

But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all Judaea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. [Acts 1:8]



November 2011

The Recorder

Inside - this month . . .

Pastoral letter	2	Church family & Life	5, 7, 10, 11
Services & Rotas	3	CWM	8 - 9
What's on?	4	Prayer Page	12
Commitment for Life	6		

An edited version of this magazine is available on the Church Website.

(Personal details are NOT included)

Church website: <http://www.trinity-urc.org.uk>

Trinity - A Family Church

Worshipping together - Caring for one another - Sharing with others

Dear Friends,

Thank you to those who have been praying for Bernie and me as we have been visiting the United Church in Papua New Guinea during the last nine weeks. We are grateful to God for all that we have experienced. It has been a time of great blessing for us. In this letter I'd like to give you a flavour of the very different communities that we have been with, by sketching briefly each Sunday morning.

Our first Sunday was spent in Singapore. A 15 minute walk from our hotel took us to Orchard Road Presbyterian Church. The service was already underway, but we were hospitably escorted to our seats in the crowded church. There were about 500 people there, and, we later learnt, another 2 – 300 in an overflow hall. Almost everyone was Chinese, and the majority were young. The preacher was a URC minister, Revd Derek Kingston! Derek worked with this church for many years through CWM. He left in the late 1990's and served in the URC before retiring a few years ago. Orchard Road Presbyterian Church had asked him to come back for 6 months to help out. It was an uplifting service.

A week later we were in a very different situation in the South Mendi circuit of the Highlands Region of the United Church in Papua New Guinea. As we arrived at the village of Yagen, HQ of the circuit, we were met by Women's Fellowship ladies in uniform, who led us to the church, singing. It was the circuit's annual Thanksgiving Service. Each congregation presented a money offering for the work of the church, with special songs and speeches.

Week 3 saw us worshipping with the congregation we had been part of for many years, Mendi Town. It was Father's Day. Bernie preached and I led prayers. We also both got pulled in to impromptu men's and women's choirs! Children and young people contributed to worship with songs and dances. It was great to be back.

On the 4th Sunday we travelled south again, and I was honoured to be asked to conduct the confirmation of a pastor into 'full status' as he had successfully completed his 3 year probation. Pastor Julias is one of 12 young men from the coast who responded to a plea from the Highlands to come and help with the shortage of pastors.

Week 5 took us to Kip, in the Lai Valley, where we had lived from 1974 – 1978. It is a hauntingly beautiful place, but hard to get to. The church is thriving under strong local leadership. As in Yagen (week 2) the church building is new, but not quite finished. Building projects here are often 'paused' whilst more funds are raised. A bit like our Revive project.

For week 6 we were in Nipa, about 2 hours drive from Mendi on the 'highway', a stone surface road that has multiple potholes and fantastic scenery! The service was held out of doors because 3 circuits were coming together to meet us, that's about 20 – 30 congregations. It included a drama showing a young man's hunger for the Word of God.

By week 7 we had left the Highlands. We were in a college near the coastal town of Rabaul that had been destroyed by volcanic eruptions in 1994. The students are studying for certificates in Chaplaincy, and in Community Leadership. They sat on the floor, women one side, men the other. This was by far the smallest congregation we worshipped with, but it made up for that with their commitment and enthusiasm.

Week 8 found us on the Papuan coast, worshipping with the people of Keapara village, where the arrival of Dr William Lawes of the London Missionary Society on 5th April 1876 is marked by a memorial stone. There were between 200 and 300 children in the Sunday School. The people here love to sing and dance, and do so with great power and grace.

Our 9th Sunday was spent in the capital, Port Moresby. We went to 'The Sione Kami Memorial Church'. There were about 3,000 people in worship that morning. Sione Kami was a minister from Tonga who worked with us in the Highlands before transferring to Moresby. He was a gifted evangelist, and much loved leader in the United Church.

And so ... week 10, and back with you at Trinity. One Church, one Faith, one Lord.



Minister : Rev Dr Gwen Collins e-mail: gwen@trinity-urc.org.uk

Church Secretary : Mrs Sue Saunders, e-mail: secretary@trinity-urc.org.uk

November Services

Sunday Morning Worship at 10:30am - led by the Minister (unless otherwise stated)

- Nov. 6 Holy Communion
- Nov. 13 Remembrance Sunday
- Nov. 20 All age worship, led by Amersham Free Church Worship Team
- Nov. 27 Advent Sunday

Rotas for November

Not included in this version

What's on in November



Nov 21st or 28th Tales from a River Cruise - Lesley B
(Hostess - Lesley B)

WOMEN'S MEETING

Tuesday 1st Nov Poems and Readings - November & Autumn
 Tuesday 8th Nov Communion Service for Remembrance Week - taken by
 Rev Dr Gwen Collins
 Tuesday 15th Nov Bucks (3)
 Tuesday 22nd Nov Ann Lathrope - R.O.P.E
 Tuesday 29th Nov John Standfield - DVD of Tuscany
 Bring & Buy



All meetings start at 2.30 in the Lower Schoolroom (unless otherwise advised)

Diary Dates

November 12th Coffee Morning in aid of "Children in Need"
 15th Church Meeting
 25th/26th 24/7 Prayer for High Wycombe
 26th Coffee Morning
 27th Praise Service
 29th Elders Meeting



November 2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Not included in this version



For some time now I have been sending old ink cartridges to an organisation which processed them on behalf of Christian Aid. They no longer work with that charity, so I will now be asking them to support **Act4Africa** instead - details below.

Angus

Act4Africa is a health education charity which delivers HIV and AIDs Education and Behavioural Change Programmes in an effort to arrest the AIDS pandemic which is threatening a whole continent. The goal is to deliver interactive HIV & AIDS Prevention Education Programmes, primarily using performance arts and sports. Also, to challenge cultural behaviours, provide love and comfort to those impacted by AIDS and reduce the threat of HIV & AIDS in Africa.



ZIMBABWE

I-stories: 20 months on

It is now one year and eight months since Christian Aid's partner the Student Christian Movement of Zimbabwe (SCMZ) launched the I-stories booklet. This booklet shared the experiences of both survivors and perpetrators of 2008's politically motivated violence – much of which involved youth gangs at a community level. With support from Christian Aid, the booklet was printed and distributed nationwide through SCMZ groups in schools, colleges and universities to its 5,000 members and beyond.

'The booklet has become an important tool for discussions and dialogue, used by every SCMZ branch in their study circles and dialogue meetings' says Douglas Tigere, SCMZ staff member and the person who conceived of the I-stories project. According to Douglas, the positive response to, and demand for, the booklet has been 'overwhelming'.

Douglas describes the process of sharing the stories as having been 'humbling' and emotional. *'At one meeting in the city of Mutare, I personally was moved to tears; it was really painful to see someone sobbing as he narrated his ordeal during the 2008 Elections'* he says, explaining, *'it is sad to note that in some instances the idea of revisiting one's experiences has opened wounds and some have not liked this idea, especially those who have been beaten, abused or experienced the harshest inhumane treatment because of their belief in democracy.'*

Witnessing such grief, says Douglas, has helped him understand that for some the act of sharing their experiences proves too painful. 'I realised that this process takes time and people respond in different ways' he says. Yet he reports that those who appeared in the booklet have expressed gratitude to SCMZ at the opportunity to be involved. (second part of this article about I stories will appear next month)

BANGLADESH

Christian Aid update: Emergency floods

In August, heavy monsoon rains in the Satkhira and Khulna districts in southwest Bangladesh have forced 700,000 people to flee their homes following the worst flooding to hit the area in eight years.

People have fled their homes and have moved into schools and cyclone shelters. In the worst affected areas people have lost everything and have no way of making a living as fish and shrimp farms have been destroyed and they have no seeds to replant.

The whole of Bangladesh faces a shortage in vegetables as the Khulna district, which is one of the worst affected areas, is one of the main vegetable growing regions of Bangladesh and seeds stored in nurseries in there have been destroyed. With funding from DFID Christian Aid has been working with other agencies to reach the most vulnerable.

Christian Aid's response

Christian Aid partners the Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh (CCCB) and Shushilan have significant experience in responding to floods and have begun delivering food and other items by boat to areas impossible to reach by road. Food, temporary shelter and hygiene kits are currently being delivered to more than five thousand households in the Satkhira district. Christian Aid is distributing fresh drinking water and purification tablets as boreholes and other water sources have been inundated by flood water, contaminating the water supply.

People are suffering

Mostafa Nuruzzaman, Director of Christian Aid partner Shushilan, says 'People are suffering. This year's floods are worse than previous years. We have received more than 50% more rain this year. 'It has been raining continuously for the last 10 days. Many of the roads are flooded. People have left their homes because they are flooded and are living in schools, cyclone shelters, and on the road.

'People are unlikely to be able to return home until November or December because of the water logging. Women and children are particularly badly affected.'

Long term recovery

People have lost their crops which will affect their recovery from the floods. In many areas this is the main harvest season, and so people could suffer from food shortages for the next nine months. As many houses are made of mud, when the flood waters came, they were washed away. The floods could continue for the next month, meaning people will have to remain in temporary shelters for several months.

Enable Young People in Buckinghamshire to Make Drug Free Choices!



It's time to take action to prevent binge drinking and other drug-related problems in Buckinghamshire! Hope UK, a national Christian drug prevention charity, is setting up a team of 10 (or more!) voluntary drug educators from churches across the county. Could you be one of them? The **FREE** and **accredited training** programme will start as soon as possible. If you're interested please contact Ian Michell: on 020 7928 0848, or at i.michell@hopeuk.org

YOUR Church needs Drivers



Following a change in the local Sunday bus timetable there is now an even greater need for volunteers to bring people to church on a Sunday. Do you pass anybody listed below that you would be prepared to pick up on a Sunday morning? Please help if you can, even if only occasionally. Many of those who already help with transport have other commitments on a Sunday morning,

hence the need for more volunteers. Some families are bringing two cars to church so as to help with picking up folk. The streets involved are:-

St Hughe's Avenue
St Hughe's Avenue
Chichester Court
London Road
London Road
Downley
Lucas Road

Is there anybody who would be prepared to organise a rota of all the volunteers?

Please contact me if you would like any more information. Sue

Reform Magazines for 2012

I soon have to renew Trinity's yearly group subscription for the 'Reform' magazine. 'Reform' for anyone not in the know is the monthly magazine of the United Reformed Church. Some regular monthly contents at the moment include features on a number of topics, an interview, letters, news, bible study, book reviews, a column by an Eco Gardener and even a puzzle page!

The cost for the year is £20.00 for 11 issues. (July and August are published as one copy.) Would anyone wishing to place an order please contact me by the

6 November. If you would like to see a copy to help you decide, please let me know. All present subscribers should have received an order form with their October copy of 'Reform'. If you wish to pay by cheque please make it payable to 'Mrs K. Evans'.

If you decide at a later date you would like to receive 'Reform' I can place an order for you at any time during the year.

Thank you.

Kay E



Leprosy makes a comeback

Mamysoa realised she had a problem after she stepped too close to the fire. "I burned my foot quite badly, but it hardly hurt at all".

The 20-year-old housekeeper recently became one of five new cases of leprosy that Abdoul Zamandrahengo detects every month

from his tiny public clinic in Antalaha, a small town on Madagascar's east coast.

Zamandrahengo's clinic has become a centre for the treatment of leprosy in the region. "It's my own fault," he told IRIN. "When I came here, I was told there were no new cases. Then I trained environmental workers to look for signs. These rangers go far into the forest and to the remote villages. They tell potential patients as far as 200km away to come to Antalaha and see me."

Leprosy is often called the disease of the poor, as healthy, well-fed people are rarely affected. It is caused by the bacillus, *Mycobacterium leprae*, which are transmitted via droplets, from the nose and mouth.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the disease is not highly infectious but can be spread by living in close quarters with someone who has gone untreated. A weakened immune system caused by poor nutrition and health care can make someone who has been exposed more vulnerable. Without treatment, the disease can cause progressive and permanent damage to the skin, nerves, limbs and eyes.

A surge in new leprosy cases in this remote region of Madagascar could not have come at a worse time. Once a prosperous vanilla-exporting town, Antalaha has suffered the economic consequences of two years of political instability that began with the March 2009 coup in which Andry Rajoelina, with the support of the military, deposed President Marc Ravalomanana. Numerous foreign aid and trade benefits on which the country was heavily reliant, particularly for the funding of social sectors, have since been suspended.

"There is no security, so vanilla planters had their vanilla stolen from their fields. These thieves sold the beans for low prices," said a mayor of one of the communes outside Antalaha who declined to be named. "On the other hand, the price of rice has been going up. One 'kapok' of rice now costs 2,000 ariary [US\$1 for a small tin-full]. Poor people can't afford this."

While people are becoming poorer and more susceptible to illness, the public healthcare system is receiving less money from the government. According to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), government spending for health dropped to US\$2 a person in 2010, compared to \$5 in 2009 and \$8 in 2008. Clinics in remote places like Antalaha are the most likely to suffer from shortages of drugs and medical supplies.

Six to 12 months of treatment with multidrug therapy - a combination of two antibiotics and an anti-inflammatory (medicines that WHO distributes for free) - stops the disease from spreading, but there are other obstacles to overcome.

Eradicated?

The main one, according to medical workers, is that the Malagasy authorities declared that leprosy had been eradicated from the country in 2010, a decision that makes Zamandrahengo fume with frustration.

[continued from page 8]

"This is the work of someone who is behind a desk. Everyone here in the field knows that there are new cases," he told IRIN. "Instead of helping us, they say that I don't know how to diagnose leprosy and that I hand out too much medicine."

Diagnosing the illness can be tricky in a tropical climate that causes many dermatological problems. Another of Zamandrahengo's patients, a 26-year-old farmer presented with a skin problem that initially looked more like a symptom of syphilis, said the doctor. "But he also had bumps around the earlobes and that is a typical sign of leprosy."

At a small dispensary outside town, another health worker who did not wish to be named displayed a school notebook in which he had also recorded leprosy cases. Last year, he referred five new patients to Zamandrahengo. This year, there are already nine. "Please don't write that I said there are new cases here because officially, there aren't any," he said.

Official figures notwithstanding, WHO continues to send drugs to treat the disease to the provinces. "The problem is that they only send the exact amount of treatment for existing cases," said Gregoire Detoef of the Foullereau Foundation, an NGO that works to help leprosy patients all over the country. "So often it takes time for treatment to reach the new patients."

Although the treatment stops the disease from spreading, many leprosy patients need care for the rest of their lives. After losing feeling in affected limbs, people with leprosy often end up with severe wounds on their hands and feet. "A woman who is cooking will just pick up the pot from the fire and burn her hands without noticing," Detoef said. "A man who is walking home can step on sticks and rocks and hurt his feet."

Boiled cloth for a bandage

In addition to medicine to treat the disease, leprosy patients need bandages to dress their wounds. But these basic items are often lacking in health centres. "We went into the villages to show health workers how to dress wounds," said Odile Valat, a French nurse who volunteers for three months a year in the region. "We told them to cut one piece of gauze into eight parts, but they didn't even have one gauze. So then we started with boiling pieces of cloth."

Traditionally, leprosy patients have been housed in special villages and taken care of by local NGOs. "People here know what leprosy is, and they used to ostracize the lepers," said Valat. Now that there is treatment that also prevents patients from infecting others, this policy has changed and newer patients stay in their own villages and receive treatment at home.

This shift in approach has been accompanied by its own set of problems. While the patients in the two remaining leprosy villages in Antalaha enjoy free health care and schooling for their children and grandchildren - and earn a living by working in the village plant nurseries, all supported by local aid workers - the newer patients often struggle with the consequences of their disease without any assistance. Families may lack the means to support a non-productive member of the household and patients with families of their own, cannot support them.

One of Zamandrahengo's patients, an elderly man, can no longer work as a result of his leprosy. "He has 10 children and can't afford school fees for them," said the doctor. "I try to get money from anybody who visits here to help him out. It's hard work, to help all of these people."

Tax cuts mean Bad News

No - that is not a misprint! Every reduction in the rate of tax means a lesser amount that can be recovered in the form of Gift Aid. Put simply, every pound donated under the Gift Aid scheme is now worth about 3 pence less than it used to. The following extract is the HMRC explanation of what Gift Aid is about.

How Gift Aid works

The Gift Aid scheme is for gifts of money by individuals who pay UK tax. Gift Aid donations are regarded as having basic rate tax deducted by the donor. Charities take your donation - which is money you've already paid tax on - and reclaim the basic rate tax from HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) on its 'gross' equivalent - the amount before basic rate tax was deducted. Basic rate tax is 20 per cent, so this means that if you give £10 using Gift Aid, it's worth £12.50 to the charity. For donations between 6 April 2008 and 5 April 2011 the charity will also get a separate government supplement of three pence on every pound you give.

If YOU use the Gift Aid scheme, you might like to consider increasing your donation to compensate for what is actually a reduced tax bill in your hands, (making you better off!). The three pence in the pound supplement referred to in the previous paragraph was introduced to lessen the impact of the tax change on charities. You will realise that this adjustment has now come to an end - so the church will receive less Gift Aid refund for every £1 you give.

For any further information on this, do not hesitate to have a word with Tony H, our Gift Aid convenor.

Opportunities to serve as a Games Pastor

Games Pastors will play a lead role in responding to the practical and spiritual needs of thousands of visitors coming for the Games. Where people gather – from transport terminals to games venues – Games Pastors will be there. If you've heard of Street Pastors, Street Angels or Town Pastors you will get the picture.

More Than Gold is working with the transport hubs and the churches to make sure the right number of the right kind of people are where they are needed.

Why are Games Pastors needed?

During London 2012, vast numbers will be arriving at airports and train terminals, and thronging games venues and the approaches to them.

For example –

- St Pancras International Station, the 'Gateway to the Games', expects around 100,000 additional travellers every day
- Heathrow Airport will have its busiest day ever after the Olympic Closing Ceremony and its second busiest day immediately following the Paralympics
- Every day up to 800,000 extra people will travel into London – spilling out into streets around Games venues, official big screen Live Sites and other venues And many will need the support of a friendly face and a caring attitude - in the form of a Games Pastor.

Further details will appear in next month's Recorder

This month we would like to wish a

Happy Birthday



to

Julia S (9th)
Grandma B (9th)
Taye A-C (14th)
Ben L (16th)
Gwen C (19th)
Ellen C (26th)



Birthday Congratulations

to

Willie M (14th)

celebrating his 70th Birthday
with love from us all at Trinity.

*The December edition of the Recorder will be published on 27th November.
Closing date for contributions is Friday 18th November*

The January edition will be published on 1st January.
Closing date for contributions to be sure of inclusion is 3rd December. Every effort
will be made to include later items if at all possible.

Recorder Editor :e-mail : editor@trinity-urc.org.uk

Church web site: <http://www.trinity-urc.org.uk>

prayer page

"Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke fits perfectly, and the burden I give you is light."

Matthew 11:28-30 - *New Living Translation*

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2011

Living God, we are too young, too old, too shy, too fearful
but you still send us out.
Out amongst our families and friends,
out into our communities, towns and cities,
out to live, mix and mingle with others.
You send us out with love and joy and hope
to pour cups of tea and play with children,
to listen to worried parents and deliver the church newsletter,
to sign justice petitions and recycle glass bottles.
You send us out to share in your mission, wherever and whoever we
are.

Living God, you call out our names. "Who will go for us?"
Here I am. Send me.

URC Prayer Handbook 2000-2001

I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge - that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.



Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Ephesians 3:14-21 (NIV)

Who among us is without sin?
We who have been forgiven know
the power of the word of grace
that trips lightly over our lips,
Sunday by Sunday,
and lodges in our hearts:
"Forgive us our sins,
that we might forgive those who sin
against us."

Who will deliver the word to those on the other side?
Who will cross over, bearing the balm of compassion
and the light of liberation?

*Christ crossing over,
awaken us to our receipt of grace,
and move us to extend it to those on the other side.
Amen.*

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