



In House

Thornbury Baptist Church

April/May
2009

Page 1:
Developing
Youth and
Children's work

Page 2:
Uganda Mission

Page 3:
Jesus and me

Page 4:
Church
calendar



*"I am the
resurrection and
the life...."*

9th April:
**Maundy
Thursday**

10th April:
Good Friday

12th April:
Easter Sunday

Developing Youth and Children's work

Last year the Church endorsed a proposal that we seek a trainee to work in the Youth and Children's work and as a result we are in the process of seeking to recruit through an organisation known as South West Youth Ministries (SWYM). Information on SWYM can be found at www.swym.org.uk. SWYM run a foundation year, after which around 50% of trainees go on to do further training in some type of Full Time Ministry. In this way, SWYM looks to invest in people and train them up for a career, not just do countless 'gap years'. The initial commitment is for one year and then we pray and review what the future holds for us and the trainee.

SWYM have a good reputation and have many people apply each year. SWYM do the initial praying and short listing and suggest people for us to interview (e.g. on visit weekends) that seem to match the kind of placement we are. We have the decision then of who to take on. In the foundation year our trainee would receive the following training from SWYM:

- Six 4-day residential conferences with everyone from SWYM.
- A cluster morning each Monday with the other Bristol based SWYM workers.
- Work they have to do each week such as a journal and self evaluation to report back to the area co-coordinator.

Once they start work, the trainees will be managed fully by the 'Ministry partner' – that's us. We need to provide:

- Accommodation.
- A Line manager to train them in the job, work out working hours and holiday etc.
- A Mentor/Pastoral carer to encourage and support them in growing as a person.
- Office space and all expenses related to the job.
- Supervision to develop them as reflective practitioners.
- Pocket money for a life outside the work.
- Other Living expenses and travel expenses.

The total financial support that we will need to provide is in the region of £9,000 for the foundation year.

During their week the trainee would spend 4 hours in their cluster meeting, 4 in hours private study, and 32 hours work. They may have some previous experience but this is not guaranteed, and they can be any age from 18 to mid-thirties.

Please pray for this initiative, that God would pair us with the right person in what would be a partnership that would benefit us as a Church and the individual as well as an investment in the kingdom of God.

Helen Smedley

Uganda Mission

When Helen Harrison, Helen Smedley, Alywn Huteson, Rachel Crooks, Jo Burton, Steph Wrench, Pete Heath, Phil and Natalie Harnett, Josh James and myself set out last September on a mission trip to Uganda I can safely say that at least one was nervous, and ten didn't really know what to expect. It had been over a year since we'd been asked if we were interested in being part of a mission team to Uganda, and it was surreal to finally be at the point of departure after so much anticipation. Hopefully this short article can give you an insight into some of the things the team did, share a few of my personal experiences, and inspire you to rely on God like some of the Ugandans we met were doing.

The team of eleven were in Uganda for two weeks in the town of Mbale in the east, and, due to the travelling precautions (such as not driving at night), we had roughly ten days of scheduled activities from 'Oasis Uganda', the Christian organisation we were associated with, which runs several outreach projects throughout Uganda. Our programme included a variety of different things, such as children's work, prison ministry, The Aids Support Organisation (TASO) ministry, church painting, and visiting locals' homes and smaller churches, which gave us many opportunities to serve God and to get a fuller flavour of Ugandan life.

It is difficult to portray what it felt like to be in Uganda, a world apart from the UK, but perhaps a description of the first *boda* ride (a bicycle with a cushioned seat at the back for transporting passengers - side saddle for ladies!) down to the Beersheba project (an Oasis Uganda educational initiative) is enlightening. Once Alex, a friendly local trainee teacher who runs the Kids Club, had secured a reasonable price (*mzungus* - 'white man' in Swahili - normally being wealthier are charged more) we began our journey along tarmac roads that quickly turned to red mud lanes and tracks the further we traveled outside Mbale. The hot sun, the nearby foothills of Mt. Elgon covered in vegetation, the plots of crops everywhere, the rows of ramshackle houses turning to mud huts, all contributed to the dreamlike atmosphere of finally being in a place which I'd only known on television documentaries. As we went along little children would often call out "Mzungu! How are you?" and "Mzungu, bye!" being just as fascinated by us as we were by the whole surroundings. The children we met, of all ages, were amazingly friendly and willing to take part in the games of stuck-in-the-mud, ladders, parachute games, and the okey-kokey, as well as listen to the Bible stories and songs we shared.

Attending a local church and visiting a tiny parish soon opened my eyes to the differences between the attitudes of Ugandan Christians and my own attitudes. Many had very few possessions and little income, and some were desperately ill with HIV - in fact there seemed very little to be cheerful or grateful about. However their love of God and strong relationships with each other far outweighed these burdens, and I felt dis-



passionate and antisocial in comparison. In the second meeting a song, along the lines of "We are going to the Promised Land" prompted people to lift chairs and benches on their heads and dance around the church!

This reliance and trust on God was something I had never experienced, particularly coming from a culture where everything, education, food, a home, is provided for. It seemed that a lack of material things had increased their reliance on God to provide, and made me wonder if having all my needs met was really such a good thing, since it reduced my reliance on my God. Often we feel deeply for people with very few belongings, and make donations of money and goods - but in all honesty our situation of self-sufficiency and non reliance on God is much more desperate. I'm certainly not encouraging a reduction of donations to needy areas (!), rather pointing out how struck I was that it is God who ultimately satisfies people and how, in the Kingdom of heaven, those that are appear the 'last' in world's eyes are the 'first' in the eye's of Jesus.

Similarly during the second Sunday we were in Mbale the pastor of the church and his wife returned from a conference in Nigeria bringing the greetings of Nigerian churches and professing their love of the people and the work they saw going on. I was strongly reminded of Paul's letters which often begin with phrases like "I remember you constantly in my prayers" and end with extensive greetings to individuals. The unity of the Ugandan church, the body of Christ, seemed much closer in attitude to the early church in the Bible than I had ever experienced before.

All the team had a brilliant, and challenging, time in Uganda and we got to experience firsthand the delights of this country and people. Please feel free to contact the team for more stories - these are only some of my own highlights and impressions, which I hope have been enjoyable reading and encouraged everyone to look to God for ultimate provision and happiness despite having many, if not all, of our basic needs met in our society.

George Cooke

Jesus and me

Life was comfortable when I met Jesus. I had a good husband and three lovely children, two girls and a boy. Farming with my husband's family was good and things were improving financially. Why did I meet Jesus? Well, I didn't know I did! Having always loved God I had prayed to Him every night from childhood into married life, going to church as well.

Moving a lot between my Mother and Grandparents helped me feel insecure most of my young days, so when I married into the farming community it was a big step. Even though I was warmly welcomed into a large family network it was a different way of life and it took me several years to settle down. It was on a trip to Canada with my two girls and holidaying with my Mother that the revelation happened.

It was a beautiful sunny morning. I can remember the sun streaming through the windows of my Mum's church when something touched my heart. The congregation were so warm and loving and at the end of the service there was an altar call and up I went to receive my Saviour.

Back in Shepperdine I continued attending my local church and restarted the Sunday School for children from the ages of three up. God provided two faithful helpers at different times and even if there was nobody to help it was still special. I loved sharing about Jesus but my husband did not understand this "new religion" of mine. Meanwhile my daughter, Lorna, said "why don't you try Thornbury Baptist Church, my friend goes there." I went when I could. Eventually my Vicar retired, and I had my husband's permission to attend TBC regularly. Over the years Richard, the quiet Anglican, and I supported each other at church events and special services. He came to understand through socialising with strong Christian couples that my "new religion" was not weird or threatening and that our marriage was stronger because of it. I was baptised in March 1998.

In life the unexpected happens. Richard died suddenly 5½ years ago. That's a story in itself, but it left us bereft of a special person in our lives. I knew that Sunday after he died that I wanted to be with my church family in God's house.

God has sustained me through many changes. For example, my son and daughter married twins, my mother returned to England to live and I moved from the farmhouse into a Granny Annex. That was quite something, but I don't miss the housework! Up to date I'm blessed with five wonderful Grandchildren. Our latest situation is the thought of another power station being built on land near to us and if the company involved will be neighbourly as we have no land involved. I do hope so.

When Richard and I moved into Lowgoods Farm some 23 years ago, I told the Lord that the only way I could live here was if Lowgoods belonged to the Lord. God has kept His hand on us through all the ups and downs emotionally, physically, financially and I can say for myself spiritually, through the prayer of friends and my ever faithful house group.

The encouragement and hospitality of others really is so important in church life even when we are so busy. We have been blessed by hospitality many times, especially when I have needed a kind word and a cup of tea or a meal to just help me slow down and enjoy fellowship, life or talk a problem through with prayer. Jesus knows, but He speaks often through His servants.

My health has been a battleground but for God's grace and I was so blessed to be able to return to the lovely church community in Udvarhely Transylvania with a TBC team. Having M.E. God knew and provided me with all the strength needed to bless and be blessed. What a time of challenge, but I returned home humbled by the experience.

Things happen day to day and the only way I can live is by leaning on Jesus, sometimes minute by minute. Yes, at times, fear tries to set in, but



God provides and reminds me that I am special, single or not. Yes I have a great family and wonderful friends but my Jesus is my source even though I fail often, He never fails me!

I found this poem in a 95 year old Bible.

*Come unto me and rest and know
I'm near
To guard thee from all harm, dispel
thy fear
And if speech fails thee when thou
wouldst disclose
Thy heartache, longings, disap-
pointments, woes -
My child I understand though unex-
pressed
In silence cling and I will give thee
rest.*

1 Peter 5 vs 7

On Saturday 11th April at 7.45am there is a special men's breakfast. Instead of the men tucking into the food they will be making it and the breakfast is for the women, so go on ladies ... give it a try. As well as the scrummy food Alison Primrose will be sharing her thoughts on the ups and downs of being a Vicar's wife.

On Thursday 23rd April at 8pm is the next Family Forum. If you are a Church member please come along and help us hear God's voice for our community.

Church Calendar : April to June 2009

APRIL

Saturday 4th Easter give-away

Sunday 5th **Palm Sunday**

11am: Community service & meal
Paul Ferguson
6.30pm: Neil Mobbs

Friday 10th **Good Friday**

10am: Walk of witness
6pm: Communion service

Saturday 11th

7.45am: Women's breakfast, by men
Alison Primrose. @TBC

Sunday 12th **Easter Sunday**

9.15am: All age service Paul Ferguson
11am: Adult service Paul Ferguson
6.30pm: Terry Wicks

Thursday 16th

8pm: Prayer evening

Sunday 19th

9.15/11am: 'Come dine with me' Lis Pearce
6.30pm John Moseley

Monday 20th

7pm: Dance workshop

Thursday 23rd

8pm: Family Forum

Sunday 26th

9.15/11am: 'Feast or famine?' Paul Ferguson
6.30pm: Ian Taylor

MAY

Sunday 3rd

11am: Community service & meal
Philip Jinadu
6.30pm: Terry Wicks

Saturday 9th

7.45am: Men's breakfast @TBC

Sunday 10th

9.15/11am: Rob Scott-Cook
6.30pm: Lis Pearce

Monday 11th

Inside Out Visit to Electricity museum

Sunday 17th

9.15/11am: 'Lord of the Sabbath' Paul Ferguson
6.30pm: Ed Stuart

Monday 18th

7pm: Dance workshop

Thursday 21st

8pm: Prayer evening

Sunday 24th

9.15am: All age service Mike Levy
11am: Adult service Mike Levy
6.30pm: David Finney

Sunday 31st **Pentecost**

9.15/11am: Lis Pearce
6.30pm: David Lawrence

JUNE

Sunday 7th

11am: Community service & meal
Paul Ferguson
6.30pm: Sally Heath

Monday 8th

Inside Out Visit to Chavenage, Tetbury

Wednesday 10th

8pm: Welcome evening

Saturday 13th

7.45am: Men's breakfast @TBC

Sunday 14th

9.15/11am: 'Down by the seaside' Paul Ferguson
6.30pm: Mike Levy

Thursday 18th

8pm: Prayer evening

Sunday 21st

9.15/11am: 'Messiah's dozen!' Lis Pearce
6.30pm: Mary Groves

Monday 22nd

7pm: Dance workshop

Sunday 28th

9.15/11am: 'Unforgivable' Paul Ferguson
6.30pm: Neil Mobbs