

Diocesan News

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Kindness and curry

Jamie Hill is a trustee of Lotus Flower Trust, a charity that builds schools and orphanages in remote India. He's just back from visiting some of its projects...

LAST summer I went as 'doctor' to one small party in Leh in the Himalayan region of Ladakh, to complete and paint a small Buddhist nunnery for up to 40 young nuns.

I have just returned from a tour with the charity's chief executive, this time visiting four projects in desert and jungle areas of India.

An orphanage for 45 children in Zainibad, near the Little Rann of Kutch in Gujarat, was up and running.

But the orphanage it was supposed to replace was again bursting with more children.

New and more serviceable buildings are now planned to house the children – some orphans, some children of one-parent families, and some victims of abuse – and the local community is committed to running the new set-up and caring for the children, making the project sustainable.

In Jamba, Rajasthan, a school is to be built in the desert outside the

village so that families who somehow scrape an existence out of the sand have somewhere relatively near to send their children for basic schooling.

This project again has local support and commitment, with promises of teachers and land. Lotus Flower will provide the school, and the community will provide the schooling.

In Corbet National Park, in the foothills of the Himalayas, Patrani is a village built in a huge circle enclosing crops, thus keeping out wild elephants (and tigers) that roam the protected area.

There is virtually no central government support as living in a National Park is illegal, but after over 40 years attitudes are softening. Lotus Flower is again funding a school building for children in a community desperate for schooling, and education in English. With a building in place, the community is keen to provide that education.

Everyone has a right to educa-

tion, and these deprived kids lap it up.

In Zainibad I saw 12-year-olds working at their books from 8pm till midnight to pass exams to the next stage. It is hoped that they will become teachers and nurses or bring employment to the villages, and begin to break the cycle of poverty.

In Ladakh the projects are similar, with the added challenges of altitude and infrastructure. Children in one village have to walk five days to get to school. When they are 11 they are allowed to do it by themselves! Lotus Flower is building boarding houses and schools there.

Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims all live together and learn together. The two trips have been eye-opening experiences, full of colour and kindness and curry!

Visit www.lotusflowertrust.org.

Dr Hill is convener of G&G's Stewardship Action Network.

Top MU job for Hilary

HILARY Moran has been chosen for the Mothers' Union's premier Scottish office next year.

Hilary, who worships at St Columba's in her home town of Largs, was the sole nominee for the role of provincial president for Scotland.

A very experienced MU member, she takes over from Sheila Redwood and will represent Scotland on the Union's General Trustees Board for three years from January.

Hilary is pictured on the Mothers' Union newly designed Scotland-website, attending April's climate change rally in Holyrood ("We hope you are writing to your MSP", she says).

You can read the Glasgow & Galloway MU newsletter online and see lots of pictures of members at the Provincial retreat in March at Kinnoull monastery, Perthshire.

Visit www.muscotland.org.uk.

Also in Diocesan News this month

Why it's urgent to say NO to dirty coal power NOW

Songwriters find their voice in church-backed project

Train to help others do the world's most important job

Volunteers wanted to work with children in prison

Events, opportunities and courses around the diocese

Learn to help parents do the world's most important work

MOTHERS' Union is hosting a course at Scottish Churches House in October to train people to be 'parenting facilitators'.

The three-day residential course is designed to train you to help others to do the most important job in the world – that of a parent.

Successful participants will gain external accreditation from the Lon-

don Open College Network.

Said an MU spokesperson: You don't have to be an MU member, just keen to learn how to lead people. The training is very stimulating and enjoyable and at the end you will be able to lead a parenting group.

"Parenting groups are wonderful ways of supporting families in the

upbringing of their children. People enjoy sharing experiences, and learning from and supporting each other in these groups.

"No-one is the expert and the groups follow set courses with DVDs to watch, followed by discussion in small groups."

Contact Hilary Moran (01475 686 213) for more information.

Church-backed youth project's on song

Supported by St Mary's Hamilton with four other local churches, Hyzone works in partnership with South Lanarkshire youth services.

Its Sunday drop-in programme began in December 2007 and is now attracting regularly over 40 young people weekly (not the same 40 each week).

Detached street work is also a key component of the work. Both allow an introduction to Hyzone and space for young people to express themselves fully.

"And they do!" said its board chairman, Revd Ian Barcroft, rector of St Mary's.

"Relationships with young people take time but trust is developing, and their ease of expression is now being channelled into creative and imaginative ideas. As well as trips to the theatre and football grounds, weekends away and band nights, there's been time for poetry and astronomy workshops, and songwriting. And, of course, there's always time for pool and the Wii as well."

Ian went on: "Our purpose is not to proselytise but actively engage with young people to make 'life in all its fullness' meaningful for them; so that the complexities and traumas of fast and modern life experienced by young people can be transformed by an appreciation of their potential and possibility."

Among the highlights was the performance of the

Songwriting has been one of the highly praised success stories to come out of Hyzone, a church-backed youth project launched just over two years ago.

Hyzone songwriting group at Hamilton Universal Connections' awards night. It was a 'very poignant' success, as area coordinator Mark Brotherton recorded in the project's annual report.

He said: "Their song highlighted inequalities in the world and was inspired by the current situation in Sao Paulo, Brazil, where there are clear and distinct physical and social boundaries between the affluent suburbs and the shanty towns. The song was performed acoustically and was very well received by the audience and dignitaries alike."

One of the volunteer helpers agreed the songwriting workshops were 'a real treat', adding: "They've written and recorded songs worthy of anyone's radio airtime."

"If such talent and energy can be nurtured and steered in the right direction, the young people of Hamilton have a fantastic future ahead of them, and the wider community has a group of young people it can be proud of."

Ecumenical Possilpark

ST Matthew's Possilpark is working with local churches to renew its ecumenical partnerships.

Said Revd David Wostenholm: "We had a well attended Palm Sunday service at the Church of Scotland; the largest-ever (over 80) Passover meal at St Teresa's Catholic Church in Holy Week; and a well supported carrying of the Cross through Possilpark on Good Friday; rounding off the season with a Bible study on Ascension Day at St Matthew's then a buffet lunch there for all local churches for Pentecost."

Worship and the arts follows 'brilliant' flower day

A PRAY it with Flowers day hosted at St Margaret's Newlands proved 'brilliant', said Linda Whitby, of Education Action Network.

She said: "We had a superb workshop with flower arranging demonstrations by Olivia Parks and Margaret Mungavin and a talk by Revd Darren MacFarland on the use of flowers in church, their relevance to space in church and the liturgy."

After lunch, everyone was invited to have a go.

Linda added: "The results were magnificent and I hope the congregation at St Margaret's enjoyed them on the following day!"

"One of the highlights of the day was the lady from St Aidan's who, on her own initiative, played the piano for us during the afternoon while everyone else was arranging their flowers – it lifted the already-brilliant day to a higher level."

□ Education Action will launch a new Journey in Faith unit this year: No. 5. Covering worship and the arts, it runs for five Tuesdays (not Thursdays, as your DNS editor reported last month) from 1 September. Classes will be at Holy Trinity & St Barnabas, Paisley, 7.30-9pm. Cost £10. Posters and booking forms coming soon. Contact lindawhitby@btopenworld.com.

Help to keep offenders' families together

COULD you sign up for important unpaid work in Kilmarnock prison?

During family visiting time at HMP Bowhouse there is a volunteer-run café and a play area for younger children.

Father Jim Geen, the prison's assistant director of community integration, is appealing for more volunteers to help in either of these areas.

Building families and strengthening parent-child relationships is important, especially to those in prison.

Says Hilary Moran, of the Mothers' Union: "If we can begin in a simple way maybe we can develop opportunities to further these relationships with prison families.

"The children haven't been sentenced. Closer family relationships help the wider community as evidence has shown that prisoners who maintain strong family relationships are much less likely to re-offend. One session a month could be a start."

Phone Hilary (01475 686213) to find out more.

'Last chance' for strong climate bill

THIS month is critical for Stop Climate Chaos Scotland's campaign on the Scottish Climate Change Bill as the Scottish Parliament is likely to make the final changes to it on 24 and 25 June.

Stop Climate Chaos Scotland is backed by the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Mothers' Union.

It is staging a mass lobby of the Scottish Parliament on Wednesday 24 June, noon-2.30pm, and is urging all its supporters to take this last chance to have their say.

Participants will be encouraged to arrange to speak face-to-face to their MSPs there in support of early action on climate change.

Help with travel costs may be available. To sign up for a fact-sheet and updates visit:

www.foe-scotland.org.uk/masslobby.

Orpheus Britannicus

THE Glasgow Chamber Choir will pair two British composers' finest contributions to the choral repertoire in a concert this month.

From Benjamin Britten the programme includes Rejoice in the Lamb, Hymn to the Virgin and Te Deum in C. Among the Henry Purcell works are O God, thou art my God, Hear my prayer and O Sing unto the Lord.

Michael Bawtree conducts for this performance on Sunday 7 June, 7pm, at St Bride's Episcopal Church, Hyndland Road, Glasgow. Tickets are £10 (£6 concessions). More details at www.glasgowchamberchoir.org.uk.

Say no to dirty coal

A PLANNED coal power station at Hunterston would send out seven times more greenhouse gases than the whole of Malawi, climate justice campaigners are predicting.

WDM (World Development Movement) Scotland has also warned that the little-publicised bid by a Danish company to start a coal-fired station in Ayrshire could result in 70,000 climate refugees in the next four decades.

Like the Scottish Episcopal Church, WDM is a member of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland.

Its spokesman says this catastrophe can be averted if enough people make their views known to Holyrood NOW.

Scottish Ministers can use their planning powers to set a limit of no more than 350g of carbon per kilowatt hour for new power plants in Scotland.

Cabinet Finance Secretary John Swinney is to decide within weeks whether to take this step.

Liz Murray, head of WDM Scotland, says the Hunterston station, together with plans to ramp up the huge coal plant at Longannet, will make nonsense of targets set in the Climate Bill that is going through Holyrood now.

She stressed: "Fossil fuels are the biggest cause of climate change, yet the impacts, such as food shortages, flooding and water scarcity, are being felt most by those in the poor countries least responsible for creating the problem.

"If Scotland goes ahead with plans for new coal, then it will make it impossible for us to do our share to cut emissions or to call on other countries not to burn more coal.

You can download a draft letter to sign and send to Mr Swinney from www.wdmscotland.org.uk/action/CoalAction.htm.

In brief: news and events around the diocese. . .

A SPECIAL Diocesan Synod will be held at St Margaret's, Newlands, on 20 June, 9.30 for 10am, to elect two extra Lay members and two extra Clerical members for the Preparatory Committee for the forthcoming Episcopal Election, and to consider a draft of the Diocesan Description.

THE installation service for Revd Andrew Richardson as rector to the East End Team Ministry will be on Saturday 20 June at 3pm at St Kentigern's (Dennistoun New Parish Church), Armadale Street, Dennistoun, Glasgow. All are welcome.

THE installation of Rev Shona Lillie as rector of St Andrew's Uddingston and St Cuthbert Cambuslang will be on Thursday 16 July at 7pm in St Andrew's.

THE final concert in this year's Second Sunday season at St Margaret's Newlands is given by violinist Elaine Sexton and pianist Sam Hutchings who will perform sonatas by Edward Elgar and Cesar Franck. It's on Sunday 14 June, 3.30pm. Tickets £5 (£3 concessions, under-16s free). St Margaret's Episcopal Church, Kilmarnock Road, Glasgow.

UCA Radio is looking for volunteer co-presenters for its Sunday Breakfast Show, which features 'significant religious content'. Experience is not necessary as

training will be given. But you will need your own e-mail address and an internet connection.

Contact johndavidson@omne.uk.net for details.

THIS year's Summer Fayre at St Paul and St John's Monklands will be held in the church hall, Springwells Avenue, Airdrie, on Saturday 20 June, from 11am.

THE Revd Gordon Fyfe will be installed as rector of St Columba's Largs on Monday 8 June at 7pm.

M OIRA Jamieson is to be ordained into the Order of Presbyters by the Most Revd Dr Idris Jones, on Sunday 5 July in St Cyprian's, Beech Road, Lenzie. Buffet supper and refreshments after the service.

A BOOK sale for Christian Aid will take place at St Ninian's Pollokshields on Saturday 13 June, 10am-1pm. Entry: adults £1 (children free) includes tea/coffee. Books from 20p.

S T Matthew's Summer Sale promises lots of stalls with soup-and-sandwich lunch and internationally acclaimed (i.e. they're also sold in England) jams and chutneys. Make a date for St Matthew's Possilpark: Saturday 20 June, 11am-3pm.

Partner church to decide on same-sex marriage

Daniel Uddling sends news from our Porvoo partners in the Church of Sweden's Gothenburg diocese...

SAME-SEX marriages became legal in Sweden last month.

A new law lets homosexuals wed in either a civil or religious ceremony, though individual churches can opt out. The Lutheran church has offered to bless gay partnerships since 2007 but has still not

given formal backing to the term 'marriage'. It will decide its position on the new law this autumn.

□ FOR the third year the Church of Sweden participated in the HBT (homosexual, bisexual and transsexual) Festival which took place recently in Gothenburg. As well as services, the church offered seminars. And in Gothenburg Cathedral, the Sunday service during the festival took the IDAHO theme (International Day Against Homophobia).

□ AROUND 200 people took part in an International Day in Gothenburg last month, attending seminars on micro-finance, climate issues, and interfaith relations.

□ REVD Martin Lennartsson and trainee deacon Teresa Egfors are just back in Gothenburg after two-month exchange placements in South Africa and Swaziland within the east diocese of ELCSA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa).

Martin was working at the diocesan centre in Mbabane, Swaziland, and Teresa was involved in an HIV/Aids project in South Africa.

Martin's and Teresa's experiences from the exchange will now be communicated at parish level in the diocese of Gothenburg and we hope that this will deepen the relationship between our dioceses.

From this month the diocese of Gothenburg will be host for a group of young folk from ELCSA on an exchange with Church of Sweden youth from Gothenburg diocese.

The focus of the exchange is leadership training and sharing of faith and life.

In August, we host a pastor and an evangelist from ELCSA for two months.

□ ON 1 July Sweden takes over chairmanship of the European Union. The Christian Council of Sweden will focus on four advocacy themes: migration, climate, the arms trade, and the enlargement of the Union.

□ SWEDISH female football star Lotta Schelin joined Bishop Carl Axel Aurelius in the opening ceremony of Gothenburg's new football arena. Both handed over money for a child project in Brazil that is part of the Church of Sweden's international work. Lotta is also an ambassador for the Church of Sweden and its international work, especially that related to Fairtrade.

Next issue . . .

ITEMS for the July/August issue may be submitted by **Monday 15 June** in prose text (**not** leaflets, adverts, posters or PDFs, please) to the editor, Susi Cormack Brown: dns@episcopalglasgow.co.uk, or c/o the Diocesan Centre, 5 St Vincent Pl, Glasgow G1 2DH.

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