

Happy New Year from MethodistChildren!

Dear Rainbow Users,

We finished 2007 on a high following the successful launch of Peacebuilders, especially since the Church of North India are so pleased with it too!

See below for info about the new Peacebuilders worship resource and overleaf for how it's being used around the Connexion.

This year, 2008, is a year of big changes here at Methodist Church House – make sure you keep up to date by signing up to our monthly E-news. JMA will be changing, that's for sure!

Thanks for all your work for JMA and for children.

Doug, Mary, Penny & Steve
The MethodistChildren Team

Worship for Peace

The Peacebuilders project has been a great success and the latest addition to the list of exciting project resources is *Worship for Peace*.

This new booklet gives you ideas for activities with children and young people that can lead to the preparation and delivery of an all-age service. Working through the three dimensions of Personal, Community and World Peace you and your group can learn, worship and speak out on the theme of building peace.

Why not use *Worship for Peace* to create a service that:

- replaces one of your church's regular all-age or family services
- begins a special Lenten commitment to peace building
- celebrates the way new life brings peace at Easter

You could invite the minister or local preacher to work with you to prepare the service.

All the Peacebuilders resources are available from mph, 4 John Wesley Road, Werrington, Peterborough PE4 6ZP

You can order the Peacebuilders Activity Book, window sticker, paper sticker, badge, postcard '20 ways to peace', JMA service 2007 on the theme of peacebuilding, and copies of Rainbow April 2007 which marked the launch of Peacebuilders.

All these items are free, though donations are welcome!

An order form is in the download section of the Peacebuilders website at www.peacebuilders.info



FOLLOW UP NOTES



www.methodistchildren.org.uk

Peacebuilders

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Peacebuilders – News from

The Children's Sunday Club in Nantwich took over the morning service on 11 Million Takeover Sunday (25 November). The children planned and led a service on the theme of Peace and introduced the JMA Peacebuilders project.

This sketch and the prayers were part of the service:

David (Sunday Club leader) (from body of church)

We all bear grudges; it's human nature, isn't it ?

Steph: Blessed are the ones who work for peace.

Sam & Christine:

They will be called children of God.

David: They're different - why should I care ? They're nothing to do with me.

Steph: Blessed are the ones who work for peace.

Sam & Christine:

They will be called children of God.

David: But they're different - they worship in a different place, a different way.

Steph: Blessed are the ones who work for peace.

Sam & Christine:

They will be called children of God.

David: If we don't sell arms, someone else will. They might not be as careful as we are.

Steph: Blessed are the ones who work for peace.

Sam & Christine:

They will be called children of God.

David: If I shout louder and hit harder than the rest, my voice will be heard.

Steph: Blessed are the ones who work for peace.

Sam & Christine:

They will be called children of God.

A prayer to say thank you

Dear God,

For each of us growing up knowing that we are loved,
Thank you.

For everyone rescued from danger and temptation,
Thank you.

For the friendship we find at church, school and work,
Thank you.

For your peace and love you give us,
Thank you.

Amen.

A prayer to say sorry

Father God,

We are sorry that we quarrel and
fight with each other,
our brothers and sisters, parents and children,
neighbours and friends.

We say things we wish we had not said,

Do things we wish we had not done,

Think things we are ashamed of.

Please forgive us,

Amen.



Pilots

Wavertree Pilots made a Peacebox, which is going to their schools and the local nursing home to spread peace through the community! The Pilots have included badges and window stickers as well as prayers, information about Pilots and peace postcards!

around the Connexion

Dear fellow Peacebuilders,

I wanted to update you on the progress of our Peace project so far.

We launched Peacebuilders on the 2nd September in our two morning services, and have linked it to as many services as possible. Our cafe worship really enjoyed creating peace images and models and adding them to a peace tree, which has been present in the hall, both during worship and through the weekly activities.

Our weekly junior club has been following the Peacebuilders: children for peace programme, and just before half term, created our Peacebox to share with the community. Our box spent two weeks on the church premises visiting both our groups, and other community groups, who were all invited to contribute their thoughts and ideas.

During half term a local pottery cafe has our box, which will return this weekend, before moving on to our local schools.

The infant school will have an assembly on peace, and the box will be in their library for a week for the children to look at and add bits.

Our local Junior School got really excited when they heard about the project. They will have their assembly next week, and the box will travel to each of their classes in turn. All of their teachers have been given a copy of the project booklet to use with their classes. At the end of the week their year four classes are coming to visit the church to see what we have been up to, and to start creating a peace wall. In the coming weeks, I will be taking some Peacebuilder sessions with year three, focussing on peace and co-operative games.

We were also asked to start a midweek Peacebuilders' club, but unfortunately are not able to do that at this time (although we may do a similar club in the future).

Our local community has really taken on board the project too. Local businesses are keen to have the box and share with us. A local art studio actually approached us (having heard of the project) and asked if the box could visit and inspire some art work, which I hope will form part of a display in the church.

The minister and I have already talked about how to extend the project beyond our original time scale, and maybe even reach out more widely. We were planning to round up our project with a Peace service just before Christmas. We are now planning to hold a special Peacebuilders service, focussing on Christ the Prince of Peace, and then send our Peacebox back out into the community for 2008. We are keen to involve the local press and may even look at the possibility of passing it to other churches across the UK with which our congregation has links.

So thank you again for this wonderful project idea and the supporting resources.

Peace be with you

Emma Crouch
emma@blackbirds.org.uk
Children and Families Worker,
Hallam Methodist Church, Sheffield

Turning Challenge into Opportunity

Children are much less likely to just come to church than in previous generations. We can no longer wait for them to turn up, we need to go and find them.

This realisation is behind a new Girls' Brigade initiative in England and Wales, the 'ALF Year of Outreach', created by Arise Ministries.

Ruth Gilson, Co-Director of Arise, comments, "On the doorstep of every local church there are communities of children, many of whom know little about Jesus, most of whom never engage with the church – what a CHALLENGE!! Almost every one of these communities of children has a local church within easy reach – what an OPPORTUNITY!!"

The 'ALF (About Life and Faith) Year of Outreach' is a professionally produced, exciting and useful tool - a pioneering programme containing a whole year's worth of discovery and discipleship resources. The material contains everything needed to set up, promote, launch and run an engaging and exciting outreach amongst children aged 7-11. Packed full of games, quizzes, challenges, arts and crafts,

interactive DVD clips . . . and so much more - all aimed at helping you to reach children and enable them to discover and follow Jesus!

Another key aspect of the programme is its flexibility, it can be easily adapted to meet your particular situation, and can be used in a range of settings, including your existing outreach, churches and school groups, as well as beginning a brand new 'ALF' club. It has been great to see some Methodist churches already doing this!

These are exciting times as we are seeing challenge being turned into opportunity in many places. We would love to be able to support you further as you seek to 'tell the next generation . . .' Please contact the team at Arise Ministries to discuss ways that we could help, or, if you prefer check out our website: www.ariseministries.org.uk

Hannah Field
Arise Children's Evangelist
info@ariseministries.org.uk
01235 510426



Have you looked at ROOTS recently?



ROOTS is a great resource for children's groups. It's the most widely used publication in Methodist Churches but if you haven't seen it or would like another look, send for a free sample! (details below)

ROOTS is an ecumenical project, with contributors drawn from a variety of denominations and traditions from across the UK and uses the *Revised Common Lectionary*. There are two bi-monthly magazines, *Worship* and *Children and Young People*, plus a supporting website, www.rootsontheweb.com

ROOTS is unique in that it offers inspiration for worship preparation across all ages. This means that whether the congregation worships together or in separate groups, everyone can explore the same angle on the week's Bible passages.

ROOTS recognises the changing circumstances in which churches serve their communities. Each week's material is stand-alone, recognising the increasing pattern of leadership by rota.

ROOTS *Children and Young People* magazine provides resources for anyone working with the 3-16 age range – it's really flexible, with plenty of choice to suit the leader's style and the different sorts of groups that they work with.

Each issue includes notes on the Bible passage, a presentation of the passage suitable for young children, craft activities and games, discussion points, an activity sheet and suggestions for songs. There are also articles offering guidance on working with children and young people - everything from story-telling to planning a pilgrimage, plus seasonal material. The pick and mix ideas and activities are written to suit groups in any situation, whatever the length of the session, the venue, the size and age-range of the group.

ROOTS *Worship* magazine is for worship leaders in adult and all-age settings. Each issue includes notes on the Bible passages, two different threads of thought to stimulate sermon preparation, prayers, discussion points, activities and suggestions for hymns and songs. There are also all-age service outlines for seasons and festivals, including liturgies and reflections for Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter.

www.rootsontheweb.com offers additional prayers, activities, *Fast Response*, a weekly reflection on current issues and events, linked to the weekly lectionary passages, and an archive of all past ROOTS resources.

For a free copy of the magazines, simply phone 01733 352002, email sales@rootsontheweb.com or look at the Sample Area on our website, www.rootsontheweb.com.



JMA News



Ireland and Kenya 2008

JMA works across England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. There is a special project in Ireland this year to help **Kibera Methodist Mission**.

Kibera is Africa's largest slum, with 1 million people. It's hard to imagine what it's like. The Methodist Mission there has a range of programmes but JMA's overseas funding will support its school for children who have struggled and dropped out of school. Volunteer teachers, food, uniforms and books and pens are provided.

Methodist Church Ireland hopes that groups will use the **activities and ideas pack** that accompanies the project for 2008 so that children can learn about, pray for and support their peers in Kenya.

Fairtrade Fortnight 25 Feb – 9 March

JMA has always supported Fairtrade and through the work of our Partner Churches we are in touch with very many people who benefit from being able to sell their produce through Fairtrade channels. But we need to keep promoting Fairtrade and convincing people that it really makes a difference if they use their shopping habits to bring change to families and communities.

So... why not run some JMA events in Fairtrade Fortnight?

Order all sorts of resources, posters, badges, balloons, bunting, etc., from www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources or phone 020 7440 7676

It makes a real difference!

New Way to Give

Great news! Donations to JMA can now be made online. Just log on to www.justgiving.com/jma

It will suit people who

- are doing a sponsored event
- live far away
- want to mark a special occasion with a one-off gift
- want to make regular donations without cash
- do absolutely everything online anyway

The site also allows you to set up your own fundraising page which is brilliant for sponsored events, really easy to do and great fun. It also makes it really simple to gift-aid which adds a worthwhile sum to individual gifts.

Normal ongoing JMA collections should be submitted via your Circuit Treasurer as usual. If you need to send a cheque direct to us here please, please make it payable to MCFWM, if you make it payable to JMA we'll unfortunately have to send it back to you and ask for a new one!

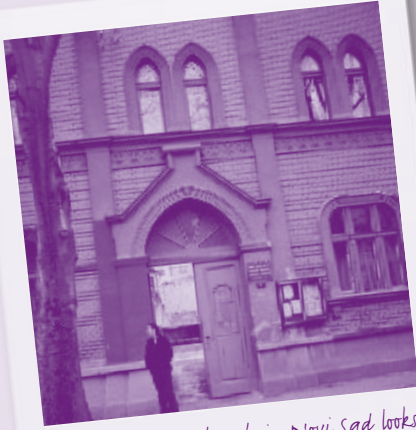
Windows on the World

We have a list of 'World Mission Speakers' who have some particular experience of mission with one of our 61 partners around the world. There are also 20 or so Mission Partners home on leave during 2008. So why not invite one of them to come to your group and give you a real 'window on the world'?

The person who compiles the list and organises visiting speakers is Margaret Michelmores. Contact her for the list of speakers, 'Windows on the World', or tell her your dates and interests: michelmores@methodistchurch.org.uk or write to Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR.

Churches round the world

Here's a bit more information from Steve about the churches on his pictures



The Methodist Church in Novi Sad looks like every other building on the street

Novi Sad is in Serbia (Rainbow September 2005)

The country has a population of 10 million of whom 2 million live in the capital, Belgrade.

During the 1990s sanctions were imposed on Serbia in response to its attempts to remove certain ethnic groups from within its borders and in 1999 Nato mounted a bombing campaign to prevent further persecution.

The country's economy and reputation have not recovered. It is clear that the standard of living for ordinary people is declining, those in work often receive poor wages. Agricultural products are being undermined by foreign imports.

There are 14 Methodist congregations in Serbia, all in the northern part of the country, with a total of about 1,000 members, served by 9 full-time ministers. Methodism was started here in the days of the Austro-Hungarian Empire by a German minister who travelled to Serbia via Vienna, planting congregations as he went. These mainly German-speaking churches flourished until the Second World War. After 1945 almost all the Germans in Serbia were deported or killed and most of their houses and churches handed over to the state. That's why so many churches are in houses now. The Methodist Church was allowed to continue under Yugoslavian law although many other organisations were banned.

There is a relationship between Novi Sad and the Liskeard Circuit in Cornwall.

Kadakada is in Papua New Guinea (Rainbow January 2005)

This church is just a few metres from the Pacific Ocean in a beautiful area of the island of New Britain. It is an important place for the United Church of Papua New Guinea as it is near here where some of the early missionaries

landed from Fiji in 1877. Those early

Christians had a difficult time and I was told that when some of those missionaries were killed by local people, their dog came back to Kadakada with the news and the dog is buried along with the missionaries at the top of the hill behind the church.



Kadakada Methodist Church is surrounded by lush Pacific trees



Decorated for Easter! Buildings at the side give a clue to this country

Catholic Cathedral in Beijing, China (Rainbow Summer 2000 & January 2006)

The church was crowded at each of the six services on Easter Day as many of the 50,000 Catholics in the city flocked to mass on the most important day of the year. The building was rebuilt in 1904 although there has been a church here for much longer. Although the church itself looks very European (as many churches in China do)

you can see some Chinese-looking roofs on the outbuildings.

There are no longer denominations in China, all were combined into either 'Protestant' or 'Catholic'. There are 40,000 Protestants in Beijing with 50 pastors and church workers, only 9 worship centres are categorised as 'churches' but a further 700 are called 'meeting points' having between 2 and 5 services each Sunday. In 2001 when I visited 10 new pastors were appointed. The Christian population is growing very quickly and the shortage of pastors is one of the biggest problems, but new Bible Schools and Colleges are being built. Being a Christian is much more acceptable now, especially in Beijing, where anyone can easily buy a Bible in the church shop for 60p.

Nagapatnam Church, South India (Rainbow April 2005)

This church, part of the Church of South India, is in the fishing town of Nagapatnam and faces towards the sea. On Boxing Day 2004, lots of people were in church when there were sounds

of commotion outside, such a disturbance in fact that the preacher eventually stopped as people went outside to see what was happening. It was the tsunami.

Many people just ran away or got on any bus that was leaving town, others started looking for family, but many took refuge in the church and prayed. The water from the second wave reached into the church, but not quite up the steps into the sanctuary.

Within hours the church became a centre for help and then a place to find food and shelter.

Our partners, the Church of South India (CSI), the Church of North India (CNI) and the Methodist Church of Sri Lanka, have been able to do great work to help people rebuild their lives and their livelihoods – thanks in part, of course, to money raised by JMA.



Attractive with its flowering trees now, but this church saw the worst of the tsunami in 2004

I stayed with Elaine Thomas who was a Mission Partner there when I visited in 2003. She has now returned to be a minister in the UK again and works in Leeds. She married a husband while she was in the Caribbean and is now Revd. Elaine Joseph.

Argentina (Rainbow September 2003)

This photo was taken in the kitchen of a family home in Ushuaia on the island of Tierra del Fuego at the very southern tip of South America. The group is the beginnings of a Methodist Church. As well as meeting for prayer and study these people are planning how to grow a congregation – not easy when your minister lives 800 miles away!



A new Methodist church is beginning in this kitchen near the Antarctic

Ghana (Rainbow January 2004)

Cape Coast is where the first five Methodist missionaries landed on 1 January 1835. They are buried under the pulpit in this cathedral and their arrival is still celebrated every year on that date. The diocese now has 20 circuits and 430 churches, a testament to their dedication and faith.

The old castle is nearby, slaves were taken and bought by the British on a breathtaking scale here. The dungeons were routinely filled, a ship arrived every six weeks and African men and women were herded through the 'Gate of no Return' to begin a voyage across the Atlantic that many of them would not survive.

The cathedral and the castle face each other across the town, representing the extremes of good and evil which the British brought to this part of the world.



Wesley Cathedral is in a port from where slaves were shipped to America

St Vincent (Rainbow September 2003)

This is a church on the island of St Vincent, a small country (population 118,000), which is part of the Leeward Islands. I wrote in Rainbow at the time about the difficulties of the banana trade and the country is still struggling as trading relations with the EU change critically this year.

It is a country that really highlights how important it is for us to buy fairly traded bananas if we can.

The Methodist Church here is in the South Caribbean District of the MCCA, the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas.



A traditional village church on a warm island

ClimateChange

Ronnie and Birdie aren't the only ones taking climate change seriously this year and Ursula isn't the only one suffering from the crisis.

JMA is teaming up with MAYC World Action to produce some resources to help churches take up the challenge Youth Conference have made to us all and devote a whole month to learning about what is causing the climate crisis.

But – let's make change fun...

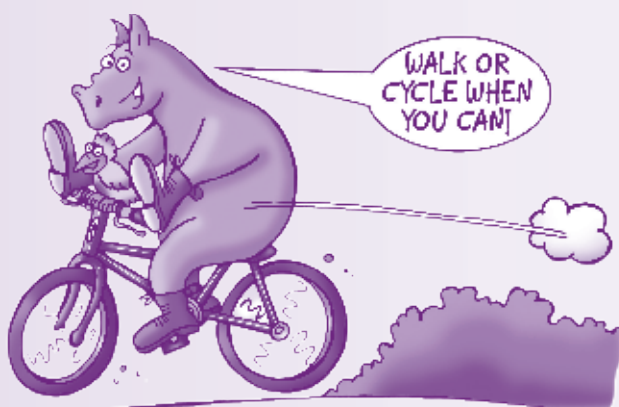
Young people in the Methodist Church have issued a challenge to the Church to take the issue of climate change seriously. They want every church, and all ages, to be active and involved in making a difference during 2008.

In particular – use one particular month to focus on it.

In response to this, JMA and World Action are taking this challenge forward in the 2008 Climate Change Project. In the spring we're going to have exciting resources on-line and in packs.

We're going to have

- *text-a-fact* a special text service about Climate Change
 - polls
 - blogs
 - competitions
 - games
 - studies
 - worship
- ... and much more.



But – let's start with ourselves...

Why not create your own week-long carbon footprint diary – telling us all the things you do on a daily basis. Whether you

- walk to school... or go by car
- switch on all the lights in your home... or switch some off too
- buy fruits from abroad... or from nearby
- use plastic bags... or reuse old ones

Why not encourage your group, family or friends to do the same and then we'll be ready to start.

Resources on the web www.carbonfootprint.com

At Carbon Detectives children can calculate a school's carbon footprint and find out what can be done to reduce carbon emissions. www.carbondetectives.org.uk

Carbon Control is a carbon reduction project for children aged between 7-14 with an online curriculum-based carbon footprint calculator. www.carboncontrol.org.uk



And watch out for the project at www.methodistchildren.org.uk and www.mayc.info

Share your fundraising activities. What did your group do? E-mail digital photos of your events for inclusion in Rainbow.