

OUR COMMUNITY



'IF WE COME TOGETHER, WE CAN ACHIEVE AMAZING THINGS'

Rekha Biswas from Bangladesh provides the most humbling and inspirational example for Christian Aid Week. This courageous lady goes from house to house, talking to families about the problems they face getting water. And vitally, she challenges gender roles. She encourages women to come to meetings of the local *pani parishad*, the village water council.

Getting clean water is a problem throughout Bangladesh. In the northeast, water scarcity and lack of infrastructure create difficulties for the many landless communities living there. In the central low-lying wetlands, the land is flooded for more than half the year and underground water sources can be contaminated with arsenic. In the southwest, the rise in sea-levels, partly as a result of climate change, is making fresh water salty. People often have to walk for up to 24 hours to collect water to drink.



Christian Aid/Mohammadur Rahman

And when water's not on tap, as it is for most of us in the developed world, it's women and children who suffer the most. They spend hours carrying heavy pots of water to their families. Lack of water can also lead to family disputes, with women and children bearing the brunt of their husbands' or fathers' short tempers at the end of a day's labour, and risking abuse. Women also have no economic independence as their lives are spent collecting water. And they end up caring for family members who become sick through drinking dirty water. Children lose out on education because they have to spend long periods fetching water.

(Cont on page 3)

MAY 2008

30P

*There is one
thing we
cannot
imitate;
we cannot
imitate being
full of the
Holy Spirit.*

Oswald Chambers

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Through the new village *pani parishad* (water council), Minu Basar (centre left) has learned how to harvest rainwater safely so that she doesn't have to travel for a whole day and cross a dangerous river to fetch drinking water

'As a woman, I now feel very good. I have learned to talk. I am confident. In my heart, I have weight. We used to gather water before in big pots, but I never used to put a net over them. We used to go to the toilet without wearing sandals. Now we wear them and we wash our hands with soap. Everyone in the family is happy because now we have good safe water for many months of the year.' Minu Basar from Bangladesh who had to cross a wide and sometimes dangerous river and travel up to 10km to buy drinking water for her family. Since joining the village *pani parishad*, she has learned how to safely gather and store rainwater. The *pani parishads* are supported by Christian Aid partner, Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies.

ST. THOMAS' CHURCH CALENDAR

May

Sunday 4th

9am Holy Communion and Hymns. Ruth Walker
10.30am Family Service. Led by Steve Medley with the Pathfinders

Tuesday 6th

7.30pm PCC. Galilee Room

Sunday 11th - Pentecost Sunday

9am Holy Communion. Peter Walker
10.30am Holy Communion. Peter Walker

Sunday 11th-Saturday 17th

Christian Aid Week

Sunday 18th - Trinity Sunday

9am Holy Communion and hymns. Ruth Walker
10.30am Family Worship and Baptism. Peter Walker

Tuesday 20th

8-8.45pm Prayers for St Thomas' . Galilee Room

Saturday 24th-Sunday 1st

Schools Half Term

Sunday 25th

9am Holy Communion. Peter Walker
10.30am Holy Communion. Peter Walker

June

Sunday 1st

9am Holy Communion and Hymns. Peter Walker
10.30am Family Service. Peter Walker

Daily Prayer

8.30am Monday, Wednesday and Friday at St Thomas' Church, Tuesday at Keresley Village Community Church.

Refreshment for all

Tuesday afternoons, 1.30-2.30pm in the Galilee Room



If you need transport or would like to request prayers, please contact Margaret Bosworth on 7633 7932 leaving a message if necessary with your name and telephone number and she will ring you back.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Sunday Morning Activities at St. Thomas'

10.30am (during term time)
1st Sunday Family Service in Church
2nd Sunday 3-11s, Sunday School in Galilee Room, 11+, Pathfinders in the Church Hall.
All join the service around 11.25am
3rd Sunday All ages start in Church
4th & 5th 3-11s, Sunday School in Galilee Room, 11+, Pathfinders in the Church Hall
All join the service around 11.25am
This pattern may change occasionally for special services.

Youth Essence

Monday evenings, 7.30pm, Galilee Room
(School Year 9 and above. Contact Steve Medley for more details)

Thursday at St T's

For 5-11 years
Meets in the Galilee
On Thursdays
From 6pm to 7pm



First Steps . . . with Jesus

For babies and pre-school children with their parents and carers
Meets in the Galilee Room, weekly in term time
Mondays 1.30-2.30pm

Could you Gift Aid?

Some people have asked recently whether they could Gift Aid their donations even though they pay very little tax.

If you gave the church £50 over the course of last year you would need to have paid around £15 in tax over the same period for us to be able to claim Gift Aid.

All donations for Gift Aid need to have an 'audit trail'- proof that we have received the gift. You can do this using the blue envelopes, the numbered envelopes or by standing order. If you would like numbered envelopes please speak to Pete Hudson, Stewardship Secretary.

C of E welcomes transitional Gift Aid relief

The Church of England has welcomed the transitional relief arrangement announced in the Budget for Gift Aid claims by charities over the next three years.

In this Spring's Budget speech, the Chancellor, Alistair Darling, announced a transitional rate of relief of 22 per cent from 2008/09 to 2010/11.

This retains an estimated £8m per year that would otherwise be income lost by Church of England parishes, and means that parishes should continue to claim at the current rate.

The Church of England is part of a coalition of sector bodies which includes Charity Tax Group, acevo, CFDG, NCVO and the Institute of Fundraising. Together, the coalition members have been calling on the Government to consider moving to an accounts-based Gift Aid system. This would reduce the existing onerous auditing system and boost charities' revenues by approximately £400m a year.

CATHEDRAL PRAISE

Bible teaching in an informal service of praise

Coventry Cathedral 6.30-7.45pm

Sunday 4 May

God in the old and the new - Fresh Expressions in the early Church and now

Speaker: Rev Dr Steven Croft, National Leader of Fresh Expressions

Sunday 11 May

The Holy Spirit and Mission today

Speaker: John Irvine, dean, Coventry Cathedral

Sunday 18th May

The gospel now as good news - cringe-free evangelism

Speaker: Yvonne Richmond, Canon for mission, Coventry Cathedral.

(Continued from page 1) Christian Aid

Rekha has voiced this injustice and given hope to the whole village. Salt water has replaced most of the fresh water sources in her village. But she believes there is a solution to this problem, and the lack of basic human rights in the coastal region of Bangladesh where she lives. Rekha believes that it's through communities – and especially women – finding their voices that change can be instigated.

Christian Aid partner The Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies has set up *pani parishads* in villages throughout Bangladesh. These community organisations discuss and agree the best water supply solutions for their particular villages. The water councils also provide a forum for addressing other community issues. Now that the village has clean water, the *pani parishad* is working to establish schools, as well as looking at plans to reconstruct roads and take action to stop child marriage. The villagers now have the power to make their lives better.

And the *pani parishads* encourage women to take an active role. Each council must have more than 50 per cent female membership and the president must be female.

Rekha explains that: 'In the *pani parishad*, we give training to help [people] understand what they need and then how to achieve it. But most importantly, they understand that they can do things for themselves.'

Rekha tells people that if they come together, they can achieve things that they couldn't if they were alone. By giving up a couple of hours during Christian Aid Week, you are collecting so much more than money. Your gifts can mean water, rights and courage. By coming together, we can achieve amazing things.

A gift of just £0.50 to Christian Aid would pay for one day's gender training per person with BCAS to improve relationships in families and lessen the burden on women. £50 would pay for the monthly salary of a community *pani parishad* coordinator, who helps women and the poor to discover their voice, understand their right to water, learn about health and hygiene, and begin to instigate change. Your gifts can help to give voice to a single woman or to a whole community.

How your money helps transform poor communities

Emergencies – 30%
 Long-term development – 40%
 Campaigning, advocacy and education – 13%
 Fundraising – 16%
 Governance – 1%

Time for action on climate change

As sea levels rise in coastal Bangladesh, saltwater is contaminating the water supply of riverbank and coastal communities. These communities also face losing homes to rapidly increasing river erosion

The changing climate is poised to reverse decades of development. Forget making poverty history; poverty is set to become permanent unless we address climate change as a matter of urgency.

Your donations this Christian Aid Week will help communities in the developing world to cope with the effects of climate change. But money in itself is not enough. We also need to act. We can all use our influence on politicians and business leaders in the rich world – who are the ones making many of the key decisions affecting poor countries. Global warming is not just a distant forecast. It's already happening now, and poor people are the ones who are being hit the hardest.

Climate change increases the unpredictability and severity of extreme weather patterns. During the past 35 years, hurricane-force storms have almost doubled. Eleven million people are threatened by hunger because of years of unprecedented drought in east Africa. Ninety per cent of the victims of weather-related natural disasters during the 1990s were from poor countries. And an estimated 150,000 people are dying annually from diseases exacerbated by the changing climate. For example, scientists predict that malaria-carrying mosquitoes, which cannot survive at low temperatures, are now spreading the disease further as regions warm up, putting hundreds of thousands of people at risk.

And the outlook is bleak. Even if we are able to stabilise CO2 emissions, global average temperatures are still likely to rise by at least 2°C by 2050. If this is the case, 1-3 billion people will face acute water shortages. Thirty million more people will go hungry as crops fail across the globe. Melting ice caps, combined with the thermal expansion of the oceans, means that sea levels are set to rise dramatically. A rise of one metre would displace ten million people in Vietnam and 8-10 million in Egypt, as well as potentially submerging around 16 per cent of Bangladesh.

Climate change is an issue of injustice. The world's poorest people have done the least to contribute to the problem, and yet they are suffering the worst effects. Carbon has fuelled the rich world's wealth and development. But the devastating impact of our CO2 emissions on our climate means that poor countries cannot now develop in the same way.

Christian Aid is pressing for an international agreement to ensure that rich countries dramatically cut their CO2 emissions so that poor countries can develop in a way that won't further increase climate



Christian Aid/Mohammedur Rahman

change and condemn them to perpetual poverty. This agreement will call for rich countries to cut their own CO2 emissions by at least 80 per cent by 2050; compensate poor countries for the damage already caused by climate change so they have the resources to adapt; and assist poor countries to develop in ways that will limit CO2 emissions.

Eighty per cent by 2050 means cuts of five per cent every year. This is the absolute minimum action required if global warming is to be kept below the tipping point of 2°C. Five per cent every year is a big challenge. But it's one that we must meet. Millions of lives depend on it.

As citizens of a rich country, we are all in a powerful position to make a difference. And this is where we need your help. Please sign the prayer and action card this Christian Aid Week, and send a message to the government that urgent action is needed on climate change now.

Campaigning works. Previous campaigns have delivered real change on issues such as debt and fair trade. We need to take action on climate change now, before it is too late.

Find out more about Christian Aid's **Climate Changed** campaign, and sign up to take further action, by visiting www.christianaid.org.uk/climate.

How can I be involved?

If you would like to try out Christian Aid collecting this year please speak to Heather Hudson. There are a few streets allocated to our Parish that we do not have anyone collecting in.

All you have to do is deliver the envelopes and then go back and visit each house to collect. If there is no one in when you return you can leave a slip to say you have called and give information on whether you will call back again or where they can drop off the envelope themselves. This must be done between 11th and 17th May. You are not authorised to collect after this date.

We do our own street as a family - the boys help deliver and Pete and I collect. Our neighbours know us now and some even look out for us! *HH*

St Thomas' Keresley and Coundon

What were the local events and cares of the parish many decades ago?

In May 1928 the Bishop of Coventry began an Appeal for a New Churches Fund. Mr Perry, the vicar, wrote in his letter:

My dear People

With this magazine will come our Bishop's Appeal for the Coventry New Churches Fund. I ask you to read and to give what help you can to help roll away the reproach, and to lighten the enormous burden of anxiety which has been weighing upon and wearing down the leaders of the Church in Coventry. It cannot be made too clear that the smallest contribution as well as the largest will be most welcome. The list of those who contributed to the building of our own Parish Church, eighty years ago, is before me as I write and the amounts of the gifts vary from £300 to 6d.

There was a Coventry Diocesan leaflet with this issue outlining where and why the Fund was needed.

Some details of the Parishes on the appeal list.

WYKEN. 10,000 people dumped on to a waste bit of ground at the end of the War in a parish two miles from its parish Church, a little Norman building. Population entirely poor, not a house, except the Vicarage, with a maid in it. The present equipment is one small tin Mission Church, utterly inadequate; Sunday School has to be conducted in eight different centres on Sunday through lack of any place sufficient to hold the children. The parish has already raised some £2,600 towards its new Church in addition to all they are doing to finance present work.

ST BARBARA'S. Two thirds upper working class houses, one third residential, mostly inhabited by members of works staffs. Present temporary Church will ultimately be the Church Hall. Has already raised by its own efforts £5,400 towards a new Church.

St MARY MAGDALEN. Developing through private building enterprise at an enormous pace. Population now between 10,000 and 12,000. Nearly all upper working-class, with a big sprinkling of small professional people. The present building used for a Church is an old Army Hut that would have been condemned 10 years ago, holding 150. It is like an oven in the summer and can never become a centre of vigorous Church life. The small nucleus of Church people has already raised £2,300 towards a new Church.

RADFORD BUILDING ESTATE. This is the one element of romance in the scheme. It is a Corporation venture. The foundation stones of the first houses were laid in 1925; now there are 1,500 houses. The new community is growing up na din a year's time will number 7,500. It cannot be worked from any present parish Church; it will have a communal life of its own. Already there are built, or in the process of erection, two public houses, two schools, one post office, three banks one surgery, one cinema theatre, and a vigorous shopping centre. Arrangements are being made to meet all physical and intellectual needs of the district, to the only sign of the Church's desire to meet spiritual needs is a waste bit of ground which is being reserved as a site for a Church.



Above: the Big Top
Right: a dance interpretation from one of the evening meetings.

Spring Harvest 2009

Apprentice; walking in the way of Christ

If you are interested in attending Spring Harvest next year there is a sign-up list in the Galilee Room next to some photos of this year.



The dates the church group would like to go are Tuesday 14th to Sunday 19th April 2009, the week immediately after Easter. Booking day is June 18th

A self catering standard chalet for 4 would cost £496, less any group discount applied. Discounts are also available if you are in receipt of certain benefits, eg Working Tax Credit, some disability allowances.

KERESLEY VILLAGE COMMUNITY CHURCH SERVICES

May

Thursday 1st - Ascension Day

10.30am Holy Communion. Rev David Hunter

Sunday 4th

10.30am Family Service. Ruth Walker

Sunday 11th

10.30am Holy Communion. Ruth Walker

Sunday 18th

10.30am Morning Service. Siperire Mugadazaweta
6pm Holy Communion. Ruth Walker

Sunday 25th

10.30am Holy Communion. David Hunter

June

Sunday 1st

10.30am Family Service. Methodist Local Preacher

Regular Meetings

"Children's Club" Mondays Trailblazers 5-6pm

Tuesday mornings 9.30-10.30am First Steps for babies and pre-school children with their parents and carers, during term time

Wednesday 7.30-9pm - 'Drop-in' Centre for teenagers

Mondays and Thursdays

9.30-11.30am Coffee

mornings The Church is open for anyone to drop in for a drink and a chat.



Christian Basics: What Does the Holy Spirit Do?

Like a powerful searchlight, the aim of the Holy Spirit is to highlight Christ and enable us to live the Christian life. Therefore, it is important to ask the crucial question: what does the Holy Spirit do in our lives?

The Spirit brings us new birth into the family of God, for without him we cannot develop our relationship with God. Every person who has committed their life to Christ possesses the Holy Spirit, as Paul says, 'if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.' (Romans 8:9).

Primarily the Spirit assures us of God's love and acceptance in our lives, despite our fears, doubts or failures: 'God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us' (Romans 5:5). Paul expresses this in terms of our adoption as sons and our new status, family and future: 'Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."'

So you are no longer slaves, but God's children; and since you are his children, he has made you also heirs' (Galatians 4: 6,7). This means that we can now address God as father ie abba, which is Aramaic for 'daddy', the very word used by Jesus himself. We can struggle with this truth in our experience, perhaps as a result of authority figures (eg parents, teachers etc), who have been domineering, withdrawn or abusive. However, the Spirit will work within us to bring healing and release in our lives.

As the Helper (or Counsellor) the Holy Spirit is also alongside to enable us to pray: 'In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself

intercedes for us through wordless groans'. (Romans 8:26). For our prayers he gives us both words understood, unknown words (ie gift of tongues) or no words at all (ie tears or sighs). He will also help us to understand God's word and hear what God is saying to us. 'But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth'. (John 16:13).

'The presence of the Spirit, as an experience and living reality, is the crucial matter for the Christian life from beginning to end' (Gordon Fee).

New neighbours: Crossing the Divide

An Oral History Project for Keresley

New Neighbours: Crossing the Divide is an intergenerational project which aims to bring young and older people from the village together, to explore changing concepts of 'neighbourliness' from the 20th to 21st centuries through reminiscence.

By doing so they hope to break down barriers between the different age groups involved and challenge stereotypes, leading to greater community cohesion and improved understanding between the generations.

The project will run until December 2009, with outcomes including a project toolkit, DVD/Audio records for archiving and an exhibition and celebration evening.

They are actively looking to recruit Keresley residents around the age of 65 and over to share their reminiscences with young people. You would need to be able to commit to around 4 sessions of 60-90 minutes.

Contact David Allton, Project Leader, *New Neighbours: crossing the Divide*; 024 76754181

FROM THE PARISH REGISTER

THANKSGIVING

6th April
Samuel John Tooth
Lucia Sarah Coakley

GOLDEN WEDDING SERVICE

5th April
Norman and Margaret Pringle

BURIAL

4th April
Cyril Nicholds aged 97 of Parkville Highway

BURIAL OF ASHES

4th April
Adrian Matthew Barnby aged 25 of Albion Street,
Kenilworth

CREMATION

21st April
Ellis Arthur Nanson aged 62 of Penny Park Lane

Keys - a different way to pray

Here is one of the ideas from the Spring Harvest:One Hope Study Guide to help us pray.

Search in your pocket or handbag for your set of keys and hold them in one hand. We're going to use keys as a way of praying through the various locations in which we are evidence of Christ's resurrection, the bearers of his Spirit, and the couriers of his good news.

Everyone's set of keys is different, but most include keys for a house and a vehicle, and have a key fob or something that identifies the set of keys.

Using the keys, pray for each location that they represent. For example

- HOUSE KEY: spend time praying for your home, your family, your neighbours, the street where you live.
- CAR KEY: pray for the key places you travel to
- KEY FOB: this represents you. Maybe there are places and people you dream of reaching with the good news of resurrection, but so far these dreams have remained unrealised. Spend time praying for the places that are on your heart.



'People Like Us' in the Book of Acts - Peter

When Peter spoke on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) he didn't deliver a well-prepared address that had little to do with his hearers! What began with the charge of drunken behaviour moved into a powerful presentation of the gospel. Peter's message shows us how we can address the needs of our hearers today.

Peter Concentrated On Jesus

Peter's presentation was fully Christ-centred, for he spoke of Jesus as:

- ✧ fulfilment (16-): the focus of the history of salvation.
- ✧ man and God (22 & 36): both his humanity and deity were affirmed.
- ✧ crucified (23): Christ's death was according to God's set purpose.
- ✧ risen (32): Peter was a witness to the resurrection.
- ✧ reigning (34): exalted to the throne of God.
- ✧ contemporary (33): present today by the Holy Spirit.

In what ways does our portrayal of Jesus reflect Peter's one?

Peter Offered a Gift

When Peter's hearers asked what they should do about this message, he told them to receive what God had done for them (38). He pointed to God's gifts of forgiveness for the past and the Holy Spirit as his presence in the present and pledge for the future. Neither of these gifts could be earned; they could only be accepted or rejected.

As the church today to what extent do we present Christianity as gift?

Peter Expected a Response

Peter not only challenged his hearers to accept God's gifts, but also to begin a life of following Jesus (38). He called for repentance; a change of mind leading to a turning back to God. Along with this went baptism, the outward expression of their response to the gospel, in which they could say 'yes' to God's offer and challenge.

What opportunities do we have of presenting the challenge of following Christ today?

- • • • •
- **Regular Activities in the Church Hall** •
- *NB the Church Hall is not usually available for late night Discos* •
- Preschool Playgroup Mondays to Fridays, 9am - 11.30am •
- and 12.30pm - 3pm •
- 13th Brownies Mondays, 6.00 - 7.30pm •
- 41st Cubs Mondays, 6.45 - 8.30pm (in Scout Hut) •
- 41st Scouts Tuesdays, 7.00 - 9.00pm (in Scout Hut) •
- 9th Brownies Wednesdays, 6.00 - 7.30pm •
- 9th Guides Thursdays, 6.30 - 8.30pm •
- 41st Beavers Fridays, 6.00 - 7.30pm (for 6-8 year olds, •
- in Scout Hut) •
- • • • •