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Please get your contributions for the June magazine to the editor by Friday 20<sup>th</sup> May.

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## **SIT. VAC.**

Could **you** be part of our editorial team?

Could **you** work with Becky, AND her Dad? Really?

Wow, you must be somebody special!

Contact us ASAP on **816590.**

*Calls charged at standard rates.*

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## Congratulations

*A little bird told us that a number of the ladies in our church are reaching, a ‘certain’ age this year.  
Best wishes to you all - we won’t tell if you don’t!*

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## **Christ Church on the Internet**

Visit our website at [www.lichfield.anglican.org/stoke/stone/stoneecc](http://www.lichfield.anglican.org/stoke/stone/stoneecc)

E-mail the Parish Office at [christchurchcentre@pgen.net](mailto:christchurchcentre@pgen.net)

Send your contributions for this magazine to [christchurch\\_mag@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:christchurch_mag@yahoo.co.uk)

Su	1	<b>Easter 6</b>	
		9.15 am	<b>Parish Communion</b> <b>Sermon Text: Romans 12:5 "Fellowship"</b>
		6.00 pm	<b>Evening Prayer at St John's, Oulton</b> <b>Sermon Text: Mark 1:1 - 13 "The Son of God"</b>
Mo	2	9.00 am	Prayer Group in Christ Church to pray for children and young people
Tu	3	11.00 am	Churches Together in Stone meeting
		7.30 pm	Archdeacon's Visitation at Barlaston
We	4	2.00 pm	Mothers' Union – Speaker: Mrs Shepherd "Angels" Joint meeting with Tittensor M.U. in the Centre
			<b>Ascension Day</b>
Th	5	10.30 am	<b>Special Ascension Day Holy Communion in church</b>
		1.20 pm	Christ Church First School Assembly
		7.30 pm	Ascension Day Communion Service at St Nicholas, Fulford
Fr	6	7.00 pm	Rock Café for young people
Su	8	<b>Easter 7</b>	
		9.15 am	<b>Morning Prayer</b> <b>Sermon Text: Philippians 2:5 "Discipleship"</b>
		6.00 pm	<b>Parish Communion at St John's, Oulton</b> <b>Sermon Text: Mark 1:14 - 28 "His authority"</b>
Mo	9	9.00 am	Prayer Group in Christ Church to pray for children and young people
		1.10 pm	Assembly at Alleyne's Yr 9
We	11	10.00 am	Assembly at Oulton First School
		7.45 pm	Readers' Meeting in the Centre
Th	12	10.30 am	Holy Communion in church
		11.30 am	Holy Communion at St Mary's Home
Fr	13	7.00 pm	Rock Café for young people
Sa	14	9.30 am onwards	Interviews for candidates for Youth Worker
		7.00 pm	Meal at Oulton Village Hall to meet Youth Worker candidates
Su	15	<b>Pentecost</b>	
		9.15 am	<b>Parish Communion</b> <b>Sermon Text: Colossians 4:5 "Evangelism"</b>
		6.00 pm	<b>Evening Prayer at St John's, Oulton</b> <b>Sermon Text: Mark 1:29 - 45 "His mission"</b>

- Mo 16 9.00 am Prayer Group in Christ Church to pray for children and young people  
 1.10 pm Assembly at Alleynes Yr 11
- Tu 17 10.00 am Causeway Prospects
- We 18 10.00 am Men's Fellowship – Boules Competition  
 12.00 midday – 2.00 pm Chapter Meeting  
 7.45 pm – 9.45 pm Marriage Preparation in the Centre
- Th 19 1.20 pm Assembly at Christ Church Middle School
- Fr 20 7.00 pm Rock Café for young people
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- Su 22 **Trinity**  
 9.15 am **Family Service + Baptism of Josie Watson**  
**Sermon text: 1 Peter 4:10 - 11 "Ministry"**  
 6.00 pm **Parish Communion at St John's, Oulton**  
**Sermon Text: Mark 2:1 - 17 "His forgiveness"**
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- We 25 9.10 am Oulton First School Assembly  
 7.30 pm Standing Committee
- Th 26 10.30 am Holy Communion in church  
 11.30 am Holy Communion at St Mary's Home  
 1.20 pm Assembly at Christ Church Middle School
- Fr 27 7.00 pm Rock Café for young people
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- Su 29 **Trinity 1**  
 9.15 am **Morning Prayer**  
**Sermon Text: Judges 2:6 - 3:6 "The rebellious"**  
 6.00 pm **Churches Together in Stone service, at Christ Church:**
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The following Activities take place every week in the centre during school term time:

<b>Monday Toddlers</b>	<b>9.30 am</b>
<b>Friday Little Fishes</b>	<b>11.00 am</b>

Activities for children and young people take place in the centre during the Sunday morning service each Sunday (except on the fourth Sunday of the month, which is family service):

**Climbers 3-7 years**  
**Explorers 7-11 years**  
**Pathfinders 11-14 years**

All children are welcome

# Wise Words...

## Let's pray for our national leaders.

The media is in full swing to analyse the various political options that lay before us. The General Election gives the electorate the opportunity to have their say and so be represented for the future government. Christians will differ as to which party should be supported, but equally convinced, I hope, that Christian faith should shape public life and not simply private life.

Although there is a degree of apathy about elections nationally, it still remains a key aspect of our democratic system to be able to influence the outcome through voting. But marking a box in the poll station booth is only the beginning of our responsibility.

The apostle Paul encourages us to pray: *'I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness'* (1 Tim 2v1-2). Such Bible passages have meant that churches regularly pray for their leaders. This is so important when we hear the news of a natural disaster affecting a nation, or an economic disaster such as the announced closure of the Longbridge plant, which will shape the lives of thousands. Although we feel powerless to change anything we speak to the Lord who can direct the course of history. It is a great blessing when leaders rule in a benevolent manner.

Yet this instruction has greater significance than we sometimes acknowledge. For it is based on the conviction that God is the ultimate authority over all powers and authorities. As the true Sovereign He directs the course of governments and rulers in order to fulfil His eternal plan: *'This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Jesus Christ, who gave himself as a ransom for all men'* (v3-6). Christians should pray for those in authority (whether or not they represent their political views) asking that God's greater purposes will be furthered. So, let's pray for our leaders.



Paul Kingman

## Christ Church First School News

**I**mmediately the children returned, they began a different timetable of lessons on Monday afternoon. We have introduced a greater diversity within our music lessons and Key Stage 2 children are beginning a course of French lessons. Judging by their reactions, this is proving to be very successful!

*Following our Easter Extravaganza, which closed the Spring Term, the children have returned refreshed and ready to begin the Summer term with all the excitement which it brings.*

Another "fixture" for Key Stage 2 children this month is The Stafford Borough Hockey Festival which we have been invited to take part in. This is a knockout tournament where the matches will be played throughout the day. We are fielding 2 teams of 7 children—Christ Church Camels and Christ Church Cats. We wish them every success!

Year 4 are also taking part in a Technology Day, which has become an annual event at Alleynes High School. All feeder First Schools are invited to share a day of challenges and problem solving activities. With an emphasis on teamwork, the children soon overcome initial reservations, sharing ideas and making new friends—helped in no small way with orange juice and biscuits!

Our Choir children are again out representing our School. This time it is at the annual Pyramid RE Fest which is held at Walton Middle School. Children from several First Schools and our 2 Middle Schools meet to share a celebration of music, dance and poetry—and again the sharing of food and drink.

This year, our theme is taken from Ecclesiastes Chapter 3 - "to everything there is a season". We are singing a song which interprets this passage of Scripture beautifully, simply called "A time for everything". Our final song is an arrangement of "The Circle of Life" by Elton John and Andrew Lloyd Webber. We are putting our own interpretation on this song—the children have some movement choreographed at the same time as they are singing. They are working hard as always to give a polished and powerful presentation.

Lastly this month, our youngest children-Reception and Year 1-are visiting Kibblestone to share "Bluebell Day" with other small First Schools. This is an event which is organized by The Small schools'

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Network, which we have recently joined. Both staff and children are eagerly awaiting this and are hoping for a sunny day to enjoy the beautiful countryside together.

We are very fortunate within the Stone Schools' Pyramid, to share so many activities together where the children can meet others from different schools and experience working together and celebrating each others' efforts. Many of the children who meet for the first time at these events will forge friendships which will last throughout their schooldays.

*Janet Booth* - RE co-ordinator.



## Plant Sale

Jack and Barbara Sutcliffe will be holding their annual plant sale on **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May**.

This will be held at their house:

**32 Redwood Avenue, Stone.**

Tel 818087

**10.00 am to 4.00 pm**

As before, plants for beds, borders, tubs and baskets will be for sale. The proceeds will be split 50/50 between the Clifford Project and the Youth Ministry at Christ Church.

We look forward to seeing you! (If you cannot make the day, just give us a ring and we'll arrange something accordingly.)



## Christian Aid Week, 15 - 21 May

### Making poverty history: the trade justice campaign

The UK government is committed to making 2005 a year when poverty is on the international agenda. To tackle poverty it must address the injustices in world trade. Christian Aid Week this year asks churches to call for trade justice.

Louisa Elias Mahahale works on a sugar plantation in Mozambique, earning enough to feed her family. Her job is one of thousands that have been created since the Mozambique government helped its sugar industry by attracting investment to it. It set the price for imported sugar, most of which comes from rich countries where it is subsidised. This set price means that the locally produced sugar is able to compete with imports

But Mozambique is an exception. Other poor countries are prevented from helping vulnerable industries and farmers.

For example, in Ghana, thousands of farmers have been forced to give up farming because they are no longer able to make a living selling their produce. In exchange for loans, Ghana was forced to open up its markets to international trade and take away the government help given to farmers.

This is the same for other poor countries across the world. The result is that millions of people now face an uncertain future as they lose the means to make a living.

Free trade means that governments may not interfere in the market place, and all traders - from rich and poor countries alike - must face each other in open competition. This gives the poorest no chance. To begin to make a decent living for their families they need some help from their government to support their industries - that is they need trade justice, not free trade.

This is why Christian Aid is campaigning for trade justice, not free trade. The campaign is informed by the biblical vision of a just world where the needs of the poorest people are met. To compete in today's global marketplace poor farmers and traders need special help from their governments until they are strong enough to manage without it.

**Please look out for the collectors' packs in church on the Sundays before Christian Aid week, or 'phone Phil Tunstall on 817028.**

**Christian Aid**  
We believe in life before death

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## This is how your donation can make a difference:

£5

buys five chickens, helping to restore a family's livelihood in Mozambique.

£6

maintains one girl at the Bridge School in India for a month, giving her a chance of education that otherwise would not be available.

£66

will pay for the internet connection for a computer school for children orphaned by HIV/AIDS in the Democratic Republic of Congo. £11 will buy the network card to access the internet, so students can train in computer programming.

£112

buys a water tank for a Peruvian village. This means that the villagers can get water without having to walk to the nearest stream which could be over 2 km away.

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Holy Spirit of God,  
light a flame within me, burning for justice,  
glowing with kindness,  
shining with hope  
for the end of poverty  
and the peace of all people  
in this ever-turning world. Amen.



Prayer from Christian Aid partner the Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Awareness, reproduced in *Pocket Prayers for Peace and Justice* (Church House Publishing, 2004),



## Thank You

**The Flower Guild** would like to thank everyone who donated to the cost of the Easter flowers. It was much appreciated.

**Marylyn**



# Vestry & Annual Parochial Church Meetings

The Vestry Meeting and APCM were held in the Church Centre on Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> April 2005 at 7.30pm. The meeting took the form of a business meeting, followed by a bring and share meal together, after which there was a time of worship and prayer. 32 people attended.

**At the Vestry Meeting**, Barry Hutchinson and Phil Tunstall were elected as **Churchwardens** for the coming year, and Jeremy Cooper, Arthur Foulkes and Shirley Hallam were elected as **Deputy Wardens** - also for one year.

At the **APCM**, we received **reports** from

- Cecilia Wilding on the past year in the church. :
- Kevin Reynolds on the financial year in the church when we remained in credit at the end of 2004 albeit with a reduced bank balance due to major work on the central heating boilers and the redecoration of the Centre.
- Barry Hutchinson on behalf of the Churchwardens.
- Irene Gassor on the Electoral Roll – we have added ten new people to the roll but three have died, bringing the number on the Roll at April 2005 to 173.
- Shirley Hallam for the Stone Deanery.

The annual reports submitted by the Vicar and various church groups are included in a green booklet, copies of which are on the book-racks in the Centre and the back of church.

**PCC Members:** Libby Cooper, Irene Gassor, Tony Lockett, Liz Mason and Dorothy Wilson were all elected to serve for the next three years.

**Deanery Synod Representatives:** Sue Cooper, Shirley Hallam and Ian Hawley were elected for the next three years.

The Vicar concluded the meeting by referring to the work on Mission Action Plans, which will form a major part of the new PCC's work. The formal meeting closed with prayer at 8.15pm.

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## Twelve Months in the life of our church

*This has been our Vicar Paul's first full year with us, and it is encouraging to realise just how much has happened*

Last April we started the new pattern of services which, as promised, we are now reviewing. We joined other churches in Stone for the Christian Aid Collection in May, and for a marquee service at the cricket ground. In June we hosted a production of the Roger Jones musical, 'Wildfire', the story of Stephen, the first Christian martyr. Some of our own church family took part in this moving and challenging performance.

In July a group from the Benefice attended a 'Lost for Words' training day, run by CPAS at Christ Church. This is a course to help us to share our faith simply. Since then we have run the children's course, and plan to run another one soon. In a move to improve efficiency, the PCC set up Task Groups to deal with major aspects of business. At the end of July, a group went to the Keswick Convention, and found it a challenging and uplifting experience.

### Young Church

Children and young people have been a focus of our attention. 'Seaside Rock', the children's holiday club, was the big event of August - thanks to Becky Cooper and the team. Around 60 children attended each afternoon, many from non-church backgrounds. Many also came with their families to the follow up service. Other special children's events were the Lightning Party in October and the Christingle Service. Our Sunday Schools have run throughout the year, thanks to Estella Woodhead and all the leaders for their hard work. The Monday parent and toddler group is thriving under the leadership of Sandra Morray, and the Friday 'Little Fishes' group is growing under joint leadership with Stone Baptist Church.

In line with current concerns about child protection, the PCC have adopted the House of Bishop's child protection policy. Wendy Hallam, our Child Protection Coordinator, has been doing a tremendous job in helping all those involved to obtain CRB clearance.

There have been encouraging developments with work in our schools. Paul and Libby Cooper are now going into Christ Church First and Middle Schools and Alleyne's High School to take assemblies. Schools

have been in the church for services for leavers and at Harvest, Christmas and Easter. With the help and support of North Staffs Youth For Christ we are looking to employ a full time youth outreach worker for the Benefice. (See page 8 for latest news).

### **Outreach**

September saw an outreach to the Whitebridge Manor Estate, under the leadership of Ian Hawley. The team visited each home offering 'The Jesus Magazine', which some 20% of those visited accepted. A further phase of the project started in April. John & Jan Butterworth ran 'Christianity Explored' in their home from October to Lent. There were around nine regular attenders who enjoyed the teaching and fellowship. Six of our church members were confirmed at a service in Christ Church in October.

In November we started to record the readings, sermon and prayers in Morning Services for the benefit of those unable to be present. Also in November the Pastoral Care Group organised a Bereavement Service which was well attended and very much appreciated.

### **Events and activities**

Christ Church joined with Churches Together in Stone to sing carols in the High Street, in events during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January, and in the Good Friday procession of witness.

In January the Rock Café was opened in the Centre each Friday evening as a 'drop in' facility for teenagers. Also in January the Pathfinders had their very successful 'sale and brunch', and are to be congratulated for raising over £300 towards the Tsunami Appeal.

This year's Lent Course used J John's series on the Ten Commandments. The videos were shown on Sunday and Wednesday evenings, followed by discussion. They were challenging and thought-provoking.

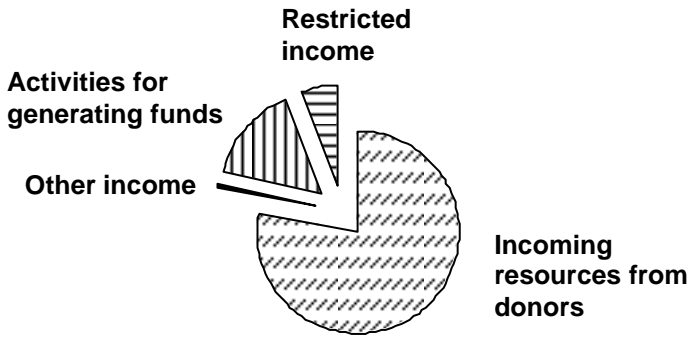
It is encouraging to look back at all that God has done among us in the past year, and to be able to look forward to a year with Him as our Leader and Guide.

**Cecilia Wilding**  
PCC Secretary

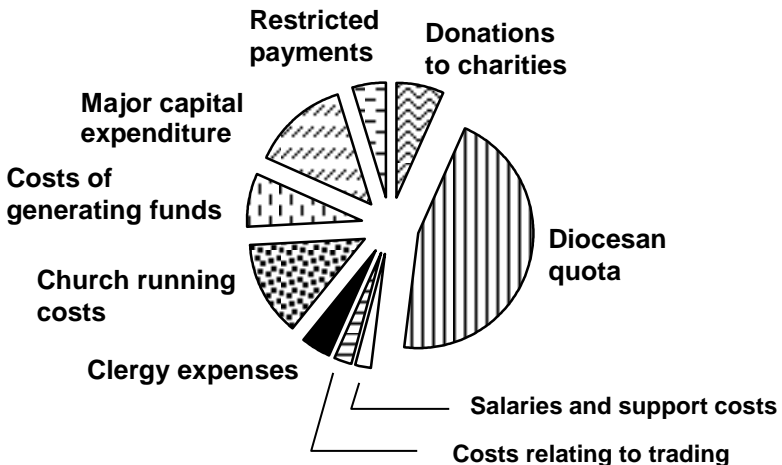
# Money Matters

The Annual Parish Meeting is the place where we review our financial position. The charts below summarise the main points.

## 2004 Total income: £ 65,999.84



## 2004 Total expenditure: £ 77,454.63



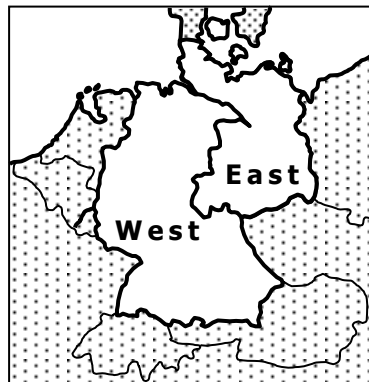
You will see that we spent just over £11,000 more than we received in 2004. That was due to major capital projects - new boilers for the church heating and refurbishment of the Centre. As a result we have significantly reduced our reserves, but that is not a problem, that's what we hold reserves for.

So the overall picture is quite healthy, and the initial indications for 2005 show that we have a continuing level of income to meet our needs. However, there is plenty of work to be done in our Parish, and we need to be able to fund the resources to do it properly. So thank you for all your contributions to date, and for the ones that you are still going to make!

If you would like more details about the accounts, contact our treasurer, Kevin Reynolds (to whom we are very grateful for all the work that he puts in).

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## **Mission discovery trip to Former East Germany (FEG)**



I would like to thank all those of you who contributed to my costs, enabling me to take part in this visit. I had a splendid time, and came home more convinced that this is where God would like me to serve in the future. I also met some extremely brave people and enjoyed wonderful fellowship throughout the trip.

We left on 31<sup>st</sup> March, flying to Lübeck, then visiting a local church for supper. The pastor, Lutz, told us how his church has grown from 13 people to 130 plus in only 10 years! Unfortunately we didn't get to meet any of his congregation, but we saw

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pictures of all of them. We then drove to our hotel just outside Rostock.

April 1<sup>st</sup> saw us driving to Rostock for a boat trip to Warnemünde, before visiting some of the residential centres in and around Warnemünde. The original town of Warnemünde is very pretty, but under the communist regime many ugly apartment blocks were built around the centre. This is one of the areas where ECM would like to plant a church. WE met one of the local residents and spoke briefly to her, then had a short prayer time. The evening was spent in fellowship at the hotel

On the Saturday we went to Rostock to the Freie evangelische Gemeinde (FeG) church there. Michael, the pastor told of his time under the communist regime and how difficult it had been for him. His testimony was very moving. After that we were shown around Rostock by one of the congregation, Ernst. He was a very interesting and informative guide. In the afternoon, back at the hotel, we met a pastor and a young girl from Barth, an area where a church has already been planted.

On Saturday evening we met Sylvia and her husband, members of the church in Schwerin, and Sylvia told us of her time in FEG. Again this was a moving and miraculous testimony.

Our last day was spent travelling to Schwerin for a service in Sylvia's church. Schwerin is idyllically situated, with 5 lakes around it, and after a lively service and a very pleasant lunch courtesy of the church members, we went for a short walk around the castle and its grounds, and saw two of the lakes before returning to the church for coffee and cake. After that it was sadly time to depart for the homeward flight.

It was a very packed trip and if anyone would like to hear more and see some of my photos, I will try to arrange a suitable time.

Thanks again to all who contributed.

**Lol**

## HEADLINES

Charles and Camilla finally got hitched,  
And will Tony stay or will he be ditched?

Everything's changing, but God stays the same,  
He knows what will happen, he's ahead with the game.

The Vatican will have a new pope in session,  
He'll be at St. Peters to give his first blessing.

Everything's changing, but God stays the same,  
He knows what will happen, he's ahead with the game.

Chelsea might win for the first time in ages,  
Jose works hard to earn those high wages.

Everything's changing, but God stays the same,  
He knows what will happen, he's ahead with the game.

It's not like the old days, we're in a new age,  
But God will stay with us when we turn a new page.

**Mim Bell**

## Youth Worker Update

**T**he pledges of financial support received so far have met our initial target. So we have been able to go ahead with advertising for the post, and we will be conducting interviews this month, with a view to making an appointment for September.

If we make an appointment, it will initially be for 3 years, and we will still need to raise further funds for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years. Listen out for further announcements, and watch the display boards in church, which will be updated as we go along.

# Who are those missionaries...?

## Hebron School . . . an introduction

Hebron School is an independent, international, Christian, residential school. It is in the town of Ootacamund (Ooty), which is known as 'The Queen of the Hill Stations' in the Nilgiri Hills in Tamil Nadu, South India. It is situated at 2200m (7500 ft) above sea level. The town dates back over 200 years to when the British chose it as the summer seat of the Madras government. Because of its temperate climate.

The current enrolment of 371 students consists of 175 girls and 196 boys (282 residential and 84 day students). The ages of the children range from 5-18yrs. Two thirds of the students are from mission families, while the other third are classed as from 'business families'. The higher fees charged to business families enable the school to provide low cost fees for the children of Christian workers. Some of these 'business' children come from different faith backgrounds. The school follows the British curriculum offering GCSEs and A levels.

The Humphreys family - **Owen** (a primary teacher), **Tracy** (an Art teacher) and their three children **Ben** (16), **Steffan** (12) and **Jonathan** (10) - have been at Hebron School since September 2002.

The main purpose of the school, from its earliest days, is to support the work of Christian workers by providing low cost Christian educational facilities for their children. To this end, all the teaching staff and dorm parents are committed Christians.

The school primarily attracts those whose parents work in India, but many mission kids (MKs) travel from further afield. We have children whose parents work in Japan, China, Mongolia, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and the Middle East. In August we will have some children travelling from Kyrgystan and



Georgia-Asia. (Get your atlas out!) Over 20 nationalities are represented at the school.

## **Tracy writes.....**

"We have now been working at Hebron for almost 3 years. In that time I have faced many changes and challenges but overwhelmingly I feel excited and fulfilled knowing God wants to impact His 'Life in Abundance' to me. Hebron has been a wonderful place for getting me out of my 'comfort zone'. So many times I have been placed in a situation where my immediate reaction is, "eek!" or words to that effect!

With hindsight, it has been these times when I have experienced God's presence the most. For example, I remember the first time I took a service in Junior Church. I had participated in children's services at home, which involved a small number of children in a port-a-cabin. The Junior Church Service here is held in a large church with 100+ kids and a variety of adults. I'm sure my nervousness was written all over my face and they could hear my knees knocking in the back row. Now, two years on, 'The Junior Service' and J.Zee (the kids' worship group) has become the highlight of my week. I still get nervous but I also have LOTS OF FUN!

Being a mum here has many benefits, the main one being I know my kids can grow up in a secure Christian environment, and that they have the opportunity to develop friendships with other children from all over the world. They will grow up with broadened horizons, an appreciation of other cultures, although they may not appreciate it now!

I realise though that there may be another side of the coin. Many children who spend a significant time overseas find it difficult to settle and feel 'at home' in their home country. Are we raising 'global nomads'? This is something we ourselves would value prayer for, that our boys Ben, Steffan and Jonathan would be secure in themselves and ultimately in the knowledge that our Heavenly Father loves them and has a great plan for their lives, and the realisation that being at Hebron, at this time, is part of that amazing plan."



*Is it really almost an entire year since I stepped onto a plane at Heathrow headed for Mexico City? It is time to write about my experiences, and how they have changed my life. Thank you so much for all the prayers and support, letters and emails that I received while I was out there. They really did make a huge difference.*

I was in Mexico from April to September 2004 working with WEC missionaries in a city called Cuernavaca (about 1 hour South of Mexico City). Here are a few of the activities I was involved in.

**Amigos del Rey** (friends of the King) - a children's programme in a poor suburb of the city. We ran monthly children's services in the town square and a week-long summer school. I was involved in painting / cutting / sticking for props and decoration, playing keyboard for worship, leading a small group in the summer school, and working media projection for the songs and sketches.

**Amigos sin fronteras** (Friends without borders) - a team of medical professionals who travel to poor towns offering medical and dental treatment, providing clothes etc, as well as conducting outreach activities. On the first trip I worked in the pharmacy which was incredible since I worked in a pharmacy in Stone for 2 years, and the second trip I was a dental assistant. That was far out of my comfort zone, being responsible for cleaning dental tools, and making up the fillings, but having had vast work done on my own teeth, I was able to sympathise with the terrified patients, and offer them advice, support, even just a hand to be squeezed as they had the work done, and to use the opportunity to pray for each person who came for treatment.

**Centro Cristiano** - the church I went to in Cuernavaca is the fastest growing church in the city, and it is incredible to see what God is doing there. There were five services each Sunday, because there were too many people for the building (about 1000 at each service), and every service new people gave their lives to God. It was very exciting! I worked in the church office one day a week doing data input, marking papers and filing. Once again I have done work like this before, and the Mexicans were amazed at how fast I completed my tasks. It was not all rosy, as the first few weeks I would be put in a small office on my own

with no window, fan, or company for about 5 hours - which was obviously difficult, and might explain why I worked so quickly! Seeing the fruits of the work, and how people's lives were changed through the church was amazing.

**Terreno de WEC** (WEC Property) - In one miracle after another, God has given the WEC missionaries in Mexico a piece of land that has surpassed anything they could have dreamt for. They are now converting it into a Christian youth camp, a Pastors retreat and a missionary sending base. There are several Mexicans who have felt a calling to be missionaries in the Middle-East, and currently there is no missionary sending base in Mexico, so it's very exciting times. I worked at weekends with youth groups from around the area to dig, scythe, machete cacti, clear spaces, and mark out building sections etc. It will take about 20 years to complete the project, in the meantime they are using the opportunities to bring youth groups together. On the first work camp, around a bonfire at night (when God protected us from the deadly scorpions and black widows) we were sharing testimonies, and one of the Mexicans gave his life to the Lord, so already it is bearing fruit!

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I had a definite calling to go to Mexico, which was very important, especially when things got difficult and I started to question whether I was really doing what God had planned. There were a lot of times when I was frustrated, lonely and I felt that I wasn't doing much. But these times made me completely dependent on God, and forced me to be really prayerful about everything. On my very first day I was advised to pray for one English-speaking friend and one Mexican friend and that is exactly what God provided for me. I think the first 2 months alone were also crucial to help me make a huge effort to adjust to the culture, to really get to know my host and the area I was living in, and just to really seek God and to have some solid time alone with Him. It is incredible looking back, and reading my prayer diary to see the transition from times when I was very low and very unhappy with the timetable I had been given to the way God had changed circumstances, changed me, and made situations very different.

Now I'm coming to the end of my university life, and I can look back and see how my experiences in Mexico have changed me.

**Mandi Mason**

*. . . and there'll be more from Mandi next month Ed.*

**Funerals**

30<sup>th</sup> March  
6<sup>th</sup> April

William Harold Timmis  
Joseph Southall

Aged 92 yrs  
Aged 77 yrs

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**Baptisms**

10<sup>th</sup> April  
10<sup>th</sup> April

Sophie Louise Brock  
Louise Buckley

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**Sidespersons for May**

**9.15 am**

- 1<sup>st</sup>** V. Ledward, S. Gerrard, J. Cooper, T. Lockett  
**8<sup>th</sup>** A. West, D. Wilson, T. MacFarlane, J. Rowlands  
**15<sup>th</sup>** M. Holden, G. Holden, M. Hutchinson, B. Hutchinson  
**22<sup>nd</sup>** P. Hipkiss, D. Pickles, P. Tunstall, S. Hallam  
**29<sup>th</sup>** C. Wilding, T. Lockett, V. Ledward, S. Gerrard
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**Flower Rota for May**

- 1<sup>st</sup>** Mrs M. Massey  
**8<sup>th</sup>** Mrs M. Hutchinson  
**15<sup>th</sup>** Mrs G. Martin  
**22<sup>nd</sup>** Mrs B. Thornicroft  
**29<sup>th</sup>** Mrs A. Greer

