Bogdan. "The Situation of Protestants in Today's Poland." *Religion in Communist Lands* 19, no. 1-2 (June 1, 1991): 37-44.

Tymiński, Michał. *Kościół zielonoświątkowy w Polsce*. [The Pentecostal Church in Poland].

Cieszyn: Misja Życie. 1999.

Zamoyski, Adam. *Poland: A History*. London: Harper Press. 2009.

Zieliński, Tadeusz. "Wprowadzenie: Pytanie o przyszłość ewangelikalizmu polskiego."

[Introduction: questioning the future of polish evangelicalism]. In *Ewangelikalny Protestantyzm w Polsce u Progu XXI Stulecia*. [Evangelical Protestantism in Poland at the Threshold of the 21st Century]. Zieliński, T.J., ed., Warszawa: WBST and Katowice: Credo. (2004): 9-11.

Zwierzchowski, Zbigniew. "Between the Wars: Golden Years for Polish Baptists." *Baptistic Theologies*. Prague: IBTS. Vol. 1. No. 1. (Spring 2009): 86-101.