

**Thursday 1 January** New Year's Day walk: meet at 9.30 am (see page 10)  
**Saturday 3 January** Monthly time of prayer in Quiet Room, 9 am  
**Saturday 3 January** Churchyard gardening party, 9.30 am  
**Monday 5 January** Men's Fellowship New Year Social (Ladies invited)  
**Tuesday 6 January** Youth update and prayers in Quiet Room, 9.30 am & 7 pm  
**Wednesday 7 January** Holy Communion at 11 am, followed by a light lunch  
**Wednesday 7 January** Time of prayer for Alpha course, in Church at 8 pm  
**Monday 12 January** New term starts for Jigsaw Playgroup  
**Monday 12 January** DASH Group meets, Upper Church House, 8 pm  
**Wednesday 14 January** Opening supper for new Alpha course (see page 10)  
**Monday 19-23 January** Christian Unity Week prayers and lunches in local churches  
**Sunday 25 January** Churches Together service in Holy Trinity, 6.30 pm  
**Monday 2 February** Men's Fellowship: David Page on local commons & wildlife  
**Saturday 7 February** Concert with Steven Isserlis (cello) in church, 8 pm (£14)  
**Monday 16-19 February** Holiday Club for Primary school age children  
**Friday 12-14 March 2004** Parish Weekend away at High Leigh  
**Wednesday 21 April** Annual Parochial Church Meeting

### REGULAR SUNDAY SERVICES

	8 am	10 am	6.30 pm
1st Sunday	Holy Communion (trad)	Morning Praise	Evening Prayer
2nd Sunday	Holy Communion (trad)	Morning Praise	Holy Communion Ord. 1
3rd Sunday	Holy Communion (trad)	All Age Service	Evening Prayer
4th Sunday	Holy Communion BCP	Holy Communion Ord. 1	Evening Prayer

### WEEKDAY SERVICES

Monthly on a Wednesday (see diary above): Holy Communion (Prayer Book)

2nd and 4th Wednesdays, at 2 pm: Toddlers' Praise (in the Church Hall)

Every Wednesday, at 7 am: Prayers for 30 minutes (in the Quiet Room)

Every Thursday, at 3.45 pm: Intercessions (in the Quiet Room)

Monthly on a Thursday, at 11.45 am at Wingham Court: Holy Communion

4th Thursday in month, at 11.30 am at the Day Centre: Holy Communion

Insight is the Parish Magazine of Holy Trinity, Claygate, published monthly.

Editor Jon Davey, 71 Hare Lane, Claygate, Surrey, KT10 0QX,

Phone: 01372 810106, email: jondavey@fish.co.uk

Subscriptions and Distribution Merle Liddiard, 01372 465038

Church Office Church Road, Claygate, Esher, Surrey, KT10 0JP

Phone: 01372 463603 Fax: 01372 464894

email: churchoffice@holyltrinityclaygate.org.uk

January 2004

40p

## WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

During this special week, Churches Together in Esher and Claygate are holding half hours of prayer at noon every weekday followed at 12.30 by a simple lunch of soup, bread and fruit. The venues will be

Monday 19th January: Holy Trinity Claygate

Tuesday 20th January: Esher Green Baptist Church, Park Road, Esher

Wednesday 21st January: at the Friends Meeting House, Claremont Lane, Esher

Thursday 22nd January: at Christ Church, Church Street, Esher

Friday 23rd January: at the Church of the Holy Name, Arbrook Lane, Esher

The Week of Prayer concludes with a United Service at 6.30 pm on Sunday 25th January in Holy Trinity Claygate at which the Preacher will be Canon Hazel Whitehead, Principal of the Guildford Diocesan Ministry Course

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and much more about your  
church's life and work!

VICAR: CANON JULIAN HENDERSON

LAY ASSISTANT MINISTER: VALERIE BAGLEY

CURATE: THE REVD DAVID KING

NON-STIPENDIARY MINISTER: THE REVD DR LINDA MORGAN

YOUTH WORKERS: ASA HUMPHREYS, STUART WRIGHT

Phone: 01372 463603 Fax: 01372 464894

email: churchoffice@holyltrinityclaygate.org.uk

www.holyltrinityclaygate.org.uk

## Parish Weekend

Places on the Parish Weekend away at High Leigh have been going quickly, but if you have not yet got round to committing yourselves, it is not too late. Some places are left, but please do not delay any longer!

If you need a reminder, it takes place from the evening of Friday 12th March until after Sunday lunch on 14th March. The Revd Bob Key, General Director of the Church Pastoral Aid Society, will be leading the adult sessions with the theme "Breaking the Mould", while the youngsters will have plenty of fun of their own - see Asa's article on page 5.

Do pick up a brochure and booking form

## Be a better parent

A reminder that our two new Parenting Courses start this month, on teenagers from 12 January, and on pre-school children from 27th January. Call Valerie Bagley on 464243.

As we look ahead to the appointment of the next Bishop of Guildford, all in the Diocese are invited to join in

## "PRAYER FOR A SEE OF CHANGE"

Every Wednesday at 9.30am - 10am

In the Lady Chapel  
at Guildford Cathedral

From 7th January - 30th June 2004  
inclusive (not 7<sup>th</sup> April)

and at 8 pm on three Wednesdays -  
28th January, 10th March & 21st April  
- but all in the Diocese are invited to  
pray at these times wherever they may  
be.

## ALPHA

This course, which provides an opportunity to explore the claims of the Christian faith in a non-threatening environment, will begin again on 14th January with an opening supper, to which anyone may come. This opening evening offers a taster of what Alpha is like and those who attend are not committed in any way to doing the course. So if you would like to share in a meal with others and find out whether Alpha might be for you, then please phone Dudley Sloggett on 01372 469453.

There will be a time of prayer for Alpha on January 7th and it would be great if a good number were to gather to pray for the forthcoming course. It's at 8 pm in the church.

## New Year Social

The Men's Fellowship's popular start to the New Year is being held in the Church Hall on Monday 5th January at 7.45 for 8 pm. It's a Ladies Night, and the Fellowship extends a warm invitation to ladies of the church to join us. There will be entertainment, a bar and a buffet (but provided by you - everyone who comes is asked to bring a plate of finger food to add to the buffet for us all to share).

No tickets needed, no booking required, and it's free - so surely you will not want any extra incentive simply to come along!

The Fellowship's February meeting will hear about many of the open spaces we are fortunate to have around us and the wildlife they support, when David Page of Elmbridge Borough Council comes to speak to us. It's on Monday 2nd February, but sorry ladies - it's back to men only.

## Extra Christmas pounds?

A good walk on New Year's Day is called for. How about a 5 mile country circuit from Bramley, setting off from Claygate at 9.30 am? Call John Amos on 466047 or Jan

## Competition for church magazines

The winners of this year's competition for the best church magazines were announced on 29th November. One magazine from not far away was a runner-up - "Contact", from New Malden.

The other runner-up was "Saints Alive" from Appley Bridge near Wigan, but the overall winner of the John King Trophy was "Trident", serving Eynsford, Farningham and Lullingstone in Kent.

(No, we didn't enter "Insight" this year, but we were grateful to those of you who managed to collect and send to us samples of the winning magazines two years ago.)

## CONGRATULATIONS TO FRANK AND BERYL ATKINSON

A Diamond Wedding anniversary is a moment for celebration and thanksgiving. Frank and Beryl reached their 60th anniversary on December 27<sup>th</sup> and we offer them our warmest congratulations and best wishes.

## Prizes from an old charity

The Revd Edward Rogers set up a Prize Fund in 1910 for children 'adjudged by the headteacher to have been of good conduct and diligence in his or her work at school. The prizes shall be used to further the education of each prizewinner at school or any institution of further education or to assist him or her to prepare for any profession, trade or calling on leaving school.' The Rector of St Nicholas Thames Ditton and the Vicar of Claygate are the two trustees.

Nick Fenwick of Esher High School and Sarah Day and Will Frewin of Hinchley Wood School were each awarded £50 booktokens at the end of last year and we offer them our congratulations on their past record and best

## New auditors

For a number of years we have been fortunate that a church member, Julian Stedman, has been willing and able to audit the church annual accounts. However, he has decided that he will no longer be a 'registered auditor' and has asked to be released. The PCC have written to Julian, conveying their thanks and enclosing a gift as a token of their gratitude. The amount of work Julian has put in on the church's behalf is huge and we are deeply grateful.

The good news is that he will continue to help prepare the annual accounts with the rest of the Holy Trinity finance team. But once that is done, Garner Bleasdale Chandler of Guildford, a firm of accountants who are well-known in the Diocese, will act as our official auditors. Jem Salter, Sarah Quest, Julian Stedman and Julian Henderson had an encouraging meeting in December with one of their partners and, while it is normal for the Annual Meeting to appoint auditors, this vacancy between annual meetings has been filled with the PCC's authority.



## Holy Trinity in the wider community

A church never works in isolation, but in response to needs in the community where it is set.

So it is good to record the role played throughout 2003 by Derek Huff, a church member, in the group that made all the arrangements for the Christmas Lights in the Parade and the Christmas tree at the Green. Derek's skill with lighting and sound makes a valuable contribution to this community event and he is much appreciated. Believe it or not, the meetings in preparation for the November switch-on begin much earlier in the year. At the debrief meeting afterwards on 10th December Derek was given a present from the Claygate Village Association Christmas Lights subcommittee, as a token of everyone's thanks.

### The Jigsaw Nativity

It is also good to record that Jigsaw, the church's Playgroup, put on a wonderful nativity play in the church hall in December and a good crowd of parents, relatives and friends from the wider community attended. Both the children and the staff had worked so hard to create one of those moving Christmas moments, a real tribute to the dedication of the Jigsaw team.

Stuart's work with community youth And it's important to pass on a decision of the PCC in December about Stuart's work as our community Youth Worker. Since September Stuart has been paid for two days work per week, but in reality has been putting in three days, simply because there's plenty to do and he found he had the time to do it. The PCC decided to increase his pay to cover the extra day and encourage him in the really valuable work he does in the community among young people.

Holy Trinity is glad to be serving the local

## "You can't mitigate a dead fish!"

The tension between the pressure to exploit the rich natural resources of Canada and the safeguarding of the way of life of the aboriginal peoples there was the subject of Ray Towse's illustrated talk to the Men's Fellowship on 1st December.

His special focus was on the Voisey's Bay Nickel Project in Labrador, but he carefully filled in the history and the wider background to the development of Canada, its relationship with its large neighbour south of the border and the impact of colonisation on the country's native peoples.

It had been the Inquiry into the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline in 1977 which had laid down principles under which the environmental impact of industrial development had to take account of human, cultural and social concerns. These had been very much to the fore when plans were launched in 1993 to mine the rich deposits of nickel which had been discovered around Voisey's Bay in Northern Labrador, and Ray had been to Canada to observe the Inquiry into the proposals.

The area is one in which the native population, comprising Innu and Innu (Indian), follows a traditional way of life of harvesting, hunting and fishing, which would have been destroyed by plans not merely to mine the ore but to bring in year-round shipping to take it away, in the process breaking the ice on which the aboriginals rely to move around on during the winter.

An impasse had resulted, compounded by the financial difficulties of the company which had paid as much as \$4.3 billion for the mineral rights. To aboriginal fury, however, 250,000 other mineral claims were lodged. Environmental Assessment takes into account the idea of mitigation but, they ask, how can you mitigate a dead fish? It was an informative evening on something of which we knew very little.

## A Journey through Grief

GOD OF THE VALLEY

by Steve Griffiths

(published with a foreword by David Winter by Bible Reading Fellowship)

Steve Griffiths is no stranger to Holy Trinity. Brought up within our church, whose Secretary has for many years been his mother Doreen, he and his family have often been in our prayers over the last few years as they have faced great distress.

Now Steve has written a new book exploring the subject of grief. It is an intensely personal book, forged in the searing experience of losing both his sister Jackie and his wife Clare to cancer within the space of little over two years. It is also a very honest book, and one senses the pain with which parts of it have been committed to print. But most importantly for us the readers, it is a remarkably positive and heartening book, demonstrating the way in which with God's help we can grow and mature through the experience of suffering.

Steve starts factually by telling us the story of his wife's illness, from the first signs of her brain tumour, just four months after their daughter Rebekah was born and less than three months after he was ordained, to her death at the age of 36 in July 2001. Within that time frame his sister, also in her mid-thirties, was diagnosed with breast cancer and died of it. The valley of the book's title is of course the valley of the shadow of death.

Each chapter of the book describes a different aspect of Steve's experience of bereavement - the exhaustion, the lonely desolation, the interminable waiting on God, the loss of a shared identity, the often unadmitted, or even unrecognised, anger at what has happened, the feelings

of guilt and self-hatred, the lack of pastoral care from the church authorities, and so on. The chapters then go on to draw biblical parallels and to explore how the Bible can offer comfort and a new perspective on each of these aspects of bereavement. The book discusses some of the Psalms, the stories among others of Job and Jonah and of course the Gospels, and in the process presents us with valuable new insights.

Steve describes how it was a friend who suggested that he should write a book as part of the process of recovery, and how valuable the task has been as a form of catharsis. But he also identifies another good reason for writing the book, in the context of Psalm 22. The second half of the Psalm, Steve points out, demonstrates the Psalmist's recognition that the story of his restoration can have an impact on the whole world. He goes on

"As we share our stories with each other, so the world will hear of the grace of God and his merciful dealings with us. As we testify to the good things we have experienced, the kingship of God will be proclaimed to all nations and many will be brought to salvation."

In sharing his story with us through this book, Steve Griffiths has made a powerful contribution to that end. As those words imply, while his story may be helpful to those who also find themselves faced with bereavement, its value is far wider than that. It extends the horizons for us all in understanding God's love for us and our relationship to him, and how, even in our brokenness, we can find new meaning and new opportunities to serve him. It is a life-enhancing book.

□ *God of the Valley is available from the Church Bookstall, price £6.99.*

Holy Trinity's motto for 2004 offers in the words of Jesus Christ a simple and clear definition of eternal life. It comes at the beginning of His prayer to His Father recorded in John 17 on the night before He died.

*Now this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent. (John, chapter 17, verse 3)*

The phrase 'eternal life' is an important phrase to understand. It describes a life that begins now when a person believes in Jesus Christ, starts to follow Him and is in communion with Him. First of all it refers to a spiritual quality of life, which is the experience of the Christian in this life. It then stretches into eternity transcending the moment of death and departure from this world. So it is possible to say at a funeral the words Jesus spoke to Martha and Mary after their brother Lazarus had died: he who believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live. Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. So when the body of a Christian eventually dies, there still remains that eternal spiritual life that cannot die. And this hope is a central aspect of the Christian faith.

If that's what it means, how is it acquired? In this motto verse Jesus says that eternal life comes through knowing God. This is more than knowledge of facts and information about God, and more than knowledge of the church, its history and its practices; it is a personal and direct knowing of Him, in the way we know a friend, a boss, a neighbour, a family member. Such knowing is expressed personally in commitment to Him, trust of Him, obedience to Him, praise of Him, conversation with Him, listening to Him.

The key to eternal life is being in a living relationship with the risen Jesus Christ, so that when our time comes to leave this world and we meet Him as our Judge, He will not be able to say of us, as he did of some religious people recorded in Matthew 7 21-23, 'I never knew you'. It is quite possible to be doing religious things, even miraculous things, and call Him, 'Lord, Lord', but if faith does not issue forth in doing the will of God in obedience to His Word, then we have not received His gift of eternal life or entered into the Kingdom of heaven.

To our ears that sounds harsh, but Jesus' words were often not easy to hear. He frequently brought challenge and demanded response. We do well, as we embark on a New Year, to heed His Words and my prayer for 2004 for all church members and all the wider community of Claygate is, using the words of the song in Godspell, that we will know Him more clearly, love Him more dearly and follow Him more nearly, day by day.

With my best wishes and prayers for 2004,



## Parish Personalities

*This month's subject for the Insight Inquisition is Hilary Spooner.*

*Where were you brought up?  
Beckenham and Sevenoaks.  
How long have you lived in Claygate?  
For 34 years.*

*What do you like most about it?  
The friendly atmosphere.  
And if there was one thing you could change? Too late! But I would like to have seen it as it was in 1910-20 when my mother used to stay here.  
Where would you locate your ideal home?*

*I'm very happy where I am.  
What is the least welcome part of your daily round? Cleaning the oven.  
Which personal trait do you struggle most to overcome? To accept that I am not always right!*

*What food are you most partial to?  
Any fruit.  
And leave on the side of your plate?  
Dark chocolate.*

*What do you watch on television?  
Sport, costume drama, antiques and medical soaps!  
What would your desert island book be?  
Kidnapped.*

*What is your favourite music?  
Elgar's Introduction and Allegro.*

*And your favourite hymn?  
"Praise my soul the King of heaven".  
Which passage of the Bible is most telling for you personally?  
Psalm 139.*

*Do you have an unfulfilled ambition?  
To have had a small flock of Southdown sheep.*



### From the Parish Registers

*We welcome into the family of the Church:*

Isabella Georgia Bond  
Fabienne Lucie Bond  
Molly Grace La Frenais  
Alice Elizabeth Grace Pengilly  
Charlotte Victoria Katie Pengilly  
William David Alexander Pengilly  
(all baptised on 7th December)

*We offer sympathy to the relatives and friends of:*

George Arthur Perks  
(30th November)  
Leonard Arthur Andrew Moorhouse  
(6th December)



# A Moment to Meditate

Jesus' warning to us not to cast pearls before swine, and to avoid giving what is holy to dogs, is one of the best known of his sayings, and one which has become a popular cliché.

Its meaning is obvious, isn't it? Don't waste things that are precious on those who cannot appreciate them. But if we think a little more about it, and especially if we look at the saying in the context of the part of the Sermon on the Mount in which it falls, we might become a little less confident about what Jesus meant. It has been described as a puzzle.

The saying follows on immediately from Jesus' admonitions against our judging others. The previous three verses are those which deal with what used to be called motes and beams. Don't offer to take the speck out of your neighbour's eye if there is a plank in your own. We are hypocrites if we judge the faults of others while ignoring the extent to which we are also deficient. Criticising others will render us more vulnerable to having our own credentials questioned.

And yet here we are apparently being told to judge others as being unworthy to share in the good things, perhaps not fit to be offered the good news of Jesus Christ or to be invited to receive the bread and wine of Holy Communion. One of the earliest of Christian documents, *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, supports this reading by saying "Let no one eat or drink of your Eucharist, except those baptised into the name of the Lord; for as regards this the Lord has said 'Give not that which is holy to the dogs'".

So do we judge others or not? Well, it might be that verse 6 is there quite deliberately to help us see that the warning against

*"Do not cast your pearls before swine, or they will trample them underfoot."*

Matthew, chap. 7, verse 6

judging others is not absolute. It would not be right for us to live our lives in a moral vacuum, refusing to make judgements about what is right or wrong. It is essential that we make those judgements, to guide how we behave but also to assess the example of other people. We should have seen that in verses 4 and 5, which make clear that we can and should help to correct others, by removing the speck from our neighbour's eye but only when we have removed the plank from our own.

Our judgements are not to be made lightly or indignantly, but with honesty and humility. But the proper discrimination we are called upon to exercise might lead us to caution or reprove others and attempt to divert them into better ways, or to perceive that their advice or teaching is wrong and should not be followed. It might also lead us to see that there are some who will only misuse and besmirch things of true value and who are better ignored and avoided.

\*\*\*\*\*  
*Scribatus*  
 \*\*\*\*\*

*The grace of God*

*Your worst days are  
 never so bad that  
 you are beyond the  
 reach of God's grace.  
 And your best days  
 are never so good  
 that you're beyond  
 the need of God's grace.*

\*\*\*\*\*

## Young People today ....

*Asa writes:* With the festivities of Christmas behind us and the dreary normality of going back to school approaching or past, 2004 holds many excitements, other than exams, for the church youth group. Here is a brief look forward at what has been planned so far for this year so that you can put the dates in your diaries or maybe pretend to be a teenager yourself just to get an invite.

We have the excitement of the Parish Weekend away on the 12th - 14th March, where we have some very special leaders for the children and young people of the church, and a lot of Frisbee and cake as well. The Youth Fellowship will be visiting West Sussex where a vicar friend of Sami, Stuart and me is running a church that has a monthly youth service for the whole of his deanery. This has been very well attended, particularly by young people from New Hall who our youth fellowship are already friends with.

Talking of New Hall, having just had a New Hall reunion at New Year, we host a mini reunion on Valentine's Day this February. Pray that our young people can attend for the right reasons despite the date. And after Easter, from the 13th to the 18th of April, we have another New Hall CYFA Houseparty which is open to young people as young as 13 and is, in my opinion, the most relaxed and fun of all the Houseparties. A good one to attend if you are coming for the first time. A couple of our older young people may well be leading for the first time on this Houseparty, so it is an important event at both ends of the teenage years.

We will be studying stories of faith throughout the Bible in our Cell Groups from Abraham to Paul. If there is one thing that I repeatedly return to in my walk it is these stories of repentant sinners who God uses mightily. In the midst of all the struggles we face, learning and holding dear to these encouragements is key to remaining anchored to Jesus. Over this term we will also be looking at Acts in Youth Fellowship so that we can see how the disciples reacted to all that they had seen with Jesus. We will be exploring together how we can learn from their example.

We will also be having a considerable amount of fun as well, for example having an afternoon on Sunday 28th March up Box Hill with a picnic and, if the weather is good enough, a kite flying contest. If you want to bring your good selves along then we would love to have you there with us. We will also be having a few special social events that our young people can bring their friends along to as well, but I will keep you posted about them as and when that happens. Otherwise keep praying that all those who come to YF can have ears to hear and hearts softened to receive the good news.

Cheers.

**ANNUAL MEETING**

This year's Annual Parochial Church Meeting will be held on Wednesday 21st April

## Sebastian Fernando

A simple ceremony of thanksgiving and dedication for Sebastian took place during the 10 am service on 14th December. Earlier in 2003, Majella and Christine Fernando adopted an 18 month old boy from an orphanage in their home country of Sri Lanka, and this thanksgiving was all the greater because Sebastian had just made a remarkable recovery after 11 days in Kingston Hospital. In the ceremony we gave thanks to God for those who cared for him at the orphanage and for giving him a new family. We prayed for Sebastian, Christine and Majella and gave them a Bible to be 'used as their guide'.

**OVERHEARD**

*"As soon as we heard that our Vicar was leaving the parish, we decided to give him a little momentum."*

*"The second day of a New Year's diet is always easier than the first. By the second day, you're off it!"*

# A visit to Meg Merrifield in Mombasa

Meg Merrifield has been teaching at the Bishop Hannington Theological Institute in the coastal city of Mombasa, Kenya, for the past four and a half years. Before that she worked in Nigeria, facing Moslem uprisings against Christians and once escaping in just the clothes she was wearing during an attack when churches and homes were burnt.

Mombasa is a city with a population of 700,000. It is 60% Muslim and 'a Third World City with no glamorous tourist accommodation'. Tourists come to stay at the beach resorts to the north and south of the city from where they fly or drive to the game parks. Recent terrorist events have discouraged tourists and the economy is in decline.

Bishop Hannington Institute began in Mombasa in 1888, only 50 years after the first missionary arrived in East Africa. The institute was named after the first Bishop of Eastern Equatorial Africa, James Hannington, who was martyred on his way to Uganda in 1885.

Meg introduced us to the students during their mid-morning break in the communal 'dining room', seated on benches for hot sweet milky tea poured from large kettles. We then met each class in turn. We were both shocked at how basic was the new classroom block: built of breeze block, with a corrugated iron roof and plywood folding partitions separating the rooms. The humid mid-morning air stirred between the wire mesh windows on either side. A voice came over loudspeakers, of the daily call to prayer at the mosque followed by the sermon. It was loud and intrusive and difficult to concentrate.

There are 23 full-time students at the College, mostly sponsored by their dioceses. They are all from Kenya except for one from Tanzania. We met the third year class first: eight young men who introduced themselves to us and then followed on with very challenging questions such as was the war with Iraq a success? and is war un-Christian? And what did we think about gay Bishops?

The second year class was larger and included 3 young women. They are less likely to find a church after graduation than the men as traditional attitudes to women tend to remain in the Kenyan church: their ambitions were limited to FE teaching. The students included both single and married; those who are married have children too and the wives usually have jobs and extended families to take

*Meg Merrifield has been Holy Trinity's link with the Church Mission Society since 1980. But no one from the Church has actually paid her a visit - until now.*

*Jill Marsden reports on the trip which she and Roger made to Kenya in October.*

care of the children. One student and his wife have adopted a child, orphaned by AIDS.

It was good to talk with them and to share our common purpose - of bringing the Good News of salvation to the world; we told them of our church in Claygate which is partly responsible for sending Meg to them! They expressed gratitude and sent greetings to you. We then had lunch with the students: a plate piled high with rice and a little lamb on the bone with tomato and mildly spiced. It tasted good.

## A lot more than just teaching

After lunch we saw the accommodation block which is pictured on the noticeboard at church. There are 5 or 6 students to a dormitory, sleeping in bunk beds, each with a tiny locker and clothes hanging on hangers from the beds. Each room had its own iron and we were impressed by the students' smart appearance. The library is in this block, recently extended and now with room for each student to study, all thanks to Meg's hard work, both in overseeing its completion and in sorting and referencing the books. The students are learning computer studies too and a church in the US donated seven computers.

Besides her teaching responsibilities Meg oversees the work of the bursar and the purchase of food for the kitchen. During our stay she had been told there was a shortage of rice - clear messages to one of the students were passed on too late to the wrong person and because Meg's phone was cut off she was forced to go to the store in her car and collect the large sack of rice.

Meg's accommodation, too, is pretty basic. She lives on the ground floor of a block adjacent to the compound with the simplest of facilities and a night watchman with a penchant

for falling asleep, so that his permitted deterrent - a bow and arrow - was stolen! The stench from a broken sewer flowing past the block taints the air. Meg's requests to the authorities for its repair have so far fallen on deaf ears. She has electricity and gas and intermittent computer and phone. She has a wind-up radio on which she receives the BBC! Her Nissan, rented from CMS, has air conditioning! The traffic in Mombasa is a law unto itself, with *matatus* (minibuses which collect passengers along the way and pull in and out at will) ruling the road. There are no traffic lights and little road maintenance so the roads are pitted and rutted; driving at night along unlit roads is extremely hazardous; there are many pedestrians and hand-drawn carts and stray goats wander across the road. Compared with Nigeria, Mombasa feels safe.

Meg has both Christian and non-Christian friends. We met her on Sunday at her church at the Missions to Seamen. Meg is a 'Friend of Fort Jesus', a massive fortification hewn out of solid rock by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century, and many activities are organised through this membership; she goes bird watching and to a Bible-study homegroup.

Each afternoon she would take us to a place of interest and we went with 2 of the students to the village of Rabai to the north-west of Mombasa. This was the village where the CMS missionary Johannes Ludwig Krapf settled in 1844 and built the first church 4 years later. The same year his wife, Rosine, and baby daughter died within a day of each other. It was 16 years before he had his first convert.

Another afternoon we visited a Rehabilitation Centre for the physically disabled at Bombolulu. Simple crafts were performed - one lady was painting cow bone beads with leaf stalks dipped in henna, another was cutting little figures from used drink cans to make brooches and tricycles were being produced operated through hand-pedals and a chain which moves the front wheel. We saw many tricycles in use along the roads nearby. Such a tricycle can transform the life of a disabled person.

We would return to our coconut-fringed Kenya hotel each evening with very different stories to exchange. We returned to England with a greater understanding of the commitment, dedication and sacrifice made by missionaries like Meg who give themselves wholeheartedly to the work of spreading the gospel overseas. Please remember her in your prayers and especially the decision she has to make soon about whether to stay on at Bishop Hannington or to prepare for her retirement in her home in South Wales.