

Home and Away Outreach

As most of you know our **Havilah** ministry has been running for just over eight years now and although we now employ two staff members, we operate mainly with a dedicated team of volunteers, twenty-two in total and a faithful group of volunteer soup makers beyond that.

At the beginning of September we found out that we had been nominated for The Queens Award for Voluntary Service (the nomination coming from Mr Andrew Welsh, retired MSP, and the lady Lord Lieutenant of Angus) for our service to our community. As you can imagine we are all delighted by this but also very humbled at the same time to be thought worthy of such an award. One of the items that was needed for the nomination was a letter from someone that had benefitted from Havilah. We asked John Wilson. This is what he had to say:

I would like to share my experience of the support I received at the Havilah Project in Arbroath in 2008 and continue to receive now some six years on. (Cont. on page 5)

As you know we recently had a **Malawi** feedback evening. For those of you who were unable to attend I will summarise and to keep the rest of you reading I will add some extra info!! There were 5 representatives out in Malawi over the summer, for a combined length of 5 months! We checked up on the centres, had interviews with each of the children and meetings with staff and local leaders.

Thyolo:

We found Thyolo as always in great form. We had an interview with each child in the centre and found out what issues each child is facing, what their dreams, hopes and ambitions are and how we can best support them. We took the boarding children on a school trip to a safari park. This was wonderful as it was amazing to see them so excited to see all the animals and enjoying themselves in such a beautiful part of their own country. Even Victoria and Stephen Moses, the house parents, were very excited to see these big animals for the first time and had dressed up for the occasion! (Cont. on page 7)

Linda Hunter

When Candace informed us that she'd be leaving Scotland to move to Paris to be nearer her family, our thoughts were these: firstly, that we were going to miss her greatly from around St. Andrew's Church and, secondly, who are we going to get to fill Candace's shoes in the church office!!



And so we began the recruitment process, placing an advert in The Courier

and, in due course, receiving applications. We received a decent number of these and, to our delight, there were several which looked possible and a few which looked like promising indeed. In the end, we selected four candidates for interview and from that process selected Mrs Linda Hunter to be our new Administrator.

We're absolutely delighted to have recruited Linda who, we believe, is a perfect fit for us. She is a bright and bubbly individual, enthusiastic and energetic, and since coming to St. Andrew's has thrown herself into the life of the congregation. But most importantly, she has exactly the right skill

set and her whole career has been in running offices and in administration in general. We're confident, therefore, that she will adapt to our environment very quickly and will help us to organise ourselves in such a way that we'll be able to focus on our mission without having to worry about 'keeping the back shop in order.'

From the time of Alison Davie, we've been richly blessed in terms of the people who have taken on staff jobs at St. Andrew's. We look forward to Linda beginning in mid-October and to joining our team that she might serve God in her career. Welcome, Linda!

Graham Kendrick & Tony Campolo

The next of our big Autumn dates is an evening with double-act, Graham Kendrick and Tony Campolo. Graham will, of course, be leading the worship and Tony will bring his electrifying preaching to challenge and inspire us. That these two giants of the Christian Church are appearing together - in our Church - leaves us pinching ourselves, suspecting that

we're dreaming! But sure enough, they will be on St. Andrew's Church on Friday 31st October, the evening beginning at 7.30pm.

By the time you're reading this, tickets will have gone on sale - through the church office and online at www.christiantickets.co.uk. If the London. Community Gospel Choir concert is anything to go by, you'll want to move fast to avoid disappointment. And for those of you who found the LCGC to be a little too loud for your liking, you'll certainly find this evening to be somewhat less so.

CHURCH OFFICE : 431135

ADMINISTRATOR

Candace Laing

Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri : 9 -12noon

MINISTER

Rev Dr W Martin Fair, BA, BD

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Rev Stuart Irvin, BD

SESSION CLERK

Jane Miller : 875235

TREASURER

Susan Godsall : 430862

FREEWILL ENVELOPES

Iain Robertson : 877519

CHURCH OFFICER

Janis Clark : 878594

PASTORAL CARE

Kim Marr : 430505

YOUTH WORK TEAM

Adele Ramsay : 07403 193 875

Sheila Dunphy : 873218

HAVILAH PROJECT

LEADER

Tracey McLeod : 434088

HAVILAH ADMINISTRATOR

Karen Reaney : 434088

ORGANIST

Jane Miller : 875235

FABRIC CONVENOR

Ray Reaney : 07803 235418

SUNDAY CLUB

Elaine Fair : 873238

SAFEGUARDING

Eleanor Mands : 01382 477318

FLOWER CONVENOR

Margaret McIntosh : 876993

PRAYER PROMOTERS

Judy Spink : 872395

Anne Matthew : 876008

SUPPLIES CO-ORDINATOR

Norma Beattie : 873442

BOOKINGS / ROLLKEEPER

Candace Laing : 431135

MAGAZINE EDITOR/CDs

Ken Miller : 875235

ST ANDREW'S ARBROATH

Parish Records

September 2014

Baptisms - None

Blessings - None

Weddings - None

Funerals - Evelyn Low, Ian Spink

Malawi Fundraisers

Please note we still recycle old mobiles, foreign coins and ink cartridges. We are now also able to recycle toner cartridges.

IMPORTANT DATES

NOVEMBER EDITION

Handwritten articles should be handed in to the **office** by the **first** date and **not** to the Editor.

Word Processed files, as attachments, can be sent **directly to the Editor** by the **second** date.

Please avoid embedding articles in an email as these then need additional formatting work.

Friday 17th October (Written/preferably typed)

Tuesday 21st October (Word-Processed file)

CDs of Services

These are available for any housebound members who are unable to attend either Sunday or Wednesday services. If interested, please contact Ken Miller.

For all other members, please note that the weekly sermons go on our website and are therefore accessible for those who may miss some due to being on holidays etc.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

Organisations will alert members when groups resume after holidays or when changes to venues are made.

SUNDAY

10.15 am – Gathering for prayer.

10.30 am – Choir practice.

11.00 am – Morning service (with short communion on the third Sunday of each month. Tea/coffee after. Creche – up to age 3. Infants – ages 3 to 5. Juniors – ages 8 and 9. Seniors – ages 10 and 11 Sunday Club – Elaine Fair (873238). Teen Scene – S1 to S2

7.30 to 9.00 pm – Youth Group

9.00 pm – Senior Youth Group

Monday to Friday - 11.00 am – Havilah : Drop-in Centre – Community Spirit (434088)

MONDAY

2.00 pm – Dorothy Dobson Over 50s Exercise Class

6.00 pm – Rainbow Guides – L Hadden (875379)

7.30 pm – St Andrew's Guild : Fortnightly – Shona Kemp (878526)

7.30 pm – Flower Club : Fortnightly – M McIntosh (876993)

TUESDAY

9.30 am – 3.00 pm - Mum and Me - K Marr (430505)

WEDNESDAY

10.30 am – Midweek Meeting Point – M Fair (873238)

6.15 pm – Brownies – Rosie Hill (07977 790528)

7.30 pm – Guides - Rosie Hill (07977 790528)

7.30 pm – Women's Group – first Wednesdays – Elaine Fair (873238)

THURSDAY

10.00 am – Parent and Toddler Group – L Clark (437758)

2.00 pm – Friends Club : first Thursdays – N Watson – B Gerrard, secretary (434821)

6.00 pm – Anchor Boys – S Jamieson (431942)

6.00 pm – BB Junior Section – W Ewart (876114)

7.30 pm – BB Company Section – M Clark (437758)

FRIDAY

9.30 am – Coffee morning

Intimations, changes of address, hall bookings etc., please contact the Church office, Monday to Friday, 9 am to noon and for 15 minutes after Sunday Service, telephone 431135.

Martin Fair

October 2014

Dear friends,

What's the point in Christian faith that doesn't connect with real life? What's the point in Christian faith that doesn't address the real issues that people face? The answer is that there's no point. Jesus was never 'other worldly'; his feet were very much on the ground and he met people where they were, regardless of where that was. And he met people at their point of greatest need. The woman caught in adultery, about to be stoned? Jesus met her in that moment. The leper, the blind man, the official whose daughter was dying, the tax collector, the prostitute AND EVERYONE ELSE - he met them where they were! That's why St. Andrew's Church involves itself in real life and seeks to connect with people in all walks of life, in every situation.

There's an area, however, that has been much neglected - by almost all churches - and it's the area of mental illness. We've been embarrassed, perhaps, to talk about it. There is still a considerable amount of stigma attached to those who suffer from poor mental health - and at times, precious little understanding or empathy. We know how to respond when someone is suffering from a physical illness. We're not nearly so sure what to do when the condition is mental.

I'm pleased to say that we're beginning to see some signs that things are changing. Recently, all secondary school chaplains were invited to a conference on health and well-being, the point of which was to further inform and prepare us for working in school and further education settings where mental health problems are in play. And they are - all too frequently. Suicides in Scotland, which mostly occur among young males, run way above the UK average and the suicide rate among people with a DD11 postcode continues to make clear that this - always tragic - problem is very prevalent on our doorstep.

With that in mind, our Nurture Core Group, which our Associate Minister, Stuart, leads, is putting on a conference which is being designed to raise awareness about the difficult subject of self-harm - an issue which mostly affects younger people. The evening is open to teachers and professionals but, most especially, it is for parents, grandparents and carers. Quite simply, none of us knows when we might find ourselves having to face this issue with someone we love. The evening is being run in conjunction with NHS Tayside, Angus Mental Health and the Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH.) All of these key agencies were delighted that the Church was getting involved and taking this initiative.

These things might be considered as 'first steps.' We can't say for sure where we'll end up but there's no denying that the problems caused by mental illness are real and that, at one time or another, almost every family will be affected in one way or another.

Please take some time after you've finished reading this article to pray for some people who suffer from mental illness and for our Church as we edge forward in developing a Christ-like, compassionate response to the issue here in Arbroath.

May God bless you all,

Martin and Elaine

martin.fair@sky.com

An Invitation To Invite

That sounds a bit of a confusing title - does it not? However, it captures something important for us in the church. It reminds us, and indeed urges us, to consider how we might be spurred on to invite people to 'come and see' for themselves. Primarily, in this season that we have committed to thinking more about Jesus, it reminds us of the invitation that Jesus makes and that, we of course, point to. Further though, there are lots of opportunities to invite folk to different events that are all a part of the special effort that we make to engender a welcoming community.

Perhaps you might be minded to invite someone along to a coffee morning, or offer to accompany them to the Kendrick and Campolo evening. Well, I would like to tell you about another event that is happening soon and I would encourage you to think particularly about someone that you might invite to it.

The Nurture Core Group is running the first of a series of 'Awareness Events' on Tuesday the 28th of October at 7:30 pm at Community Spirit. The event is going to aim to raise awareness about self-harm among young people, and we will be hearing from different local professionals who work in this field. We are aiming this event at parents, grandparents, carers, teachers and generally anyone who has contact with young people. Now, whilst I would extend an invite to you all, I would also urge you to think of folk who you know who would appreciate hearing more information on this delicate subject. A neighbour, a family member, a colleague; there are lots of people who, I am sure, would be keen to better understand how this can affect young people and how they can respond appropriately.

And so I make not only an invitation, but also encouragement, to think about who you might invite.

Your friend and Associate
Stuart Irvin

Ask Theophilus

Question :

When I asked the question about the word 'justification', I didn't realize that in the Bible this word was the same as 'righteous/righteousness'. You finished last time on an unhappy note: 'There are various points at which we all fail in one or another of our relationships. So not one of us is always, without fail, righteous!' Please, something now about 'justification' (my original question).

Theophilus answers :

Here is an illustration about justification. It's not a very good one and raises some questions, but it serves a purpose. Because in the Bible both 'righteousness' and 'justification' are very often used in a legal sense, my story is about a law court.

A judge has before him a convicted criminal. The young man of no fixed address, but self-evidently from a good home, has been in court several times. First for theft, then for drug-dealing, then for heavy debts. But now he has been found guilty of attempted bank robbery, using a replica

weapon. A most serious crime!

A custodial sentence of up to twelve years is possible. But the judge does have powers to impose a fine with retribution payments to the traumatized bank staff whose branch the foolish youth tried to rob. The court gasps as the judge imposes the heaviest fine and/or prison sentence, allowed by the law: £20,000 or twelve years in prison. Clearly, the bankrupt young man will be a long time behind bars!

But, having pronounced sentence, the judge removed his gown and wig, descended from his throne, approached the court clerk and handed over a cheque for £20,000. He then turned to the youth in the dock, stretched out his arms, and said, 'My son, your debt is paid, come home. Mother and I long to have you back with us again.'

The judge has righteously justified his errant son. That is, faithful to the law, he has paid the debt, and he has opened the way for the son to be restored to his family relationships. As Paul boldly declares—this is the scandal of the gospel—through Christ's sacrifice God 'justifies the ungodly' (Rom.4:5)

Malawi Fundraising

Recent Fundraisers:

Great Bake off - £488

September Soup Lunch – £230

Thanks to all who participated and contributed.

Next Malawi Fundraisers:

Friday 24th October at 7.30pm – Bingo Night

Sunday 9th November – Soup Lunch

Saturday 29th November: – 10am – 4pm – Christmas Fayre.

Sunday 14th December – Soup Lunch.

Please note we still recycle old mobiles, foreign coins and ink cartridges. We are now also able to recycle toner cartridges.

Also, has anyone any holdalls that they no longer use or need? Please let us know if you are willing to donate them to Malawi.

Guild

Well that's summer over but didn't we have fun ladies! In June we had our bus trip to the People's Palace and Winter Gardens in Glasgow. In July, the energetic amongst our members had a lovely walk around St.Vigeans Nature Trail and in August we had a tasty "Chippie Tea" in the Church Halls. Summer weather was really good this year and I hope you all managed to come to one or all of our outings.

Now we are back to our fortnightly meetings which began on 15th September with our Communion and Dedication Service. On the 29th September there was an interesting talk on the work of Street Pastors.

INVITATION: It is never too late to join the Guild!! Although we have had our September meetings we would be pleased to welcome new members and any ladies who

have been members and lost the habit of coming. Please come along to our meetings - we would make you very welcome. Meetings are fortnightly on Monday nights at 7.30 pm.

October Dates: 13th October - Theme Night – A World to Serve

27th October - Demonstration on handbag making (Is it too early for Christmas Shopping? I think there will be an opportunity to buy.)

We are looking forward to another year in the Guild when we hope we will learn more about the Bible and the work of the Guild Movement throughout the world. Hopefully having fun and fellowship along the way.

Always remembering our Guild Motto - "*Whose we are and whom we serve.*"

Ruth Morrison and Fiona Bullock

Those of us at St. Andrew's are never happier than when we see one or other of the people who did part of their training for ministry with us going on to fulfil their calling. Well here we have with two reasons to be cheerful; Ruth Morrison (formerly Bell) has been inducted to the charge of

Abbotsford linked with Duntocher in Clydebank and Fiona Bullock (formerly Brown) has been elected to serve as minister of Hillside and Dun right here in Angus - her ordination and induction is to follow in a few weeks time.

We rejoice with Ruth and Steven, Fiona and Ian, and we wish both couples much blessing as they step into ministry in their own right.

Havilah - continued from front page

I would like to share my experience of the support I received at the Havilah Project in Arbroath in 2008 and continue to receive now some six years on.

For many years my life was in a mess due to drug addiction and I had given up hope. Not only that, my family, friends and society had given up on me. I found myself in a very dark, lonely place trying to work out what life was all about and where I had gone wrong to end up in the place I was in. Due to my drug addiction I ended up in prison several times, sleeping on streets and at one point eating out of bins. I had reached the lowest point a man possibly could get to. I was left feeling suicidal. One day in 2008 after being released from prison I was told about the Havilah Project. I heard that it was a place you could go to for some food and support and that it was run by Christians. I remember the day as if it was yesterday, when I took the first step into that Project. I was met by a man who showed me nothing but love and care. He never judged me for looking like death warmed up or smelling a bit and didn't look at me like I was an outcast due to my life problems.

That day was the start of something special. The volunteers started speaking to me, loving me and offering help and a solution to my situation. To be honest I was overwhelmed at the support they gave me. The staff started walking step by step with me on a journey that was going to be difficult for us all as I wasn't the easiest guy to work with, but the one thing that stuck out to me was that no matter how hard I tried to run or give up, the volunteers at Havilah never gave up on me. They were always there supporting me, phoning me to encourage me, helping make sure I made it to appointments. They became like a family to me. The team at Havilah got me away to residential rehab at Christmas 2008 and although I was out of sight I was never out of the minds of the volunteers. They would come and visit me, they would make sure I had everything I needed and give me phone calls to continue encouraging me. I remember a time I decided to leave rehab and I ended up living back on the streets of Edinburgh, begging and living in horrendous conditions, I was tracked down by Jim and Tracey, the leaders of the Project. They had travelled

all the way down to find me just to say they had not given up hope in me and were going to help me get my life sorted out no matter how long it took. That act of commitment will always stick with me for the rest of my life.

The Havilah volunteers not only helped and supported me in my recovery but they then started engaging with my family to help restore the broken relationships with them and myself and offering them help and support in their time of difficulty as they watched their son basically kill himself on drugs.

After the visit of Jim and Tracey I did go back to rehab and I finally completed that programme in 2010. Since then I have remained drug free and have done some amazing things in my life. I have travelled to the Czech Republic, Montenegro and Sierra Leone on mission trips working with drug addicts, the homeless and refugees. I am currently working as the Assistant Manager for a homeless organisation, working with ex offenders, people stuck in addiction and the homeless. I head up a prison ministry going into prisons offering people the same help and support I received from the Havilah staff and I also head up a homeless feeding programme in my local church similar to what Havilah does.

I am looking forward to getting married at the start of November 2014 to an amazing woman and Jim, the guy who met me at the front door of Havilah in 2008 is my best man.

To this day the Havilah staff continue to help and support me, they have become the best friends I could ever ask for. Without the help and support I received from the Havilah Project I have no doubt in my mind I would have ended up dead living the way I was, but that one act of kindness, love and acceptance for who I was made me realise what life was all about and gave me the hope I had been looking for. They helped me become the man I am today and for that I will be forever grateful.

In my eyes the work that the Havilah Project does in the small town of Arbroath is life saving, not only to the individuals they come into contact with but the service user's families too.

John Wilson

Friends Club

Our Committee for this year is:

President – Noela Watson

Vice President – Maureen Broomfield

Secretary – Beatrice Gerrard 01241 434821

Treasurer – Isobel Mitchell

We had our first meeting of the session with speaker Mo Morrison who took us on a tour of Arbroath. The tour included shops that were on the High Street, dance halls that are no longer there, the harbour when it was full of fishing boats and the fish were sold there, and the different parks. A vote of thanks was given by Beatrice Gerrard.

Our next meeting is at 2 pm on the 2nd of October.

By Royal Appointment!

In the early springtime, Martin, our minister, received a letter enquiring whether or not he'd be available to preach in Crathie Kirk at the end of September. Crathie Kirk is, of course, no ordinary Church; it's where the Queen and members of the Royal Family worship during the months of

August and September when they're in Scotland, staying at Balmoral.

And so it came to pass that OUR MINISTER preached at Crathie on the 28th September, with the Queen present in the congregation. With the weekend spent 'in residence' in Balmoral Castle, it was, for him, an experience never to be forgotten.

Clerk's Corner

Core Groups

The final Core Group to have its members named in Quest is the **Nurture** Core Group:

Core Group Leader – Stuart Irvin
 Leadership Group link member – Pat Mill
 Ministry Team Link member – Sheila Dunphy
 Kirk Session member – Mairi Duncan
 Congregation members – Karen Gammie, Sharon Hamilton, Eleanor Mands and Gaynor Scott.

Included in the remit is the overseeing of the adult education needs of the congregation, support for the Home Groups, ensuring that all Safeguarding requirements are met, visiting organisations, and supporting opportunities for prayer.

The visit of the Scottish Cabinet to St Andrew's

A letter has been received from the First Minister's Office thanking all those who were involved in the arrangements for this event. This included the catering and stewarding teams and all those involved in other aspects of the organisation.

The whole visit was a challenging one

London Community Gospel Choir

With all tickets sold out a week in advance, it really was a case of putting the 'house full' signs up outside the Church on the evening of the concert by the London Community Gospel Choir! And what an occasion it was! Yes, they were somewhat on the 'loud' side for some people but what energy and passion in their performance.

The tour bus carrying musicians and singers arrived at 9.30 in the morning and the various LCGC members were then whisked away to get showered and refreshed after a night of travelling. They were back in time for lunch at which point Doris and her team served them soup and chicken salad along with some freshly cooked smokies - which they eagerly devoured!

The afternoon was spent rehearsing etc. and then following an equally sumptuous tea, everything was set for the concert. In emails that have followed since the concert, the choir have stated time and again how bowled over they were by the friendliness and quality of hospitality that they received! Well done to all our volunteers!

The doors were opened at 7pm by which time a large crowd had already gathered outside and by 7.20pm, still 25mins ahead of the start time, stewards were working hard to get people seated in the few places that remained. And then the music started - the singers backed by a four-piece band. They sang a mix of contemporary and traditional gospel classics and, throughout the whole concert, moved

because of the particular arrangements which needed to be put in place and the building was buzzing from early morning until very late at night.

We have received a Quiaich to acknowledge the thanks.

Recycling materials.

Thank you all for your faithful response to requests for particular items. However, we do have a problem with this! Some of you are bringing in things that you think we might need, as opposed to things we have requested! We just do not have the storage to deal with this so here is what we would ask you to do:

Only computer cartridges, postcards, wool, stamps, toiletries and books on religious topics can be left in the marked cupboard in the small halls.

When we have requests for other items then, in the past, there have been boxes in the vestibule. Unfortunately, these have been quite numerous recently and require to be moved every time we have, for example, an event or a funeral. To solve this problem, marked boxes are now located in the stairwell. Currently this is where you would put food donations for the Food Parcel Project and the vitamins for Malawi.

and swayed and danced in time to the music. Their passionate faith and love of the music was evident from start to finish and by the end of the night even we reserved and canny Scots were tapping our feet and dancing in response.

While those who are used to rock concerts and such like were un-fazed by the volume - and loved the power of the music - others found it harder to cope with the the level of the sound and would have preferred things to be a little less ear-blasting. Hopefully, though, everyone got a flavour of what the

London Community Gospel Choir is all about and gained something of an appreciation for the gospel genre.

As we watched the crowds flooding into the church, and as we remembered the church being full for the recent Scottish Government event, we found ourselves longing for the day when Sunday worship will be greeted with the same kind of response!! These are hugely interesting times that we're living in. We watch keenly to see what God is doing.

LOOKING AHEAD

OCTOBER

Sunday 5
 9.30 am - Traditional Service
 11 am - Worship Service
 6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 12
 11 am - Worship Service
 4 pm - **SWEATY CHURCH**
 6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 19
 11 am - Worship Service; with Holy Communion
 6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 26
 11 am - Worship Service
 4 pm - **MESSY CHURCH**
 6.30 pm - Evening Worship

NOVEMBER

Sunday 2
 9.30 am - Traditional Service
 11 am - Worship Service; featuring prayers for the Persecuted Church
 6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 9
 10.50 am - Worship Service: beginning with Act of Remembrance
 4 pm - **SWEATY CHURCH**
 6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 16
 11 am - Worship Service
 6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 23
 11 am - Worship Service; with members from the Guild, marking National Guild Week
 6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 30
 11 am - Worship Service; with all-age Communion to mark the beginning of Advent
 4 pm - **MESSY CHURCH**
 6.30 pm - Evening Worship

N.B. As well as the services above there is the following:

A 40 minute service every Wednesday morning at 10.30 am.

Malawi - continued from front page

We also played games with the children, taking them out a parachute and teaching them all sorts of games to play with it. A specific inter-Aquaid sports tournament was held but unfortunately the older Aquaid boarders at the main centre beat our young Thyolo boarders. The Thyolo crew really enjoyed themselves though and they were especially excited to try ice cream for the first time on their way home.

A meeting was held with all the staff, where all the happenings at the centre were discussed. These highlighted some issues and many great ideas were brought forward to the table. We are so lucky with the team of dedicated staff we have both at Thyolo and Kambilonjo - people who really care for our children and love them as their own children. We realised that we also need to support the staff as, although they are making a good living by Malawian standards, they are still very poor and a long way from the standard of living that we ourselves enjoy. We were able to chat to them and show our appreciation of their hard work.

Going forward at Thyolo we plan to build some staff accommodation so that our staff can be properly housed in decent housing. This will take time so we are looking at other short-term ways of giving them decent housing in the meantime. We are also looking to further the work of our extra classroom, which is currently being used for tutoring in the mornings and extra lessons in the afternoons. We have also arranged for vocational training in carpentry, tinsmith, sewing and knitting to be undertaken.

Kambilonjo:

At Kambilonjo we have seen major improvements in the last year since the introduction of our new house parents Charles and Memory Lundu. This couple have been incredible. They are very loving with the children, yet bring them good discipline and the house functions like clockwork with all the children being very happy. The children are given the best medical care, especially as some of the boarders have extra medical needs. Furthermore, they have managed to get the whole community on board and now the guardians and families from around are helping in the gardens which has allowed us to plant and harvest a bumper crop, far more than the requirements of the centre. This will allow us to give much of this maize back as relief to the surrounding villagers, many of whom are very poor themselves.

Here we also met individually with the children and took them on a safari trip (involving a raging elephant which scared the life out of the children and monkeys who were stealing the picnic!) Many of these children had never been out of their village before so to travel to see elephants, hippos, crocodiles, monkeys and many many antelopes was very exciting for them - they didn't sleep the whole night before!

At Kambilonjo we were more involved in the letter writing to all the sponsors (most of these children's English is much poorer as the standard of education here is low- so the

letters were written and then translated for your benefit!). I was involved in the translating of one letter which described the young girl's joy at her parcel. She thanked her sponsor for making her feel important and for bringing her up in the world. She noted that she couldn't believe how lucky she had been- she had received a hat, Frisbee, pens, stickers AND sweets! Her sponsor must really love her! This girl is new to the centre and the sponsorship programme is also in its infancy at Kamibilonjo. This just shows the incredible gratitude of the children for everything that you are doing for them! It was a privilege to witness it! Thank-you!

Again we met with the staff and identified many difficulties that our staff face daily and have addressed these. We also noted that there was an extreme lack of healthcare in the area with the nearest clinic a full 2 hour walk away, and this clinic is private and very expensive (one villager had to sell all his pigs to get his wife out of the hospital after a difficult birth). We therefore met with local chiefs to discuss plans for a healthcare clinic, with the thought that we would fund the building and running of this, with children not paying for the service and adults paying a minor charge (to cover the cost of any medication they use) in order to make it as sustainable as possible. This is a major undertaking as clinics and medicine are so expensive and difficult to run in Malawi, but one that is badly needed in the area. The local chiefs have agreed to supply half of the bricks needed for this endeavour, free of charge and will supply the workers required to construct the clinic. We have also arranged a land swap and bought the land next to the centre where we will be able to build this clinic.

Going forward at Kambilonjo, we will be constructing and beginning a clinic next to our centre with hopefully a progression involving an ambulance service to the nearest hospital which is just over an hour's drive away on a very bumpy road. We have also planned the building of a second classroom, much like at Thyolo where the older students can go for peaceful studying and further lessons. This will also include a library and a teacher's office. We are also planning on building a workshop for vocational training with teachers coming in to teach skills both to our students and the surrounding villagers as the drop-out rate from school is very high and the education level is extremely low.

At both centres we also have tutors who are previous students who have finished their secondary school education and are awaiting their results and the chance to go onto further study. We have sent a young person each year for the last 2 years to each centre to help with one to one tuition and also give them some useful employment while they await their results.

This year we have sent a further 2 to each centre. One of those posted to Kambilonjo is my sponsor child Jean Maluwa who I have supported since she was at Primary School. I am so proud of her to have achieved so much and worked so hard and hopefully she will have done well enough in her exams to pursue her career in Accountancy! There's a testament to the work of the St Andrew's Church sponsorship scheme!

Below : Our Harvest Thanksgiving Service was enriched by the beautiful displays from the Flower Club ladies.



Below : Sweaty Church is back in full swing with Stuart leading some vigorous exercising and Martin playing cricket.

Above : The LGCC enjoy a relaxing moment with some of our members after the concert

