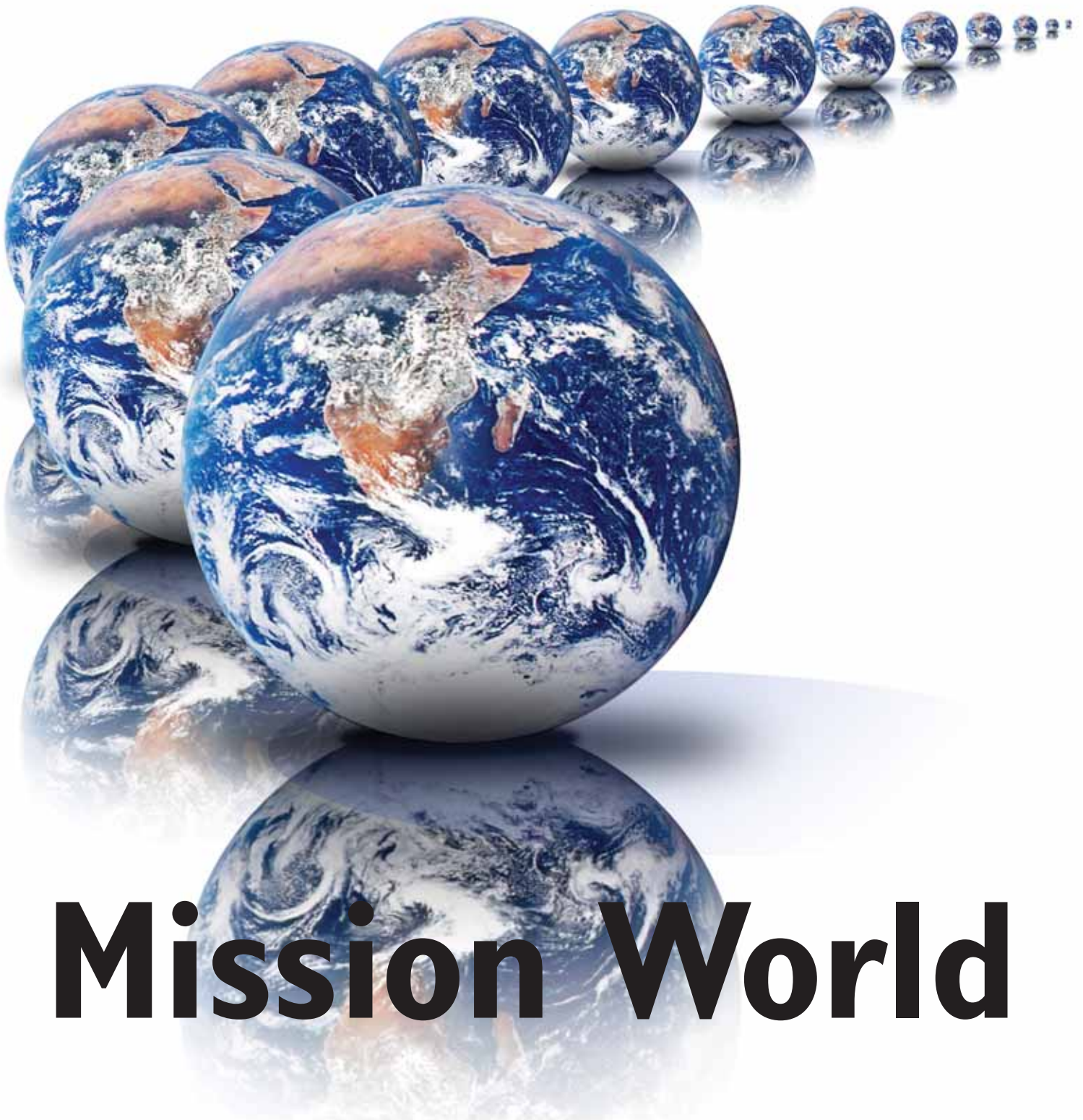


insight

the magazine of Easthampstead Baptist Church

September/October 2009



Mission World

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Insight

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Excited about crabs!

Welcome to this edition of Insight, our Easthampstead Baptist Church (EBC) magazine.

We produce Insight every two months and it includes articles, updates, diaries, prayer pointers and news about our church. If you are part of the EBC community it is vital to update you on things that are going on across the church and if you are not yet part of our community we hope that it will help you understand a bit more about us. This is the ninth edition of Insight and in this edition we are looking at our mission to the world and how we might make a difference.

I have recently had the chance to be on holiday in Pembrokeshire for two weeks with my family. One of the things that we did was to book in for a crab catching event run by the Pembrokeshire National Park Authority. We turned up at Carew Mill (a beautiful castle and tidal mill) and were met by two members of the National Park Authorities staff. Over the next two hours we had a fantastic time and caught lots of crabs! What made it such a great time was the passion and enthusiasm of the two staff members leading the event. They were great, they walked up and down the line of children demonstrating how to make a catch, talking to us about the crabs, showing us how to pick them up safely and retrieving lines that had accidentally been thrown into the water! It really struck me that passion and enthusiasm are infectious and inspirational. By the way I never knew that it was



Chris Porter

possible to be excited about crabs!

In this edition of Insight you are going to meet a truly passionate and enthusiastic person. Abs Dumbuya has been coming to EBC for five years or so and his story is incredible (see page four). Abs set up the Dorothy Springer Trust (DST) several years ago and is about to return to his homeland of Sierra Leone for a year to help young people with disabilities find hope and a future in one of the poorest countries in the world. Abs is an absolute inspiration to me and on top of all that he is also one of the humblest and nicest people you could ever hope to meet! In the next couple of months as a church we are going to be making some important decisions about how we might support the Dorothy Springer Trust over the next few years. Our hope is that by following Abs' example we might help some people who are in desperate need and make a significant difference.

September also sees us launch a slightly different pattern for our Sunday gatherings. On the last Sunday of every month instead of our usual three Sunday morning services we shall be joining together for one combined service at 10.15am. We are also planning to launch a series of guest services throughout the year which will be specifically designed for those who wouldn't normally go to church. See page three for more details of this new pattern and these new services.

For those of us who call ourselves Christians we should be passionate and enthusiastic about our mission to the world. Whether that is to help those in desperate need around the world or to introduce people to the love of God through guest services it is a calling that we cannot avoid. Our hope is that this edition of Insight will inspire you to a greater level of passion and enthusiasm for our mission world.

Chris



Church News

Did you know in the last two months at EBC...

We have agreed a possible way forward with our building plans.

In May we heard the results of the feasibility study that Allen Associates architects had been running for us on the possibilities for extending our building at South Hill Road. Over the months that followed we have been praying and reflecting on that feasibility study. At our Church Meeting in July we agreed that we didn't feel that the timing was right to undertake the whole project as might distract us from some of the other things that God was calling us to do. Instead we are looking at taking a phased approach and including some other things that are separate from the building. We agreed to do some more investigation into the phased approach to the building and also into finding a permanent base for our Storehouse and community care activities. We also talked about including taking on a youth worker in phase 1.

At our Church Meeting on 17th September we will be presenting the outcomes of these investigations and looking at how we might proceed. If you are a regular attender at EBC please do try to be there that evening.

We have conducted a review of our Sunday morning services

It has been a year since we moved to our new pattern of Sunday morning services and so we have just completed a review of how they have been going. We

have been concerned about the strain doing three Sunday morning services every week has been putting on our teams and also the effectiveness of our services.

We have decided to tweak what we do. On the last Sunday of every month we will run one joint service at 10.15am instead of our three different services. This will provide a great chance for us all to be together more often as well as helping relieve some of the pressure on our teams. We have also decided to stop running Explore: Life at our 11.15am service on the first and third Sundays of the months. Instead we will run six or seven special guest services each year and encourage each other to be inviting people to come to those special services.

We have some great series and events already planned for the rest of 2009 and the beginning of 2010. Our first guest event will be on Sunday 27th September at 10.15am at South Hill Road. It will be a joint event celebrating harvest called 'Guardian of Eden?' It will include great activities for children and a ploughman's lunch.

We are also looking at the possibility of employing someone for a day or two a week to help us plan and run our Sunday services to increase the creativity and quality of what we do. The extra money that has been given through the '222' campaign (see last times Insight for a report on the '222' campaign) should enable this to happen.

A group went to New Wine

At the end of July a group of over 60 people from EBC attended the New Wine Christian festival at the Bath and West Showground in Shepton Mallett. It was a fantastic week although we did get a lot of rain! The children and

young people had a great time in their activities and we all enjoyed worshipping God with thousands of people. The teaching times and seminars were also great and we enjoyed being together and the late night wine and cheese parties were especially popular. Those who came for the first time really enjoyed it and we are already planning for next year!

Our young people attended Soul Survivor

A group of young people attended the Soul Survivor Christian festival in August. They were blown away by worshipping God with 12,000 other young people and many of them were significantly touched and challenged by God. They will be reporting back to us in the next few weeks at our Sunday morning services so watch out for more information from them.

We ran our fun day at Fox Hill School

On Saturday 4th July we ran a fun day at Fox Hill School. It was a great day, the sun shone and over 300 people came to enjoy the giant inflatables, the barbeque and the farm. We had many great conversations with people who couldn't believe that we would have cared enough to run something like this for our local community and who couldn't believe that it was all free! Watch out for our next fun day this time at Crown Wood School on Saturday 12th September.

We had a placement student with us

For two weeks in July, Brian Stocker was with us. Brian is training to be a Baptist Minister and was required to do a two week placement in a church. Brian grew up in Bracknell and it was great to have him with us. He spoke at each of our three morning services and those who were at our 10.15am service when he brought out a complete ox tongue won't forget him quickly!



This is Abs Dumbuya's story . . .



The story of one man's determination to help fellow disabled people in Sierra Leone. With echoes of "Pay It Forward" and "Blood Diamond" it makes a compelling and uplifting story.

My full name is Abdulai ('Abs') Don Dumbuya - Don was added after I was baptised, signifying the conversion from a Muslim background to Christianity.

'Abs' was given to me by a colleague I worked with back in 1992, partly because she found it difficult calling me Abdulai but, more flatteringly, she used 'Abs' to refer to my muscular torso - oh how I wish I hadn't over indulged after all those years!

On a more serious note - I was born in Sierra Leone in the Northern Province and at the age of five years contracted polio. This resulted in physical disability - I can't walk without the aid of crutches. Around the same time as my illness, my father died. My mother re-married and moved with my step-father and their seven children to the diamond-rich Southern Province.

I was sent to Freetown (the Capital of Sierra Leone and a Port City for the first settled freed slaves sent from England and Nova Scotia) and I spent my early years at the Freetown Cheshire Home, which is run by Leonard Cheshire Disability, founded by Group Captain Leonard Cheshire VC. I received primary education within the home and then early secondary school at the Albert Academy and Prince of Wales school. Also in the home we received several overseas visitors, including some from Christian organisations, who would bring

us sweets, and in turn we would entertain them with well-practised Gospel songs. It was during one of these visits that I became a Christian, accepting God's love demonstrated when he sent His son to die for my sins. I later left the home to stay with an uncle in the East End of Freetown.

With a strong interest in engineering - I used to make wire car models and model buildings when I was at the home - I contacted a UK College in Market Harborough, but my application fell through due to lack of funding. However, the college administrator, Mrs. Margaret Atkins, took a keen interest in me, and we kept in contact.

Political tensions were rising and with the illegal diamond trade funding the procurement of arms, the war in Liberia eventually spilled over to Sierra Leone in 1991. Sierra Leone is currently among the poorest countries in the world, ranked bottom by the UN Human Development Index (HDI) in 2005 and second from bottom in 2007. The country is still recovering from a ten-year civil war that inflicted a very heavy toll on people, and involved child soldiers and some appalling atrocities. There were around fifty thousand deaths, and as many as two million people (nearly half of the population) were displaced and/or left with immense physical and mental suffering. These horrors are captured in the



Abs and Family at his BEng Graduation

highly-rated film *Blood Diamond*, which tackles the subject of the illegal diamond trading that fuelled much of the war between the government and the rebels wanting to control the diamond south.

I managed to escape the brutality of the war when I was given the opportunity to come to the UK to teach African Craft and to be a Classroom Assistant as a Community Service Volunteer in Bradford-on-Avon (near Bath), working with children who had emotional and behavioural difficulties.

During my time in Bradford-on-Avon, Margaret Atkins and her husband Alan drove down to Bradford-on-Avon to visit regularly, and during the school breaks they took me to Market Harborough for holidays. As Margaret said, I soon became very much part of the family and would say I was their fourth child!

After a year in Bradford-on-Avon, I went to America to continue teaching at Camp America. Margaret had continued applying for funding for me, and upon my return to the UK, Margaret's mother, Mrs. Dorothy Springer, secretly funded my A-Levels and Bachelor of Engineering, BEng (Hons.) degree. I eventually gained a PhD.

It wasn't until after Mrs Springer's death in 2003 that Margaret told me that her mother had been funding my education all this time. I was totally overcome by her kindness! This life-changing generosity transformed my life from the bleak future envisaged in my early years to one where I have become independent through gainful employment, working for TRL (the Transport Research Laboratory) as a Research Engineer and able to make a positive contribution to society.

In 2005, I returned to Sierra Leone and saw for myself the devastation of the war. The number of people with disabilities had increased, as a hallmark of the war was the rebels' habit of chopping off people's limbs. In fact, regarding disability, the World Health Organisation

estimates that disabled people in Sierra Leone make up approximately ten per cent of a population of six million. However, the actual figure is likely to be much higher, due to the impact of the war. As in many parts of the world, especially Africa, disabled people in Sierra Leone are often stigmatised by society, and with severely limited access to education and economic opportunities in the country, it is not surprising that they constitute a significant percentage of those living in abject poverty.

I thought about the hopeless situation in the country and what Dorothy Springer had done for me, and it inspired me to set up the Dorothy Springer Trust (DST) in her memory. Together with friends, we registered the charity with the Charity Commission (Charity Registration No. 1120537) in 2007. For me personally, setting up the charity is a way of giving something back, because somebody gave me hope – a 'pay it forward' concept!

The charity will help those in dire poverty in Sierra Leone by advancing the prospects of disabled people in that country through education and vocational training, with a focus on Information Communication and

Technology (ICT). This area of training will give disabled people a level playing field – and even a competitive edge – in providing technical expertise to businesses and government. Our aim is to enable disabled people in Sierra Leone to support themselves and their families through skilled employment, allowing them to participate more fully as equal members of society.

The charity completed its first project in 2007 by handing over more than a hundred computers to disabled organisations in Sierra Leone. The computers were donated by an anonymous company, also Loughborough University, friends and colleagues. They are now being used by disabled people to develop their IT skills. Recently, in fact, we were informed that new IT skills were a very significant factor in enabling three students to secure jobs. This is encouraging and truly validates our strategy of focusing on ICT as a way of helping disabled people get out of poverty. As we continue to make an impact in the country, we are now moving beyond just providing computers, to our second major project: working with local organisations in Sierra Leone to select and sponsor up to five disabled people to undergo
Continued on Page 6



Dorothy Springer Trust supplied PCs helping to make a difference in Sierra Leone

Abs' Story

Continued from Page 5

ICT training and certification and setting up an employment agency that will offer technical services as a way of making the charity sustainable.

I feel so passionate about the charity that I am taking a break from my job in the UK (with the kind permission of my employer) and return to Sierra Leone at the end of October 2009 to run our second project. Some of my activities will involve building a local team, organising and managing candidate application, and selection and sponsorship processes, as well as negotiating a course curriculum and costs with the training partner. The charity will cover the full fees of the course, travelling and maintenance (including boarding and lodging or local accommodation). As part of our commitment, and as a small charity with limited resources, all monies raised will go directly to the training programme, so I will be supporting myself through searching for part-time employment.

You can help in a number of ways, through prayers, donation and wanting to be kept informed. Thank you for your support. To find out more about the charity, please contact 01344 302 253 or visit the charity website www.dorothy-springer-trust.org.uk.

My Christian faith and network

has sustained me throughout my time in the UK. After moving to Bracknell for work, I began my current strong connections with Easthampstead Baptist Church. I was amazed when I first walked into its doors, back in 2004, by the friendliness and welcome I received from the door staff. It was the first time I had felt strongly about Church Membership, and I was invited to find out more about Church Life through the Newcomers' course. I have formed strong friendships with many people in the Church, to the extent that Rob Lea (an Elder at EBC), is also a Trustee of the Dorothy Springer Trust.

Above all, this story is about how people can really help make a difference! The motivation for making a difference might differ between people, but for someone with faith, I see when people are close to God they reflect his kindness. Take, for example, our charity. Our need to help the poorest of the poor in Sierra Leone is underpinned by our belief in love, compassion and helping those in poverty and who need help. I am reminded here, of practical Christianity and faith accompanied by action, as recorded in James 2:15-17.



Meeting the Sierra Leone Minister of Information, Communication and Technology

review



All music reviews are reprinted here by kind permission of Cross Rhythms. More such reviews are available at www.crossrhythms.co.uk and all regular albums are available from Cross Rhythms Direct at £9.97 + p&p.



Writer of 'Love Came Down', 'You Are' and co-writer of 'Happy Day' with Tim Hughes, Ben Cantelon is the worship director for Soul Survivor, a role which takes him all over the world. But it's not the physical miles that have inspired Running After You, Ben's captivated by a deeper, more personal journey: one that takes us away from 'business as usual' and closer to God himself.


Running After You has the breadth and force to inspire people and take their journey a few steps further. 'Running After You links in with the idea of being desperate to follow and connect with God; wanting God to get closer but life getting in the way.

Canadian-born Ben Cantelon is now, of course, the latest worship leader/songwriter to benefit from the huge exposure of the Soul Survivor conferences. His talent was in evidence as many of the songs followed well the tradition of some of the great hymns declaring the wonderful truths revealed about God. However the layered-guitar sound, though well put together in the States by Dwayne Larring, has become simply too generic. Despite this I was impressed with "Carry On" where Ben sings a heartfelt encouragement to those who are wearying on the Christian journey. I was also stirred by the title track - an anthemic prayer to go on with God through the wilderness. And I was touched by the line in "You Alone" that says "in my loss and pain you are here". But overall I wished he had gone further. Not only could Ben have painted a more descriptive picture of the works of God, but also reflected more on our frailty as we chase after him. Nevertheless, there are some atmospheric songs here crisply delivered and no doubt Ben's full length debut will sell well to the young worshippers touched by his ministry.

Reviewed by Dave Derbyshire

Coming soon . . .

From Sunday 6th September we are starting a brand new series called Jesus 3D. So often we talk a lot about Jesus but forget about who he really was and what he was really like. In this series we want to get to the heart of who Jesus really was and we expect that as we discover more about him it will have a profound impact on who we are and how we live.

A stylized graphic of Jesus' face in profile, rendered in red and black. He is wearing a crown of thorns. The text 'Jesus 3D' is written in white at the bottom left of the graphic.

Jesus?
nice guy, prophet, wise teacher?
revolutionary, radical, rebel?

Sunday 6th September
His Significance

Sunday 13th September
His Sacrifice

Sunday 20th September
His Relevance

On Sunday 27th September we have the first of our new guest events. We will all be together at 10.15am at South Hill Road for a great event that will celebrate this amazing world that we live in. We will be including some great activities

for children and young people, music, media and reminding ourselves of the incredible things that God created. We will finish off with a ploughman's lunch together. This is a great opportunity for us to invite our friends.

The guest event on 27th September launches us into a new series called Guardian of Eden looking at how we can do better at caring for our world. We shall investigate local and global issues and on Sunday 11th

October Andrew Kohn will be visiting us and speaking on their recent experiences in Nepal and how global warming is affecting some of the poorest people and countries in the world.

A poster for the 'Guardian of Eden?' event. It features a stylized graphic of a leaf or flame in shades of yellow and orange. The text 'Guardian of Eden?' is written in a curved, stylized font at the top right.

Guardian of Eden?

Sunday 27th September
10.15am
at Easthampstead
Baptist Church

 A special event celebrating the world in which we live.

www.ebc-bracknell.org

A poster for the 'Guardian of Eden?' event. It features a stylized graphic of a leaf or flame in shades of green and yellow. The text 'Guardian of Eden?' is written in a curved, stylized font at the top right.

Guardian of Eden?

Sunday 27th September,
Sunday 4th October and
Sunday 11th October
at Easthampstead
Baptist Church

 A 3 part series celebrating the world in which we live and investigating how we might care for it a bit better.

www.ebc-bracknell.org/

Interview

**Sue
McCartney**

Sue McCartney (centre of picture below) has been part of Easthampstead Baptist Church for many years. She is a regular attender at our 10.15am Sunday service at Crown Wood School. Over the last few years Sue's passion for EBC's work and partnerships overseas has been growing and growing and she has been on a number of different trips to see some of the organisations and people that we work with. We thought that we should interview her and find out a bit more!

1. Tell us a bit about yourself

I was a primary school teacher until I retired five years ago. I have been attending EBC since I arrived in Bracknell in 1973 and became a Church Member the following year, after my baptism.

2. Tell us a little bit about some of the trips you have made overseas

I was very interested in the Enable Trust when it was first set up after several Ministers from our local area went to Kazakhstan several years ago. I began to attend their monthly support group meeting and felt that I would like to get more involved after I retired. I've been over to Aktau in Kazakhstan 4 times – going for a fortnight each time. We also regularly pack boxes of clothes aid: about 40 boxes every 3 months.

The Enable Trust fund and support 'Serepta' a charitable aid organisation in Aktau. They distribute the clothes that we send out regularly to help the poorer families. They give money for needy children to have free school meals, and run children's clubs in one of the schools and more recently in a children's village – what we would call an orphanage.

People from this country have helped in many ways – from drug awareness talks to positive parenting courses. I have run

spoken English classes in the schools and have met with teachers to help improve their English.

3. You have also been to France – tell us about that

I have been on 3 trips to support Wayne and Wendy Hadley and the work they are doing in St Etienne, France. They work to provide a united Christian witness in that city. On those trips the emphasis has been on praying for people in Sunday services. We also visited the Romanian squatters and held a service where many asked for prayer.

I have also been to Israel with the Bible Society to give encouragement and support to workers in schools and hospitals.

4. Why did you go?

Because I wanted to help people in countries that lack so much that we take for granted in Britain.

5. What is your hope for what we at EBC might do to care for those around the world?

I would love to see more people from EBC getting out to serve those in need around the world.

I would like to see us support those who are part of our church, like Abs (see pages 4–6) who go for longer periods. I would like to see us support them not only financially but also in prayer and emotional support, keeping in regular contact with them, even visiting them. It is very lonely when you are working amongst people who don't speak your language – particularly for those like Wayne and Wendy who are not working with a team or organisation. To pray and share what you are passionate about in a second language and in a different culture is hard work!

In the autumn of 2009 we are sending a team out to Uganda with an organisation called Tearfund to help on water projects and our hope and vision for the future is that every person who is a part of EBC would have the opportunity to be involved in helping those in need around the world. If you would like to know more about the organisations and partnership we are involved with at EBC please speak to Chris Porter or Steph Littlejohn.

