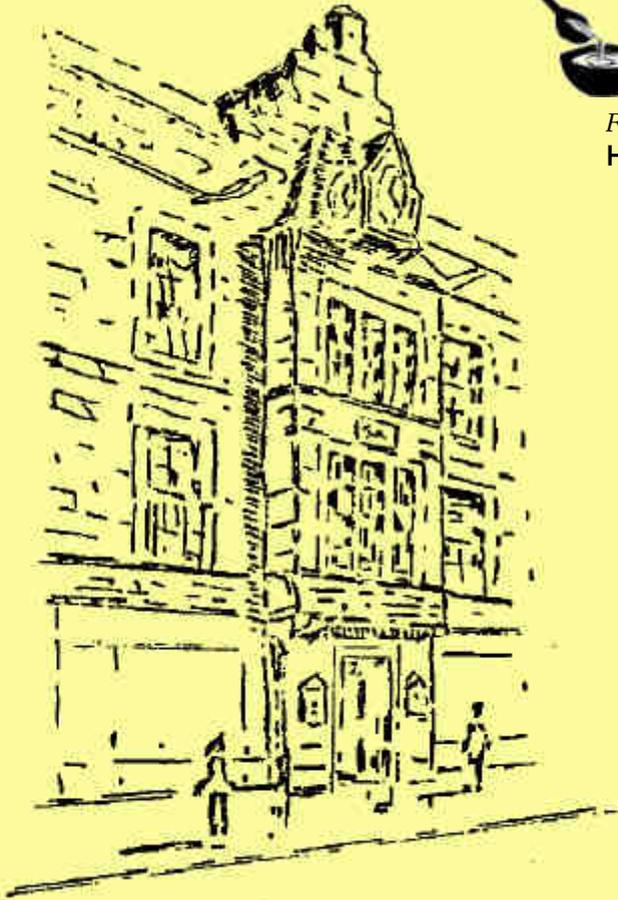


In the
LORD'S NAME



We Give
THANKS

For The
HARVEST



PORTOBELLO BAPTIST CHURCH

Messenger

September 2006

www.portobellobaptist-church.org.uk

A THOUGHT

I am sure that it is true to say that we all at times try to create our own image of God. I am also sure that we have all managed to free ourselves from the image that would present him as that old white bearded, grand fatherly figure in the sky.

Never the less, I am sure we each have our own personal image, an image, I would suggest links in with whatever spiritual baggage we are carrying around with us.

Perhaps our image is of a merciful God, or a judgmental one; a father or a brother or a lover. There are even those around today who would suggest to us that the image we create should be that of a mother.

Whatever the picture we create, we are all guilty of selecting and arranging our experiences to conform with any image we already hold. We tend to forget that God is much bigger than our ideas and our concept of Him.

Someone has suggested that holding on to God is like holding on to an elephant by the tail – you have to go in his direction, not yours. And His direction leads us into new horizons – *“for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts”* (Isaiah 55 v9).

It is good to remind ourselves from time to time – that it is God who holds us in the hollow of his hand – and not the other way round.

Bob Gemmell,
Pastoral Assistant.

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CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 2006 UPDATE

Christian  Aid

The total amount received from door to door collection was £8,751.45, not counting Gift Aid declarations.

Christian Aid Committee

THE PULPIT

September	3rd	Rev. Alan Berry
	10th	Rev. Jim Barclay
	17th	a.m. Mr. William Anderson p.m. Rev. Robert Gemmell
	24th	Rev. Robert Gemmell
October	1st	Rev. Alan Berry

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

September	14th	Management Committee 7 p.m.
September/ October	30th/ 1st	Harvest Thanksgiving Weekend
October	27th - 29th	Baptist Assembly, Aberdeen (Leaflets available on the half landing)

HARVEST THANKSGIVING

The theme of our harvest thanksgiving this year is “Body & Soul”. A harvest supper will be held on Saturday 30th September at 7 p.m. with a DVD on the Karen People based on the Burma/ Thai border. The services on Sunday 1st October will be based on the harvest theme, the evening service being mainly devoted to praise. The harvest appeal, for which envelopes will be issued, is to feed the “Body & Soul” of some of the most marginalised people (e.g. The Karens). As a church we have responded most generously in the past; let us do so again.



Jack Spiers

BMS WORLD NEWS

GEORGIE'S O.B.E. FOR PRE--SCHOOL PROJECT

A BMS World Mission worker has received an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list for her years of work with disadvantaged children in Brazil.

Georgie Christine (right) has been recognised for her role in founding a network of church-based pre-school education projects, known as PEPEs, in Sao Paulo in the early 1990s.



Today, more than a decade on, PEPEs have spread out of that city, across Brazil, and are now making a difference to hundreds of children's lives in other parts of Latin America and in Africa too.

“This is more than a surprise,” says Georgie. “I never expected anything like this. I always feel that the people in the churches do as much as I do and there are many who have done more than me. I will take this award on behalf of all the people involved, as this has always been a group effort.”

David Kerrigan, BMS Director for Mission, is delighted for Georgie. “Her many contributions have been recognised in this way. Her educational background, her passion for children and, above all, her conviction that these children matter to God have been the driving forces behind the development of the PEPE network”.

Georgie has worked in Brazil with her husband Stuart – who is BMS Regional Secretary for Latin America – since 1977. It was in 1991,

following a three-year break in the UK, that the couple began to work in Sao Paulo, where millions of people live in shanty towns called favelas.

Georgie and Stuart were immediately struck by the efforts of a local Brazilian pastor to help children in these favelas. Without a good start in their schooling, these kids would be disadvantaged for life, dropping out of education and turning to a life of crime, drugs or prostitution.

This was the starting point for Georgie, as she helped to develop the pre-school education programme, which aimed to break the cycle of poverty that trapped many people in slum life. PEPE projects are locally based and benefit not only the children but the wider communities. Churches are often planted, centred on the pre-school.

(Our Link Missionary, Lynne Brown, is engaged in PEPE Projects in Angola)

FINDING JESUS IN ALBANIA'S JAILS

The first-ever chapel to be built in an Albanian prison has been funded by BMS World Mission – and is now built and in daily use.

As part of BMS church planters Mat and Hannah Wilson's ministry in the capital city of Tirana, Hannah – a social worker (pictured in centre) – and her Albanian colleagues have been visiting women in the city's women's prisons. Initially they gave skills training and help in reintegrating women back into society after their release but their work has now expanded to include proclamation of the gospel.

Hannah says, "We have been holding regular Bible studies and church services. BMS funded the building of a church in one of these prisons as there was no place for the women to meet and worship God or have fellowship together, except their cells.

"Our vision is for this church to have an impact not only on the prisoners and prison staff but also the communities the women come from. During the last church service the women wrote a short message on a Christian postcard to either their children or husbands.



"We are trying to build an expression of church in the prison that reflects the heart of Jesus. The church is opened every day by the teachers or volunteers to teach courses in hairdressing, sewing, English, computers and for Bible studies.

“The women come into church for courses but also to have a coffee and talk with the volunteers. Once these prisoners enter the church, we have seen a change in their attitude. They alter their language, they don’t argue inside the building and it appears they truly respect God.

“Our prayer is that this will not be just inside the building or in our presence but will eventually filter into their whole lives, their families and the communities they return to.”

“I was in prison and you came to visit me” (Matthew 25: 36) The prison ministry began in March 2002 when Hannah and colleagues visited the female prisoners on Albania’s ‘Mothers/ Women’s day’. After this initial visit they were struck by the prisoners’ need to meet people from the outside and they began visiting each week.

Mat and Hannah Wilson are from Histon Baptist Church, Cambridgeshire and have worked with BMS in Albania since 2001. Mat pastors Way of Hope Baptist Church in Tirana. They have three children, Ben, Katie and Rebekah.

EMAIL FROM LYNNE BROWN

Hi Ewan,

It was good to hear from you and to know that you and your Dad are doing okay. The people at Portobello seemed a very caring group to me. Will continue to be praying for you.

Well, I've been back more than two weeks now. The suitcase eventually got here, intact but a bit wet and everything is unpacked and in its place. I've had a meeting with Manuel who was looking after things in Luanda. He has done a superb job in supporting the missionary educators and handling different problems and situations that have come up. The PEPEs have been running well and it was a real thrill to have visited some and to see what the children are now able to write and do.

Teresa, the coordinator, was in Luanda. We met up and she brought a good report of what is happening down there. Justino is doing a good job with the children and the church is getting involved, helping him with transport and visiting some of the families. The PEPEs in Uige have yet to get off the ground but Januario, the coordinator for Uige will be in Luanda in September so we will get together then and see what we can do.

I would value your prayers for Teresa, Januario and the missionary educators as they continue the work. I'll be having meetings with pastors and church leaders in the next weeks and months as we look to the future with PEPE. Please pray for these. Pray for me too. I've been feeling a bit homesick and it is taking longer to settle back in than I thought. Mary and Joan were off travelling and now preparing for holiday (for Mary) and Home assignment (for Joan) so things will be different around here.

Different too because it looks as if I will have a volunteer out for three months. Jane Coates has taken early retirement from primary teaching and she should be arriving on 9th September. I'm hoping we will all learn a lot from her experience. Pray that all goes well and that she will fit in well in Angola. It will be her first time to Africa.

Thanks for your prayers and I'm praying for you folks at Portobello too.

Love
Lynne

LETTER FROM AN UNSAVED FRIEND

My friend, I stand in judgment now,
and feel that you're to blame somehow.
On earth I walked with you by day,
and never did you show the way.
You knew the Saviour in truth and glory,
But never did you tell the story.
My knowledge then was very dim.
You could have led me safe to Him.
Though we lived together, here on earth,
you never told me of the second birth.
And now I stand before eternal hell,
because of heaven's glory you did not tell!

HOW TO KNOW WHEN YOU ARE GETTING OLD

Everything hurts,
What doesn't hurt, doesn't work.
The gleam in your eye is the sun shining on your bifocals
you feel like the morning after but you haven't been anywhere
your children begin to look middle aged,
you join a health club, but you don't go
you have all the answers, but nobody asks you the questions
you need glasses to find your glasses
you turn out the light for economy instead of romance
your in a rocking chair but can't make it go
your knees buckle but your belt won't
your back goes out more than you do
your house is too big
your medicine box is not big enough
you sink your teeth into a steak and they stay there
your birthday cake collapses from the weight of the candles.

* * * * *

They do say, you are as old as you feel, for I certainly do not feel (which is good) the ?? years I have reached.

Just a big thank you to all my good friends in the Baptist Church who make the effort to climb my stairs, though a struggle.

God bless you all, you are so much appreciated.

With love and Prayers,

Mrs Cathy Whittaker