



PORTOBELLO BAPTIST CHURCH

*Messenger*

August 2006

[www.portobellobaptist-church.org.uk](http://www.portobellobaptist-church.org.uk)

## A THOUGHT

The month of July has come to an end; it has been notable this year for a variety of reasons. We are being told that climate change has produced record weather statistics and foreboding for the future. For me there has been BEAUTY AND BOUNTY. Beautiful long, hot, sunny days. Beautiful sunsets with the sky ablaze and the red reflected in the water of the river Forth, the clouds rimmed with gold (for the early risers there was also the glory of the sunrise!). Then there are the fruit-bearing bushes and canes which are heavy with their produce. Surely these things, and many others which we shall think of when we celebrate harvest, remind us of our creator God, “without Him was not anything made that was made” and, as the children’s hymn says “The Lord God made them all.”

It also behoves us not to be unmindful of the starving millions in other parts of the world because of man’s selfishness and greed.

There were two events which I attended where the keynote was JOY. One was the concert held in St. Philip’s by the Watoto Children’s Choir. These are Ugandan children most of whom are orphaned by the death of their parents by Aids or otherwise un-cared for. They are cared for by a Christian organisation. To see their bright shining faces (and white teeth) and listen to them singing in both their own language and English and testifying to their faith in God was an inspiration. The other was Prom Praise in the Usher Hall: the orchestra led by the indefatigable Noel Tredinnick and singing of hymns old and new by the hundreds present together with the other solo and musical contributions was uplifting and provided an evening of praise to God. It was appropriate to sing “Let us go out with joy” at the end.

In these days when on the international scene there is so much of gloom and despair let us remember the beauty, bounty and joy which speak to us of the goodness of God.

Jack Spiers,  
Church Secretary.

## THE PULPIT

August	6th	a.m.	Rev. Alan Berry
		p.m.	Praise Service
	13th		Rev. Robert Gemmell
	20th		Rev. Alan Berry
	27th	a.m.	Rev. Ariel Berkowitz
		p.m.	Rev. Robert Gemmell
September	3rd		Rev. Alan Berry

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

August	30th	Quarterly Church Meeting 7 p.m.
September/ October	30th/ 1st	Harvest Thanksgiving Weekend

## EMAIL FROM LYNNE BROWN

Hello to the folks at Portobello Baptist. I have to say it feels like a long time since I was with you and it feels as if I have travelled most of Britain since then. It was good to be with you and share what God is doing in PEPE Angola. It was good to meet you face to face and get to know some of you.

Thank you for your prayers during my time in Angola and thank you for your prayers in my time at home too. I have travelled as far north as Aberdeen, south to Nottingham and west to Rothesay and in all the travelling I have kept healthy and managed not to miss or be delayed on any trains, planes or ferries. God has given opportunities to share in and out of churches at picnics, in schools and at teachers meetings. Praise him for the opportunities and pray that he will work in the hearts of those who have heard something new and different about Him. I am coming to the end of my link visits, only one last visit to do. It has been tiring at times, but encouraging meeting so many folk interested, enthusiastic and praying for PEPE. Times like that make me really feel a partner with you in the work and I share in your sadness too with the news of Carol.

I have not had a lot of news from PEPE while I have been away but most of what I have heard has been encouraging. One church has been able to build a room for PEPE, another is helping with the daily snack. One of the teachers has had to leave but we have a replacement for her. It sounds as if Manuel is doing a great job while I am away. Continue to pray for him,

Mary and the workers out there, that God would encourage them and keep them healthy. Please pray for me too as I have a time of rest before I prepare for going back. Thank you for your faithfulness.

Love  
Lynne

## NEPAL EVERY HOME CONCERN

This title is not an error, but a more diplomatic name for Every Home for Christ in what has been the world's only (very strong) Hindu country! We have been hearing about EHC's work in general, and this is a little about its ministry in one land.

Solon Karthak, the NEHC director, is a man of amazing missionary vision, and, under his leadership for 26 years, teams of faith workers, who get no guaranteed salary or any assistance with children's schooling, etc., have covered the whole country with the Gospel message. Together with an excellent tract they offer a Bible study course, and the promised certificate at the end of that is a magnet to any Nepali. The thousands of converts are well followed up with teaching seminars, further study, etc. They are linked to local churches, and where there is no church some 100 new fellowships have sprung up. NEHC set out to cover the whole country by the year 1996. God knew, but they didn't, that that very year the Maoists would start their violent campaign, and travel in the country would then be restricted and dangerous! So NEHC then changed tactics to some extent, and planned to put a resident worker in each district of Nepal, to work part-time, and to evangelise and follow up converts part-time, without having to travel too far. This has been worked out very effectively in some areas, but others are waiting: there are lots of volunteers, but funding is limited.

NEHC has been by far the most effective and widespread of the scores of Nepali evangelistic organizations. But as well as its own program, it also works in good cooperation with many others, and is the major supplier of Christian literature for distribution to Nepalis, not only in Nepal but also to the ten million plus in India, Malaysia, Myanmar, and to the Bhutanese people in their almost closed country.

Just a couple of figures to give an idea of the scope of NEHC's ministry: This year alone they are printing one million tracts (apart from actual Scriptures) for use by various groups; they are awaiting the delivery of 440 boxes of Scriptures to be circulated to Nepalis in "a host of countries

around the world”; another 5,000 pocket Bible are on order for easy mailing and use by individuals – and on and on the details go. Also, scholarships are given to needy children; staff are sent for intensive Bible training, etc.

The King of Nepal has finally stepped down to being a mere figurehead, and things are moving so rapidly that many of the people are bewildered by the political volcano.

Nepal is now a secular state, working on changes to bring the Maoists and many so far neglected groups into the government of a new democracy with a totally new constitution. Many Christians feel that there will be new freedom ahead, and the Church there is already one of the fastest growing in the world. But it is going to take some more miracles for government to move ahead smoothly and get everyone working together, and the door is now open to New Age and other such groups. We value your prayer for the outworking of God’s purposes in the months and years ahead.

Betty Young

### MAKE EVERY DAY A GOOD DAY (Part Two)

Well, to get on with it, it’s the attitude you take toward the day -- when the day begins -- that determines the day. Some Psychologist has said that you condition your day in the first five minutes of your waking thought. Whether this is so or not, I wouldn’t know. But I do know what happens if you wake up and say to yourself, or to the people near you, “Oh, this is going to be a tough day. This is going to be one of the worst days I’ve ever been through. I can just feel it coming.” You will find that you are absolutely right -- because you are making yourself feel it come and you are bringing it on yourself.

But if you are a person of prayer and a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, the first thing you will do in the morning is to thank God that He watched over you and your loved ones during the night and brought you to the light on another day. How long have you been looking at the light of successive days? It is a glorious sight. And now another day is before you with all its opportunity. God gave you this day and it is a day to rejoice in. In the course of my life I have often observed that the more spiritually minded a person is, the more beautiful the day becomes, the more replete with possibilities it is. So if you want to have a good day every day, get your life changed by Jesus Christ and start every day good.

Yes, friends, the Bible has it straight. “This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.”

Prayer: Our Heavenly Father, we thank You for this day. And, despite all its evils, life is good -- and the evils can even help make it better as we conquer them. So help us to be thankful for this day and every day and treat each one as a precious gem to be filled to the full with meaning and with love and with human service. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Taken from a booklet written by Dr. Norman V. Peale)

### EVANGELISM FOR ORDINARY PEOPLE (Part One)

'Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.' – 1 Peter 2:12

Imagine the scene. It is the end of time and you are standing in a huge crowd of people worshipping God. As you look around there are many people you have never met. There are others you do recognise – friends and family and members of your church. Then there are others too. You recognise them but you are completely surprised by them being there. There is the school bully who mocked you for being a Christian. The neighbour who seemed so disinterested in Christian things. The guy from work who ridiculed your belief in God. 'How did they get here?!' you think to yourself.

Peter envisages such a day when people who persecute and ridicule Christians now will one day glorify God. Somewhere between now and then they have become Christians. How did it happen? Peter says it is because Christians lived 'good lives among them.' The best way to reach people is through people. Rebecca Manley Pippert says 'God didn't send a telegram or shower evangelistic books from heaven or drop a million bumper stickers saying 'Smile Jesus loves you.' He sent a man, His Son, to communicate the message. His strategy hasn't changed. He still sends men and women before he send tracts and techniques – to change the world.' People are reached when we as Christians live good lives among them.

#### I. We are to live good lives

I recently read the letter column in the Times newspaper. The two issues relating to Christianity that were being debated were homosexuality and Sunday trading. It is sad that in many people minds Christianity has become defined by our attitude towards sex and Sundays! People's perception of Christianity can be very negative – we are characterised by what we don't do, or a slightly outdated fashion sense (socks with sandals!).

Peter says that Christians should be characterised by the attractiveness of their lives. We are to live good lives. He outlines how we are to live good lives as citizens (2:13), as employees (2:18), in our families (3:1,7), and in the church (3:8). There should be something about the way we relate to those in our community, work, family and church which is a powerful witness to a watching world.

## 2. We are to live among 'pagans'

When Peter spoke of Pagans he didn't mean people who are into witchcraft and spiritualism. He was simply referring to non-Jewish people who were not yet Christians. He expected those that are Christians would be living alongside those that aren't. Although we are 'aliens and strangers' we are still 'scattered' in the world (1:1). Yet often this doesn't happen. The temptation is to live in a Christian ghetto – surrounding ourselves with other believers. We look for Christian flatmate's, friends, hair dressers, mechanics, holidays, retirement homes etc! There is nothing wrong with fellowship – but there is something wrong with withdrawing from the world around. How are we to reach a world that we never interact with?

Do we get to know those we work with and show a genuine interest in their lives? Do we take the initiative in speaking to our neighbours – what about inviting a load round for an open house? For those that work in a Christian environment or who are retired what about joining a sports club or evening class?

It is often said that Christians are to be 'in the world and not of the world.' It could be all too easy to be the opposite – sharing the values of this world not really living in it. If our evangelism is going to be effective and people are genuinely going to be reached we need to 'live good lives among the pagans.'

TO BE CONTINUED ...

By Michael 'Motsy' Ots

(Minister of Evangelism, Lansdowne Baptist Church, Bournemouth)

Today, if there are flowers blooming and I don't see them,  
or birds singing and I don't hear them, clouds sliding silently  
through the soundless sea of space and I don't notice them,  
then come, Lord, to break through and touch me  
with Your miracle of mercy.

And I shall live the rest of my days in Your presence,  
power and peace. Amen.

Rev. Robert H. Schuller