

Note from the "Editor"

First of all I must begin by introducing myself. My name is Philip Hobbs and I am Treasurer and Steward at Garndiffaith (Bethel) Methodist Church, posts I have held for longer than I can remember. Although I am not a Member of the Circuit Mission Committee the Rev. Martin Freeman came knocking at my door one day to ask me if I could do him a favour and foolishly I said yes, and then asked what the favour was. The answer was could I possibly help him with the production of a newsletter about mission within the Circuit.

Having already said yes I found myself stuck, unable to back out, so I must warn you that this is the first time I have been involved in a project of this nature, so I am not entirely sure how the end product will turn out. However having now met the rest of the team involved I am sure we will cope.

You may remember that some time ago I wrote to all Churches in the Circuit asking for information on what sort of work you are all involved in in the way of Mission, whether it be at home or abroad..I have to date received responses from half the Churches in the Circuit either from the secretary or the minister responsible for the Church. It was my original intention to include details received from each Church in the first newsletter but I feel this would make for a dry and boring read. I have however included details of the work of a few churches and would add that the information received from the other churches is very similar in content and it is clear that they take Mission work very seriously indeed.

I would however like to hear from the other half of the Churches with the information on what they do and also hear from everyone any stories, information or anecdotes regarding the schemes they support so that we can share them with all members of the Circuit through the Newsletter.. I look forward to hearing from you soon so that we can include some of these stories etc. in the next issue.

When we first met as a team to discuss this newsletter, we had to come up with a title and the one that sprang to mind was Mission Impossible. We chatted about this and eventually came to the conclusion that nothing was impossible and therefore settled for the title MISSION POSSIBLE to reflect this feeling that everything in God's work was possible. We hope you agree.

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GWENT HILLS AND VALES CIRCUIT

Mission Possible



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CIRCUIT MISSION
COMMITTEE

From the Churches..

Blackwood

Mission does not necessarily mean money, but in Blackwood Church we are helping with "outside" charities. Members support "Everyone's Child Romania" regularly, which is a local registered charity working in Romania, led by Mr. Paul Davies of Blackwood. They are working with children and young people with Aids and HIV.

Each year we, as a section, have a sponsored walk, for two charities, sometimes local and sometimes a wider based charity. This year British Diabetic Society and a newish Exeter based charity "Dave 2 Squared". This is based in Exeter University and involves a young Blackwood lady, from Church, who is going to Ghana.

The 2nd Blackwood Boys Brigade at church is also involved in this charity organised by the boys working for their Queen's Badge. All the boys, 5 - 18 years were involved with sponsorships of various kinds. We in Blackwood help raise funds for JMA, Christian Aid, LPMA etc. etc.

Regularly, members give substantial parcels of food for the local Food Bank based at a local Pentecostal Church, which is distributed through the Council and Social Services.

We also belong to the Street Pastors, and are members of the Street Pastor's Prayer Support Team, based at Blackwood Methodist Church. It is in a good position right in the middle of town. It has been very well received and the crime rate has gone down on weekends since we started almost two years ago. What a worthwhile organisation, members are so enthusiastic going out in the evenings, the fellowship between the Pastors is so good. The young and not so young are having seeds sown and we pray that these will grow.

Submitted by Marjorie Holding.

Trinity, Abersychan

Along with other churches in the Circuit, we at Trinity, Abersychan, support various missions. Support is given to Home Mission, Overseas Mission, Leprosy Mission and Network, mainly on a weekly donation basis.

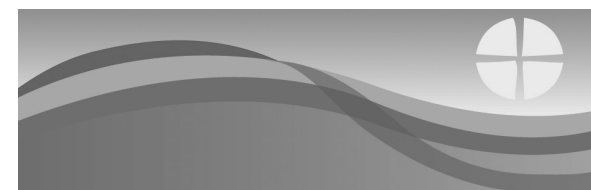
Earlier this year, working with our minister, Rev. Martin Freeman we decided to support the collection of a variety of items to be sent to Nyaboo, a small town in Ghana. Originally we were asked to collect old television sets (so far so good). It was decided to store these items in the schoolroom at Trinity.

Then, the items started to arrive. Television sets, computers, printers, radios, microwave ovens, if it was electrical it arrived. Also we started to receive parcels of games, books, football shirts, (two complete sets), football boots, ladies and gents shoes and clothing, bicycles and a complete set of marching band side drums and bass drum. Plus loads of toys.

When we started to sort these items out we had so many boxes, black plastic bags and parcels the schoolroom was practically full. We even had stuff on the stage and in the backroom, there was so much of it. We set out to collect as many cardboard boxes as we could. We obtained them from as far afield as Abergavenny, Griffithstown and of course from our local friends from Abersychan. The ladies of the chapel turned up and sorted...and sorted....and sorted, until, eventually we had everything parcelled up ready to go.

Martin had ordered a rather large container, which duly arrived on the back of a lorry, and was placed on the grassy patch next to the gate of the chapel and we started loading. Muscular help arrived in the shape of our friends from another chapel in the Circuit and some young men from the Community Service organisation and we completed the loading in two days. The trailer was picked up and the last we saw of it was on its way up High Street on its journey to the docks and on to Ghana. Then we had another cup of tea, and then we went Home.

Submitted by John Williams.



Pontllanfraith

We have tried in a variety of ways to engage in Mission and Outreach.

Through our pastoral visitors we try to provide outreach to our own members but also showing concern for people in the community - phone calls, cards and letters, visits and perhaps most importantly - prayer.

We contribute every week to the Food Bank in Pontllanfraith, which provides assistance to needy families in our area.

Street Pastors has been a very successful venture in Blackwood and our Church has supported this both practically and financially.

Once a month we hold a short service in Millbrook Residential Home in Pontllanfraith and through this we have come to know some of the residents who we feel appreciate this Christian contact.

Through prayer and financial assistance we have supported a wide range of charities, both at home and abroad. In our Women's Fellowship meetings we have, through listening to a variety of speakers learned a great deal about our local community and the wider world and again have given moral, financial and prayerful support.

For the last six years we have run a Holiday Club in Blackwood and members of our Church have been very actively involved in organising this project, which has proved to be a very effective means of outreach in the local community.

Submitted by Sue Radford.
