

we can make a difference ...



February 2009

Together

News for church representatives from your local area co-ordinator

Let us not forget them

Let's make 2009 a year to make a difference

I shall never forget the sight of three young girls waiting in a row for treatment at The Leprosy Mission's Shahdara hospital in Delhi. Neither will I ever forget watching a Leprosy Mission surgeon at Naini hospital operating on a brave 14-year-old boy to restore movement to his leprosy-damaged hand. Or the crowds of people waiting to be seen in the outpatients' department at The Leprosy Mission's Faizabad hospital. Above all, I will never forget the wonderful work being done at our vocational training centre (VTC) at Faizabad.

For this reason I have chosen Faizabad VTC as our project for 2009, for which we need to raise the sum of £5,089.

Giving hope to the poor

Nearly all the students at the Faizabad VTC are either affected by leprosy or come from families affected by leprosy. Most



Training in carpentry changed Radhesyam's life

are from extremely poor backgrounds with only minimal education. The chances of finding work without a trade or specific skill are very slim indeed. They also face the stigma associated with leprosy.

Changing lives

At the VTC students can learn a trade such as tailoring, electronics, fridge/freezer repairs, carpentry or diesel mechanics. They are also given training in job application techniques. Ninety per cent of the diesel mechanic students at Faizabad VTC, for example, find employment.

While in Faizabad, I visited 18-year-old Radhesyam (pictured above) who graduated from the VTC in 2006 and is now working as a carpenter. He enjoyed his training at the VTC and learnt a lot, and his life has been transformed because of it.

Faizabad VTC urgently needs our help to raise £5,089 this year. If your church can host a coffee morning or fundraising event, or support one of the area's events this year, it could change lives. Let's not forget them.

Seasons Quiz '09

How well do you know your seasons? Why not participate in our Seasons Quiz? Quiz sheets (£2 each) will be available from 1 April for your friends, family, church or group. Send me a cheque, payable to The Leprosy Mission, for however many you need. The prize is an M&S gift voucher. Winner to be announced in the Feb 2010 newsletter.

Summer Walk of Hope '09

Join us on 18 July in Sutton Park from 10 am (starting at the visitor information centre near the main gate) for a 3-mile sponsored walk. Sponsorship forms available now from the website or from me.



West Central serves the following postcodes: B, CV, CW, DY, ST, SY1-9, SY11-14, TF, WR, WS, WV

Mr Allister du Plessis
130 Church Road
Erdington
BIRMINGHAM
B24 9BD
Tel: 0121 384 2402
allisterdup@tlmew.org.uk



The Leprosy Mission
Goldhay Way
Orton Goldhay
Peterborough PE2 5GZ

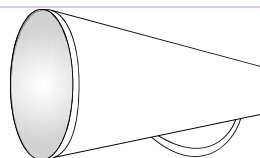
Tel: 01733 370505
post@tlmew.org.uk
www.leprosymission.org.uk
Charity no. 1050327

A company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales no. 3140347

Together is published twice a year



Please share this information with other people in your church



Our vision: a world without leprosy

Small text at the bottom right corner.

Celebrate

More than 340 people braved the chilly December air to gather in All Saints Church for one of the most successful events in West Central in recent years.

All Saints Church in Small Heath was a favourite of the poet John Betjeman, who fondly called it the 'cathedral of the back streets'.

The church's fine acoustics framed each note played by the Birmingham Citadel Band perfectly. From the opening bars of 'Christmas Fanfare' to the closing bars of the march 'The Carollers', the evening was a musical feast. Bandmaster Graham



The congregation at All Saints Church

Laplough expressed his delight with the congregation's singing.

The rich sound of one of the Salvation Army's biggest and best brass bands filled the soaring arches of the Victorian church, making it a truly unforgettable evening.

Best of all, over £2,300 was raised from the evening in ticket sales and donations, including the donation

of 50% from the proceeds of the sale of the band's CDs, which gave an extra £100 to The Leprosy Mission.

Thank you to Birmingham Citadel Band, All Saints in Small Heath and everyone who came, for making it such a successful and memorable evening.

See right and overleaf for events planned for this year.

Ideas that make a difference

An event called 'Raise the Roof Lunch' was organised last year by Mavis Littleford and members of Wolverhampton St Jude's Church. The aim was to raise enough to buy a low-cost house. They made much more than that and over

£1,100 was raised altogether, so well done Wolverhampton St Jude's! Many other churches in West Central organised events to make a difference during 2008. Fundraising can be fun, so here are a few ideas that your church

might like to try in 2009:

Talents auction – sell your skills in babysitting, cake decorating etc. to the highest bidder.

Quiz night – make it a theme evening to add fun!

Or a barn dance?!

More area events 2009

Malverns Walk of Hope '09

Join us on 17 October at 10.30 am for a pleasant and moderately easy 4.5-mile walk starting from Upper Wyche village in the Malverns. This can be reached from the A449 which runs through Great Malvern. Pay and display parking is available in a disused quarry a few hundred metres down the hill towards the A449. Sponsorship forms are available now from the website or from me.

Top brass Christmas celebration

Join us again on 3 December at 7.30 pm at Wylde Green United Reformed Church in Britwell Road, Sutton Coldfield, for carols and music from the Birmingham Citadel Salvation Army Band. Tickets (£4 per person or £4.50 on the door) will be on sale from October.

Carols with Sutton Coldfield Chamber Choir

Join us on the 17 December at 7.30 pm at All Saints Church, Herbert Road, Small Heath, to hear the sound of one of the West Midlands' finest choirs in one of the finest settings. Tickets (£4 per person or £4.50 on the door) will be on sale from October.

Snap Away 2008 winners

The winners of our 2008 photographic competition are as follows:

Best portrait: Mary Edwards

Funniest: Pete Stevenson

Best scenery: J.N. Gibson

Happiest photograph:

T. Price

All are from Birmingham.

They each received a prize of an Eddie Askew book.

And finally

Our motivation for all that we do in The Leprosy Mission comes from our desire to show the love of God to those who are suffering from the causes and consequences of leprosy. They are very often the poorest and most marginalised people in the world. I believe they are the people Jesus was referring to in Matthew 25: 40 when he said: '... whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me'.

Watch out for The Leprosy Mission's new Gifts for Life leaflet, coming soon

Gifts for Life, which range from a child's education to a hospital bed, can be the perfect way to channel your donations or those of your church or group. They also make excellent alternative gifts. Contact me for more information.

