

Chester

Diocesan News

August 2018

News, features, jobs...
chester.anglican.org

Growing stronger parishes

The Bishops' appeal for the Congo

From Bishop Peter, Bishop Libby and Bishop Keith.

Dear Friends,

We are writing to inform you of the current turmoil in Aru and Boga, the Diocese of Chester link dioceses in northeast DR Congo. There has been some coverage of this crisis on national news which you may have seen. We have received requests for support from our link dioceses in this time of need.

These dioceses are approximately coterminous with the district of Ituri, an area that saw some of the bloodiest fighting in the Congolese War from 1999-2003. Much of that fighting was between

two tribal groups with a long history of conflict, the Hema and Lendu.

Starting last December, and coming to a head in February, there has been a resurgence of hostilities after more than a decade of peace. Although the old tribal antagonism has played a part, church and community leaders do not really understand who is stirring up the situation; it is not like it was before. Clergy report churches and houses being torched, women raped and many killed. The centre of these atrocities is Djugu, 70 kilometres from Bunia, the provincial capital, where +Keith, Archdeacon Ian and a team from the diocese visited last July.

continued p2 ...



The Bishops' appeal for the Congo ... Cont from page 1

Unsurprisingly, many are fleeing the fighting. Earlier this month it was reported that there were more than 100,000 displaced people, including 42,000 refugees in neighbouring Uganda. Bisoke Balikenga, Provincial Youth Leader, tells of 25,000 displaced families in Bunia. The number of displaced and refugees in DRC as a whole equals those of Syria.

The local Church is doing a magnificent job. They are putting people up in their homes and opening up their schools to shelter the displaced. Their whole ethos is summed up by their vision 'Ensemble nous pouvons' (Together we can). However, emergency aid is essential: the Anglican Alliance, whose mandate is to bring together development, relief and advocacy work across the Communion, is aiming to raise \$100,000 across ten DRC dioceses, starting with Aru and Boga.

When asked about the greatest need in the current unrest, the bishops' unanimous answer is prayer. Therefore, we urge all churches in Chester Diocese to remember the situation in Ituri before the Lord, in both public and private intercessions. They also ask for advocacy: the Archbishop of Canterbury mentioned the DRC conflict in the House of Lords. One of our local MPs, David Rutley, has been in touch with the Department of International Development and received an encouraging reply that the British Government are monitoring the situation very closely and are planning a visit later this year. Finally, those displaced by the conflict require emergency aid in the form of clothes, food, healthcare and trauma healing.

To this end, we are asking parishes, schools and individuals across the Diocese to consider ways in which we across Chester Diocese can support our brothers and sisters in the Dioceses of

Aru and Boga. As the Apostle Paul wrote: At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need (2 Corinthians 8:14).

We are asking if you would make a donation, however large or small. Donations should be made direct to the Congo Church Association, using one of the following methods;

- By online payment, details can be found at www.congochurchasn.org.uk You can Gift Aid your donation, by using this payment method or by downloading a form from the same website.

- By cheque, payable to 'Congo Church Association', Please write on the reverse of the cheque the reference DioChester and address it to; The Hon. Treasurer, Paul Dickens, Hockliffe Grange, Hockliffe, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire LU7 9NL.

- By direct payment, payable to 'Congo Church Association' CAF Bank Ltd Account No. 00016616 Sort code 40-52-40 When making a donation please quote the reference DioChester .

With love in Christ, +Peter, +Libby and +Keith

Chester Diocesan News

EDITOR: James Butterworth, tel 01928 718834 ext 233. Email stories and pictures for the **October** issue by **18 August**, to: james.butterworth@chester.anglican.org

DISTRIBUTION: phone **Inprint Colour** on **01270 251589** and ask for Mark Heywood.

Chester Diocesan Board of Finance is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England (no. 7826) and a registered charity (no. 248968).

Wedding couple renew vows

Donald Kerr suffers from dementia and could not remember marrying his wife Margaret back in 2009. So when he asked to renew their vows it was very special as he would have a chance to replace his memories of saying his vows.

Donald, who is a former journalist working in regional television news including Spotlight South West, Granada Studios and Radio Merseyside, surprised Margaret when he asked her to marry him. Margaret said: "I was overwhelmed when Donald said, 'Would you marry me.' I asked our local vicar whether we could have a little service to renew our vows that we had taken when we were actually married in Falmouth in 2009."

Donald and Margaret Kerr renewed their vows in the Brookfield Nursing Home where Donald has been a resident for the past fifteen months. They were surrounded by friends for the special occasion which was arranged by Fr. Peter Walsh, Parish Priest at Saint Andrew's Church West Kirby.

Brookfield Nursing Home catering team and all the staff stepped up to help the couple and their friends organise the special day with a spectacular buffet accompanied by champagne!

Fr Peter, who officiated at the blessing of their marriage, said: "We visit Brookfield once a month for a simple service of Communion. When Margaret asked if she and Donald could renew their wedding vows I was thrilled. It is lovely to be able to offer pastoral

care to residents and their families. At the renewal of vows, we all shared in the joy of memories with all the residents at Brookfield."

Margaret arrived at the ceremony to the music Sailing By, a tune often played before the Shipping Forecast on Radio 4, which recalled Donald and Margaret's great love of sailing. Fr Peter asked Donald if he would take Margaret to be his wife and Donald managed to say: 'I will' which moved all who were present to tears.

Saint Andrew's is currently developing its ministry to local care homes and the elderly in the community. Fr Peter said: "Our faith teaches us that everyone deserves respect and love regardless of age or health, following the example of Christ. Those suffering from dementia can often be open to profound spiritual experiences. It is a vital part of our ministry to serve dementia sufferers and to support those who care for them, who may be suffering stress and mixed emotions of guilt or anxiety."



200 years supporting churches in the Diocese

2018 marks the 200th anniversary of the Incorporated Church Building Society, set up in 1818, which helped to build and enlarge many hundreds of Anglican churches.

14,000 grants were given to churches all over England and Wales, including over 400 in the Diocese of Chester. Churches helped include St George's Kendal (1827) (Kendal was part of Chester Diocese back then), St. Andrew Crewe in 1960 and St. Luke, Dunham on the Hill in 1859.

The Incorporated Church Building Society was at the forefront of the battle for free pews – it funded over two million pew spaces, most of which were free seats, in contrast to the then customary provision of private pews. The work of the Society continued through the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth. In 2013 Parliament and the Charity

Commission agreed changes to the rules of the Society, bringing affairs under the National Churches Trust. Today the National Churches Trust supports church and chapel buildings of all denominations throughout the UK.

Historic signs - did you get a grant?

Churches awarded grants from the Incorporated Church Building Society had to acknowledge its financial help by displaying a special sign in their building. Many of the historic plaques survive to this day. Anyone with a photo of an Incorporated Church Building Society churchplaque can post it on Twitter using the hashtag #ICBS200 You can find out if your church was helped by the Society by visiting www.nationalchurchestrust.org/was-your-church-helped



Celebrating thirty years of partnership

There was a joyful celebration at Foxhill on 16 June to mark thirty years of the link between the Diocese of Chester and the Anglican Church of Melanesia. Supporters from within the diocese were joined by some special guests from Melanesia: Brother Nelson (Head of the Melanesian Brotherhood), Brother Michael (Head of the Tabalia Section of the Brotherhood), Sisters Priscilla and Mary-Gladys from the Sisters of the Church. The Revd Richard Carter, from St Martin-in-the-Fields in London, who spent fifteen years as chaplain to the Melanesian Brothers was also with us.

We heard accounts of how the link began back in 1988, partly through the initiative of +Michael Baughen, and how the story of the link has unfolded over the last thirty years. Personal visits, educational exchanges, schools links and sustained prayer have all been part of the picture. Richard Carter spoke movingly of the martyrdom of the seven Melanesian brothers in 2003, and how this diocese had provided much-valued support at that time. We were also reminded of the establishment of Chester Rest House in

Honiara, funded largely by this diocese, income from which now sustains 60% of the activities of the Melanesian Brotherhood.

The link is thriving in both directions, with several new schools partnerships in prospect, and a mission visit from the Mothers' Union in Melanesia planned for the autumn. We look to the past with thanksgiving and to the future with confidence.

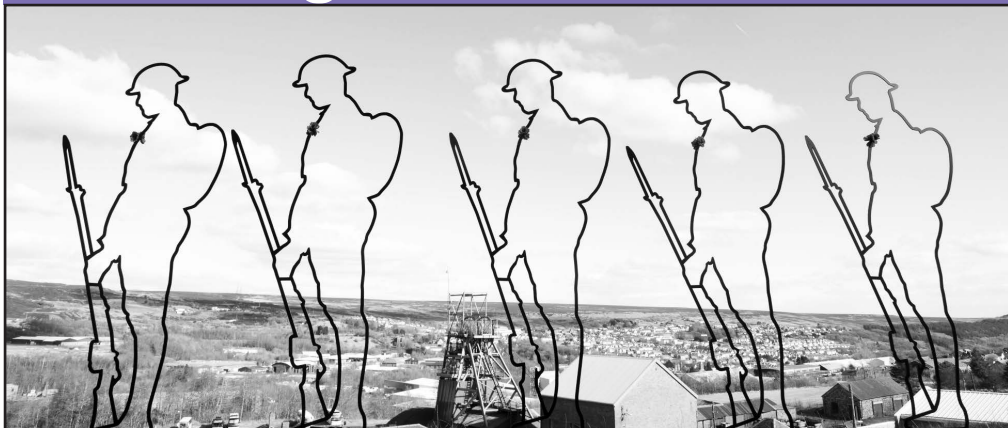
A letter from George Takeli, Archbishop of Melanesia, who visited Chester last year, was read out in which he wrote:

“Warm greetings and our unceasing prayers for God’s blessings on your gathering today to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the mission link between the Diocese of Chester in UK with the Anglican Church of Melanesia. Any such partnership link is always conceived and born out of true love and friendship for mission work to spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ to people within our churches and the Anglican Communion.

“I am pledging my support to grow this mission link between our churches in future.”



Marking the end of WW1



Many churches across the Diocese of Chester are already planning for this year's Remembrance Day which marks the centenary of the end of the First World War.

A number of ideas and resources are available to churches, schools and community groups to help them mark the day appropriately.

Remembrance 100

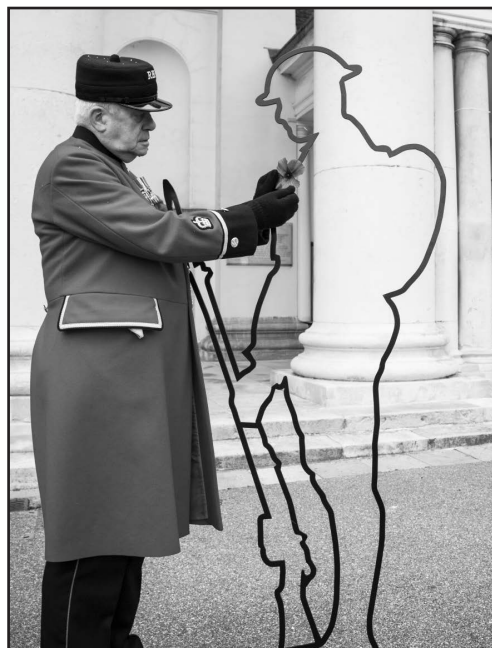
On Sunday, 4 August 1918, the fourth anniversary of the declaration of war, King George V and Queen Mary joined members of the House of Commons and the House of Lords for a special service at the Church of Saint Margaret, Westminster. The King had asked that 4 August 1918 should be observed as a National Day of Prayer. One hundred days later the war ended.

On 4 August 2018 churches across the country are taking part in 100 days of prayer to mark this historic moment in our history.

Resources are available to help churches in prayer at: www.remembrance100.co.uk

There But Not There

In November 2016, Penshurst Church, Kent, installed 51 transparent seated military figures to mark Remembrance Day. Called 'There But Not There', the installation struck a chord with all who saw it. It is now a national art-installation and your church can take part.



Churches and schools have until midnight on the 16 July to apply for fully funded grants to purchase transparent 'silhouettes' of military figures, as part of the nation-wide art installation There But Not There. The silhouettes can be placed within community halls, places of worship and places of education, bringing to mind those who went to war and did not return.

The Bishop of Stockport, the Rt Revd Libby Lane says: "This project offers a poignant tribute to the thousands who went to war, never to return, and the millions whose lives were affected by loss. I encourage churches, schools and communities in the Diocese of Chester to apply for the grant funding made available for the silhouettes and to participate in this creative and imaginative initiative."

To apply for grant funding, go to: www.therebutnotthere.org.uk

Church of England release a range of resources

The Church of England has launched new worship and prayer resources to mark the centenary of the end of the First World War.

The resources from the Church of England include a prayer for families to say whilst visiting a war grave or memorial in addition to other prayers; an Act of Commitment to work together for peace; a Vigil Service to mark the centenary; and a monologue interspersed with suggested words and music, entitled Steps towards Reconciliation.

The resources put together by members of the Church of England's Liturgical Commission, are available now at www.churchofengland.org/first-world-war-centenary

Disability Insights

In this occasional series of Disability Insight articles Sally shares her 'hidden disability' to help, support and enable others to find God and trust in Him.

Sally is a 49 year old single mum with 3 teenage children. She is a global motivational speaker, a managing director, lecturer and author. She communicates well, having the skills to empower people and help them to gain their goals and objectives. However, this hasn't always been the case.

Sally recognised she was different from the age of 5. Unable to concentrate, and easily distracted, she was often confused about reading and writing. She became very frightened of authority and friendship circles. Sally was in and out of trouble throughout her school life, and her school reports reflected these difficulties. Church

life wasn't always easy either.

Because people could not see them, Sally learnt to socially mask her disabilities until she was finally diagnosed as being on the Autistic spectrum with ADHD.

Sally now applies her knowledge to others. Her disability & dyslexia is used to coach others. Her zany personality always has people laughing. Sally is currently attending the Enabling Church Course and is a member of our Chester Diocesan disability forum.

Without doubt Sally has experienced what she calls her 'womb-reared support from God'. He is her best friend, her Guide and Great Redeemer. Without God Sally struggles to see how she could remain so optimistic in some of her very low and dark times. 'He has always been beside me', says Sally.

Foundations for Ministry is twenty-years old



Some 1,100 people have followed this unique programme with its focus on gaining a clearer understanding of an individual's God-given vocation. People in a huge range of walks of life have used the insights FfM has given them. And hundreds of ministers, lay and ordained, have used it as a stepping-stone in their

ministerial development. Come and celebrate FfM at a service in the cathedral on 23 September at 3.30pm. All past and present FfM students and staff are warmly invited.

If you have a particular story to tell of how you've used your FfM experience, please email ministry@chester.anglican.org

The Big Story

Over 3000 people turned out at St Michael's Church, Middlewich, to enjoy 'The Big Story', a multi-sensory experience of bible stories.

Following the success of similar events in 2012 and 2015, St Michael's Church invited six local primary schools to contribute to the event, weaving together a maze of tunnels, caves and open spaces depicting some of the main Bible stories and themes and filling the entire church building.

Jeremy Coles, St Michael's Director of Music and Family Work, says: "It was a tremendous effort by the church and school community and such a privilege to speak to people of God's love for them."

