

Newsletter 3

July 2010

Hello Everyone...Greetings from the Gambia!

It has been a while since I have written a newsletter but I wish to update you all on my work here in The Gambia. The rainy season has now arrived- it is very hot and humid with lots of rain. There is water everywhere!!

Albion Lower Basic School

The school now has a fully functioning computer room following the arrival of the container from the Container Ministry last December and their gift of eight computers and computer equipment. I was moved by the gratitude of the school for the computers- one teacher told me, "When the computers arrived in school we danced and danced!" The additional computers have really enhanced the teaching and learning of computers at the school and the children have achieved a pleasing standard- this has been evident in the computer exams I have been asked to administer. The school has celebrated the pupils' success by awarding prizes at the end of term for success in computers. The Government has commended the school for how the computers are used for administration purposes.



Methodist Special School



This is the only school for pupils with special needs in The Gambia. Most of the teachers have no training in teaching pupils with special needs. The school experiences financial difficulties.

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I have now been given responsibility for managing the finances of the school and assisting with daily administration on a part time basis.

Please pray for the school as it strives to move forward and meet the needs of the pupils in a more effective way than has been currently happening.

Education Secretariat

My work continues with the Secretariat (which manages all 13 Methodist Schools in The Gambia). Just recently, a Sponsored Walk was organised to raise funds for the Secretariat to organise training workshops for teachers, provide resources for schools etc.



Other work

In my spare time, I help in the Bishop's office with administration whenever additional help is required. This has given me the opportunity to learn more about the working of The Methodist Church here in The Gambia.

Church Life

The Methodist Church in The Gambia has seen some changes! A Bishop now heads the church instead of



Bishop Norman Grigg

a President. Bishop Norman Grigg returned to The UK in June 2010 and the current Bishop, Bishop Peter Stephens now heads the Church.



Bishop Peter Stephens

During Conference in June, I had the opportunity to attend the ordination of three ministers- the service lasted about three and a half hours long. What a wonderful service- lots of great singing and African style music!

Just recently I was invited to attend a wedding of seven couples at the Methodist Church at Ghana Town!



The grooms waiting for their brides!

Marakissa Mill Project

In January of this year, the foundation stone was laid of the mill at Marakissa. Rev Bill and Mrs Wilma Scott, Glengormley were present at the event as they were visiting me at the time. The project has been funded entirely from donations made through the Irish Methodist Church.



The Project was completed by early May 2010 and I was invited to participate in the dedication of the mill.

The project will make such a difference to the life of the people in the village. No longer will the women have to travel long distances to have their rice ground. People from the neighbouring villages will also come to use the mill- this in turn will generate funds for the Project to cover future costs etc. It was such a wonderful experience



to be part of the dedication ceremony- I was touched by the heartfelt gratitude of the people of Marakissa for the generosity of all those who contributed to the project through the Irish Methodist Church. Many lives will truly be blessed!



Travel Plans

Schools have now closed until late September so I am really looking forward to a holiday at home in Northern Ireland from mid-August to mid-September- time to spend with family and friends.

Thanks

The Lord has been truly gracious to me and I have been blessed in a multitude of ways during my time here. The Lord is ever faithful and I am truly thankful.

Thanks to all who pray for me, write emails and send letters of encouragement and gifts in the post- it is always a joy to receive them. I am also grateful for the donations of money given for my work in The Gambia- people's lives have been touched by your generosity. May the Lord bless you in a really special way!

Yours in Christ's Service

Ruth