



PORTOBELLO BAPTIST CHURCH

Messenger

109th Anniversary Edition

November 2006

www.portobellobaptist-church.org.uk

A THOUGHT

On 31 October, I finished reading the Bible's Psalter again. After psalms by different authors, of varied subject, style and length – the longest being 176 and the shortest just 2 verses – you might have thought that the compiler would be out of breath and close off the book on a quiet restful note. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Psalter ends with a bang.

In 6 short verses we are exhorted to Praise God 13 times. Can I show my age again by admitting that I like the note of command in the Authorised Version where the Psalm starts and ends with “Praise ye the LORD”. That does sound stronger than just “Praise the LORD”.

The praise begins at the sanctuary – a good place to start – but it doesn't end there. You sense the psalmist arms spread wide looks heavenward and cries “Praise Him in His mighty heavens”.

Praise Him for His acts of power – no that is not enough – praise Him for His surpassing greatness. Words aren't enough to express the psalmist's wonderment and praise to almighty God.

Vocal organs are not enough – he pulls in the orchestra of at least 8 instruments and even takes the action that David was criticised by his wife of dancing before the LORD. Wow! He really is going O.T.T. – i.e. over the top. But this is the Bible. It is holy writ. It is inspired – and maybe we should add – inspiring!

Is the psalmist out of breath by this point. In a final flourish he draws in the whole of creation and cries aloud “Let everything that has breath Praise the LORD”. That includes US!

Praise ye the LORD!

Food for thought ...and action.

Alan Berry,
Interim Moderator.

THE PULPIT

November	5th	a.m.	Mr. W. Anderson
		p.m.	
	12th		Rev. Alan Berry REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY
	19th		Rev. Andrew Rollinson CHURCH ANNIVERSARY
	26th		Rev. Robert Gemmell
December	3rd		Rev. Alan Berry

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

November	23rd	Management Committee
	29th	Quarterly Church Meeting

FROM THE BAPTIST UNION

A New Mission Advisor

Rev. David Gordon, the Union's Mission Advisor, has accepted a call to be Senior Pastor at Kirkintilloch Baptist Church. His ministry of five years with the Baptist Union concludes on 31st December 2006 and his post is now being advertised. We are asked to make it a matter of prayer that the Lord will clearly speak to the person of His choosing for this strategic ministry.



A New Newsletter

A new newsletter called 'Connect' has been launched, in place of the BUS News & Fellowship of Prayer, with a view to help people in the churches to keep connected to the wider Baptist family. There will be twelve issues a year and the cost will be £3.50 per annum. Please give your name to Miss Winnie Beattie or myself if you would like to take 'Connect'. It's certainly cheap.



THE TOWN 'STAR' CLOCK

It came as a surprise to find that the responsibility for the clock had resurfaced despite having previously provided

evidence that the clock did not belong to the church. It is now being said that the three faces of the clock and the mechanism are the responsibility of the City Council but the casings etc are the responsibility of the church and to replace them will cost £40,000.00!! The matter is in the hands of our solicitors.

THE CHURCH MANSE

The ownership of the church manse, at 2 Ormelie Terrace, passed to the new owners on 3rd November 2006.

CHURCH ANNIVERSARY

The church anniversary will be celebrated on Sunday 19th November. We are privileged to have as our guest preacher the Rev. Andrew Rollinson. A fellowship lunch will follow the morning service. By a decision of the church the anniversary is the occasion of a special Gift Day for the Lift Fund. As a measure of thanksgiving to God for 109 years witness as a church, may we give generously -- "the Lord loves a cheerful giver."

A PRAYER

Spirit of the living God fall afresh on me;
Spirit of the living God fall afresh on me;
Break me, melt me, mould me, fill me;
Spirit of the living God fall afresh on me.

CCL Licence 176122

Jack Spiers

EMAIL FROM OUR LINK MISSIONARY IN ANGOLA

Hello folks,

Hope all is well where you are. Just thought I would write and let you know how things are going with PEPE.

We have been having a busy time over the last few weeks. I introduced Jane to all the PEPEs and she has spent a bit of time at each one. Her evenings are spent cutting out craft items, making number banners and threading beads onto string as counting tools for the children. The missionary educators have loved having these resources and they certainly cheer the PEPEs up. It has been good making these visits and seeing areas for improvement in terms of teaching and new techniques. Jane has also done some training at our monthly meetings. PEPEs will finish for the year

in the next few weeks. Continue to pray for Hoji- Ya -Henda as Jovita won't be coming back until next year and Nsimba really needs more help.

When I've not been out with Jane, I've been busy writing letters and reports, translating, preparing materials and having meetings with Pastors and other interested folks. I had a good meeting with ladies from the Luanda British Women's group, they seemed interested in helping and we have received some desks and shelves from UNICEF, with a promise of exercise books and pencils for the new year. Praise God for his provision and pray for the future.

We had good news from Uige, the PEPE got underway at the beginning of October. We are hoping to get up there for a long weekend to present certificates and visit the PEPE if it hasn't closed for the year by then. The pastor and teachers were keen to try things out even though it was close to the end of the year, and they will continue with the same children in February. Last weekend we were down in Benguela to present certificates for the folks who did the course last year. It was a good journey. Lovely to see the students again and some more will hopefully be teaching in PEPE in the next year. We visited the PEPE in Calumba, a very needy area. It was good for Jane to see some beautiful parts of Angola too.

Other good news: my work visa has been renewed, I'm here for another year and Terezinha, PEPE international Coordinator is hoping to come in January and I really pray it will work out as I have lots of things to ask her.

Prayer Points

- Pray for encouragement for those involved in PEPE
- Pray for the next training course starting in December
- Pray all would work out for a trip to Uige.
- Pray churches would catch the vision and help more children.

Thanks for all your prayer support and encouragement.

Lynne



ORDER YOUR P.B.C. 2007 CALENDAR

This year we are offering, on an order basis, calendars for 2007 based on the hymn/ PowerPoint photographs used during Sunday worship. With inspirational verses from traditional hymns.

These will be priced at £5.00 each with the proceeds going towards the Lift Building Fund. Please email webmaster@portobellobaptist-church.org.uk to place an order.

THE STATE OF THINGS – LEBANON

For 34 days the world watched as two forces violently feuded with destructive artillery. By the time the UN-brokered ceasefire went into effect on 14 August, over 1,500 people – on both sides – had lost their lives and another 1.5 million had been displaced from their homes.

The world's eye has since gravitated away from the images of destruction and turmoil, leaving those affected to pick up the pieces.

Following his recent journey to Lebanon, Gordon McBain, BMS World Mission Regional Secretary for the Middle East and North Africa, reports, "All the bridges [he previously remembered] have been completely blown out. Petrol stations have been bombed for no apparent reason."

BMS, however, has not left Lebanon. Nabil Costa, the Executive Director of the Lebanese Society for Educational & Social Development (LSESD), comments about Arthur and Louise Brown, BMS long-term workers in Beirut: "[The Browns] were the only foreigners who stayed." Referring next to Muslims who come in contact with Christians in Lebanon, Nabil asserts, "People will say, 'those Baptists are genuine Christians'".

The truth is, our work in Lebanon is just getting going. BMS has already given relief grants of £18,800 (via LSESD) and plans to supply additional funding through its Lebanon Appeal initiative.

"Money is always helpful," Nabil comments, "but there is a real need here for Christians to sympathise with [Muslims]."

When asked about the next steps for the Lebanese reconstruction, Gordon McBain says, "Christians there are looking to dig new wells, set up development projects, install generators, and restart school and medical work; it is the Church that will spearhead it all."

Gordon suggests, "First we should pray for the nation of Lebanon, then work to improve its infrastructure through gifts given via BMS' Lebanon Appeal."

PLANTING CHURCHES IN THE FERTILE SOIL OF ECUADOR

BMS couple Peter and Vicki Butchers are helping to plant a new Baptist church in Los Vergeles – a community of roughly 10,000 families who live in poor conditions on the edge of Guayaquil, Ecuador.

Peter comments, “They have started a fairly informal Bible study on Sunday afternoons, which they - with our help - hope to use as the basis to start a church in the near future. A pre-school programme has also begun with 25 children. Vicki is helping the teacher, Rodrigo, with that. There is a lot to do.”

Los Vergeles is a mixture of bamboo houses and breezeblock dwellings, with primarily mud-track roads. Heavy rainfall, therefore, brings hard times for the community.

“The government has recently installed a water supply, although this is not drinking water; however, there are few people who can afford the water bills,” Vicki says. “There are many needs here, and the challenge will be trying to ascertain where the priorities lie.”



Peter is also trying to develop initiatives for the wider Baptist family, particularly a church planting strategy for local ministers. “I’m aiming to work alongside some of the pastors who have church plants around the city,” he says, “I want to help create networks of support and training for those working in poor communities.”

Peter and Vicki, along with their children, Thomas, Charis, Alex and ZoË, are also beginning to feel settled in Ecuador and, like their parents, are coping well with learning Spanish.

Despite a considerable amount of positive news to report, the Butchers have also experienced their share of difficulties. The volcanic eruption of Mount Tungurahua this summer hindering the economic and social recovery of the region.

“The pretty tourist town of Baños has been virtually cut off and many have lost their livelihoods. Eventually the roads should be reopened, but after the 1999 eruption it took several years for the town to fully recover.”

The Butchers, however, remain positive that God will continue to cultivate the fruit of their efforts. They are grateful for the support of churches and individuals back in the UK as they continue the Lord’s work in South America.