

we can make a difference ...



October 2010

Together

News for church representatives from your local area co-ordinator

One girl and her dog

Perhaps their greatest challenge yet!

Toby and I like to go for a walk. We, like you, are lucky enough to live in one of the most beautiful areas of the country and so have no end of picturesque paths to choose from.

While I was in India last year I was challenged by how far people with leprosy had to walk to get medical treatment; those with leprosy are not even allowed on buses or trains in some areas. Many of these people have to walk for miles on feet damaged and numbed by leprosy, which makes the journey doubly difficult.

This led me to wonder how I could, through something I enjoy, raise awareness and money for those who walk for necessity, who walk to get treatment, who walk through their rejection.

Throughout 2010 we have had a number of walks across the South West to raise money, but I felt that



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Pointing the way to raise money and awareness

I needed to do something extra. I wanted to really challenge myself in something I wouldn't ordinarily consider myself capable of. That is why next year I am hoping to walk the South West coastal path – all in one go!

This iconic path starts in Minehead in Somerset and goes all the way around the coast to Poole in Dorset, taking in the most-southerly and most-westerly points of the UK along its 630-mile route. The path is split into 53

stages and I am hoping that you will be able to come and join me in walking your local stage, or perhaps you can come and cheer us on as Toby and I stroll past. Look out for future information of dates and places that I will be passing through in your area, and help me to step out of my comfort zone to help those who are thrown out of theirs through their association with leprosy... and I hope that I will be able to praise God for every painful blister I get!

Super speakers



I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge 'thank you' to all the marvellous volunteer speakers that we have throughout the South West. They do a wonderful and vital job of promoting the work The Leprosy Mission does, through lots of speaking engagements all across the region.

If you are interested in joining the team or if you would like to invite a volunteer speaker to your group or church, please do get in touch.



South West and the Channel Islands serves the following postcodes: BA, BH, DT, EX, GY, JE, PL, SO, SP, TA, TQ, TR

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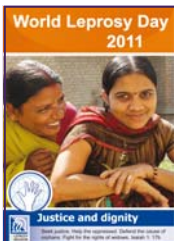
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World Leprosy Day 2011 Please encourage your church to remember World Leprosy Day on 30 January 2011, or on another day that is convenient. This year we are raising funds and prayer support for Naini hospital in India. Visit www.worldleprosyday.org.uk for a range of resources available from the end of October, or contact head office for a pack to be sent to you: t. 01733 370505 e. post@tlmew.org.uk

Our vision: a world without leprosy

Ouch!

Leprosy is coupled with the loss of pain and feeling (which sounds attractive when you stub your toe), but what about the pain it does brings?

This is Sono and she is 18 years old. On her young shoulders is the very real pain of disgrace. When she contracted leprosy her brother-in-law offered to take her to the The Leprosy Mission's Shahdara Community Hospital in Delhi, many miles from her home village. To do this, and to pay for the treatment that Sono would need, the family collected up all their savings as well as begging and borrowing from their family and neighbours. The money was given to the brother-in-law who travelled with Sono to Delhi. The family had not realised that all treatment at The Leprosy Mission hospitals is free for leprosy patients, as it is often the poorest of poor who catch leprosy. The one person who did know was the brother-in-law who, on arriving in the big city, scarpared with the cash leaving Sono alone and penniless.

Luckily she found her way to The Leprosy Mission hospital and started on multidrug therapy to cure her leprosy. She then underwent reconstructive surgery to straighten out her clawed hand. Leprosy may have robbed her of



Sono

any physical feeling and pain in her hand but it has given her the pain of rejection and shame. If she had not had leprosy her brother-in-law wouldn't have been able to steal all that money, so her family feels it is ultimately her fault and she must suffer the consequences of his sin.

The impact of leprosy goes even further than the physical body and the nerves it attacks, it affects the whole person in ways more complex than we often realise. It's a good job then that The Leprosy Mission works not only to cure the physical problems caused by the disease but also to heal the often-hidden and long-lasting pain leprosy brings. Sono and her family are currently working with reconciliation counsellors with the hope that she will be able to return home.

Treasure in the South West

2010 saw the discovery of treasure in the South West in the form of fun little treasure hunts in Cornwall and Dorset.

These treasure hunts are basically a fun accompaniment to a walk in lovely and picturesque surroundings. They include all the directions needed to complete the walk and all the clues necessary to find the hidden treasure ... but there is no need to take your shovels as you won't be doing any digging for real treasure!

The treasure hunts are still available for £5 and are suitable for all – young or old, male or female, on your own or in a group, on any day of your



Can you find the treasure?

choosing. So if you live in the West Cornwall or Hengistbury Head area or are planning a holiday there, do get in touch for a treasure hunt pack and have a fun day raising money for The Leprosy Mission.

The variety of life

Across the region young and old have been getting creative with their fundraising initiatives. We have seen cakes made and sold by children in Guernsey, a variety show performed by young people in Devon, wool being spun in Somerset, bicycles ridden, cars washed and cream teas served. This wide range of fundraising has not only helped to change the lives of many people affected by leprosy, but it also shows the variety of skills and talents which our supporters are blessed with.

This is mirrored by the vast array of ways in which The Leprosy Mission works to help those affected by leprosy to become self-sufficient. Realising that all are given different abilities, we train people and support them in a variety of skills and expertise – from tailoring to typing, child care to carpentry, from health care to horticulture, and self-help groups to shopkeeping. Whatever type of training given or support offered, we believe that everyone should have the freedom and the opportunity to use their God-given talents. This means we are seeing lots of people affected by leprosy supporting themselves and their families in a wide variety of ways. Thank you for helping them become the people God made them to be.



You may have heard that sadly The Leprosy Mission England and Wales's National Director Rupert Haydock passed away suddenly last month. Rupert was at a supporters' meeting in Nottingham on 1 September when he collapsed, just before the meeting took place. He was a very Godly man, highly respected by his colleagues and fully committed to furthering the work and ministry of The Leprosy Mission. Please pray for his family at this time, for his wife Janet, daughters Joy and Ruth and his son Peter.