

OXFORD AND KIMBERLEY AND KURUMAN LINK NEWSLETTER ISSUE: SPRING 2014

New Developments in the Link



A team member baking bread at St Philip's soup kitchen, Boegoeberg

This Newsletter comes with great joy in being able to share the developments in mission and outreach that have taken place since we last wrote:

- Exchange visits are strengthening mission on both sides.
- We have seen some longstanding links grow, as well as a new parish link emerge. You can read about the new link between Dorchester Abbey and Boegoeberg on page 6.
- The Diocese of Kimberley and Kuruman has undertaken an internal review of its diocesan outreach projects. As a result, they've moved from a strategy based around creating "diocesan projects" to one of encouraging and supporting parish-based action that respond to the needs of particular local communities. There will still be work around HIV and AIDS, economic empowerment, and other forms of service ... but it will be based at a local level and better able to respond to local needs as they arise.

As part of this last shift, the Diocese of Oxford's financial support for K and K's outreach work has also changed its focus. Since the mission house at Taung is now a parish, not a diocesan, mission hub, we are no longer raising funds for it. Instead, we are supporting what the Diocese of Kimberley and Kuruman identified as its highest priority for making their new strategy work – a full-time Social Development Officer. That officer's brief is to help parishes think through the theology and practice of outreach, working with them to formulate a vision of loving service, to understand the needs of their communities and to respond to those needs in a way that is sustainable. You can read more about Heather Steenkamp, the SDO, and her work on page 3.

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Comment from the Editorial Team

By **Anne Morse**

Last summer, after many years on the Kimberley and Kuruman Link Committee, I travelled to the Diocese of Kimberley and Kuruman for the first time. I'd just been made editor of the newsletter, and my purpose was to gain insight into the various parish-to-parish links, to meet key people in Kimberley and to see the places, in order to compile better-informed newsletters.



Visiting the parish of All Saints, Montshiwa

Together with Maranda St John Nicolle and Father Simon, I travelled to all four corners of the diocese, taking in numerous parishes and projects along the way. I have many memories of listening to people in their homes and churches and



The Mothers Union, St James, Galeshewe

beginning to understand what daily life is like: the hardship and overwhelming need, the high levels of unemployment and the serious health issues, the injustices, their issues around building and sustaining mission. But it was also a time of great joy to meet inspiring and committed people serving their communities often at personal cost. Vibrant Christian groups living their lives in love and service for God; people who gave us a warm welcome and humbled us with their gratitude. It was a privilege to share their dreams and visions, to be in their company. That's what we hope to be sharing in this and future editions of the newsletter.

Recent Comings and Goings

Recent Visits from Oxford to K and K

- A trustee from Valley of Hope (UK) to Valley of Hope (Mothibistad)
- A party from Wolvercote to Taung
- Sue Booy and Shirley Hoy to Boegoeberg.

Recent Visits from K and K to Oxford

In December, Fr Simon Aiken, Dean of the Diocese of Kimberley and Kuruman, as well as Diocesan Canon Missioner, visited a number of parishes that are supporting outreach in Kimberley and Kuruman.

We are looking forward to having the Revd Carol Starkey, Chair of the Link Committee (K and K side), with us at the beginning of June.

Carol notes: "I am really excited. It will be nice to be there and to see what the link is doing on that side. With this visit, our relationship will grow stronger."



Introducing the Social Development Officer and Her Work

By **Heather Steenkamp**



The Diocese of Kimberley and Kuruman in the Northern Cape, South Africa recently employed a Social Development Officer (SDO). The key role of the SDO is to set up projects and programs for all the parishes in the Diocese and promote the mission of the church in their respective communities. This mission is to feed people spiritually, provide guidance, empower, build capacity as well as advance the work of God.

My name is Heather Steenkamp (the new SDO). I am married to William and we have three children: daughter, Thandeka (27) and two sons, William (18) and Terence (15).

I started with this new responsibility on the 1st of January 2014. This important task involves spreading God's Word, expressing and embracing love and compassion, building individual congregants' and parishes' capacities and in so doing growing the church.

Since starting work in the Diocese I focused on existing projects. We are in the process of reviewing short, medium and long terms goals for some of the projects as well as re-launching a few stagnant projects. The greatest need together with support for projects is building human capacity.

Members from parishes are invited to attend various training – using the slogan “each one teach one”. Some parishes already have edible gardens and are also initiating home edible gardens. Father Mhuriro of St Francis of Assisi Parish in Roodepan, Kimberley has extensive knowledge in the field of edible gardens and he offered to start an edible garden training program. We will be setting up a model/pilot garden where he will train members from various parishes in the Kimberley area once all the “ingredients” for the gardens are sourced and delivered to his parish. This garden is part of the “Hope for the Living” projects. The training will include soil preparation, planting, caring for the plants and harvesting. We will be producing training manuals in the English, Afrikaans and Setswana languages.



*Gloria in the garden
at Hope for the Living*

St Matthews, Barkly Road in Kimberley has very enthusiastic men and women who have a sewing project which needs re-ignition. To ensure the sustainability of the project, we are using the philosophy: The “wealth of the poor”. It is an exciting project where training in Market Research, Marketing as well as Basic Bookkeeping will be run to build capacity.



Carers at Hope for the Living

Caregivers who tend to the very ill and elderly in communities have expressed a need for training and spiritual guidance to enhance their work and lives.

We are busy with Sunday school training for teachers and are developing training material for them in the Kimberley area, where we also invite priests such as Father Reggie Leeuw.

An exciting career development project is to be launched with St Cyprian's Grammar School, a project of St Cyprian's Cathedral. It's a very exciting, intensive, practical career guidance program involving a range of external partners to ensure its success and sustainability.

My philosophy is: Projects must breed sustainability through ongoing human development because there are many skills sitting in the pews of parishes which can be utilized to glorify the work of God in all the Diocese.

Transitions ...



As this newsletter was being compiled, we learned that Fr Simon had been appointed the Dean of the Diocese of the Highveld on Johannesburg's East Rand.

Fr Simon said, "I have so enjoyed being allowed to engage with our Link Diocese of Oxford so far as projects are concerned and have met some remarkable and committed people who add great value to the work and witness of K&K."

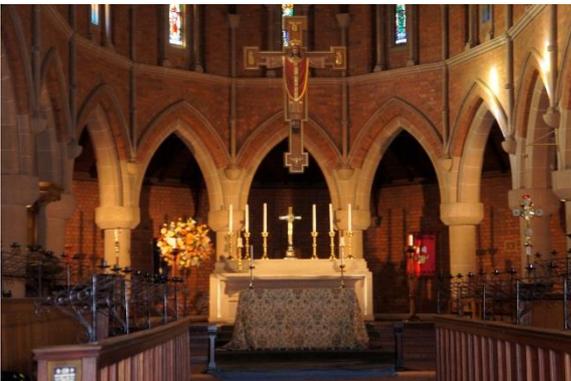
We will miss him - and thank him for his commitment to the Link and for the vision he brought to mission in Kimberley and Kuruman and to our partnership. Go well, and God bless!

This newsletter also marks a transition in the leadership of Oxford's Link Committee. Archdeacon Karen Gorham is standing down as Chair, and Archdeacon Olivia Graham is taking on the role



Archdeacon Karen has led the group for five years with insight, wisdom and a generous spirit. During those years she has visited K&K twice and has clearly developed a great love for, and empathy with all in Kimberley and Kuruman. She has steered the Link with sensitivity, prayer and hope. We have much to thank her for, and she will be missed, but she leaves a strong and committed Link committee at a time of optimism for the future of this strengthened link. We pray God's blessing on her now and for her future.

Praying Together



Prayer for Our Bishops

We pray for Bishop John and Bishop Ossie that they may know your blessing as they work with common purpose to discern your will in growing the vision and mission across the two dioceses, that they may gain strength from one another in making decisions, and joy in shared companionship in the love of Christ.

A Prayer for the Closeness of People across the Distance of Separation

Loving God we pray for all who are part in any way of the Link between Oxford and Kimberley, that the vision for the future will bring new hope and direction. We take joy in the friendships built in love and faith, some over many years others in recent months; may they grow and bear fruit; may they grow to include the many victims of unemployment, isolation and poverty wherever they prevail in both dioceses. We pray that those who give so much to help those who have so little stay strong and steadfast. We give thanks for all the ways we can give to one another and the love we share in Christ Jesus. Amen



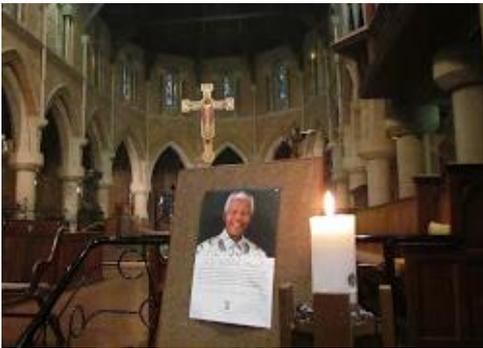
Prayer is the centre and the cornerstone of the K and K/Oxford Link, and we are requested to pray for our Link during Lent using Archdeacon Karen's booklet "Partners in Prayer". It can be found online at <http://www.oxford.anglican.org/pray-kimberley-kuruman-throughout-lent/>

Bishop Ossie: "Thoughts on Nelson Mandela"

When the biggest tree is felled, the whole forest reverberates.

Many things have been said about Mandela over these past days, but this Xhosa quotation about the big tree, Mthimkhulu, captures it all for me.

Those of us who were privileged to be in his company and to shake his hand, or as we say here in Africa to 'touch his blood', those of us who were privileged to hear him speak in his unique style – firm, convincing, genuine – always felt they were in the presence of greatness ...



One of the characteristics of this great man which has not always been reported on, or publicised,

is that he was a man of faith ... One of the things he said was the following:

"There were many dark moments when my faith in humanity was sorely tested but I would not and could not give myself up to despair. That way lies defeat and death". For the record – for those who do not know – he was a practising Methodist. He was always challenged by good Christian people to say exactly where he stands. He was always careful, being the great diplomat, not to cause things that are important to people to alienate them, but always sought to let them concentrate on the common ground, the common things that unite them.

They tried to push him into a corner, are you a Christian or not? and he would not deny or confess but would say: now, what is important here is that we are people of integrity. It was not that he was shy or coy about his faith but he recognised that it could be used, as fundamentalist faith has shown, to divide people and cause havoc. Is it not a sign of faith and a deep commitment to God that a man can walk out of prison after 27 years and reach out a hand of reconciliation? Is it not a man of faith who can, after being called a terrorist for fighting for what he believed, that all should be free and enjoy what mother Africa has for them? Is it not a sign of faith that such a person can say, Let us put the past behind us and let us be reconciled to each other? Is it not a

sign of faith the man could say it is time for us to throw our weapons into the sea and never again allow the people of this beautiful country to oppress one another?

Scripture reminds us of this when we read, "can one gather grapes from thorns or figs from a thistle tree, by one's fruit, one is known". For me, Mr Mandela's fruit, what he displayed in his life, showed me that he was a man of real faith.

Here is another lesson for us, we who are preachers should also be doers. I believe it is Francis who says to his followers or helpers, as he sends them out to work – he says: preach the good news; use words, if necessary. It is not so much the words that will convince people that our hearts are in the right place, it's when we get stuck in, when we do the right thing, when our actions support our deeds – then people will know who we really are. And this is one of the lessons I have learnt from this great man.

The challenge has always been for the people of God to witness and minister outside the four walls of the church. It's easy in the church with like-minded people, people who feel the same, people who will not disagree with you when you say Jesus is Lord. It is when you leave that building, that comfort zone, when you go out into the real world where you must practise your faith. That is where you must deliver the goods. Now, Nelson Mandela, for me, delivered the goods out there in a very difficult arena, not only people of different faiths, people of different persuasions, backgrounds, people who were enemies before, who have radically opposed views, to unite them, to bring them together, to say let us talk together, to make this country work. He made his mark on the stage and also in the wings, and for that we salute him today. A man of integrity, a humble man, a great man, a true leader.

As we come together to salute, to celebrate the life of MADIBA, and to give thanks to God for this wonderful gift to our country, we pray that we may all learn from his example. We pray for his family and all those who are deeply affected by his death ... Thank God for him and for what he has meant to this country. God bless Africa.

Excerpts from a message delivered by the Rt Revd Oswald Swartz at a memorial service for Mandela at St Cyprian's Cathedral, Kimberley. You can read the full message at <http://stcypskimberley.blogspot.co.uk/2013/12/nelson-mandela-memorial-sermon-by-rt.html>. Photo from site.

An Inspired Link between Dorchester and Boegoeberg

By *Shirley Hoy*, member of Dorchester Abbey's link committee.

Having spent an inordinately long amount of time planning for our involvement in a Soup Kitchen project in a remote part of the Kimberley and Kuruman Diocese, it was with great excitement that Sue Booy and I travelled out to South Africa.

We were met with unparalleled hospitality. All the stops were pulled out to make clear to us that our visit was appreciated. It was an opportunity to celebrate, to bring the community together, and give us some insight into the fullness of the lives led in Boegoeberg and surrounds.



Some of what we saw and heard was hard to bear. Little children coming into the weekly Soup Kitchen run for pre-school children with babies carried on their hips. The look on some of the children's faces when

they saw the food on offer; it was obvious that they did not see food very often. Stories told of living under Apartheid, and its legacy, were raw and anguished. In the face of all these difficulties many could have, and do, turn to despair.

But what was so apparent to both Sue and me was the sense of belonging that kept all the people whom we met going. The songs that were sung by the Soup

Kitchen ladies so touching! They were almost all about God being by their side.

And the living out of their faith was so evident in the way the soup

kitchen was being run. In the love offered to each child of the 179 children as they came in, in finding out what was going on in their lives; in the pride with which the vegetable garden, which provided some of the ingredients for the kitchen, was tended.

Our favourite moment of our very busy four day trip was that of sitting on the stoep (veranda) of the house of one of the remarkable women behind the project, just hours before leaving for home. We sat in the baking sun with the wind gently blowing, bathing in this love and pride, shared faith and hope, and talking about nothing much. It is this friendship, a friendship born of being able to see one another truly as brother and sister, that we hope to nourish in the years to come. Money has now been sent through for the purchase of some much needed equipment for the Soup Kitchen. Funding has been accessed for alterations to the church. Both are very much needed, but just the start of what we hope for and dream of together.



Would you like to get involved with the link? You can:

- **Join us in praying.** There are resources for prayer in this newsletter and on our website.
- **Explore the possibility of a parish-to-parish link.** Contact Canon Nick Molony, Link Coordinator, at nick.molony@btinternet.com
- **Find out more about community outreach** in Kimberley and Kuruman. Contact Maranda St John Nicolle at Maranda@ccow.org.uk or 01235 851763.
- **Make a donation towards Kimberley and Kuruman's outreach work**, by sending a cheque made out to ODBF Administered Funds (K and K Projects) to Carol Frew, Accounts Dept, Diocesan Church House, North Hinksey, OX2 0NB.
- **Ask to be put on our newsletter distribution list.** Contact the newsletter editor, Anne Morse at abmorse15@gmail.com