

mission matters

PARTNERS IN MISSION

INSIDE



Brazil street children project



New hope in Bangladesh

Issue 30

Spring 2010

Pacific Appeal UPDATE

Tarpaulin, bedding, bricks and mortar, tables, chairs, crayons and paper, fabric, thread and sewing machines.

These are just a few of the essentials that your donations have enabled the Methodist Church in Samoa to buy, in the wake of the tsunami which struck on 29 September 2009. Whole communities were devastated by the tsunami, which generated waves of up to 15ft (4.5m) in some areas and left over 170 people dead.

Thanks to the speedy and generous response of British Methodists to an

appeal launched on 2 October, £47,000 has been raised, and the money continues to come in.

Steve Pearce, our Asia/Pacific partnership coordinator, visited the Methodist Church of Samoa in December.

"MCS had just received the grant for its Tsunami Relief Fund from The Methodist Church in Britain," said Steve. "The Standing Committee was enormously

grateful for this generosity and for the partnership that it represents."

Steve toured the tsunami-affected region, including Satitoa – the village most badly affected. Almost the whole village was swept away by the tsunami - only two family houses remain.

He said, "Satitoa used to have 1,500 inhabitants and was stretched out along

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Cumbria Appeal

UPDATE

Since this appeal was launched we have been humbled by the generous responses from churches, organisations and individuals across the country. As I write this in late December the fund has already exceeded £34,000 including a substantial donation from Methodist Insurance who expressed a wish to support "those who, for whatever reason, are not able to recover from any insurer". This is Methodism in action and I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to everyone who has given to this appeal on behalf of all those who have been affected by the disastrous flooding.

David Bennett
Fundraising Coordinator



Editorial – David Bennett

How strongly do you feel about your part in the mission of the Church? I have been privileged to have a number of conversations recently about this with ordinary churchgoers.



What amazed me from these conversations was the commitment to mission that lay at the heart of Methodism - and how it is still alive and well in the Church today.

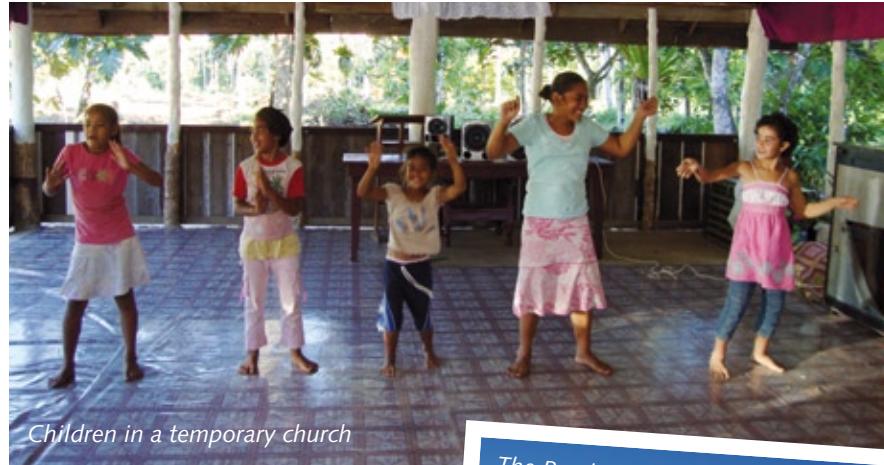
Many years ago, overseas mission was all about 'sending', and Christian missionaries were sent to countries all over the world to spread the word of God. Today, however, our theme is 'partnership', and we now work in collaboration with Churches and Church organisations in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas. They know their local area and are able to get their hands dirty doing the work of furthering the kingdom.

That's why mission needs money as well as people. We are enabling our partners to be really effective in their own communities, doing what has to be done rather than what we think they should be doing.

In this issue of *Mission Matters* you'll read about how we are helping the local church in Cumbria to help get people back on their feet after the flooding. You'll read how we have helped a local church in Cornwall to reach out to surfers on the beaches; how we have been able to send substantial sums to Partner Churches in Haiti, Samoa, Tonga and Indonesia to help with their aid and relief programmes following the devastating earthquakes and tsunami; and how one of our Partner Churches has grown and matured into the Methodist Church in The Gambia - all thanks to your support for the World Mission and the Mission in Britain funds.

So next time you send off a cheque to an appeal, or put money into one of our mission envelopes, let me assure you that you are doing the bidding of the Lord as surely as if you were there yourself.

David Bennett



Children in a temporary church

continued from page 1

the coast road with tourist chalets along the beach side of the road and houses, shops, churches and a school on the other side. Now, the idyllic beach is still there, but along the road is straightforward devastation. I was taken there by the Revd Sanele Lavatai whose family live in this village. He showed me where the primary school he attended used to be and stood on the steps of the Methodist church with me as we contemplated the wasteland before us.

Then we drove inland a short distance up the hill to where some of the villagers have built temporary homes. No one is ready to live by the sea again yet. The minister Revd Mika Timoteo lives here with his wife Toreka and their children. They've built a temporary church here and have been discussing whether to build permanently here on the hill or to go back to their original site. We were able to tell Revd Mika that the funds had just been agreed by the Standing Committee for the

The Revd Sanele on the steps of the church



rebuilding. He was suitably pleased."

Working with local communities, the Methodist Church in Samoa is now rebuilding churches and worship centres, supporting pre-schools to get back to what they do best and enabling women's fellowship groups to start fundraising projects.

Slowly, people's lives are being put back together again in Samoa – and your giving is helping to make that possible.



Satitoa from a hill

World Mission Fund

Candlelit dinners

Next time you have a dinner party, spare a thought for where and how people might be eating that night in many countries where the Methodist Church is supporting the mission work of our Partner Churches. Conditions can be far from ideal. Lack of water, food, electricity and sanitary conditions are a challenge, especially in rural locations.

For example, the vast majority of villages throughout Africa have no running water, and many people have to make a day's journey to draw clean water from the nearest well. In Nepal power cuts are a daily occurrence and can even last several months. In India, many children face extreme poverty and malnutrition.

The Methodist Church would like to encourage you to invite your friends round for a meal with a difference. Here are a few simple hints and tips to help you raise awareness and funds with a World Mission Fund Candlelit Dinner.

If you decide to try this out, please let me know how you get on. Cheques should be made out to 'World Mission Fund' and sent to David Bennett at Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR.



Hints and tips

- Choose a country where the World Mission Fund is actively supporting the work of our Partner Churches. You can find a list on our website: www.methodistchurch.org.uk. Next to the 'Open to the World' icon you'll see 'World Church' – just click on that for a list.
- Find a suitable recipe for your meal. Try Recipe Source: www.recipesource.com. Alternatively you could serve a very basic meal – a small bowl of rice or a piece of bread for example – underlining how little many people in the world have to live on.
- Set the atmosphere. Instead of candles and silverware, why not use a torch or hurricane lamp and chopsticks?
- Invite as many friends as you can, more than you can seat around the table. Suddenly it will seem a lot less formal, especially if they have to sit on the floor. Don't forget to tell them that it is a fundraiser, so they need to bring cash or their cheque book. If people need a guide as to the minimum level of contribution, perhaps suggest they donate what they would spend on a meal at a restaurant.
- Use this copy (and previous copies if you have them) of Mission Matters to crib stories about our work of mission. You might even arm yourself with a few facts and figures about the country.

Haiti Earthquake Appeal

"The buildings, homes, businesses and hospitals of Port-au-Prince are flattened. We stand outside and weep as we hear thousands of crying people. Thousands have died – many, many around our house."

As you read this, the world is still reeling from the news of the earthquake that struck Port-au-Prince on 12 January – the largest in Haiti's recorded history. Later quakes were less devastating only because so much damage had already been done.

It is at times like this that the Church comes into its own. Rather than wait for money to be raised, we sent £20,000 on the day that the news first broke about this disaster. Please be assured that this money is going directly to the Methodist Church in Haiti. The local churches are probably one of the best ways of ensuring that your gift is used where it is most urgently needed. Your own gifts will then be used to reimburse the World Mission Fund – any excess will go to Haiti.

Donations can be made through the Just Giving webpage on



the Methodist Church website: www.justgiving.com/Methodist-Church-Haiti-Appeal or by sending a cheque payable to the 'World Mission Fund' and posting it to the Fundraising Coordinator at Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London, NW1 5JR. Postal donations should be labelled 'Haiti Appeal'.

Tubestation

Inset: Kris Lannen
Main picture: Henry and Kris (and a friend) riding the waves

riding the ultimate wave

Surfing. What does it mean to you? Big waves? Golden beaches? Whatever it conjures up, would you make a link between surfing and church? That's what two Christians, who love riding big waves, have done in Polzeath on the north Cornish coast.

According to *The Times*, Polzeath is the thumping heart of cool Cornwall and, in an old beachside Methodist chapel, a new charity is striving to create the loudest thumping heartbeat of all.

A charity? Well, yes. But, more than that, Tubestation is a mission which, having grown out of a vision, now aims to use its resources and links in creative ways to benefit people. From Sunday worship to an indoor skateboard park, a fair-trade surf lounge to a national level surfing competition, Tubestation is about people coming together. By involving the whole community in its development,

Tubestation is also encouraging local people to see the opportunities for themselves.

It would be easy to assume that Tubestation grew out of the chapel. After all, aren't Methodist communities famous for setting up missions? Not Tubestation. In 2006 all that remained of Polzeath Methodist Church, like so many others, was a tired old chapel used by a handful of faithfuls - six to be exact - for an hour a week. It was due to be closed. But because of its calling to serve the world around it in relevant ways, the handful has grown into a full-time church, a body of people hungry for God and learning how to provide a fresh expression of church, with Tubestation now functioning as its full-time mission arm. Of the six faithfuls, one has passed away, one has moved away, but the other four are still very much part of the church, and loving

the adventure.

According to co-founder Henry Cavender, Tubestation's task is simply to be creative, to serve people, to pray lots, to sow seeds in conversation when called to and to be there when God draws people.

So, how did it get its name?

"In surfing, a tube, or barrel, is the name given to a type of wave which arcs right over the surfer's head," explained Henry. "The tube is the most sought-after, most coveted surfing experience. It has been described as a religious experience. For a surfer, the tube is the ultimate ride. We believe that, for a human being, Jesus is the ultimate ride. So, Tubestation is about the ride, having fun experiencing the fullness of life and being inspired by the ocean."

Alongside Henry is Kris Lannen. Together, they have spent the last three summers developing Tubestation and watching God build on the foundations that have been laid. Now, Tubestation and Polzeath Community Church are active throughout the year, blessing a diverse range of people.

Rolling out the next big wave

Could a Tubestation take root and flourish elsewhere? Henry thinks so. "Sure! Faith exposes logic's limitations. There are other local Methodist churches, on the brink,



The Polzeath Methodist Church building, home to Tubestation





Above: Tubestation's 'feather flag' flies proudly

Above right: Inside the church, as it used to look in its pre-Tubestation days

Right: Buzzing with surfers on a Sunday

in brilliant surfing locations, but there's no reason why the principles couldn't equally be applied in the inner-city. With a good understanding of the culture, a creative vision and a gutsy attitude from the powers that be, anything is possible. Especially as these Methodists seem to have bags of 'gutsy attitude'."

Tubestation's team now includes the Revd Dave Matthews, from Christian Surfers UK. In a full-time pastoral role, he is heading up discipling and care in

"We're in this for the long-haul, to encourage real relationships to grow, ones that God might use."



the growing church. This frees Henry and Kris to keep looking outwards; and they didn't need to look far. Across the water near Padstow is St. Merryn. It is the central village for a stretch of surf-washed coastline with seven well-known bays, and also has pockets of deprivation. Here, there is a recently-closed Methodist church and Tubestation is exploring the potential for 'Tubestation 2'.

As Henry concluded, "Lots of people visit Tubestation expecting something earth-shattering and what they find is a bunch of ordinary bogs simply using what we have to serve the people around us, and having fun doing it. The only earth-shattering thing about it is that Jesus reminded us to love our neighbour - and that is revolutionary! Exercising faith has become the new extreme sport. It's a ride. Woah!"

Goats and tsunamis

Unrestricted giving and emergency appeals

It's very tempting to respond to appeals urging us to buy a goat for a family in need, or a well for water-scarce communities. This kind of generosity really does make a difference to many people's lives. But it can also be problematic. Why? Quite simply, it restricts our work. This is why we would encourage you to give to mission funds in general - as well as to individual programmes.

For example, within hours of hearing

of the plight of the people of Samoa following the tsunami in October, the World Mission Fund of the Methodist Church was able to send an immediate donation of £10,000. We didn't have to wait for a special appeal, or for your cheques to arrive and be banked. Every second counted. We were able to respond immediately and that simply wouldn't have happened without the unrestricted gifts you make to the

World Mission Fund or the Mission in Britain Fund.

We do, of course, thank you for your generous giving to the localised work our Partner Churches are doing in their communities, and the special relationships that are forged from such support. But we do ask that you balance it with completely unrestricted giving too, so please bear this in mind in your decision to donate.

David Bennett

Brazil Marcos Marquillos and the street children project



The exact number of children sleeping rough on Brazil's city streets has always been hard to work out. Conservative estimates put the number at about 25,000 – of which some 2,000 live in the city of São Paulo.

From a very early age (sometimes as young as six) these children have to learn to be self-reliant and to live on their wits. They survive by searching for food in dustbins or on rubbish tips, and doing menial jobs such as shining shoes and cleaning car windscreens. There's no shortage of pimps, criminals and other predators looking to exploit them. Unprotected and vulnerable, street children are sometimes perceived to be a problem to society.

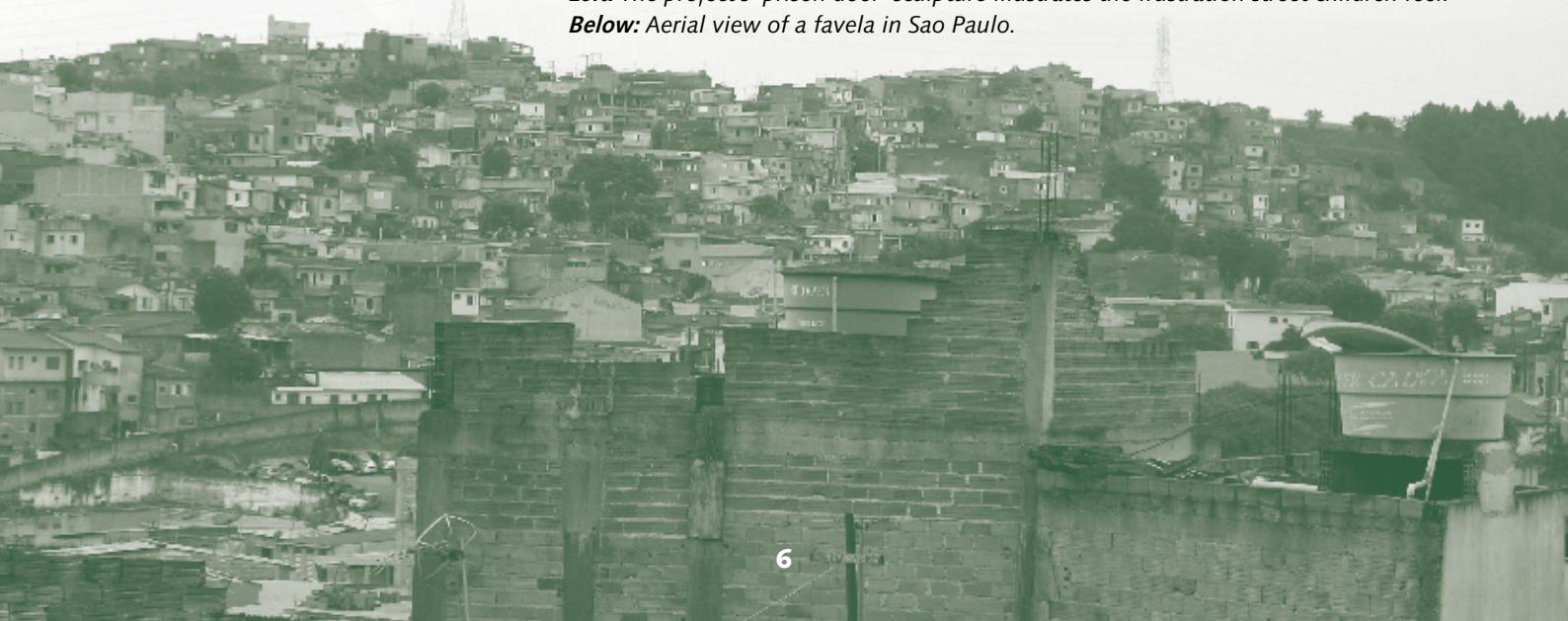
This is where Marcos Marquillos comes into the picture. Marcos runs the street

children's project in São Paulo, started some 20 years ago by the Methodist University's Faculty of Theology (FATEO). The project provides children with an education, play activity and psychological support. But most importantly, it is a safe space: an exploitation-free zone. The children who come here for support know they are entering somewhere where they can play, learn and just gather in safety without being offered drugs or lured into prostitution or petty crime.

The project is all about life having value and young lives being rescued. This is reflected in the graffiti and works of art that adorn the place. One very striking work of art there is a door from a prison. On it there's a model of a child trying to reach out through the door, putting their

Top: Marcos (right in red T-shirt) with his arm round David Gamble. Also in pic (from left): a member of staff at the project, David's wife Liz, and Demetrio Soares, a student from the Methodist University.

Left: The project's 'prison door' sculpture illustrates the frustration street children feel.
Below: Aerial view of a favela in São Paulo.



arm through the window, unable to get out. Some of the other art is angry; a lot of it pro-life in sentiment. One quote sums up the general mood very well, "You have to care for this life. It is the flower of the fruit".

Marcos, in his thirties, is a former street child himself, so he knows exactly what the children in his care go through, and he cares for them with a passion.

"I feel like there's a forest and a fire," he says. "As the fire takes hold and starts to destroy the forest, all the large animals stampede to escape the flames – all except a lone hummingbird that repeatedly goes back and forth to the flames with a drop of water to quench the fire."

The Revd David Gamble, president of the Methodist Conference, visited the project on a recent trip to Brazil. "The first thing that impressed me," he says, "was that quite a few local churches have looked at the situation in which they're placed, and seen a problem – and instead of asking someone else to do something about it, the church itself has said 'We must do something.'

"They showed us round the project and then they sat us down to talk to the youngsters, and invited them to ask us questions. Their first question was, 'How does your country deal with children like us?' To be honest, I have not come across a group of children who'd faced what



they had to face. It was more like the sort of thing in this country that you'd read about in Charles Dickens. It was just something that was totally outside my experience: the depth of difficulty so many of these youngsters had faced – and yet here was a project that was saying 'but life is good, and life can be full of possibilities for you'. And they were responding to the possibilities.

"One of the biggest things Marcos brings is that this was part of his experience too. He understands the youngsters and he's there for them; but he's also a sign to them that they can make something of their lives. You've got these kids who've gone through dreadful situations, but there's a light in their eyes. And the project works with them to turn that light into something even bigger."

Mission boxes - a simple idea

"Why does the Methodist Church need money for world mission?"

That question was asked by our circuit mission treasurer as he presented the accounts at our last circuit outreach group. Most fundraising by our church last year has been for our circuit mission project, Workaid (a local charity which sends reconditioned tools and equipment to Africa). Junior Mission for All (JMA) collects money for the World Mission Fund, but where churches have few children involved it falls to a handful of adults and families who still have JMA collecting boxes. So why not encourage people in your church to have adult World

Mission collecting boxes instead? This is a relatively easy way to provide regular income. It doesn't require the effort of putting on special events, standing on a street corner rattling a tin or taking part in a house-to-house collection.

I asked the minister who took the service on Advent Sunday if I could have a slot in the service to promote World Mission collecting boxes. He willingly agreed and, using the hymn 'O come, O come Immanuel' as the framework for his sermon, invited me to speak in relation to the third verse, which tells

of freeing people from tyranny. As an illustration I used the story of the feeding centres in Sri Lanka, made possible by an emergency grant from the World Mission Fund. Funding will continue to help the people in this war-ravaged country for the foreseeable future – all made possible by the generous giving of Methodist people.

I am pleased to say that 16 people have now agreed to have boxes, many of whom had not given regularly to World Mission before.

Margaret Michelmore,
Little Chalfont Methodist Church



World Mission Fund collecting boxes are available free of charge from Methodist Publishing.
Email: resources@methodistchurch.org.uk, or call 01733 235962 to get yours.

Methodist Church in GAMBIA

coming of age

The Methodist Church of The Gambia (MCG) began as a mission of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in 1821, and the tiny west African state was the British Methodist Church's first 'overseas district' in sub-Saharan Africa. That era came to an end on 24 May 2009 when, after 188 years as a district of the Methodist Church in Britain, the Gambia Church gained its independence.

Methodist Conference President David Gamble was present at the signing of

the Deed of Foundation. Other guests at the ceremony included the Anglican bishop of The Gambia, the Catholic bishop of Banjul, representatives of the government, the vice-president, the British high commissioner and a representative of the chief imam – who, whilst giving greetings on behalf of the Muslim leaders, said that he owed his whole education to the Methodist Church. The cross-section of guests is not only testament to inter-faith relationships in

The Gambia, but also an indication of the high esteem in which Methodists are held there.

Despite the relatively small number of Methodists in The Gambia is (about one in every 1,500 people), the impact of Methodism in the country is huge. Concentrating its efforts on educating the young, healing the sick and preserving the land, the MCG has helped change lives and transform whole communities. When David Gamble met the Gambian vice-president, Aja Dr. Isatou Njie-Saidy, she had nothing but praise for the contribution that Methodists have made to the quality of Gambian life. The Methodist Mission Agricultural Programme (MMAP) is helping to combat the country's deforestation problem by educating rural communities on tree planting and sustainable farming. As a result, in Marakissa today, swathes of greenery have replaced the desert, defying the limited rainfall.

"The Methodist Church acts far above its weight and people recognise it," said David. "When we went to see the vice-president she told us all these things the Methodist Church did, that she knew about. It was a very long list! She had government ministers with her who were Muslims



'Independence Day'. Left to right: The Anglican bishop of Gambia, the head of the Methodist Church of Nigeria, Norman Grigg, David Gamble, Malcolm Clarke, Mark Jason, Mr Sydney Riley (one of the Gambian Methodist lawyers)



Right: Mrs Nwabueze Nwokolo, one of the four representatives of the British Conference, signs the Deed of Foundation

who had been taught in the Methodist schools. The government there sees the church – and faith communities in general – as a very significant player."

It's easy to see why. Take a look at The Gambia's school results tables and you will find Methodist schools listed amongst the best performing ones. There are no restrictions on which children can attend The Gambia's Methodist schools. There are two particular ones which are really high-flying Methodist academies. Quite often those schools are supported by Methodists living in the UK. Quite a lot of British Methodist people been involved

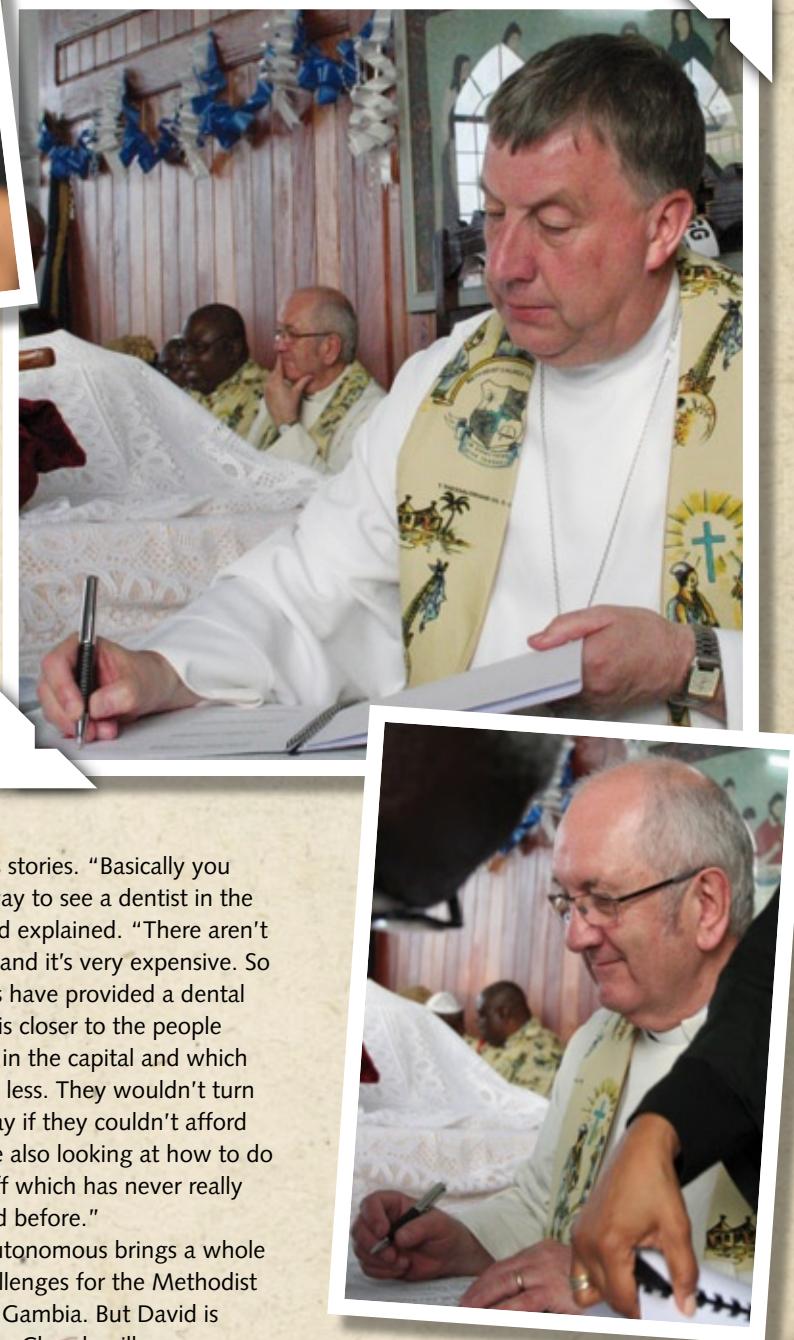
"The Methodist Church acts far above its weight and people recognise it."

in equipping Gambian schools, as David pointed out. "There's a guy who gets furniture once it's no longer used in British schools including things like computers and so on and fills big containers and takes them out."

In the field of medicine, the support of the British Methodist Church has helped the medical mission services to expand. With grants from the World Mission Fund a new health clinic is being built at Jamali, and a new Land Rover is enabling staff to attend to over 600 patients a week in clinics established in five villages.

The dental clinic at Brikama is one of

Below: This is our then president of the Conference, the Revd Stephen Poxon, signing the Deed at the Gambian autonomy service. Behind him, on the right (half hidden) is the vice-president of the Gambian Conference, Mr Malcolm Clarke and the secretary of the Gambian Conference, the Revd Dr Mark Jason. On the other side are David Gamble, the president of the Methodist Church in Sierra Leone, the Rt Revd Francis Nabieu. On the extreme left of the picture is the president of the Methodist Church The Gambia, the Revd Norman Grigg.



Above: David Gamble signs the Deed of Foundation

the big success stories. "Basically you travel a long way to see a dentist in the country," David explained. "There aren't many of them and it's very expensive. So the Methodists have provided a dental surgery which is closer to the people who don't live in the capital and which charges far, far less. They wouldn't turn somebody away if they couldn't afford it, and they are also looking at how to do preventive stuff which has never really been addressed before."

Becoming autonomous brings a whole new set of challenges for the Methodist Church of The Gambia. But David is positive that the Church will overcome whatever challenges comes its way. "It's quite difficult because there isn't a lot of money there and we have committed ourselves to ongoing grants on a partnership basis," he said. "But on the other hand they are doing a lot of work to look at ways of improving their own income.

"They are very conscious of being like the youngest child – well, a very old child actually, but a small old child. But they know they've come of age; they've been talking about this for some time."



Main picture: 'Flower dancers' at the consecration ceremony. **Above:** Bishop Michael Baroi, former moderator, on the left and Bishop Paul Sarkar, moderator, on the right, centre Bishop Sunil Mankhin

Consecration of new bishop gives hope to ethnic minorities in Bangladesh

On 8 November 2009, the Rt Revd Sunil Mankhin was consecrated as a bishop of the Methodist Church in Bangladesh. The consecration was a particularly exciting one in the history of the Church, as the new bishop is a member of the Garo people – one of the country's minority tribes. The consecration took place in Halluaghata in the north of Bangladesh where the Garo are concentrated.

"There's great excitement amongst the Garo people that one of their number has been made a bishop," said Steve Pearce, World Church Partnerships coordinator. "When we went to the village compound in Halluaghata where the church is, it was like a cross between a village fete and a cup final. There were welcome speeches – and in replying, Bishop Sunil made a point of saying 'I am from one of the minority peoples'. That's an important issue – not just in Bangladesh, but for the whole world."

The Garo are one of over 70 minority communities living in Bangladesh. The Methodist Church of Bangladesh is actively involved in the lives of those communities through the Social Development Programme it runs.

"The Church of Bangladesh is quite a

small Church," said Steve. "But it punches above its weight. Its social development programme is very well thought of – both amongst the other NGOs within Bangladesh, and wider afield. It engages in a lot of programmes through its regional centres around the country."

David Hall – one of our mission partners in Bangladesh – also attended the consecration service. "One lovely touch was the reading of the gospel in four different languages: Garo, Santali, English and Bangla. It was one of those 'glimpses of heaven', with people from all tribes and tongues joining together in praise of God."

"The UN has done some work on the rights of minority peoples, and that's something Sunil has obviously followed," said Steve. "He's going to be around with that issue – I think, as a resource person for us, because we've taken an interest in that issue, but also to keep the Church of Bangladesh mindful that there are minority peoples. Those minority peoples are very often on the edge of society. That's where the Church is called to be, and where the Church of Bangladesh usually is."



The village headman



A fabric printer at work

Somewhere Else

An unusual church in Liverpool can go ahead with plans to extend its outreach thanks to a £35,000 grant from the Mission in Britain Fund.

Somewhere Else is an inner-city church situated in an office block in Liverpool's city centre. For 10 years now, this church has consistently offered a safe haven and tried to show Christ to mostly marginalised people in Liverpool... through the medium of bread!

"Bread making has been an integral activity at Somewhere Else since its inception," explained the Revd Ian Hu, minister of Somewhere Else. "It has inspired theological reflection upon our own individual and community relationships with God."

The Revd Dr Barbara Glasson founded Somewhere Else and ran it until

Making bread at Somewhere Else: kneading the dough



September 2009, when Ian succeeded her as its minister. About 42% of the local population are classed as income deprived, while a staggering 56% are deemed employment deprived. These are the people Somewhere Else seeks to provide pastoral care for, working in partnership with The Big Issue, Asylum Link, Liverpool Community College, other ecumenical partners and social awareness organisations.

"The Mission in Britain Fund contribution to Somewhere Else is vital for Somewhere Else to continue its work. The church council has recently set a 'Vision Day' to begin a period of discernment and prayer. We are hoping that this process will allow Somewhere Else to discover how to most effectively engage as the Methodist Church in Liverpool city centre."

Somewhere Else is open for bread making, prayers and lunch on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10.30am to 2.00pm. Worship is on the third Sunday of the month at 11.00am.

Bread in the oven



Serving the bread

Mission work hit by falling pound

We want to bring to your attention an important issue affecting the work of the Methodist Church overseas. The falling value of the pound is significantly reducing the value of donations made in UK sterling to the World Mission Fund, destined to help the work of mission overseas. While you may still be giving the same amount, those receiving gifts overseas are likely to be suffering a shortfall – they may even be embarrassed into requesting further financial support to make up the difference. For example, in India, the £1 we sent a year ago was worth just 62p last month. That's equivalent to a 38% pay cut for our work - work that so desperately needs to continue, yet is threatened simply due to currency fluctuations.

What can be done about it?

We are encouraging Methodist churches to recognise the issue and respond from an informed and generous position. Please consider prayerfully how our friends and Partner Churches in our mission work around the world may be affected. Is it possible to bridge the gap by increasing regular donations or making a special one-time gift?

Methodists for World Mission Conference 2010

In June 1910, 1,200 people from around the world gathered in Edinburgh for the World Missionary Conference, now considered by many as the formal beginning of modern ecumenism. Several projects and agencies were founded as a result of it, including the World Council of Churches in 1948.

This June, Methodists from all over the world will gather once again, and remember that historic conference and rekindle their vision for the future. The 2010 Methodists for World Mission (MWM) Conference takes place at the Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, from 4-6 June. For more details, contact Diana Bosman at mwmbookings@googlemail.com.

Happy New Year!

Christmas and New Year have just passed and I wonder how many greetings you received? My colleagues and I in World Church Relationships receive scores of cards and phone calls from Partner Churches and organisations from all over the world, and it feels like being part of a large, growing Methodist and ecumenical family. We are very conscious that these greetings are received on behalf of all Methodists who are engaged in service of, prayer with, and giving to the work of God throughout the world.

So it is important for me to say "thank you" to you all, and especially for your faithful interest in enabling the work of God to be developed worldwide. The Methodist Church in Britain's role is to be alongside partners in this long-term development, and in so doing allow others to accompany us. As we travel together mutual learning inevitably happens. This will be especially important in June 2010, just before the British Conference, when representatives from all our partners will come together in London to help the Methodist Church in Britain re-imagine its future in a changing world context. Your prayers for those five days of sharing would be appreciated.

In the meantime, the Methodist Church in Britain has just allocated £1.5m for ongoing grants to Partner Churches, another £1.5m for mission partners (including new placements in Togo, Sierra Leone, Grenada and Bangladesh), £500,000 for nationals in mission appointments, and £380,000 for training of leaders of Partner Churches. These allocations could not happen without your generous giving.

I invite you to stop, just for a moment, and think how many lives will be touched by your giving and prayers, and how many people will have a happier new year because you have given of your time or resources. In that moment, please be assured that our partners are deeply grateful to you, and wish you a very happy 2010.

 **Michael King**
Leader, World Church Relationships

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

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25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR

Tel: 020 7486 5502

Email: helpdesk@methodistchurch.org.uk

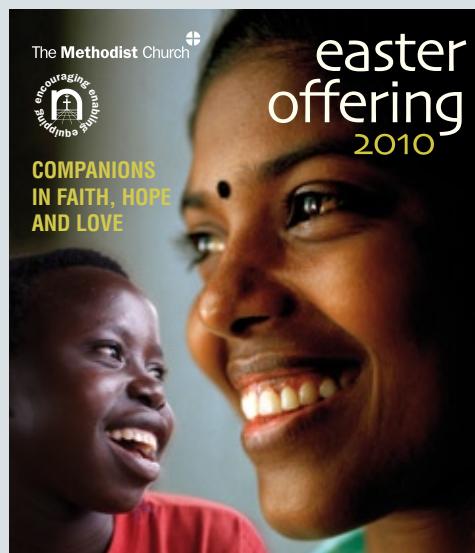
Website: www.methodist.org.uk

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2010 Easter Offering



'Companions in Faith, Hope and Love' is the theme for the 2010 Easter Offering, organised by Women's Network.

As usual, the funds raised go to supporting our overseas mission work through the World

Mission Fund. An optional love feast is being included this year. Pam Turner, the Network president, has tried and tested the recipe for the Middlemoor Love Feast Cake, still being used in the Yorkshire Dales since the time of Wesley.

Each year you have generously given between £300,000 and £400,000, thanks in no small part to the hard work of the Women's Network. We use Gift Aid envelopes to collect your gifts, which we would encourage you to fill in. It won't cost you a penny, but we will be able to collect an extra £100,000 from the Government as a result.

Please keep an eye open for when your local Easter Offering service is being held. Everything is available from www.methodistchurch.org.uk and each circuit should have ordered their materials by now, but if not please don't panic – just call Methodist Publishing on 01733 235962.

Who have been sent copies direct?

- District mission officers Circuit mission officers
- Ministers and deacons in pastoral charge
- Mission fund supporters

Who else in your church might find this useful?

Write their names and get them to tick the box when they have received or seen a copy.

Members of your local mission committee

Local preachers

House group leaders

