

# Witney Congregational Church

Issue 7

November 2009

## R CROSS A D S

*Witney Congregational Church is a crossroads where we:*

*meet God in worship*

*meet one another in friendship*

*meet our community and world with the love of Jesus*



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# WHAT'S ON GUIDE

Witney Congregational Church offer a whole range of activities through which we seek to Worship, Work and Witness to the Lord Jesus Christ in this community today.

Further information can be obtained from the Church Administrator, Minister, Church Secretary or the leaders of the particular activities who are listed at the back of this magazine.

## WORSHIP

Daily Worship	9.30 am	Mon-Fri	Short time of Prayer and Reading
Noah's Ark Service	2.00 pm	Tuesday	For under 5's parents and carers
Saturday Praise	11.00am	1 <sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month	
Sunday Services	10.30 am		
	6.00 pm		There is a crèche facility at both services

Communion is normally held twice during the month at the first Sunday evening and third Sunday morning services

## PRAYER

The Church is open each morning for Prayer; also in the Garden Room on Sunday morning and evening prior to, and after, Worship - All welcome

## STUDY & FELLOWSHIP

Friday 10.00 am Church

## YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Sunday	10.30 am	Crèche, Noah's Ark & The K.I.C.K. on Sundays
Monday	10.00 am	Noah's Ark - Infant Group for babies and pre-school children
Friday	7.00pm	Y4J - 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

Tuesday	Monthly	Deacon's Meeting
	Bi-Monthly	Church Meeting
Thursday	10.00 am	Rest & Chat (Coffee/Tea available)
Saturday	10.30 am	Coffee Morning

## SUNDAY LINK

Weekly bulletin for all Christians providing stimulating thought along with news and notices concerning our Church

## WITNEY ECUMENICAL YOUTH TRUST (BASE 33)

4 Welch Way (Entrance - High Street) ☎ 01993 200682 (Office)  
☎ 01993 777870 (Office - Methodist)

## St ANDREW'S BOOKSHOP

Opening Hours: Monday - Saturday ☎ 01993 709429  
09.00 am - 5.00 pm



Once again, as last month, as I write this editorial the weather is bright sunshine and a bright clear sky; and for this time of year is very good.

At the end of this month, we see the beginning of Advent, and already the shops are displaying and advertising all their Christmas products. Is there ever going to be an end to this now well-established commercialism? In Witney in particular, with the opening of the new shopping precinct in Marriott's Walk, this can only be exacerbated.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of this month we have Remembrance Sunday where our thoughts are with those past and present personnel of the armed forces, who have given their lives for the good of others - more of that later in the magazine. Please do take the opportunity to attend the service that will take place at the War Memorial on Church Green, and afterwards at our church.

So, turning now to the contents, here is just a glimpse of some of the articles that have been submitted; There is a sermon recently given by Rev Jason Boyd; Theo Howell gives us a remembrance poem, and Maureen Miles writes about The Spiritual Railway; Rev Ken Lee's contribution is a memorial to Bishop Albrecht Schonherr, to name but a few.

As always, many thanks to those who have contributed to this edition,

but would also encourage anyone to consider submitting articles for the next edition **double-edition** by either:

- Floppy Disk/CD
- E-mail:  
terrypowlesland@hotmail.com  
jacquipowlesland@uwclub.net
- Or, if you haven't got a PC, just plainly written on paper which can be typed up.

For your information, the last magazine for this year is due on: 29<sup>th</sup> Nov

**ESSENTIAL NOTE:** In order to meet these deadlines, all contributions should be submitted **NO LATER THAN the WEDNESDAY** of the week in which the magazine will be published.

Your Editor

- ❖ Many of us who profess to be Christians are so busy with the mechanics of our religion that we have no time left for the spiritual part of it

## Contents

1. Editorial
2. Diary
3. A moment with the Minister
4. CWM News
8. What's our business?
11. Operation Christmas Child
12. CF Mailing
14. Discussion Group
16. Remembrance
17. Prayer Letter No 137
18. Witney Theological Society
19. Bishop Albrecht Schonherr
21. The Wave
22. Frontline
24. Rotas



**Daily Prayer Time:**

Mon-Fri 9.30 am

**Services**

10.30 am & 6.00pm and will normally be led by Rev Jason Boyd unless advised below

The following events are given for your particular attention:

**Nov**

1<sup>st</sup> am Service Rev Mark Evans  
 pm Service Rev Barbara Bridges Joint service & communion at High St Methodist

3<sup>rd</sup> Deacons meeting 7.30pm

5<sup>th</sup> Bible Study - Book of Ruth 7.30pm

7<sup>th</sup> Saturday Praise 11.00am

SWMA Executive at Highbury Congregational Church

8<sup>th</sup> Remembrance Sunday 10.45am Civil service at War Memorial

Morning Worship 11.30am

12<sup>th</sup> Fellowship Group 2.30pm 9 Pensclose

Discussion Group 7.30pm

13<sup>th</sup> Y4J Youth Group 7.00pm

14<sup>th</sup> Prayer Chain meeting 9.15am

Shoe Boxes 10.00am - 12.30pm

15<sup>th</sup> Sunday Diners 1.00pm

19<sup>th</sup> Discussion Group 7.30pm

22<sup>nd</sup> am Service Cannon Tim Partridge

pm Joint Service at High St Methodist

24<sup>th</sup> Church Meeting 7.30pm

25<sup>th</sup> Base 33 AGM 8.00pm

26<sup>th</sup> Discussion Group 7.30pm

27<sup>th</sup> Christmas Crafts

29<sup>th</sup> pm Madely Park Residential Home

**Dec**

1<sup>st</sup> Deacons meeting 7.30pm

3<sup>rd</sup> Discussion Group 7.30pm

**Nov** 03 Jordan Pinnock-Trotman

17 Elaine Gudem

19 Nanna Blackman

Gavin Suter

22 Lincoln Squire (St Clair)

26 Ellie Rose Esapa

Hilary Pratley

27 Jeremy Boyd

29 Marina Bowerman

Holly Hazell



## Minister's Letter

Driving over country roads through the Champagne region during the summer of 2004, I noticed something which was both beautiful and peculiar to me. Along the edges of the vineyards bloomed roses of every colour. "Why roses in the vineyards?" I wondered. Before I could ask the question, Viviane pointed out the roses and told me the reason for their existence. Apparently, the vines become infested with a mildew which is not easily detected until it is too late. Roses are affected by the same type of mildew but display symptoms much more quickly. When the roses are healthy and blooming, then all is well. When the roses become sick, then there is disease in the vines. When the rose in a vineyard begins to ail, then the farmer must attempt to eradicate the infected vines before the mildew spreads and destroys everything.

In Romans 5:20, we read, "But law came in, with the result that the trespass multiplied; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more..." (NRSV). Like the roses, God's law given to Moses highlighted the problem of sin. The law exposed the human heart riddled with sin.

It remains true of laws in our own society. Making laws does not rid society of a crime. Instead, a law makes it possible to discern when someone has done something wrong and then to hand down punishment for the offence. Laws do not solve evil but merely make it apparent.

The Law of God shows us that we are spiritually sick. The Law - like the rose - can do nothing to deal with the problem. The Good News is that Jesus

lived, died, and rose again to bring grace to our sin-sick hearts. Where the Law shows sin to be rampant, the grace of God is more prolific still. By faith, we receive the grace of God through his Son Jesus Christ who forgives, heals, and restores us to wholeness (Romans 5:1).

Shalom  
Jason

The following poem, author unknown, has been submitted by Maureen Miles, and is entitled:

### The Spiritual Railway

The Line to Heaven by Christ was made  
With heavenly truth the Rails were laid  
From earth to Heaven the Line extends  
To life Eternal where it ends  
Repentance is the Station then  
where passengers are taken in  
No fee for them is there to pay  
For Jesus is himself the way  
God's Word is the first Engineer  
It points the way to Heaven so dear  
Through tunnels dark and dreary here  
It does the way to Glory steer  
God's Love, the fire, his truth the  
Steam  
Which drives the Engine and the rain  
All you who would Glory ride  
Must come to Christ, in him abide  
In First and Second, and Third Class  
Repentance, Faith and Holiness  
You must the way to Glory gain  
Or you with Christ will not remain  
Come then poor sinners, now's the time  
At any Station on the Line  
If you'll repent and turn from sin  
The Train will stop and take you in



## News around the world

The following information has been taken from CWM Website dated 30<sup>th</sup> October, so is up to date at the editing of this month's magazine

### **CWM:** churches sign up to green covenant

As the earth groans under the devastating effects of climate change, CWM's member churches have signed a covenant pledging to take the lead on green issues in their own communities. The agreement, which will be put to CWM's trustee body meeting in November, has arisen out of CWM's week-long Mission Education School IV - an event focused on putting protection for the environment back at the heart of mission values.

Participants from 17 of CWM's member churches gathered at host church the Gereja Presbyterian Malaysia to engage in workshops, worship and hear talks from esteemed environmental speakers and scientists from across the globe.

CWM executive secretary for Personnel and Training Rev Randolph Turner, who helped organise the event, said the course got church members sharing how climate change has impacted their own regions, before teaching them how to address the problems on their return home.

"This event was set up to get our member churches reflecting on the kind of theological and practical responsibilities they have in protecting the environment as "stewards of the earth".

"This is something CWM increasingly needs to be active about - mission is our focus and we want to encourage our churches to get involved and take responsibility," he said.

With the spiralling effects of climate change threatening to engulf whole islands and devastate lives in our Pacific and south Asia regions, this year's Mission Education School entitled "All Creation Groans: The Eco-Crisis and Sustainable Living - Understanding the Implications for Mission", highlighted that the churches' role in helping to safeguard the environment has taken on a greater sense of urgency.

### **Impact**

Rev Turner said: "There was one moment that really stood out for me during the event. That was when our representative from the Kiribati Protestant Church told us he had taken his granddaughter for a walk along the beach and got her to point out into the middle of the sea. When she asked why, he told her that she was pointing to the very place he was born 50 years ago. It made the group realise just how quickly global warming is affecting our planet."

He added: "A representative from Papua New Guinea also told us that some of the tombs of LMS missionaries were now three metres under water. The stories the participants shared with us were stark and they were real."

During the week participants took part in a site visit to an organic farming institution at the Centre for Environment, Technology & Development, in Malaysia (CETDEM). They also heard talks on climate change and the environment from six different speakers from around the world, among them Joy Kennedy, program coordinator for

Poverty, Wealth and Ecological Justice, at The United Church of Canada, environmentalist and CETDEM chairman Gurmit Singh KS, and environmentally-focused minister Rev Dr David Pickering St Andrew's Roundhay United Reformed Church in Leeds.

Rev Turner said: "What was good was that some of the church participants were actually scientists themselves so they were able to really interact with the speakers and raise valid points and challenges to what they had to say. "The participants also shared in some really good Bible studies that were run by Rev Dr Jione Havea, a lecturer in Biblical Studies at the United Theological College, Sydney Australia. They were very creative and got people really thinking about the role we must play as Christians in taking care of our world." As the week's interaction, learning and prayer came to a close, the group drew up a covenant cementing their commitment to drive a fresh mission focus addressing climate change and globalisation in their own communities.

Rev Turner said: "The covenant lays out what we as a group commit to doing as a result of the Mission Education School, but there are also recommendations that will be put to the Trustee Body meeting. We are hoping that CWM as a whole will adopt these recommendations for the future. We want to make this a mission value that has an impact."

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**Malawi:** Bringing church back to Biwi

When United Reformed Church minister Rev Paul Floe visited the Churches of Christ in Malawi back in 1999, he had no idea that the legacy of

his trip would still be very much alive 10 years on.

On a return visit to see how money raised by congregations in England and Wales has helped build a new church for the community of Biwi, he found to his surprise that the people remember him as though he was there yesterday...

My sabbatical from November 1998 to May 1999 was during an extremely painful time for Malawi, it was a time of famine. I felt rather useless in the face of suffering, yet I was told my visit was extremely important.

My spiritual home was Biwi CCM Lilongwe - a poor congregation of people who had come in from the country areas looking for food and work. The congregation was then meeting in a run-down schoolroom in a very poor part of the city.

I shared with them the experience of Ermine URC Lincoln (a small church on a council estate where I was serving at the time) which some 40 years before was in much the same position as Biwi.

### **Community dream**

The people of Biwi had a dream of building their own church and made a start by having two offerings in the church, but the people were poor and often the gift was an ear of corn - nothing to us, but everything to the giver.

I returned (thinner) to tell their story to the people of Ermine, St. Columba's and Gainsborough URC. Their immediate response was to share the dream and support Biwi in every way they could.

In 2001 I was called to Trinity Church, Porthcawl and told them the Biwi story too. The response was the same and thanks to the Livingstone Trust I was

able to to revisit the Congregation of Biwi 10 years on and see how the church has developed.

I was not expecting a welcoming committee. But some 15 people had travelled to Lilongwe airport. I was surprised to be greeted not only as a long lost brother but as someone who had affected the life of their church.

On my first visit to Biwi, there was a lot of celebration. Many people remembered my initial stay there. There was a church too, the first one in Lilongwe for the CCM. It is not yet finished but more than usable. Simple benches had been made, a table donated for communion, a lectern and chairs for the front of the church. It was built by the hard work of the poorest of the four Lilongwe Congregations.

The building provides the congregation with a base, no longer are they restricted to meet only on Sundays for worship.

The building is multi-purpose and has already been used for the closing worship for the CWM Africa Region's conference on gender issues and the role of women in the church. Part of the gift I took from Ermine and Trinity was used to install electrical wiring so now God can be praised all day and no longer will worship take place in the dark!

### **A deeper joy**

Biwi is now free and able to widen its ministry. There is a confidence in the faith of the church, an eagerness to serve God and a deeper joy.

In 1999 I was asked if I would consider working in Malawi though CWM as a missionary, Jean, my wife and I were thinking very seriously about rejoining CWM. Unfortunately Jean experienced heart trouble and the drugs and

treatment she required were not then available in Malawi.

Though I was not called there physically, spiritually and practically there was a lot of support that could be offered. Ermine URC and Trinity have enabled the Biwi Congregation to almost realise their dream.

For Ermine - a small church on a council estate - it was a time of growth too, for they could see the part they played in the development of a church in a developing country even though they were poor.

Because of what Biwi has achieved, other Lilongwe congregations have the same dream.

As for me, having dual heritage, I found a part of myself in 1999, and being welcomed "home" in 2009 has been extremely positive, though I still have not persuaded the people of the CCM that it was they who did all the work.

The grant I received from the Livingstone Trust enabled me to revisit and re-enthuse, Ermine, Trinity, Biwi and my own ministry. All of us are very grateful.

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### **Morakot: healing the wounds**

Two months ago Typhoon Morakot wreaked havoc on the lives of the people of Taiwan - yet efforts to care for its victims are in no danger of disappearing with the flood water.

The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT) has reported that volunteers are unflinching in their willingness to continue caring for those left homeless or bereaved in the disaster, recognising that the wounds inflicted by the disaster need to be properly healed and not just patched up.

Church events and worship have been reworked to put typhoon victims at their heart and as a result they have become a healing balm to those in suffering.

A willingness to put these people first was clearly demonstrated when staff and students from Tainan Theological College recently cancelled their annual retreat and threw themselves into planning a special visit to flood victims sheltering in military barracks instead.

Reporters from Taiwan Church News said volunteers seized the opportunity to serve those that had lost their homes, and rallied extra people to go with them and do what they could to lift spirits and help victims momentarily forget their troubles.

In the evening, the 200 volunteers laid on a party with dancing and drama to get people laughing. And throughout the rest of the community, celebrations for the annual Chinese "Moon Festival" involved flood victims in every way they could.

In Kaohsiung and Shou-Shan presbyteries counseling groups have been set up to reach out to flood victims. Care group leaders are still receiving calls from concerned Christians willing to help wherever they can, even though the groups were set up back in September.

Many military barracks in Kaohsiung area now have a permanent team of Christians ministering to victims. But the PCT says a sense of togetherness has not arisen out of every community in the wake of Morakot. One Aborigine village leader told church reporters that since the typhoon, families there had been concentrating on rebuilding their own homes and lives - as a result the sense of team spirit that usually permeated Aborigine reserves had

ebbed.

Volunteers from Chiayi Christian Hospital organised a special Aborigine evening festival in Hsinmei and Chashan villages near Alishan Township in the hopes of reconnecting estranged communities after the floods.

A reporter from Taiwan Church News said: "For many Aborigines, attending the festival was meaningful not because of the good food or good atmosphere but because it would help them reconnect with others and find out who still lived in their area. The festival served as a channel for people to encourage, support, and reconnect with each other during these trying times."

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### **URC Ark is green vessel for change**

The UK's United Reformed Church has drawn major attention to its Christian climate change campaign with a two-and-a-half ton replica of Noah's Ark.

The ark was built by the Green Group of Christ Church as part of "Operation Noah" in a bid to draw attention to Christian concern over climate change and lobby local MPs on their negotiations at the UN summit in Copenhagen this December.

Church leaders and campaigners want to see British government chiefs taking the lead over summit talks to cut global power sector emissions by at least a third by 2020.

Speaking to BBC Radio Lancashire about the event, Mark Dowd said, "This is a story that is well known to Muslims and Jews as well as Christians. In a time of crisis, Noah was a leader who took action to save both people and animals and he can be a role model for communities of faith today."



The following is the sermon preached by Rev Jason Boyd on 27 September, and is entitled:

## What's Our Business?

Text: James 5:13-20

It was a moment in time that changed the course of her life. It had been a hot summer's day and the sun was sinking low on the western horizon. Springing from the raft Joni dove into the water. Her body cut through the cool murky waters. She struck her head on the bottom and received a spinal injury that left her a quadriplegic. It was 30 July 1967.

Joni was a vibrant young woman, 17 years old. Weeks before she had worn cap and gown, receiving her High School Diploma. She enjoyed dating and was popular with her peers. A passionate horse lover she did show and trick riding. Growing up in a Christian home and surrounded by the love of her parents she was also deeply influenced by a youth group called *Young Life*. Joni knew that she wasn't wholehearted in following Jesus. She prayed, "Lord, if You're really there, do something in my life that will change me and turn me around."<sup>1</sup>

Now, two-hourly flipped 180 degrees from ceiling to floor, floor to ceiling on a Stryker frame for months on end; one surgery followed by another surgery; hopes of recovering movement dashed - even the chance of being able to use her hands now out of reach; her friends going off to college whilst she remained in hospital; she asked herself, "Is this God's answer to my prayer?"

The arduous and painful exercises of Physio Therapy; the tedious moves from being horizontal to sitting upright in a wheelchair; made her wonder if God was somehow punishing her. The deaths of other spinal injury patients in the ICU ward made her fear for her life. The callousness and cruelty of one member of staff made her fear for her safety.

Joni's prayers for physical healing from God went unanswered. She became suicidal. She wanted someone to help her to die...to put an end to her misery. Her doubts about God deepened. A fellow patient encouraged her to drink in the writings of existentialist philosophers, which she did. Joni was angry with God. How could God have answered her prayer with paralysis? Had God caused her accident or was he simply negligent? Had he turned his back for a moment, busy answering the prayers of other holier people and, whilst he wasn't looking, the devil had crushed her vertebrae? Why didn't God answer her prayer to be healed?

Prayer changes things. Prayer is the powerhouse of the church. Prayer is our business. Isn't it? Why then is prayer often viewed as the activity of the super-spiritual - those who have their finger on the pulse of God's heartbeat? Meetings for prayer are often poorly attended and many Christians struggle to pray.

James was convinced that prayer is not a peripheral activity of the church. It is not for the super-spiritual. Look at Elijah. He was an ordinary human being. He experienced the highs and lows of life...close to God one day and far from him the next...on cloud nine after calling down fire from heaven and putting up suicidal prayers

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<sup>1</sup> Joni Eareckson Tada, **Joni: An Unforgettable Story** (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1976, 1996, 2001), 40.

after a death warrant was issued on his life. Yet, despite his bi-polar behaviour, his prayer for a drought to last for three and a half years was answered. In the same way his prayer for a downpour and an abundant harvest was answered.

But how can we, in the twenty-first century, with all the advances of scientific knowledge, believe in the power of prayer? Surely there must be a natural explanation for situations where injury and disease disappears leaving doctors unable to account for it. Or is there something more to life than meets the eye? Does God heal today? And if he does, why do healings always seem to happen to someone else? It's not easy to believe that prayer changes things if our prayers for healing wind up in disability, chronic illness, or the furnace of the crematorium. How can we insist that prayer is powerful...that it makes a difference...when our prayers for healing seem to go unheard? Are the atheists right that we are grasping after fairytales and myths?

There are some Christians who believe that prayers for healing go unheard because the person doesn't have enough faith. But James says nothing about the 'quantity' of faith. It is the Lord who heals - not the amount of faith in the prayer. They also say that some people aren't healed because they sinned...they did something bad...to deserve their illness. Sickness is a punishment for wrongdoing.

The idea that somehow illness and disability are our fault is not only held by people with a faith. "I caused my illness. I have lung cancer. It's my fault because I smoked. I have renal failure. It's my fault 'cause I drank too

much. I have heart problems. It's my fault because I ate the wrong foods and carried too much weight. I suffer mental illness. I think it's my fault because of substance abuse." And so the list goes on. Parents of a child with special needs may somehow feel that it is their fault that their child is disabled. The wife whose husband commits suicide may feel that it's her fault because she didn't see it coming.

Jesus' disciples met a man born blind and asked, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him'" (John 9:2-3). Those who heard James' letter may have shared this blame culture. Whilst James recognised that sickness may be a consequence of sin, he does not say that all illness is caused by it. Instead, the picture he paints of the believing community is one that prays for the physical and spiritual well-being of its members.

The business of the church is prayer. Are you suffering? Pray. Are you cheerful? Pray songs of praise. Are you sick? Don't suffer in silence. Go to the elders...those who have been entrusted with the spiritual care of the believers. Ask them to gather around and pray over you. Let them anoint you with oil, a symbol of the power of God to heal. Have you sinned...living for yourself instead of God...doing what suits you even if it hurts others? Get it out in the open. Tell trustworthy believers what's really going on in your life. You'll be amazed. As soon as you start being honest with others you'll start being honest with God. It's not until we've stated the bald reality of

what we've said and done that we are able to face just how much sin hurts. Once we've start facing up to the truth we find that God's grace frees us.

Yet there are those who believe the business of the church is to mind its own business. "I come to church on a Sunday to be made to feel good about myself. I like a good sing and a chat over coffee after the service. I only want what I want from the church. And that's that." Are you suffering? "Yes, but I'll keep it to myself. I don't want to worry anyone." Are you cheerful? "Yes, but I'll keep it to myself. I might get carried away and people will think I've lost my marbles." Are you sick? "Yes, but I'll keep it to myself. I don't like others knowing my business. Besides, it's a bit embarrassing. I don't want people to be passing judgement on me." Have you sinned? Have you not been living your life according to God's ways? "Yes, but I'll keep it to myself. Why should other people have to know what I get up to in private? Besides, if I start blabbing to others about my sins I'll soon find that my private life is being circulated on the grape vine. My sin is between me and God and that's that. I can handle things on my own."

The community of faith prays through suffering, praise, sickness and forgiveness. Healing is about the whole person living according to God's right ways. Ordinary people who make God's way their way are the righteous who pray powerfully and effectively. Their prayers are bold not bland. They care for those who stray from the truth of loving our neighbour as our selves (2:8). They seek out those who lose their way and rescue them from death through forgiveness.

So where does this leave us? Why does God heal some people and not others? We know that sometimes our sinful actions have consequences that lead to illness. Equally, we know that not all illness is caused by wrong-doing. And no matter what illness we suffer, whether self-induced or something we had no control over, is not a punishment of God.

Joni, with the support of family and a network of friends along with reading books by C. S. Lewis and Francis Schaeffer, was sustained through the darkness. It was a long road with many twists and turns, lots of heartbreak and plenty of disappointment. Yet she came to the place where she realised that she had focused everything around the question of "How could God let this happen to me?" She had come to ask a very different question, "How can my life glorify God?" Instead of seeing her paralysis as a punishment she began to realise that in her dependant state was finding her true purpose. She wrote, "Wisdom is *trusting* God, not asking 'Why God?'"<sup>2</sup> Joni has since become a leading campaigner for disability rights. Not only is she a speaker in great demand, she is a talented artist whose mouth drawings and paintings are much sought after. She has lived out what it means to share in the sufferings of Jesus Christ in the hope of the resurrection.

Prayer is not a marginal activity for super-spiritual Christians. Prayer is the business of everyone who believes in Jesus. Prayer is for the suffering. Prayer is for praising. Prayer is for physical healing. Prayer is for forgiveness and the healing of our relationship to God.

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<sup>2</sup> Joni Eareckson Tada, 189.

Jane was an Easter/Christmas attendee of church. I never thought it would be anything more than that. In my first church we had a monthly evening service. Jane came one night. She became a regular. Jane came to pray for healing for her husband. Weeks went by. Jane started attending the church regularly. She came along to Bible Studies. We continued to pray for the healing of her husband. Jane had lots of questions and plenty of doubts. She became a good friend to Viviane and me as she made her journey of exploring faith in Jesus. We continued to pray for her husband.

During a healing service I had been reflecting on the son who had squandered his inheritance and come home to his Father empty handed. Jane spoke out. "I'm the prodigal son and I've come home." We had been praying for healing for her husband and she had come to experience the forgiveness of Jesus and the healing of her heart! Jane was a midwife and I felt as if I had been a midwife to her birth in Jesus. On 1 October 1998, Jane helped to bring our Naomi into the world.

I do not have all the answers to 'why suffering'...'why aren't all healed'? But I know with certainty that through prayer we can experience the healing of God as he forgives us of our sins. I know that those who are not healed now will be given new bodies on that day when we stand face to face with Christ.

**Ed:** This is also available in CD audio format and can be obtained on loan from the church office



## SHOE BOXES 2009

We will be filling our boxes together on **SATURDAY 14<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER** about **10.00 to 12.30.**



Please come along and help if you can. We would like to have all the boxes wrapped before then, so if you are able to take one to wrap please ask or bring a wrapped one of your own.

Any donations of items to go in the boxes are always needed, this year we will especially need hats and gloves for all ages. If you would prefer to make up your own box or boxes that would be lovely too - leaflets are available in the foyer.

**If you are making up your own box please read the leaflet carefully for details of what can go in the boxes.**





# The Mailing

**Congregational Federation**

Issue 2009/10

Bringing together independent free churches for mutual support through a vision of unity in creative diversity

Latest news and resources available from the Congregational Federation

**Forthcoming Events**

**November**

Investment Trust & Trading Board 4th  
Remembrance Sunday 8th  
Council Meeting 13th to 15th  
CFL Executive Meeting 15th  
Visit to Onè Respé Dominican Republic 15th  
Mission 21 Conference 17th to 20th  
Memorial Hall Congregational Lecture 26th

**December**

Gofrit Weekend 4th to 6th  
CF Office closure for Christmas close 23rd, reopen January 4th

## Wake up call!



A unique Congregational Federation inspirational gathering on evangelism for our churches. To encourage, energise and resource growth through the appropriate sharing of our faith.

## How was Harvest for you?

Hopefully an opportunity for considering the generosity of God in again providing so much for our needs. But for all that God provides it is us that decide. Christian Aid's new overarching initiative is entitled 'Poverty Over' which seeks to campaign for the necessary structural changes to eradicate global poverty. It is possible - but it involves tough choices?

Whilst poverty remains we still have a responsibility of supporting those most affected. The Federation continues to support the work of Onè Respé in the Dominican Republic. For them this time of the year means their work is well under way.

125 young people are taking part in weekly youth meetings. These discuss many topics like, sexual health, domestic violence, drugs and alcohol. They also aim to get young people involved in improving their community. 100 Haitian women are

taking part in weekly, 'migrant women's meetings' discussing topics like, personal hygiene, health eating, breast cancer, sexual health, and women's rights.



140 community health promoters taking part in weekly meetings concerning topics such as domestic violence, drugs and alcoholism, health eating, violence against children, HIV, anti-Haitian prejudice, aging and community harmony.

**Please pray for the Federation group visit to the Dominican Republic from November 15th.**

## Special points of interest:

- Harvest for you?
- Prayer Handbook
- More in Training
- Maximizing Giving
- News round up

## Gathered to the heart of God

Prayer Handbook - 2010  
by: Edited by Susan Durber  
Publisher: United Reformed Church  
Price:£4.90  
This annual publication is now a firm favourite. A unique collection of prayers and meditations

for individual or corporate worship that gathers all to the Heart of God.  
Available from Federation office—order yours today—cheques payable to the Congregational Federation.



## Training numbers just keep growing!

Our Integrated Training Course (ITC), which trains people for a variety of ministries, is a real strength of the Congregational Federation. It was described as a course of high quality in a recent audit. One of the reviewers, John Campbell, wrote, 'It has been a significant privilege to share in exploring the workings of the ITC – its evolving 'story'; its contribution to people, churches and mission; the commitment and enthusiasm of those who make it happen; the creativity and culture of endless renewal and development that sustain it and promise an exciting future. I believe the Course in its aspirations and in its practice stands up very well to scrutiny. This is a truly good thing.'

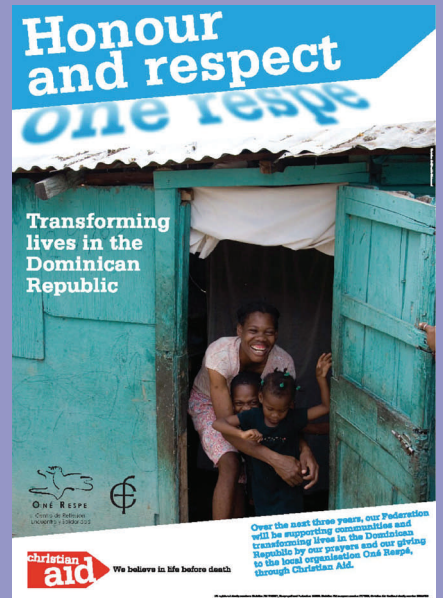
Margaret Morris Chair of the Christian Ministries Committee reminds us that this quality that our churches benefit from and deserve comes at a price. The Congregational Federation supports the course and the tutors offer a great deal

of time without payment. Numbers continue to rise - last year there were 76 enrolled, this year it's 86.



Please consider giving a donation to the work of this Committee. Thank you for your help with this valuable aspect of the Federation's work.

Explore the training available within the Federation on our website. Our course is now validated by the University of Winchester.



**Onè Respé Appeal** Donations should be sent to CF Nottingham payable to Congregational Federation with **Onè Respé** on the reverse.

## Making the most of your Giving

The Federation is encouraging all its churches to maximise their giving through the use of Gift Aid. A Briefing paper was approved at the recent Finance & Support Services Committee. The document includes reference to the new CD Toolkit to help you which has been launched by HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC).

The Toolkit contains clear, basic guidance, templates, an interactive

claim form and other materials to help you get started with Gift Aid and use Gift Aid in different fundraising situations.

Charities are also encouraged to sign up to receive automatic updates on issues relevant to them from HMRC's website.

CD Toolkit and Briefing available free of charge from the Federation offices. - Just Ask!



## News round up

**Minister's Stipend 2010** - the Retail Price Index for September is minus 1.4% and consequently the Federation's recommendation for the minimum level for full time ministry remains at the 2009 level for another year, namely £20,100.

**Water Charges - hope in sight** - At the recent Labour Party Conference, Environment Secretary Hilary Benn has announced that the Government will legislate to allow water companies to introduce a social tariff in their areas – thereby bypassing Ofwat. The Press Office quotes him as follows: Some churches, sports clubs and youth groups have been hit by huge increases in their water bills for surface drainage. It isn't

right. So I can tell you today that we will legislate to allow water companies to run concessionary schemes for these organisations so they can get on with the great job they are doing instead of worrying about unaffordable bills.

**Back to Church Sunday** - 50 plus churches of the Federation took part in the campaign this year. And many encouraging stories have already been heard. Churches seeing increased numbers including one which doubled its usual congregation from 25 to 50. Praise the Lord!! Churches who took part are encouraged to complete and return their evaluation.



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Visit the Website for more copies of this Mailing and much more at [www.congregational.org.uk](http://www.congregational.org.uk)

The following article has been submitted by Peter Gamston, and is entitled:

## Discussion Group

*O wad some Power the giftie gie us  
To see oursels as ithers see us!*

Robert Burns penned these lines, apparently musing on a louse, on seeing one on a lady's bonnet, in church in 1786. I doubt that, even in his wildest imagination, (and his was certainly wilder than most!) the Scottish bard could have envisioned some Power as ubiquitous and great as that of the media of the twenty first century, and in particular of such as the 'World Wide Web'.

Never before in human history has so much information (and, it must be said, mis-information) been available so freely to so many. You may think me very strange but I love nothing better than starting with an idea and indiscriminately surfing the Internet to see where it may lead. Let me qualify that term 'indiscriminately'; there is unquestionably far more chaff than wheat to be found on the net. Unadulterated nonsense and bigotry abounds; discrimination as to truth and worth is an imperative. What I mean by *indiscriminate surfing* is that I make a conscious effort not to stick to familiar paths but to boldly venture into the uncharted, even hostile waters, of viewpoints and perspectives I do not own with an open but, I hope, discerning mind.

It was on one such desk-bound voyage of discovery that I happened across a

phrase that may be familiar to you, but was new to me. It was the phrase 'Believing without Belonging'. Typical of my chaotic methodology I cannot even recall where I began this particular journey or where I imagined I was heading as I set off, but arriving by chance at this point I was intrigued. I was hooked and began to immerse myself in the unfamiliar and strange world of sociology, courtesy of the wonderful 'World Wide Web'.

It transpires that the phrase 'Believing without Belonging' seemingly originates with one Professor Grace Davie BA (Exon); Ph D (London), an academic sociologist at Exeter University whose research interests lie in the sociology of religion, with a particular emphasis on patterns of religion in Europe. The phrase 'Believing without Belonging' began its life as the sub-title of book by Professor Davie, published back in 1994. The book appears to have been seminal and since its publication the phrase has become something of a mantra in the specialised field of the sociology of religion; subsequent papers on the subject that fail to quote it being rare as hens teeth!

The term relates to the huge disparity that exists between the apparent 'Believing and the Belonging' paradigms - the numbers in our society that identify themselves as 'Christian', yet eschew identification with the church. The disparity naturally and rightly concerns the church; that it also greatly interests the professional sociologist came as something of a surprise to me. While sociologists are primarily concerned with questions like 'How secularised we are, and what is the

emerging nature of British secular society?' or may use terms we might consider to be technical jargon such as 'The role of religion in forming *social capital*...' sociologists have a dispassionate professional perspective that I'm convinced is insightful and believe could be enlightening. If the sociologists are doing their job well, then to see ourselves as sociology sees us may give us a fresh insight, at least in some measure, to see *ourselves* (the church) as *others* (the not-church) see us.

I want, more than anything, to begin to break down the barriers between *ourselves* and *others*; to open wide the doors. I'd like therefore to use this new-found (by me that is) sociological perspective on the church as the platform for our next short series of four discussion groups beginning on Thursday 12 November. All who are interested are most cordially welcomed to join us. Lest you are fearful that it sounds dry (I do have a knack of making things sound dry!) let me end, apropos of nothing in particular! with a quotation Grace Davie uses to illuminate our plight in a wry account of an interview which went like this:

"Do you believe in God?"

"Yes."

"Do you believe in a God who intervenes to change the course of events on earth?"

"No, just the ordinary one."



The following poem, author unknown, has been submitted by Theo Howells, and is entitled:

## ***A Poem for Remembrance Day***

### **"The inquisitive mind of a child"**

Why are they selling poppies,  
Mummy?  
Selling poppies in town today.  
The poppies, child, are flowers of love.  
For the men who marched away.



But why have they chosen a poppy,  
Mummy?  
Why not a beautiful rose?  
Because my child, men fought and died  
In the fields where the poppies grow.

But why are the poppies so red,  
Mummy?  
Why are the poppies so red?  
Red is the colour of blood, my child.  
The blood that our soldiers shed.

The heart of the poppy is black,  
Mummy.  
Why does it have to be black?  
Black, my child, is the symbol of grief.  
For the men who never came back.



But why, Mummy are you crying so?  
Your tears are giving you pain.  
My tears are my fears for you my child.  
For the world is forgetting again.



The following article has been extracted from Church News Service, and is entitled:

## Remembrance

Have you seen the film *'Saving Private Ryan'*? The first twenty minutes of the film is a powerful account of war, portraying the first landing crafts arriving at the Normandy beaches on D Day. The film successfully brings to life the events of that day, as a vivid act of remembrance.

From a biblical perspective, the word *remembrance* means making present a past reality, so that we can benefit from it today. On Remembrance Sunday we think about those who have given their lives in wars over the years, as well as those who continue to grieve over their lost loved ones. We want to make their sacrifice in past conflicts real for us today, so that we can engage with the horror of war and those enduring suffering today.

It involves dealing with the *why* question in the face of relentless tragedies and injustices: *why does God allow such suffering to take place?* One of the great themes of the Scriptures is that God identifies with the suffering. But the Christian faith goes beyond this! It affirms that in Jesus, God's son, divinity became involved in suffering and death on the cross. It is at Calvary that we see how God himself knows what it is to lose a loved one in an unprovoked attack. *'I could never myself believe in God if it were not for the Cross. In the real world of pain, how could one worship a God who was immune to it?'* (John Stott).

Although we don't fully understand the reason why God allows evil and suffering to continue, we do know what the reason isn't! It can't be that he doesn't love us! God so loved us and hates suffering that he was willing to come down and get involved in our hurting world. This can be a source of real strength on such an occasion.

However, how can we ensure that those who have given their lives are truly honoured, not forgetting those who are risking their lives in conflicts today? An appropriate response is to actively work and pray for justice in our world, especially where there is inequality and conflict. In a divided world we are also called to renew our efforts to work for peace. We need to be serious about being peacemakers, especially where it involves those close to us. As Jesus said, *'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God'* (Matt 5:9).





## PRAYER LETTER No 137

### 'Water of Life'

September and October have been very dry months with very little rain. In September the gardens looked parched, lawns and verges brown and yellow. Gardeners were longing for rain and knew rain would fall sooner rather than later, which it did. Imagine living in a country where it doesn't rain for months; or in a country where you have to walk miles to fetch water.

We take water for granted. How many times a day do you turn the tap on for washing your hands, washing dishes, cleaning vegetables, cleaning your teeth? The answer is probably in double figures. How many times a day do you flush the toilet? How often do you use the dishwasher, washing machine? How often do you boil the kettle with too much water in?

Do you ever think about the amount of water you use each day?

Do you ever thank God that the water you use is 'on tap'?

Do you ever thank God that the water is clean?

Think about the women and children in many parts of the world who have to walk miles each day to collect the water they need for basic washing and cooking. Often this water is contaminated causing illness, sometimes death. The journeys these women take to get their water supply are frequently fraught with danger.

Pray for the safety of these women and children.

Pray that fresh clean water can be supplied to their villages.

Pray for those organisations who are working to drill boreholes, build wells so people can have clean water.

Thank God for the engineers and Water Companies that supply us with the clean water we use in our homes.

Every Blessing  
Beryl

*Please note that for up-to-date prayer requests contact Beryl Cartwright (703717)*

The following article, submitted by Rev Ken Lee, has been extracted from Keston Newsletter No 10 2009, and is entitled:

## *In Memoriam* **Bishop Albrecht Schönherr**

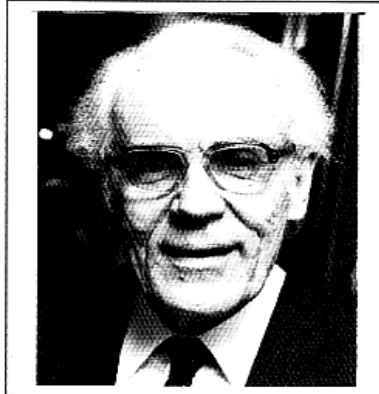
Albrecht Schönherr was one of the outstanding German Protestant Church figures of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, who outfaced Nazism and for 12 years led the church under East German communism. His death on 9 March in Potsdam at the age of 97 also takes from the scene the last of the surviving pastors, whom the theologian and martyr, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, prepared for ordination in the anti-Nazi Confessing Church.

Albrecht Schönherr was born in 1911 in Katscher (present-day Polish Kiertrz) in Silesia. Theological studies took him from Tübingen to Berlin, where in 1932 he found himself in the circle of students around the young lecturer Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was already challenging the rising tide of nationalism invading the church. Hitler's coming to power in 1933 wrought havoc among Protestants, many of whom hailed the Nazi revolution as completing the work of Martin Luther and opening the way for a truly 'German church for the Germans'.

Those who like Martin Niemöller and Bonhoeffer resisted this way formed the Confessing Church in 1934. It was quickly to prove costly, not only for those who were already pastors, but for students aspiring to ordination. Many who opted for the Confessing Church lost all the privileges of a university education, and in some cases were literally put out of the officially recognised seminaries onto the street. Schönherr chose this way, and in the summer of 1935 found himself once more with Bonhoeffer in the first group of ordinands admitted to his illegal seminary at Finkenwalde, a remote village on the Baltic coast. This proved a strenuous experience, not only because of the primitive conditions but more especially the rigour of Bonhoeffer's teaching – his lectures included what were later published as his famous book *The Cost of Discipleship* – and the almost monastic pattern of prayer, meditation and mutual confession that Bonhoeffer imposed. At the same time there was much conviviality, swimming, football, sunbathing and music-making. Schönherr was later to say that it was here that he saw for the first time the meaning of a 'sound life' and learnt a spiritual

discipline from which he drew so much that sustained him in the dark times that followed.

The Gestapo closed Finkenwalde in 1937. By then Schönherr was serving as pastor in Greifswald and Brüssow in eastern Germany. In 1940 like so many pastors he was drafted into the army (a convenient way, the Nazis hoped, of disposing of many of them) but survived to become a British prisoner of war, and afterwards resumed his ministry in what by then was the Eastern Zone and founded his own seminary. After a succession of



appointments of steadily increasing responsibility, in 1967 he was appointed bishop of the Church of Berlin-Brandenburg where he remained until his retirement in 1981. His highest position, however, came with the added responsibility of being President of the Conference of Church Leadership of Protestant Churches in East Germany, a post he held from 1969 till his retirement.

To be head of a church under an atheist communist regime may be judged to be offered one of the most poisoned of all chalices. Unlike the Nazis who employed their own brand of pseudo-religion in a blatant bid to take over Protestantism, the Marxist-Leninist regime of East Germany preferred to leave the church intact, but within strictly prescribed boundaries, and without any challenge permitted to the ruling ideology. The gospel might be preached from pulpits, but only Marxism was public truth, and while Christian charitable work could continue it was the state which knew what was best for the people's needs from cradle to grave. Could such a situation be accepted without accusations of acquiescing in state tyranny, or even fellow-travelling communism? Schönherr had once heard Bonhoeffer warning against imagining that a movement could be broken from inside: 'If you board the wrong train it is no use running along the corridor in the opposite direction.' But if the regime was opposed outright, would not this play into the hands of those ideologues wanting an excuse to drive the church still further off the scene? The

dilemma was acute throughout the Cold War period, and required a church leadership with the wisdom of serpents and the innocence of doves.

In 1978 Schönherr had a notable meeting with the then head of the East German state, Erich Honeker, at which certain clear and positive guidelines on the role of religion in society were laid out, rights of the churches agreed and some major concessions granted by the state (in broadcasting and prison chaplaincies for example). Schönherr remained adamant that the church could not identify itself with any one party or ideology, but that did not mean a withdrawal from the public sphere and secular responsibility. He liked the term 'a church *within* socialism' to describe his church's situation, its responsibility and its freedom under the gospel. 'Critical solidarity' is also how many pastors defined their attitude to their state during these years. It was a way laden with ambiguities, and after the downfall of communism in 1989 there emerged unpleasant stories of infiltration of the church by state agents and informers. But perhaps the surest tribute to Schönherr's 12 years of leadership of the church under communism is that when change – *die Wende* – began to stir in 1989, it was to the churches that so many East Germans flocked to debate their future and to insist on peaceful transformation. Spaces for democratic change had been preserved. In 2002 the award to him by the German government of the Federal Cross for Distinguished Service, together with other public honours and honorary degrees in Germany and elsewhere, was testimony to his standing

Schönherr was a tall, quietly spoken man who carried himself with a modest yet cheerful dignity. He was always glad to talk to people interested in his mentor Bonhoeffer, and manifested in himself something of that 'sound life' he had learnt at Finkenwalde. For instance at an international Bonhoeffer conference at Hirschluch in East Germany in 1984, with deep reverence he conducted daily prayers according to Bonhoeffer's Finkenwalde pattern – and during an afternoon boat trip generously plied us foreign guests with schnapps and coffee. In his long retirement he travelled and lectured widely. Even during the communist period he had taken opportunities to relate to the wider world, as when in November 1972 he visited Britain and in a poignant gesture was invited to stand alongside the Queen Mother at the Act of Remembrance at the Cenotaph.

In 1936 he married Hilde Enterlein, who had been another of Bonhoeffer's Berlin students, Bonhoeffer himself conducting the ceremony. She died in 1962. The following year he married Annemarie Schmidt, who survives him as do the six children of his first marriage, his 20 grandchildren and 33 great-grandchildren.

Whenever, today, we walk through the Brandenburg Gate with the freedom that Berlin has enjoyed now for 20 years, we can recall with gratitude Albrecht Schönherr and those like him who, even in those days of oppression, faithfully walked on its eastern side and already lived in that freedom given by the Word of God in the power of the Spirit.

*Keith Clements*

## CHRISTIAN VIEWPOINT

COFFEE

*MORNING Plus*

*for both Men and Ladies  
10.30-11.30 (2nd THURSDAY)  
at Welcome Evangelical Church  
HIGH ST WITNEY*



**Thursday November 12th**

**Pastor Jason Boyd**

of

**Witney Congregational Church**



Thank you for the beautiful  
flowers & all your cards on  
the occasion of our Ruby  
wedding anniversary

Terry & Jacqui



**Join The Wave in London on 5 December as we make the final call for climate justice ahead of the UN's Copenhagen summit.**

The Wave, organised by our friends at the Stop Climate Chaos Coalition (SCC), promises to be the UK's biggest ever demonstration in support of climate action.

And prior to the demo, Christian Aid will also be co-hosting an ecumenical service featuring the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Archbishop of Westminster, Vincent Nichols.

**Dress in blue** and join us as we flood the streets of London and encircle Parliament to press home the need for the Britain to do all it can to seal a just deal in Copenhagen.

Where and when

**11am-12 noon** Ecumenical service. Join the Archbishop of Canterbury at a service at Methodist Central Hall in Westminster

**Noon-1pm** Assemble at Grosvenor Square

**1-3pm** March to the Houses of Parliament

**3pm** The Wave will encircle the Houses of Parliament. Please wear blue, and if

you can, bring a piece of blue material (eg a scarf or banner) to become part of the Wave.

Our campaign demands

We've fewer than 100 months to reverse growth in carbon emissions. Copenhagen is our chance to start putting it right.

We want the UK government to focus on three areas.

**1. Quit dirty coal** End our reliance on dirty coal power, and instead boost the UK's renewable energy supply to help build a green economy and create new jobs

**2. Protect the poorest** Provide resources to help the world's poorest and most vulnerable people adapt to climate change and allow them to develop in a carbon friendly manner

**3. Act fair and fast** Deliver a fair global deal in Copenhagen that keeps global warming under 2°C.

## **Prayer Corner Gift**

Nanna and Bob kindly brought a gift back from Cyprus for use in the Prayer Corner. It is a 3-D mirror with a cross and hands upturned in the middle. It is a fascinating object but also is an ideal focus for prayer and reflection. It is there for you to handle or just to look at and focus your thoughts. Please take time after a Sunday service or anytime in the week to look at it.

Thank you Nanna and Bob for your thoughtfulness.

## LOCAL SOLUTIONS TO A GLOBAL PROBLEM

Christian Aid and its partners around the world are working to show that diverse, community-based solutions can help poor communities to achieve sustainable development and provide long-term resilience to the impact of climate change.

**Melanie Marks** compiles a few examples...

### CENTRAL AMERICA

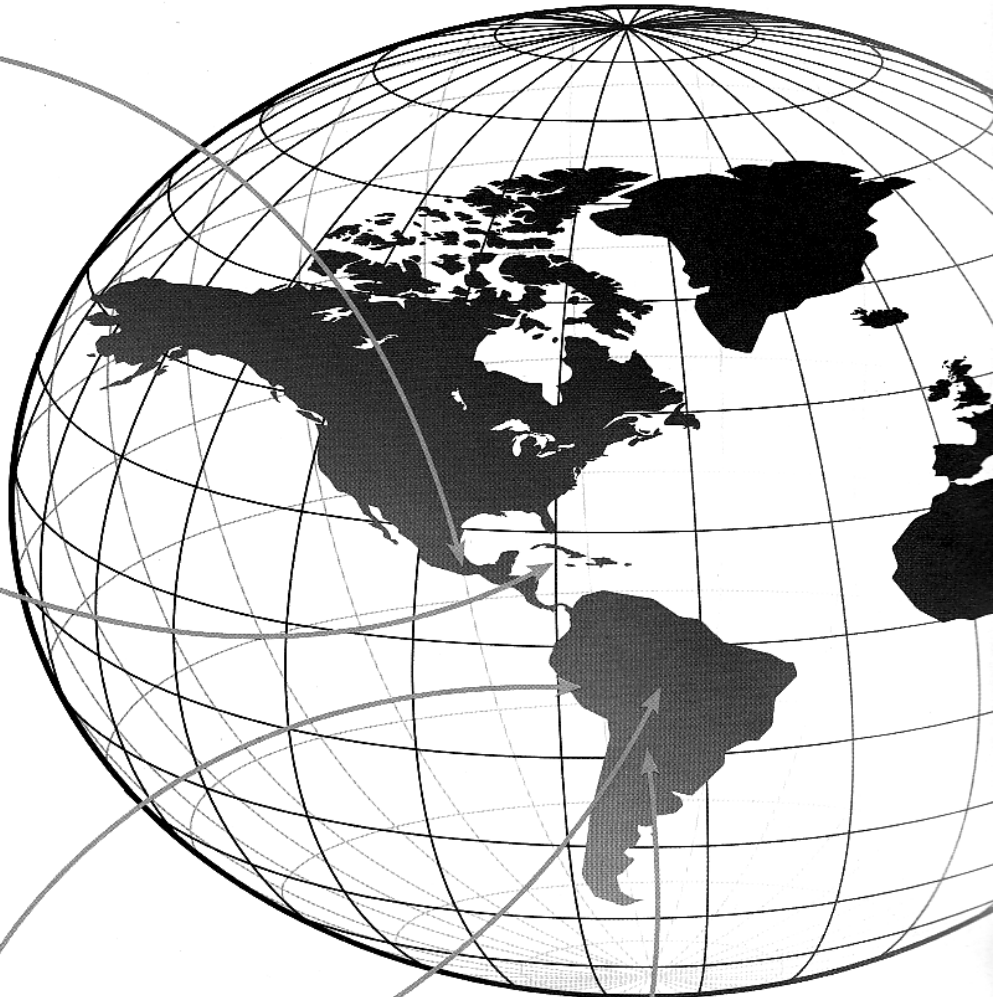
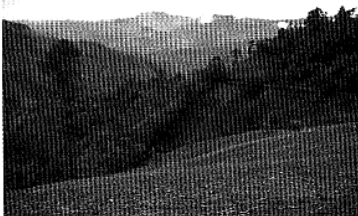
In El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua, Christian Aid works through a number of local NGOs, training village committees to deal with emergencies, introducing flood-resistant crops, helping communities to build drainage pipes and bridges and to develop long-term protection such as recycling and reforestation.

### HAITI AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Christian Aid is working with partners on both sides of the Haitian/Dominican border helping small farmers and forest associations to deal with the effects of climate change. For example, they help farmers adapt their crops in response to changing weather patterns and provide environmental education on sustainable management of natural resources and reforestation for people most vulnerable to natural disasters.

### PERU

Our partner the Centre for Agricultural Development works with communities in Ayacucho, one of the poorest areas in Peru, helping them mitigate the impact of climate change by improving their agricultural practices, through tree planting, restoring natural pasturelands, building terraces and collecting and retaining water more efficiently.



### BRAZIL

The destruction of the Amazon rainforest is contributing massively to carbon emissions and global warming. Christian Aid's partner CPI works with traditional peoples of the Amazon on land rights, recognising that these groups have a strategic role in protecting the forests and therefore the reduction of global warming.

### BOLIVIA

Christian Aid works with Fundación Solón, a national advocacy and campaigning organisation that helps indigenous people to speak out on the effects that climate change has on their communities. It is part of the Bolivian Climate Change Platform, which will be sending a delegation to Copenhagen to make its voice heard.

### TAJIKISTAN

The Youth Ecological Centre works with young people to lobby and campaign on environmental issues concerning renewable energy, energy efficiency and climate change. They have also installed solar panels in schools and other public buildings, promoted cow dung-powered stoves and given households plastic sheeting to cover their (glassless) windows.

### BANGLADESH

The Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) is helping communities adapt to climate change in rural Bangladesh. With Christian Aid's support, BCAS is helping to build resilient communities that are better prepared to deal with rising water levels, the erosion of river banks and the salination of water sources.

### INDIA

Christian Aid partner the Development Research Communication and Services Centre (DRCSC) works in 12 districts of West Bengal to promote food and livelihood security among the rural poor. These methods are helping farmers to adjust to the effects of climate change. Some of the methods promoted by DRCSC are seed banks, vegetable 'nutrition' gardens, diversification of crops and the reforestation of river banks.

### PHILIPPINES

As typhoons increase in severity and temperatures warm up, communities are finding it difficult to protect their crops from devastation. Thanks to loans and support from Christian Aid's partner Marinduque Council for Environmental Concerns on the island of Marinduque, people are now profitably farming butterflies.



### KENYA

In drought-prone eastern Kenya, Christian Aid partner UCCS has been working to address problems around water availability. As well as changing farmers' cropping patterns, a further response has been building dams to improve water supplies in the worst-affected areas.

### MALI

The Mali Folkecenter is actively promoting sustainable energy as a local solution for rural communities. Jatropha is being grown by families alongside other crops, to be turned into a biofuel that will supply these communities with their own electricity. The plants take up to three years to reach maturity but the communities understand the importance of sustainable energy and the long-term benefits it will bring to their lives.



### ZIMBABWE

Since 2005 Christian Aid partners have been working with communities to introduce them to conservation-agriculture techniques. By 2009 at least 5,000 farmers had been trained, and they are reporting an increase in yields of sorghum, millet and maize.

### BURKINA FASO

Christian Aid's partner the Albert Schweitzer Ecological Centre has helped build a solar-recharging station at Tigandalgii. Before this existed, the only lighting here came from oil lamps. Villagers bring car batteries for charging, and use the batteries to power lighting at their homes, the local school and in the market. Now, even when it gets dark, children can still study and market traders and basket weavers can see to work.



# ROTAS

## WELCOMING TEAM

Nov	01	Beryl & Pip Cartwright
	08	Remembrance Sunday
	15	Irene St Clair & Iris Lindsay
	22	Pat & Ben Smith
	29	Nanna Blackman & Val Obriain
Dec	06	Jill & Robert McBride



## COMMUNION

Nov	01 pm	Jacqui Powlesland	
		Preparation	Iris Lindsay
	15 am	Chris Esapa & Elaine Gudem	
		Peter Gamston & Pat Smith	
		Preparation	Beryl Cartwright
Dec	06 pm	Nanna Blackman	
		Preparation	Iris Lindsay



## FLOWERS

Nov	01	Jacqui Powlesland
	08	Joan Curry
	15	Beryl Cartwright
	22	Val Obriain
	29	Alison Hazell
Dec	06	Pat Smith



## COFFEE

Nov	01	Jill & Robert McBride
	08	Susan Wass & Irene St Clair
	15	Val Obriain & Sarah Hopwood
	22	Pat & Ben Smith
	29	Marjorie Lee, Iris Lindsay & Judith Bungey
Dec	06	Sue Birdseye & Linda McCormac
	Note:	Reserve Irene St Clair



## REST & CHAT

Nov	05	Jean Stanley
	12	Pat Smith & Gwen Mee
	19	Marjorie Lee
	26	Jean Stanley
Dec	03	Iris Lindsay & Joan Currie



Every effort has been made on the rota list to meet individual circumstances. However, please change with someone else if the dates are not convenient for you - Thank You