

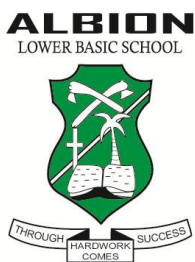
Newsletter 4

March 2011

Hello Everyone... Warmest Greetings from the Gambia! As I write this, the sun is shining outside and the temperature is around 32°C. I hope you are not too envious!! Enjoy reading about what I am currently doing here in The Gambia. May you praise God for how He is working and blessing many, through the work and witness of The Methodist Church, The Gambia.

Albion Lower Basic School

The school computer room which I was able to develop last year with the support of the Container Ministry, Lurgan continues to be widely used and is the pride and joy of both the pupils and teachers. At the moment the pupils have just completed practical tests in basic computer skills and soon will be sitting their written tests. The pupils will be given special prizes for their success in developing computer skills at their school prize-giving later in the school year. The school is so grateful for a further two computers recently donated by the Container Ministry, Lurgan. I have been working with Tom, (a V.S.O volunteer from the UK) to access internet facilities for the school. Teachers are now receiving training in using the internet and soon it is hoped that the training for older pupils will begin. The school also hopes in the future to be able to provide the local community with access to the Computer Room.



Methodist Special School



I continue to work at Methodist Special School on a part-time basis but it seems likely that by the start of the next school year that my work will increase here as I take on a role as an administrator and financial manager. Along with the Deputy Head, the Chairman of the newly formed Board of Governors and the Methodist Property Committee I will be overseeing the finances of a building project at the school – re-roofing of the school and building an

eating area for the pupils. Please pray for the Board of Governors of the school as it seeks to find a way forward to making the school a centre of excellence.

Special Visitors

In November I was delighted to have a visit from Tim Dunwoody MMS (I) and Janette McCormick (DYCW). It was a real joy to be able to spend time with them and share 'my place' here in The Gambia with them. I am looking forward now to the arrival of my friend, Drea from Carnmoney, who is planning to spend a fortnight here during the Easter period.

Ebenezer Methodist Church, Ghanatown, Brufut



During my time here I have made several visits to Ebenezer Methodist Church based in the middle of a fishing village where life can be a struggle for its inhabitants. The Methodist community have seen the need for a school to be built in the village as part of its Christian witness to the mainly Muslim community. The church is not wasting time as it waits for planning permission from the government to start building. Building blocks are being made locally and then are stacked at the church. Through the generosity of a number of people from the Methodist Church in Ireland I have been able to contribute some money to the building fund.



The Container Ministry, Lurgan



At the beginning of March a container arrived from Northern Ireland containing items mainly for the educational and

medical work of The Methodist Church, The Gambia. Willie Carson and his team in Lurgan did a wonderful job in packing the container and did not waste even an inch of space! Once the container was unpacked it took about three days to sort and allocate the items.

I praise God for my wonderful team of helpers: Max, Bernard, Lilian, Adama, Awa, Soso and some of the caretakers belonging to the school where I stored the contents of the container. The people here have been blessed and touched by the generosity of the Methodist Church in Ireland. On behalf of The Methodist Church The Gambia may I send my heartfelt gratitude to all those who contributed to the container in any way. You have brought joy to the lives of so many but above all Christ's love was evident through your giving.



The Methodist Church, The Gambia

In February of this year at Conference Rev Hannah Faal Heim was designated as the future Bishop of the Methodist Church, The Gambia (from February 2012). She is the first Gambian to lead the Church since it became autonomous in 2009 and as far as I am aware she is the first female in West Africa to become Bishop. Please pray for Rev Heim as she takes on this new role and for the church as it moves forward under her leadership and faces the challenges of being autonomous. May the Lord lead, guide, and provide wisdom for the church during the challenging times ahead.

Easter Celebrations

Each Wednesday evening Wesley Cathedral (the church I attend) holds a special service for Lent. On Palm Sunday church will start at 9.30am to allow time for us as a church to participate in a march of Christian witness around Banjul. Praise God for the freedom the Church has to witness of Christ's love in a country that is predominately Muslim. Easter Sunday is a day of great celebration and everyone turns out in their Sunday best!

My Future

I find it hard to believe that soon I will be returning home on furlough from late July to mid- October and I am so looking forward to having the opportunity to share with others how the Lord is working in The

Gambia. During my time here the Lord has shown me time and time again that He is my 'Faithful One' no matter what circumstances I find myself in. The Lord continues to provide for me on a daily basis and watches over me as I serve Him here in The Gambia. I have been blessed truly and I have learned so much from those I live with, spend time with and work with and it is my privilege and joy to have been called to work here for the Lord.

Thanks

It brings me great joy and encouragement to receive your emails, letters and cards. I thank you too for your many prayers-you have truly blessed me. Wishing you many Easter blessings...

Yours in Christ's Service

Ruth

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