

Grapevine

December 2007 / January 2008

Parish Magazine

St. Luke with St. Bartholomew



You are invited to a

New Year's Eve Party

in the Parish Hall 31st December 2007 from 8:00pm

Don't sit at home alone - join in the celebrations
with other members of the Parish family!



Young families welcome!

Entertainment will include games, dancing,
quizzes, a raffle and much, much more!

*Please bring some food to share.
Soft drinks will be provided, but if you require anything
stronger, you'll have to bring it yourself!*

*If you would like to help on the day, could provide a quiz,
game or raffle prize or have any other suggestions
for a great evening, please contact
Lynne Webb, Christine or Brian.*

Popular Hymns



Nigel Hardcastle

We can worship God with hymns we like and ones we don't like. Never the less it is good to have good number of hymns people like in our worship. Having hymns everyone likes and no one dislikes is, however, impossible because everyone has different tastes.

Long ago as green young curate I got my congregation to rate hymns between 1 (really loved) and 5 (really hated). The plan was then only to have hymns which everyone gave scores between and 3. Only one hymn fitted this condition: *At the name of Jesus*. After we had sung it I realised about half had chosen it because of the "lovely modern tune" and the other half had chosen it wanting the old tune and were really irritated if they got the new one! One curate learns you can't ever please people choosing hymns.

In our parish *Shine Jesus Shine* is the ninth most popular hymn. On this basis I would chose it about three times a year. However, it is also chosen by house groups and by Sunday school. The first year here we ended up singing it 8 times! Steps had to be taken. The hymn is also one that is many people's pet hate. Putting up with it three times a year is reasonable. Eight was not!

Different Sorts of Hymns

Sometimes it can help to realise what sort of hymn you are singing.

- Some hymns are prayers addressed directly to God the Father, or to Jesus, or to the Holy Spirit. (e.g. *Lord and Father of mankind*).
- Some hymns are meditations. They are not addressed to God but are thoughts about God and live sung in his presence. (e.g. *Be still for the presence* is addressed to US, but directs us to the presence of God.)
- Some hymns are OBJECTIVE. They mainly describe God as he is and allow us to respond to him as we feel best. Any expressions of feeling and response are in general
- Some hymns are SUBJECTIVE. They describe what one person's response to God is.

Subjective hymns can sometimes be easier for people to identify with. However, if you don't feel like the writer felt they can be very off putting. For public worship objective hymns should probably predominate but there is a place for subjective hymns too.

Amani Centre, Morogoro



Bridget and Leslie Green

Bridget and Leslie Green, Trustees of Friends of Amani Tanzania (FoAT) report on their October visit to Amani Centre Morogoro and its associated projects supporting the poor and disabled.

Since the beginning of 2007 we had been planning our eight-day visit to the Amani Centre as a follow up to our initial visit in May 2006. Some weeks before our departure, the FoAT Trustees learned from Mama Josephine Bakhita that the Amani Centre core funding had ceased and that the centre was struggling to meet its bills and to pay its staff. The FoAT Trustees consulted on the situation and discussed this with Beanfeast, the Scottish supporters of Amani. We were tasked with facilitating Amani to review its structure and consider ways in which it could develop sources of sustainable income.

Our visit was therefore not just a fact finding mission but also an opportunity to meet RC Diocesan representatives and the Amani Staff to raise awareness and help them to understand their situation and begin to facilitate change.

The Mountain Village of Mgeta

We certainly beat the bounds of the Parish on our visit to this remote mountain village. Once a thriving mica mining area it is now entirely dependent on farming for its survival. Sixteen goats were bought with money raised last Christmas by FoAT and these have produced seven kids which have been reared and distributed to other worthy families. The project is well run and further families would benefit if we raise money again from the sale of cards this Christmas. Several families have also managed to rear a pig and there were several hens scratching in the soil.

The parish priest, Father Luhimba's pastoral activities include identifying and supporting those families who are to receive

goats. He is also a talented engineer and builder! He has a "hands on" role in rebuilding the 100 year old church and had "engineered" temporary repairs to the 40 year old rampump which pumps the only source of water from the river to the mountainous village. Over lunch with us, he identified the need for a new rubber diaphragm for the pump, which we promised to source and supply on our return to the UK. We are pleased to report that the despatch is imminent and the village will once again have pumped water.

Mikese Farm and Vocational Training Centre

This project is doing well under the leadership of Alloyce Makoye, the Farm Manager. A new classroom block has been completed and funded by the local telecom company, Vodacom. The old sewing room is now being used as a hen house having re-sited the sewing room in the new Vodacom block. The disabled youth are caring for over 50 laying hens in fine condition. Eggs are sold to raise money for feed and the remainder used as food by youth at Mikese and Amani Centres.

The carpentry skills are being developed and sample furniture already produced. We identified this as a potential income generation project for Amani; the skills of the disabled youth could be put to good use in the production of furniture for sale.

The short rains were imminent and the farm will soon need ploughing. Mr Makoye will arrange to hire a tractor. If a second-hand tractor were sourced, there is the potential, not only to farm Mikese more effectively, but it could be rented out to other local farmers and so generate income for Amani.

The planned pig-rearing project, another potential source of income, still awaits a regular and reliable source of water. We are pleased to report that on our return to the UK, the FoAT trustees have agreed to the release of monies to complete the drilling of the boreholes. The charity still needs to raise funds to install a pump and pipework.

The disabled youth at Mikese have cleared the ground for a football pitch, built some sun shelters and erected a tent from

which they were selling soda to the local kids who come to play. There is no shortage of enterprise at Mikese!

Mvomero Secondary, Dibamba Primary and Mgudene Primary Schools

These schools are typical of many rural schools in Tanzania. They are without electricity and a water supply, the children share desks and there are very few books. Teachers sometimes have 70 or 80 children in a class and the teaching style is very much "chalk and talk".

We were welcomed in turn at each school and formerly introduced to the members of staff. Each headmaster reported on the current progress of the school development, achievements of the pupils and a wish list of their needs. We then attended a full assembly of the pupils and Bridget was able to award pens and pencils donated by friends in the UK to a number of the pupils as prizes for their recent achievements. In introducing ourselves, we were able to explain how we had become involved with the Amani Centre and what valuable work was taking place with the disabled families. We explained how the disabled families were being taught to care for themselves and stimulate their disabled children. We stressed that disability didn't mean inability and gave the example that the disabled youth at Mikese may be able to supply desks if funding could be found from either the UK or other community sources to kick start the initiative. We encouraged the pupils to give some of their time and seek ways to help the elderly and disabled in and around Mvomero. We were encouraged that at least one member of staff from each school returned to Mvomero with us and took part in the afternoon presentation and discussion with the elderly at the centre and each was able to learn more about the work taking place at Amani and its associated sites.

Physiotherapy and social work in the community

We were particularly encouraged by the work that the recently appointed physiotherapist, Dietrich Chussi, had been leading in the communities around Mvomero and at the Amani Centre

itself. We saw examples of how some of the families with disabled children had been taught to use local materials to create simple physiotherapy aids to help their children. These included parallel bars made from banana trees to assist a severely disabled child to walk and a back supports to help a child sit so that he could watch his mother work in the fields. We were pleased to see how some of the older physically disabled children we had seen last year who had to be held and fed by their mothers, could now be given physical support to sit up and had been taught to feed themselves.

Funga Funga

Since the start of this year, FoAT have pledged to provide funds, channelled through the Morogoro RC Diocese, to provide a second meal a day to augment the basic, and only other meal, provided at this government run old people's home. Our visit on a Sunday afternoon coincided with the delivery of the meal from the church. It appeared very wholesome, though allocation was a little disorganised, as the "Wasi" (old people) struggled to collect their bowls and get their serving. Everybody received a share but the first to arrive with their bowls certainly had a good measure!

Some of the youth from Amani who accompanied us on our visit, sang and entertained the Wasi and one elderly gentleman gave a rendition in English of his favourite tune. Conditions at the centre are still very basic and the elderly are largely left to their own devices.

At our meeting with representatives of the Diocese the following day, we raised the question of the future of Funga Funga. The decision for the church to take over responsibility from the State rested with the Bishop. It appeared that if Friends of Amani were to write formerly to the Bishop with our promise of continued support this would speed that decision. That letter has now been despatched and we await the outcome.

Daycare

This is an area that troubles the trustees of Friends of Amani and our colleagues at Beanfeast. The Amani Centre has three new classrooms which remain largely unused. With the demise of the school bus to collect disabled children from the outlying district, the numbers who attend on a regular basis have dwindled to about 20. The trained teacher is currently on sabbatical leave and the children are now in the hands of staff with little knowledge of special needs teaching. The Trustees of FoAT and of Beanfeast plan to review their support to this essential work and consider ways in which funds can be channelled to train staff locally and re-establish quality day care for disabled children in the Morogoro area.

Restructure

During our visit we had discussions with senior clergy from the Roman Catholic Diocese and Amani staff about the current financial situation at Amani and initiated a "brainstorming" session with staff to consider how they might restructure to become more efficient and generate income to meet their core objectives. We reaffirmed the support of Friends of Amani Tanzania in adding value to the work of the Amani Centre to help the poor and disabled in the Morogoro region and to further the education of the less advantaged in Tanzania.

Support from St Luke's and St Bart's

A very big thank you to everyone who responded to our appeal, just before our visit, for pens and pencils. These were very well received by the children in the schools and at the Amani Centre. We decided it was appropriate to give the very smart St Luke's and St Bart's pens to the clergy, teachers and staff we met as a gesture of friendship and a longer term reminder to them of all their friends and supporters at our churches.

The mothers of the disabled children were extremely grateful for the shampoo and soap generously donated by some of you. These mothers, all single and with no means of financial

support, are taught the importance of basic hygiene and wash their children with buckets of water outside their simple dwellings.

We are very grateful to the church charity committee for choosing Friends of Amani Tanzania as one of the outreach organisations to support in 2008 and we look forward to giving an "illustrated talk" in the sermon slot on 27 January.

Please continue to pray for the work of the Amani Centre and its outreach projects in the Morogoro District of Tanzania in helping the disabled and the poor. Your prayers in church on the Sunday before we left for our visit in October meant a great deal to us and we felt that God was working with us and through us as we went about his work.

One highlight of our visit was to join in the celebration of RC Mass, conducted in Swahili by an Italian priest, in a packed church. We really felt the hand of ecumenism at work!

Christmas Gift Cards: On sale soon

We will again have Christmas Gift Cards to the value of £10 and £20 on sale soon. Last year we raised £500 from our parishes alone from the sale of these. If you are struggling to think of an appropriate gift for a friend this Christmas, do please consider giving them a gift card and supporting the work of Friends of Amani Tanzania.

Joint Youth Work News



Laura Peirce

Really hard to believe I have been in post over a year now. Hasn't time gone fast? Therefore, I feel it is a good time to update you on some of the events since I last wrote in Spring.

Picnic in the Park

I was on the organising committee for Picnic in the Park which was a joint church event with all the churches in Earley and East Reading. It was held in June and the weather held out for us on the day and a great time was had by all. There were a variety of activities to take part in, ranging from circus skills, an interactive prayer tent, bouncy castle, and cream teas, to worship!

First Communion

At Earley St. Peter's I have been involved in preparing young people to take Communion before being confirmed. This was a great success and 5 young people took their first Communion in July.

SHOUT!

SHOUT is a youth group for years 4-8 held at Earley St. Peter's on the 1st Tuesday of each month. I have regularly been involved in helping with this group which is flourishing. A number of young people aged 13 have just left the group and so we are looking to recruit more young people. This group is open to all churches and is something for the younger ones to get involved in. It is always a fun evening and tends to be quite noisy!

FIZZGang!

FIZZ is the Saturday night youth group at Park and Gang is the same for Wesley and St. Luke's. This past year has seen the two groups doing some activities together, which has proved a

great success. For example, we went sno tubing together which was brilliant! As a trial this term the two groups have joined and are now called FIZZGang! So far, numbers have been very good. We had 23 young people and 7 leaders for the recent treasure hunt! We have also planned beetle drives, cinema, bowling and music jam nights.

Continuing Work

Various elements of work have continued throughout the year. These include helping in schools lessons with REinspired, leading assemblies for Maiden Erlegh Year 7, running a Christian Union at Maiden Erlegh, and helping out on Sunday mornings with the young people in all churches.

Plans for the coming year

This year's plans are many and varied to say the least! Some are still unfolding, some were planned ages ago and some are not yet even thought of!

I aim to take the minibus driving test this year, I also am booked into two first aid courses, and am completing the ACORN "Called to Listen" Course. There is going to be more training for all volunteers from the Diocesan Youth Advisor.

At Easter, we have booked to take a group of 32 of us to Spring Harvest in Minehead! I am greatly looking forward to this. We are also planning more joint events with Anderson Baptist and Tyndale Baptist.

I will continue to lead assemblies in Maiden Erlegh for year 7 but this year I am also covering year 8 as well, and branching into Bulmershe to cover year 8.

I will continue to work with the newly formed FIZZGang and hope this will go from strength to strength.

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Mothers' Union News and Notices

Joan Morgan

At our October meeting we heard an interesting talk by Mr Russell Summers about his work with the Samaritans, an organisation that helps many unhappy people across the world. They need our prayers and always welcome helpers.

There was a full house for our November meeting. Mrs Pat Townsend led prayers which included MU members at our link church in Rockhampton, Australia and the MU in Congo.

Mrs Celia Harris read the story of the Marriage at Cana and then John and Penny Starr took us on a wonderful tour of Peru with a colourful dvd of the wedding of their son Richard to a Peruvian girl. We wish them a long and happy married life.

Other news is that the money collected from the MU Overseas boxes amounted to £386. Thank you everyone!

MU Notices:

Tues 3 rd December	MU Advent Service	St Peter's Earley 8:00pm
Weds 5 th December	MU Corporate Communion	St Luke's 10:00am
Wed 12 th December	MU Prayer Group	68 Donnington Road, 2:15pm
Weds 19 th December	MU Christmas Party	Parish Hall 2:15pm
Weds 2 nd January 2008	MU Corporate Communion	St Luke's 10:00am
Weds 9 th January	MU Lunch	
Weds 16 th January	MU Prayer Group	68 Donnington Road, 2:15pm

www.themothersunion.org

The Great Escape



Ellen Rollings

Spring cleaning
Opened the cage door
Oblivious of the budgie inside
Out it flew!
Oh look! Flying skywards
Following its wake
Hoping for a miracle
A miracle did not happen
Wishing for a miracle
To propel our budgie back – back to Earth
Back to its rightful home – downwards
Come back! I pleaded
Do not go away
We love you
A grown-up woman
Pleading for a bird's love
But it flew and flew
A point of no return
Did not look back
“My great escape!”
It seems to be saying
“I am not coming back”
So it flew, higher and higher
Into the bright morning sky
Heavenwards
I stood there lost for words – helpless
For the children bad news – a loss
In the garden
By me stood the empty cage
Bits of food on the cage floor
Feathers, water bowl, climbing frames, toys
All that were left
Budgie is gone!
Gone to be with its friends
So I said goodbye and thanks for all the fun
The pretty blue, yellow and green bird
Is gone! Flown away. God bless.

Theft of Metal – Urgent – Our Churches are at Risk!

 John Starr

Lead, copper and stainless steel roof coverings, lightning conductors, rainwater pipes, bronze statues, iron gates and even church bells have all been STOLEN recently from churches near and far.

Increased world demand for metals has encouraged thieves to become increasingly bolder and organised in their attacks. It matters not to them that stonework is damaged in removing lead, for example, and that resulting water damage may damage internal furnishings.

From January to September 2007, our Ecclesiastical Insurance Co received a staggering 1,348 claims for metal theft from Anglican churches, costing an estimated £4.4 million!

What can we do? We can all be aware of suspicious 'builders' on our sites, of ladders etc. left unlocked, of structures (e.g. wheelie bins) making easy roof access and of obscuring trees and bushes. As one approach to deterrence 'Ecclesiastical' have purchased a SmartWater licence and starter kit for marking property (including lead on roofs!). The SmartWater solution is unique to a church, almost indestructible, invisible and shows up under ultra violet light. It links criminals to an actual site and has 100% conviction rate when used in court evidence.

But we do not want to allow the thieves to get that far. *Prevention* by each one of us being alert to our church building security is better than *Cure*.

Vietnam Cycle Challenge 2007 in aid of Macmillan cancer support



Sue Richards

Day 1

Our first night was spent in the bustling city of Hanoi. From here we took a two hour coach trip into the countryside to collect our bikes. Upon finding our designated bike we spent time setting them up, fitting peddles, saddles, etc. Just doing these simple jobs became difficult due to the humidity and heat.

Was this a taste of what we were to endure for the next seven days?

After a good lunch of noodles we mounted our bikes for the first climb of the challenge, ascending 2004 ft before cruising down into a beautiful valley. We stayed in a village where we were entertained by the locals with music and dance.

Day 2

We headed off on a quiet back road, passing through plumb orchards, corn and tea plantations. The cycling comprised of tough climbs (4297 ft) to our overnight stay in Moc Chau.

Day 3

This morning we were greeted by torrential rain, and we set off with a gradual down hill, through terraced rice paddies that were overshadowed by beautiful limestone cliffs.

Day 4

A fantastic days cycling in an area inhabited by the White Hmong hill tribe. The women go about their daily tasks dressed in the most brightly coloured traditional dress which includes a beautiful black head dress adorned with bright pink tassels and pom poms.

Day 5

Today was supposed to be a slightly gentler day, it started well as the road took us between sheer cliffs on which the villages were perched dramatically on the hillside. However the road gave way to

mud as the main highway was undergoing major reconstruction. We were all covered from head to toe in red mud and had to be hosed off before consuming a hearty lunch.

Day 6

The sun was out, as we followed a beautiful route following the Na River thorough a lush, undulating landscape of ferns, bananas and bamboo.

Day 7

For me and many other riders, this was the hardest day so far. The morning ride consisted of 37miles of undulating dirt / asphalt road which took us through spectacular gorges. Early into the afternoon I began to flag and lay down by the side of the road to recover, feeling a little sorry for myself. I pulled myself together and got back onto my bike, I knew I just had to keep the wheels turning. I discovered later the day consisted of a total distance of 68.61 miles climbing 6425 feet in temperatures reaching 108 degrees!

Day 8

The final day of the trip arrived with the sun shining - a long day in the saddle awaited us. After lunch, the atmosphere was a little subdued as those of us who had ridden every mile of the way made mental preparations for the 17 km climb to Heaven's Gate. Upon reaching Heaven's Gate the Macmillan banner was out and everyone was cheering us on.

Each and every one of us had a personal reason for making this journey. Forty nine cyclists finally entered the town of Sappa in single file, completing a journey of a total distance of 421.32 miles, and climbing a total of 33,667 ft - all in the aid of Macmillan cancer support.

The memories I shall always cherish from the challenge are that the Vietnamese have very few possessions, but are so happy and would give you their last bowl of rice; the squeals of delight of the children as I cycled passed; the magnificence and beauty of this unspoilt country.

I thank all of you who have generously sponsored me via Gwen.

Spiced Beef



Wendy Baggley

I have prepared and cooked this recipe every Christmas time for years, and it's become a tradition in our house. About a fortnight before Christmas I go to a good butcher to buy the meat.

1. 4-5lb piece of lean, boned and rolled brisket of beef.
2. Place it in a large bowl or pan and rub 4oz salt all over the meat.
3. Leave to stand for 24 hours in the fridge.
4. Drain the liquid from the bowl and rinse out the bowl before putting the meat back again.
5. In a basin combine the following sugar and spices:

8oz soft brown sugar	1/2oz allspice
3/4oz saltpetre	1 tsp ground mace
1/4oz white pepper	1 tsp ground nutmeg
1 tsp ground cloves	1 tsp crushed juniper berries

6. Rub this mixture into the beef daily and turn the beef twice a day in the juices for 10 days, keeping the bowl in the bottom of the fridge during the 10 days.
7. Transfer the meat and juices to a large deep pan, add enough cold water to cover, bring to the boil then simmer for 3 1/2 hours.
8. Turn off the heat and leave to stand for 1 hour.
9. Lift out of liquid and press joint between two plates, leave to go cold, then put in the fridge.
10. Slice thinly to serve.

N.B. It's very nice with chutneys and pickles!

Rum Butter Tarts



Wendy Bagglely

These spicy tarts make a change at Christmas time from the usual mince pies.

8oz shortcrust pastry	1 egg, beaten
2oz raisins	1 tbsp dark rum
2oz no soak dried apricots	1oz ground almonds
2oz butter	2oz dark soft brown sugar
½ tsp ground cinnamon	Pinch grated nutmeg
Pinch ground cloves	

1. Mix the apricots and raisins with the rum and leave to stand for 15 minutes.
2. Roll out the pastry thinly on a floured surface, cut into rounds and line greased patty tins.
3. Cream butter and sugar in a bowl until light and fluffy; beat in the egg, ground almonds and spices.
4. Stir in the rum soaked fruit.
5. Put a spoonful of this mixture into each pastry case and bake for 15-20 minutes at 375°F or gas mark 5.
6. Cool tarts in the tin for a few minutes before putting onto a wire rack until cold.
7. Serve warm or cold, sprinkled with icing sugar.

N.B. Orange or cranberry juice could be used in place of the rum if you wish.

Merry
Christmas