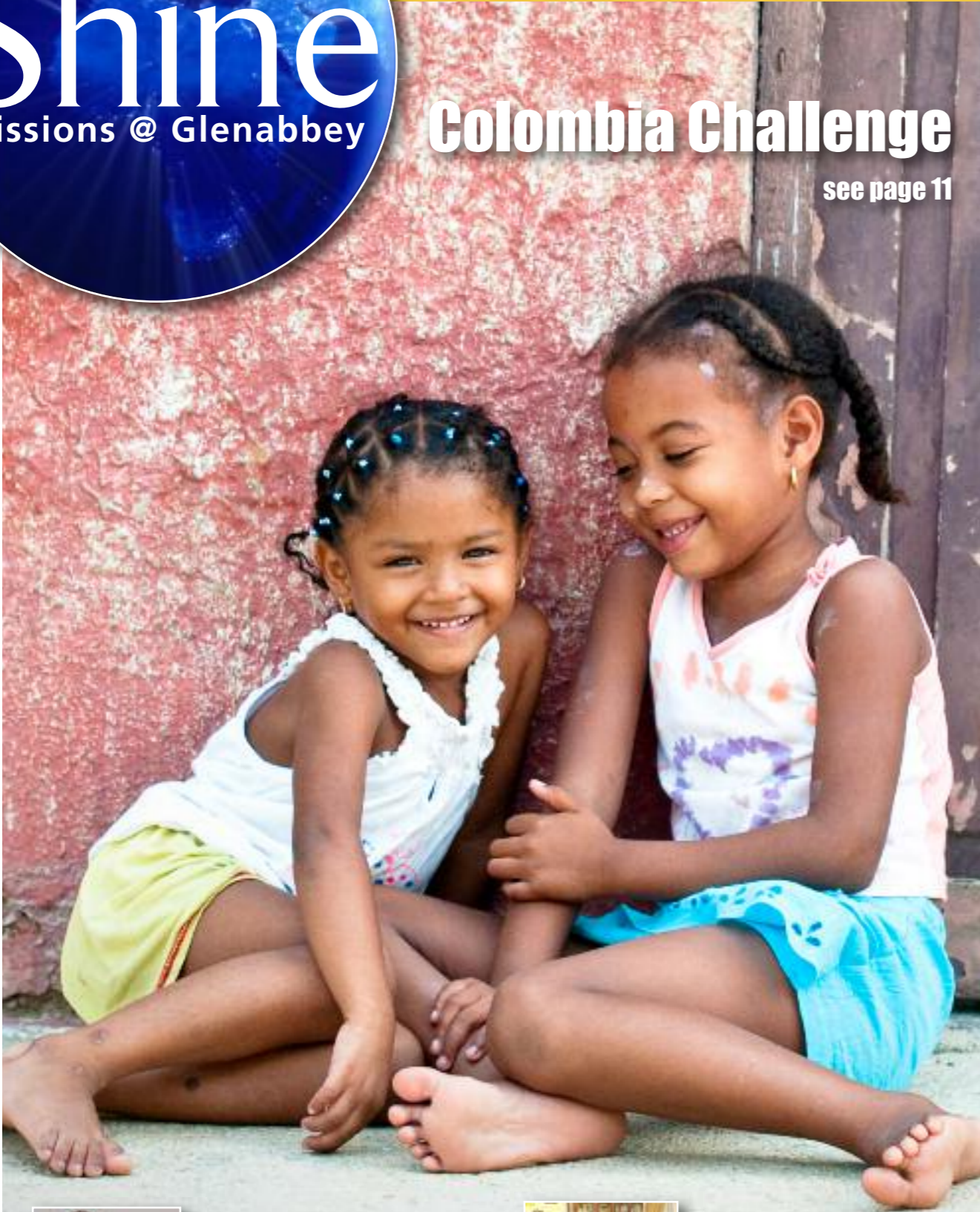




# Colombia Challenge

see page 11



**Charlie & Tania's  
"foreign affair"**  
pages 4-5



**A New Christian  
community in Loja**  
pages 6-7



## New Beginnings

At the start of another year I've been challenged by stories of new beginnings. From the call of Abraham in Genesis 12, to the call of Jeremiah 1:4-10; or the birth of Jesus and the implications for Mary in Luke 1:26-38; to the coming of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 and the start of the early church – new beginnings are such exciting stories full of as yet unknown potential.

This issue of Shine contains many stories that talk about new beginnings. New beginnings that have something in common – Charlie and Tania and their call to 'mission' with ECM in Camarma helping to facilitate the planting of churches across Europe; a new classroom block in Mukinge with the potential of untold impact on the lives of the children who will fill those classrooms; memories of a dream that became a reality known as the OM Ships ministry; excitement at the answer to prayer for the continuation of her work amongst vulnerable women with the arrival of new people; or the start of a new church in Loja, called the Chonta Cruz Christain Community.

New beginnings, yes, but what do they have in common? – Well the answer is simple – they all feature in this edition of Shine. All of these new beginnings are from stories that are unfolding in the lives of those who have gone out from Glenabbey on long term and short term missions opportunities to serve God in other parts of the world. It's an exciting start to a new year as we get to read a little of the new things that God is doing in and through other people that we know and pray for.

So why not think about a new beginning for yourself? What about joining a short term mission team this summer, or link up with one of our missions partners? Is God challenging you to consider leaving the comfort of your life here to serve him somewhere else? New beginnings are exciting, new beginnings are happening all the time. If you'd like to find out more about any Short Term Missions opportunities then please email: [stm@glenabbey.org.uk](mailto:stm@glenabbey.org.uk)

Enjoy Shine!

David Mairs

We are always keen to hear from our members regarding their missions activities. Please contact David Mairs in the church office or via email: [missions@glenabbey.org.uk](mailto:missions@glenabbey.org.uk) to keep us informed



by Flo Milliken

## Missions?

### ... Nah, it isn't really my thing!

I wonder can you identify with that? I used to. Missions didn't really do it for me. Growing up I saw missionaries as eccentric people, clearly called by God to do great things. I was happy to let them and take only a polite interest when required. I wasn't naturally drawn to mission work so it obviously wasn't my calling.

I wonder have you ever told God you'd go wherever and do whatever He wanted you to. I did once in 2000 and a few months later received a phone call from a mission organisation looking for a physio in Uganda for two years. It soon changed my outlook on mission. When you go, the dark faces become people with names, personalities and needs, so much so that praying for them and giving to them becomes much easier when you return. It's one of the reasons we advocate that anyone who can should look into doing a short term missions trip at some stage in their lives and there is no age limit on that. Going widens your horizons, forces you to lean more on God and helps you see the world through God's eyes.

#### Pray, give and go

If asked, "What can you do for missions?" most people would say pray, give and go, but if you are not a goer then you're a sender. Those who go often give up a good salary, which should help keep the sacrifice of our own giving in perspective. Missions can't function without finances and there are so many opportunities on our doorstep to support those who do go. We have the privilege of knowing several goers in our own church family to whom we can give.

But it's not just finances we can give. An encouraging email or parcel from home means a lot.

And what of prayer? Do you think it

really makes a difference? I had my doubts, but having experienced specific prayers being answered it helped me appreciate the power of prayer. I valued my prayer warriors back home and wished I could transport them out to see how God was answering their prayers.

Today we have no excuses for not praying specifically for people and situations all over the world. Our home grown missionaries give us prayer points and our Wednesday night prayer meetings and website keep these updated.

Websites, such as the Joshua Project ([www.joshuaproject.org.uk](http://www.joshuaproject.org.uk)), even tell us how to pray for the many unreached people groups in our world and we can have these sent to our phones on a daily basis.

Pray for the Unreached People of the Day



Still not convinced you have a role in missions work? Could it be that it's not the "how" of missions we struggle with but more the "why"? Whilst we feast on the great Bible teaching and resources we have at our disposal, are we taking them for granted and ignoring the fact millions of people have never even heard of Jesus? If God's glory is our top priority then we need to obey Him and do the good works which He has prepared in advance for us to do.

As we enter 2012, let us ask God to lead us into missions work, praying that we will see and take the opportunities before us so that His name will be glorified.

*"Tell of His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples. For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised."*  
1 Chronicles 16:24-25

## Dental Caring

### in Dobrun

Richard McBride

In 2008 the India Focus Group begat Glenabbey Healthcare. Our aim is to 'love our neighbours' using everyday skills, abilities or interests to benefit others. Ladies led the way with nurses, GPs and even dentists responding. The first Stand by Me/Glenabbey team was formed in August 2009 - destination Romania. Headtorch, portable chair, bag of tools and frisbees - we were going. And God found a use for us.

Stand by Me (Previously Kids Alive UK) rescued 11 endangered or orphaned girls 13 years ago. They were cared for physically, emotionally and spiritually by Cami and her loving family in the House of Hope. Stand by Me built the Denisa centre to provide Dobrun's local kids with a safe meeting place for education, sport, craft and food. Today 43 of the 10-14 year olds attend daily for after-school support. After a sweltering week of health checks, first aid training, simple dental treatments, frisbee, football and a few water fights we had made lots of new friends. With the nearest dentist 45 minutes away the need was significant. A second visit was planned for June 2010.

#### A second trip

Again Glenabbey responded with nurses, dentists and a translator. Interdenominational Romanian lessons provided help for a Glengormley Presbyterian team, also Romania bound. Richard Irwin negotiated the red tape to give the dentists official license to practice. Cami made contact with Dr Cristi Meru, affectionately named 'Vlad' (after Vlad the Impaler, that loveable Romanian), a local dentist who kindly opened his clinic for our use. The team ran first aid, self awareness and dental health education in Dobrun. We provided dental examinations for kids and adults and transported those in need to 'Vlad's' clinic for treatment. Another busy week. 2 chairs, 3 nurses, 2 dentists, 3

translators, patients, parents, 1 Vlad and 1 Monty all in the same room in over 35° of heat...sweaty chaos. The final day saw the dental team in another town (Slatina). We briefly met another dentist Petronela. Dental education, examinations, advice and treatment for a Slatina children's home.

#### Homegroup help

Parkgate home group organised a Chinese banquet raising £785 for



Romania healthcare work. God opened an unexpected door: Petronela's mother owns a dental practice in Slatina and they were keen to help the kids of Dobrun. For the past 12 months Cami has been transporting Denisa kids two afternoons per month for dental care. The Parkgate funding has improved the quality of life for 23 children who are now pain free and have experienced something of loving our neighbours. As funds started to run low, Glenabbey church kindly responded with a one-off £400 donation. This secures the work into 2012.

#### November visit

During November's visit to Dobrun we met Petronela and 'Mama' (Ioana). It was encouraging and reassuring to see smiling kids and the care they had received, the quality of clinics and materials being used. The trip was complete when we tracked down and met 'Vlad'. It was a pleasure to courier gifts to Dobrun on behalf of a Portadown CE team.

It's great when the family of God works together to help others. Dunadry homegroup responded with an Accessorize coffee morning and carwash, providing enough to sustain dental caring in Dobrun for at least the next 12 months. Thank you.



## Healthcare team to visit Ethiopia

This March (1st - 10th) a team will again be travelling to the town of Bekoiji, Ethiopia to continue the care of the children and families of the Stand by Me school there. The team of healthcare professionals headed by Jonny Stirling (GP) will include 2 paediatricians, and 3 nurses. In addition other non medical folk from the Parkgate Homegroup will be travelling and assisting with Health Promotion, building water filters etc. The homegroup have been raising significant levels of funds to assist with these projects.

The medical team will be continuing with the ongoing health programme for the children in the school and will also be following up some specific medical needs which they've been made aware of in advance. Pray for safety for all involved and that God will guide in all the circumstances the team may face.





# A Foreign Affair

Rachel Shields meets Charlie & Tania Deering

Security, it would seem, is over-rated. Not by everyone, of course; there are still enough of us pedestrian-loving, un-imaginative folk staid enough to actually prefer tax returns to empanadas, lengthened vowels to soft accents and bedroom slippers to hiking boots. But there is a minority – and a growing one at that – who seem quite irrepressibly happy to swap security for adventure, that enigmatic call of the unknown. It seems, somehow, to be in the blood; that elusive something which percolates imperceptibly beneath the surface of their lives, tugging impishly on the corners of their imagination and unsettling any and all attempts at determined repose. Moreover, it has a name. It is called “mission”.

A self-confessed coward like myself finds it quizzically hard to imagine why. Yet when you talk with Charlie and Tania Deering, feet curled up on the sofa, drinking coffee and green tea (Tania’s, not mine - I have no difficulty rating security), you begin to see things through their eyes and acquire a sense of their perspective. Mission, obviously, is in their blood. Having served in Ecuador for seven years prior to their return in 2002, Charlie and Tania never quite managed to lose their missionary focus; so when an email bounced into their inbox in December 2010, suggesting Camarma (near Madrid), as a possible missionary destination, no one, least of all their children, was surprised when they began to investigate further, going out to Camarma to “have a look round”. That was back in April of last year. Since then, Charlie and Tania have applied formally to ECM (European Christian Mission) and been accepted, also formally, for mission work in Spain. They hope to start this newest chapter of their lives this summer.

#### Roles

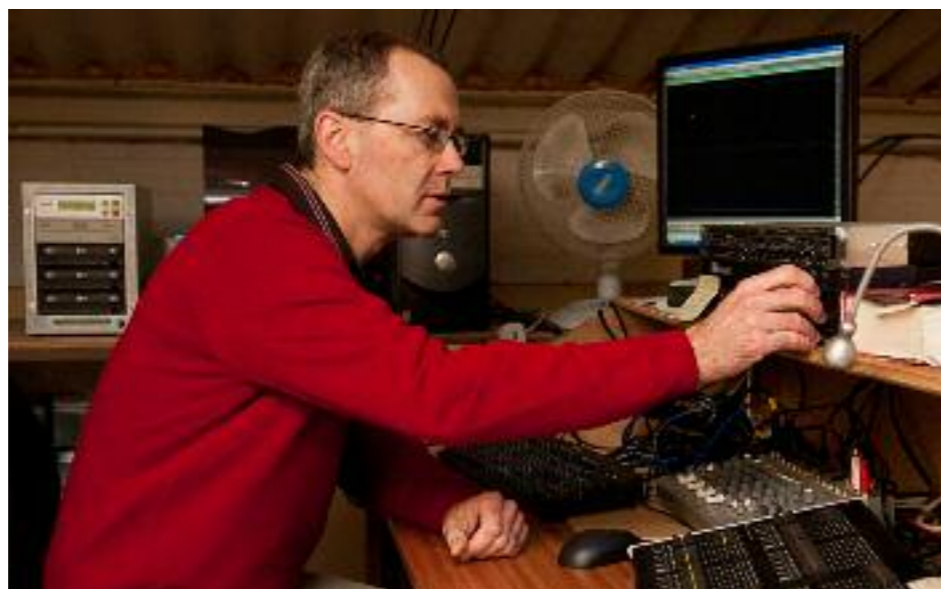
Charlie explains more about their roles. “ECM, whose primary focus is on church planting in Europe, has workers in 18 countries. Ron and Brenda Anderson, whom we know well, are responsible

visitors. She also hopes to assist Brenda in outreach in the nearby local women’s prison, as well as actively engaging with the Camarma church.”

#### Personal Issues

It all sounds, well, busy. But what about the personal side? What about those things that don’t fall neatly into place, like the distance between themselves and Mark and Naomi, their two grown-up children; or the on-going worry of aging parents; or the need to find a home for three year old Kenzie, the beloved Springer Collie who scratches intermittently at the kitchen door, as if to remind us of her presence? What of the connections made here, the friends, the small groups, the ties? And what about Rachel, the little special needs child that Tania cares for each week? What of these?

It is obvious that these are very real issues for Charlie and Tania. They are very aware of the need to “finish well”. And yet, as we have all been reminded



recently, they are going where their gifts will be exploited the most and where the desires and passions of their hearts will be best realized. In this, they have the total support of their children; and the support of Glenabbey as a church fellowship.

#### Support

As with many mission agencies, Charlie and Tania will not receive a salary while working for ECM, so the challenge for them at the moment is to raise the necessary financial support, as they will be dependent on the gifts and generosity of others. Glenabbey as a church has committed its support for the next three years and while, from a human perspective, Charlie and Tania realise that timing could be better with many people facing economic hardship, they firmly believe that God has brought them this far for a reason and that, ultimately, the work is His.

One last thing remains to be said: “To Him be the Glory” Buen viaje!!

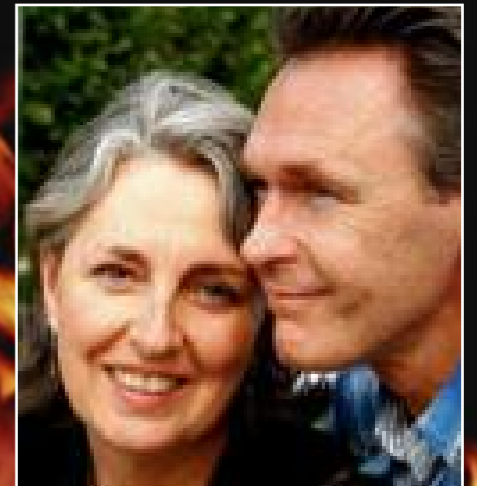
## STOP PRESS!

Glenabbey Missions has agreed to supply an initial 10% of their overall support needs over the next 3 years which equates to around £3,000 per year. That leaves another £27,000 to be found per year from Glenabbey members, friends and family. It seems like an awfully big number but maybe seeing it as two annual salaries of 15K puts it more in perspective. When it’s broken down it equates to 50 people giving £50 per month or 100 people giving £25 per month. If you’d like to stand with and support Charlie and Tania as they serve God in Camarma with ECM, please pick up one of their support packs at the information desk or contact Charlie and Tania directly on : 028 9336 7010, email: candt@deering.fsworld.co.uk.

## Arsonists 4 Christ

An Italian student asked me, “So John, what is it you actually do in Agape?” Students do not put a gloss or a spin on their questions! My answer was, “I light fires – usually under students like you.” I went on to explain that my vision is to see a new generation of Young European Movement Leaders raised up so that they can take the gospel to their peers in a culturally relevant way. Perhaps growing up in West Belfast does make me a bit of an arsonist for Christ! Considering that there are 12 million university students in W. Europe & that they are both a strategic & difficult group to reach we need the Spirit to move in Revival fashion.

Ruth’s responsibility is the Staff Care & Development for Agape in Western Europe. Her vision for the approximately 800 staff members is that is that they will all feel known, needed & have a future. Sometimes she feels that she is a bit too busy putting fires out. Maybe her upbringing in Strabane has prepped her for such a time as this? The reality is that where you have missionaries you will have problems. Acts 15 shows that we are a driven & opinionated lot who sometimes lack some interpersonal skills! But she is content that most of her time is spent on positive & proactive matters that help the staff of Agape Europe develop. This in turn helps them be even more effective in their ministry roles of evangelism & discipleship.



John & Ruth both serve on the Agape European Leadership Team



## Some ideas for Your Evangelism:

#### Jesus Supper

Recently we have been trying to wean ourselves off the usual event driven evangelism that we have, i.e. where we invite our reluctant non-Christian friend to a religious meeting, usually at church.

We asked ourselves the simple question, “Where is God already at work & how may we join him?” The answer was closer to hand than we first thought. We are blessed with a lot of not-yet-Christian neighbours so we asked some to come for a meal. The only deal was they should think of one question about Jesus. So the meal deal was called a Jesus Supper. We ate & chatted about Jesus in a most honest fashion. Their questions were brilliant: “What am I missing out on, if I do not know Jesus?” “I used to go to church, I think I have a faith, is that enough for Jesus?”

Why not try having your own meal deal with your neighbours?

#### facebook

I am only a recent convert to the social media phenomena of Facebook or as my sister calls it Noseybook. However, it’s where a lot of people are easily found & we need to use all available means to connect with & reach the lost. What has impressed me is the flexibility & ease at which you can chat, send You Tube videos, clips of sermons, or just post your status as a follower of Jesus. So, why not try using Facebook in gossiping the gospel?

Introducing...



# Chonta Cruz Christian Community, Loja

Chonta Cruz Christian Community began as August ended; just as our Ecuadorian summer drew to a sultry close. With just four Vogan's attending and baby Sammy sleeping peacefully, we met together for the first time under our new name: the Chonta Cruz (our local area) Christian Community. Previously God had given us Isaiah 43:18-19 as a promise that he would do a new thing for our spiritually impoverished area of Loja, and so, in late August, we stepped out in faith and CCCC began.

Allow me to share with you a few statistics to give you a feel for the work we do here: Our recent holiday bible club averaged 30 kids with 12 parents turning up for the closing presentation. Our children's Christmas play saw 70 people attending and hearts touched by the closing gospel presentation. In response we have now started a weekly kids' club (currently in our garage!) with Jenny Riggs, an OMS short-termer from US-Mexico assisting. On Sunday mornings we have about six adults turning up for Bible study and a dozen or so children attending our Sunday school. These figures greatly encourage us. Most recently, we were joined by another family as we brought in the New Year with prayer. The following day we held our first communion service together: it was a real joy.

### Setbacks

But work such as this is difficult and not without its setbacks. Most of the adults coming to the church are single mothers who have been reached through their children or through clothes' sales organised by Radio Hope.

While we are delighted to have these women, we also need men to come to faith and strengthen the church. Take, for example, our neighbours Carlos and Narcisca: both made decisions to follow Christ and both have experienced significant pressure from their extended families to remain in the traditional, Peruvian church; yet since her decision to follow Christ, Narcisca has grown in her faith while Carlos has slipped back into heavy drinking. A New Year binge left Carlos intoxicated and struggling to live. While Mark has been able to witness to him several times, we pray he will repent and turn again to Christ. Pool (Paul), a student from Peru's

*"One woman phoned to say her sister had just committed suicide, leaving behind two young toddlers. Nube was able to broadcast a radio appeal which has brought much-needed aid"*

improve income. We heard recently that the Radio Board is happy with the improvements made and plans to hire an accountant to continue the

progress.

Nube has had several callers using the radio as a lifeline to ask for help. One woman phoned to say her sister had just committed suicide, leaving behind two young toddlers. Nube was able to broadcast a radio appeal which has brought much-needed aid, as well as



Baptist Seminary, has been a great help and encouragement to us, joining with us in door-to-door evangelism. On one of his visits Pool met with Ramiro and Andrea. Andrea had previously decided to follow Christ with Nube but her husband subsequently tried to stop her. During one of Pool's visits Ramiro humbly accepted Christ and we thank God that this family is now united in faith; but Ramiro openly admits he has sins to leave and many difficult decisions to make. Mark would like to start a men's group to help these men grow in their faith, learn new skills and better support their families. We further pray that God will develop a leadership team to strengthen our growing church.

### Radio Hope Update

During the last two years Mark has been organising the finances for Radio Hope, working with a local team to



permanent offers of help to the woman. Nube is now taking a break from the programme to attend the OMS conference with Mark and then meet with Mark's parents in Guayaquil.

### Expansion Plans

We trust that the church will continue to grow, so have made plans to extend the church by building a third floor onto our own home. This will provide a 51m<sup>2</sup> (552ft<sup>2</sup>) meeting area in addition to toilets, a kitchenette and stair access from street level. We hope eventually to provide accommodation for short termers or teams who come to help out. Since this is an addition to our own home, we are not eligible for OMS funding. The proposed cost is about £20,000, with plans currently being presented for approval by Loja City Council. So if there are any handy Glenabbey folk wishing to come out....!

### Sammy's Progress

We are sad to report that the adoption process is slow here. Officials move slowly on crucial documents, making spelling and other mistakes that invalidate paperwork. We had hoped that Sammy would be registered by the New Year but this is not to be the case. We are now waiting for reports to arrive from the Police and Public Prosecutor. Please keep praying.

### Thank you Glenabbey

We appreciate the great team in Glenabbey that works with us, supporting us in prayer and giving both individually and collectively. A special thank you to all who sent presents via Heather with Mark's parents who are visiting this month. All offers of help and visits are most welcome. Please arrange yours soon!

# The Light of the World is - Bangor?

Pam and I were in the Bangor area over Christmas and someone reminded us about the monastery there. You can't see it now (Bangor Abbey church is built on the location) but it helped to put Ireland on the map – in the sixth and seventh centuries.

It was from the great centre of learning in Bangor that the gospel reached out to Germany and elsewhere around Europe. Our family didn't quite appreciate this until we went to work for Agapé in Germany in 1986 and the head teacher at Seán's school told us that this district of Germany (a Christian stronghold to this day) was indebted to the Irish missionaries – from Bangor.

Indeed Bangor became known as the "Light of the World"! Sometimes I think that the monks probably prayed for the future of missionary work there long before Herbie Mateer launched the Bangor Missionary Convention in 1937!

### Inspiring

I find this inspiring. That other man from Co Down, C.S. Lewis, imagines how a senior devil would write to a junior devil on the art of temptation (in The Screwtape Letters). In the course of one of his letters the senior devil speaks of the Church, describing it as "spread out through all time and space and rooted in eternity, terrible as an army with banners. That, I confess, is a spectacle which makes our boldest tempters uneasy. But fortunately it is quite invisible to these humans."



David & Pam Wilson with their family

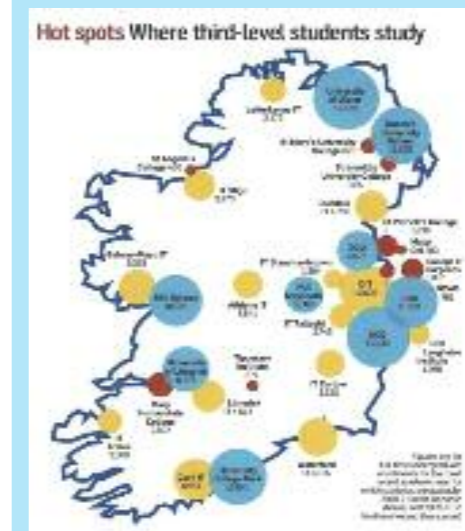
Today we call the great centres of learning "universities". And our people who have known the main elements of the Christian faith for over 1500 years are beginning to forget. There's something wrong with that - no student at an Irish university should graduate without hearing how to respond to Christ.

All is not lost. Young people who never saw their parents go to church still have a familiarity, however hazy, with ideas such as God, Jesus, mankind, sin, salvation, authority, revelation.

### Urgency

But time is not on our side. How long will the window to young Irish hearts be as open as it is today? Ten years? Better to assume maybe five years. Here's the facts of our common task. There are 99,911 undergraduates at Irish universities, North and South. In the North there is a special demographic. Jim Allister (Traditional Unionist Voice) obtained the most recent N.I. figures from the Higher Education Statistics Agency: 60% of Northern students are of a "Catholic"/nationalist background – 40% from a "Protestant"/unionist tradition.

It is to this goal – preventing people graduating without knowing how to respond to Christ – that Pam and I are committed. And we know that Glenabbey makes a great contribution to this, not just by supporting us, but by supporting this cause and making sure Christ's name is lifted up in all the right places.



# Realising the dream

News from Claire Robinson in Zambia

On the 13th September 2011, building work commenced on the foundation slab of Mukinge Hill Academy's new two classroom block. Under the supervision of Mr Noel Reid from New Zealand, work progressed and our excitement grew as we saw the rooms take shape. By the time Noel went home mid November the roof had been put on. We praised the Lord that we reached this stage before rainy season really got going!

Following Noel's departure I became building supervisor as well as project manager, not forgetting my supposed main role of teaching Grade 4 and 5! Anyone else think God has a funny sense of humour sometimes?! A typical day for me at that time began on site at 7.30am, checking works to be completed that day with the builders, electrician, carpenter and plumber. I began teaching at 8.00am and often had interruptions during the day as supplies arrived or my advice was sought on anything from the ratios of sand to cement we should use for the plaster to the depth I thought the septic tank should be dug! I was thankful when Matthias, from Switzerland, arrived to serve at the hospital workshop and volunteered to help me check the electrics and the more technical side of the project! In the afternoons I organised procurement of supplies, locally from the Boma and through co-ordination with the hospital for the truck runs to towns on the Copperbelt.

## Setbacks

In December the plastering works and flooring, which were expected to take four weeks, started to drag. When I questioned how we were going to finish by the deadline I was told 'Ah madam, the inside walls take long, we would be faster without them!' Which no doubt was true but rather impractical! We had further setbacks with cement which got wet in transit and getting any two similar estimations of paint required for the building was almost impossible! I got my school holidays on the 2nd December and started working with the labourers. My job was to scrape down all the window frames, finding them under all the excess plaster! I painted burglar bars, doors, window and door frames with undercoat and gloss while the men



Painted the interior of the classroom. The week before school opened a lot of work remained and so 10 of the other SIM short termers joined me for a three hour painting party at the school one evening! The results were surprisingly good the next morning, considering we had been painting by the classroom lights and the moonlight!

## Opening Day

Praise the Lord we opened school on Monday 9th January and we were able to teach in the new classrooms!

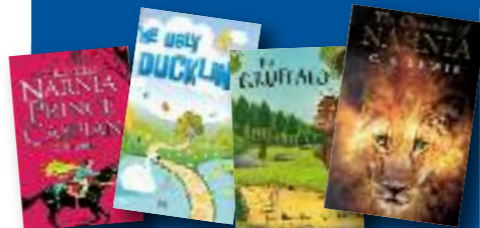
We had no glass in the windows, the toilets were not plumbed in, the outside of the building was half painted and the new desks hadn't arrived, but we did hold classes in the rooms! The dream became a reality despite the many times I wondered if we would make the deadline. God has been faithful in providing all we need to complete this stage of the school building project. Please continue to pray with us that the remaining works can be completed as close to the end of January as possible.

## Curriculum change

We have changed from the American PACE system to the Zambian Curriculum. This is much more culturally relevant for the pupils and should not be as expensive to sustain

after the initial investment in new resources this year. I have a lot of new materials to become familiar with but to be able to teach to the whole class (as opposed to every child working on an individual subject area in the same room!), to see their interest spark and develop their enjoyment of learning, makes the effort worthwhile. We still lack a good reading scheme and so this will be one of my challenges over my remaining six months, to ensure reading skills are taught effectively. If you think you could come out and encourage the children and staff of the school or if you would like to see what God is doing in Mukinge first hand, please enquire from David Mairs about the possible team to Zambia. I have been asked to start work on a new three classroom block so that we can have one classroom per grade and add a grade 6 and 7 to the school ... I've politely declined at this stage! That's another dream!

## Books for Claire's school



"A world without books is like a room without windows." So goes the saying. Claire's school is in great need of appropriate books for her library. If you have any children's books (fiction and non-fiction) that you would like to donate please bring them to church on Sunday 5th Feb for collection. Do not worry about their suitability for Claire's pupils as they will be vetted before being sent. We would ask that you give £1 for each book you donate to cover the cost of transport. Thank you. For more information, contact Gerry on 07815611892.

## Exciting Breaking News.....

**David Mairs** and **Gareth Black** will be joined by John Dickinson (Carnmoney Presbyterian) on a Bible/Theology teaching trip to the 'Far East' in April of this year. This is part of Release International's strategy for the development of leaders and pastors in the rapidly expanding church in the region. Michael Wilson will lead this team and we ask for you to pray into the whole of this trip. Pray for David, Gareth and John as they meet to agree teaching plans, for safety in travel, health and their families at home whilst they are away.

**Jonathan McCunn** will be in Tanzania for five weeks from March 1st with DOT (Digital Opportunity Trust - a charity based in Canada) as part of an international team of 15 people from IBM (representing 13 different countries). Please pray for Jonathan as he travels and whilst he is working in Tanzania. The team will be working on a number of projects to assist with capturing key life events that will help with immunisation programmes and other initiatives.

# An Ethiopian Education



Robert Young reports on his trip to assess teaching standards

My first shock in Bekoiji was getting acclimatised to the altitude – those of you who know me well will realise that my fitness levels are not what they should be, not even taking my age into account – but the breathlessness experienced during those first few hours was almost frightening – be warned if you decide to go – and if you have the opportunity I would highly recommend it. The next was how uninhibited the people were. The favourite cry was 'one camera' which, simply translated meant that you were being asked to take a photograph and let the subject view the digital display which was an occasion of great excitement for them – even if they would not have a print for future viewing. Another experiential shock was worshipping with Christian brothers and sisters in their church on the Sundays we were there – I have been in Tanzania and Kenya in the past but that did not prepare me for the exuberance, enthusiasm and sheer drama of those worship services – and did confirm my total lack of rhythm – particularly African rhythm. Perhaps most surprising of all was Ethiopian time – they use a different calendar which meant that October 2011 for us was February 1994 for them! Local time is also different from international time – as we travel Bekoiji is three hours ahead of us but you add on another three hours to adjust to local time.

## Role

My role was again an educational one and it was a joy to observe and participate in the lessons in the *Stand by Me* Bethany School and a privilege to



be involved in teacher training. Relationships between the staff and the students were very warm with high levels of interaction, smiles and reassuring touch. Such was the attitude of staff that there was much evidence of students taking risks for their learning – being prepared to make mistakes or try something new. One example of this was the willingness of older students in a class of those much younger than themselves, (there were some examples of teenagers mixing with eight or nine year olds) being prepared to volunteer answers and come forward to lead the class in an activity. The enthusiasm and energy of the teachers was infectious, leading the students to be equally enthusiastic in their learning. Laughter in the classrooms was a sure sign of the warmth of relationship and the enjoyment in learning which went alongside this. During my observation it was obvious that there were not enough texts for every student to have his/her own and there was much sharing of well used books. Students appeared to take great care of texts and their own books having them backed and carried in bags.

## Bright future

Bethany is an excellent position to embrace the future. Leadership in the school is in the good hands of the headmaster and dedicated, creative and often imaginative teaching staff has created a positive learning environment where students flourish. The training appears to have been well received and even before I left I had already witnessed evidence that it was being implemented.

An English *Stand by Me* team was also working in Bethany at the time, giving me the opportunity to be involved in the wider work of the charity. This team was involved in the redecoration of classrooms and dining hall, the repair and painting of fences, the raising of finance for part of the on-going building programme and participation

in a pure water project – and still had time to interact with the children and staff of Bethany School. The water in Bethany is of reasonable quality but still carries water borne diseases, the team built simple water purifiers where water is poured into a top bucket where it is filtered and piped into a bottom bucket. These simple filters last for three years and success in dealing with gastric and other problems suffered by the children and their parents has been clearly demonstrated. Families in most need of the filters were identified by local staff and after an explanation by El (Eleanor to her mum), a nurse from Northern Ireland who gave up three months to work in Bekoiji, they were able to take the filters home – courtesy of the many 'traps' we had hired for the day.

## God's work

Space does not allow me to share with you the answered prayer, evidence of the Spirit at work, divine intervention, the grandfather who sent his non believing teenage granddaughters as part of the team and the impact this has had on them but I would be delighted to share with you in your home groups or cells. In finishing may I thank all of you who remember me in prayer when I try to serve the Lord through *Stand by Me*, it is very much appreciated, very necessary and has been graciously answered.



# Taking the Gospel . . . . . to the ends of the earth

Three men sat in a converted pub in Bolton (John Dyson was not there) 40 years ago and dreamed of a ship to bring knowledge, help and hope to the people of the world. Their friends were 'amused'. But God liked it. Those young men, including George Verwer, were leaders of the Christian organisation Operation Mobilisation (OM) and their dream of a ship-based ministry reaching the world for Jesus is still being fulfilled four decades later; over a million people visit the vessel Logos Hope every year, to choose life-changing literature in the on board book fair or interact with the all-Christian crew. In 2009, Logos Hope docked in Belfast and thousands of people flocked to see this unique ministry for themselves. Since then, the ship has served port communities in the Caribbean, Africa, the Middle East, India and East Asia. Besides offering thousands of titles of quality, affordable Christian and



educational literature, the crew also assist those in need, train local believers in evangelism and share the Good News at every opportunity. Over 40 nationalities are represented among the 400 people who serve on board and each crew member, including the Captain, receives no salary. Their living costs are financially supported by family, friends and church members back home, which means that the ministry of all those on the ship is covered in the prayers of thousands of people. People from Glenabbey Church can be a part of the work the Lord is doing through Logos Hope. David Mairs and Brian Scott visited the ship in the last 14 months and were amazed by all that God is doing through the ministry of the crew on board (which includes eight folk from Northern Ireland!).

every ten minutes and have the opportunity to learn about God's love. During that time, the vessel's generators will burn through £25 of fuel. Could you give towards this cost, possibly by a monthly Direct Debit?

**PRAY:**  
The crew is made up of people from all backgrounds and skill sets, from administrators to qualified marine engineers and welders. Would you be interested in joining for a two-year commitment? Or, join a ten-week Short Term Exposure Programme (STEP) and gain an overview experience of life on board the Logos Hope. If you can't go - do you know someone who can? In addition to Logos Hope, God is also transforming lives and communities through 6,000 other OM workers in a hundred countries. Short and long-term opportunities can be found at [www.uk.om.org](http://www.uk.om.org). For more information contact: John O McIlvenna E: [john.mcilvenna@om.org](mailto:john.mcilvenna@om.org) T: 07816 969 350

**PRAY:**  
For the crew as they interact with those coming on board and also bring a message of hope to those at local schools, prisons, hospitals, orphanages and more. Through partnership with churches in the area, may the crew's actions inspire local Christians to be bold witnesses.

**GIVE:**  
At capacity, 150 people pass through the Logos Hope Visitor Experience Deck



## An update from Michael Holmes

The last six months have been an incredibly busy time as we have been endeavouring to rescue more kids around the world, while at the same time change our name from Kids Alive UK to Stand by Me. It was on October 3rd 2011 that we officially changed

our name and launched our new website ([www.standby.me](http://www.standby.me)). The "Our Journey" leaflet available in the foyer explains the background to the name change - but in summary we are describing ourselves now as a "movement" as we want everyone to feel they can be part of what God is doing through Stand by Me. Of course forming or joining a team and visiting one of the Stand by Me Homes, Schools or Care Centres is one way to be involved, although it's probably fair to say that demand exceeds opportunities for these teams,

hugely valuable though they are. But equally important to the movement are those people who fundraise for us - and in these areas we are genuinely so thankful to God, and to so many of you, who have got involved in this way. Whether it's been inviting gifts as part of "Big" birthday celebrations, or craft sales, inviting us into schools, running marathons, concerts, climbing mountains - the list is endless - as people have been using their God given talents and raising funds we've been investing them in things of eternal value.

## Colombian challenge

Martin Spence and I travelled to Colombia in October as an initial step to help raise awareness of the needs of the 300 children in our school in Guacamayal, northern Colombia. The kids are very poor and live in very cramped conditions with no running water. Facilities at our school are also very basic. We are actively seeking sponsorship for each of the children in addition to rebuilding the school. Currently many classes have to be held outside in the muddy yard, weather permitting - but at least the children are getting some level of education, which they otherwise would not be able to afford. If you'd like either of us to visit your homegroup, work or anywhere else! to share about this we'd love to.

Martin's photographs are fantastic - a really generous contribution to the movement! And you'll soon see more about Colombia on our website. We were thrilled last November when Kris Turnbull Interiors in Belfast offered to redesign and essentially build a significant part of the school. Thanks to Susan Gillespie, who suggested Stand by Me to Kris, a big team of the company's clients and staff are intending to raise £40,000 and spend 2 weeks there this summer, helping turn our dream for the school into reality. We really appreciate the support of both individuals and companies, and if you would like to support this project there are details on our website's projects page. [www.standby.me](http://www.standby.me)



Primitive cooking facilities

Kitchen facilities!



There's still time to join in the Tonne Run challenge of running 1000 miles - the width of Ethiopia - in one year and attempting to raise £1000 for Stand by Me. Details available from [michael@standby.me](mailto:michael@standby.me) This came about as a result of Jonny Farrell of Greater Ballyclare Youth for Christ wanting another challenge after he raised over £5000 for us by drinking only water for the whole of 2011. So on New Years day, as soon as he had a good coffee, he was off for a run in his special Tonne Run T shirt!



Don't miss the opportunity of a lifetime to take part in the world's highest marathon. Richard McBride is one of 3 folk already signed up for The Stand by Me Everest Marathon & Basecamp Trek in 2013. We have a fundraising target of £20,000 for the event. If the idea of running a marathon from Everest Basecamp after trekking there for 12 days is too much for you - there is a trek only option available and quite a few people have shown considerable interest in this option too. For more details contact [michael@standby.me](mailto:michael@standby.me)

## MEETING FOR TEACHERS

**Tue Feb 21st at 7.30pm Ballyclare Town Hall**  
An update on our educational developments both locally and overseas with **Alistair Bennett & Robert Young**  
We're looking forward to planning for the future and getting more teachers involved.



## Keith, Kristyn & Stand by Me

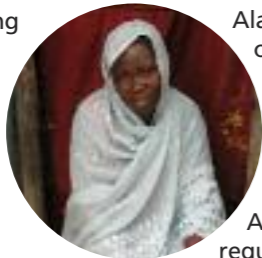
Keith & Kristyn Getty are well known to just about everyone in Glenabbey, and we're delighted to be teaming up with them for their UK tour this May. As well as dates in England and Scotland they will be performing in the Waterfront, Belfast on Fri 1st and Sat 2nd June. When you're buying your ticket why not ask some friends along who haven't heard of us. Stand by Me kids will be an integral part of the show and there will be opportunities for sponsorship etc.



'Are you glad to be home?'  
 It's a question I've been asked a lot since returning on the 20th December. The answer is tricky: YES, (!) but I do feel suspended between two very different worlds. I'm DELIGHTED to be back with family, friends, cool weather, greenery, church and Bible teaching in English; but at the same time I feel I've left part of my heart in Chad. Please forgive me if I seem glazed over when you next see me; it may take a little while to 'land!' All in all, though, I feel amazingly blessed by the church family God has given me and am very happy to be home and able to reconnect with all of you for a while!  
 Let me share with you a few snapshots from the 'other world' of Chad that illustrate how faithfully God has answered prayers .

**Fiona**

Many people have been praying for 'Fiona,' a girl from a Mu\$lim background who asked to become a child of God two years ago. Although Fiona desired to follow God she knew little about him or his word so I have been doing Bible storying with her. (Bible storying is the message of God's salvation to us from Genesis to Revelation). Just before leaving, Fiona told me, "Before I knew only the Koran, but now I know the story of the Bible," and several times after storying she freely shared, "This shows that Jesus is God; the Saviour promised since the fall." Wow! What a huge honour and blessing it has been to get to know Fiona, to share in her joys and sorrows, to study together God's amazing word and to see her hunger and passion for more! You may remember that Fiona's son 'Happiness,' died tragically from malnutrition soon after we met. God has since blessed Fiona with a healthy baby girl, 15 months old and thriving! God is good .



Alan is only the size of a two year old due to malnutrition and untreated HIV in infancy. As a result of extreme trauma, Alan still does not speak; yet he understands four languages! Last November Alan's deteriorating condition required medical intervention and essential antiretroviral drugs (ARVs), something that usually takes months to obtain in Chad. I was fearful his condition would remain untreated before I left. Amazingly, after just two hospital visits, Alan received his ARVs! He even enjoyed the trips to and from hospital as he was given undivided time and attention, a rare gift for this child. Already he has gained weight and many of the minor problems he has had are clearing up. To my great joy, just before I left Alan was beginning to attempt one or two words. Please do pray for him. Saying goodbye hit us both very hard. Only God can truly rescue a four year old boy growing up in a brothel.

**Anne**

The most stunning answer to prayer requires further explanation at a later date. A few months ago I was very discouraged as it seemed I would soon have to leave Chad and a growing



ministry because there was no-one to join me in the work. At the 'last minute' and right on time (!) God brought Anne, an experienced missionary nurse and HIV/AIDS educator, to join the Ministry to Vulnerable Women in Chad. She and her husband have been in Chad since 1988 working with TEAM International. What a blessing to have someone partnering with me and sharing the load on the ground. God couldn't have chosen a better person; Anne has already been a huge help to me and the girls. Can I ask you to pray for Anne as she continues to visit the girls whilst I am home?

**Thanks**

From my heart I thank the Lord for His faithfulness over this term in Chad. He has provided all who have prayed, corresponded, given, or even visited. On behalf of "the girls", as well as myself - God bless you.

**One Matters**  
 (This team is open to Year 11+)

**2012 Exodus Team - POLAND**

In 2011 Exodus sent 40 teams of young people to various destinations across the world. Would you like to be part of the experience in 2012? We are very excited to invite you to join up and be part of the team meeting in Glenabbey! We will follow a 16 week discipleship course which will encourage you to go deeper in your relationship with God and teach you more of what it means to be His disciple. You will find out more about worship, the Bible and prayer, as well as developing your relationship with Him. This will prepare you for your Summer Placement in Rabka, Poland - a 10 day experience - where you will join with the local ECM (European Christian Mission) workers to help run a week of connection and outreach for local teenagers. You will help take basic English lessons, build friendships with local teenagers, get involved in evening programmes, as well as being involved in trips and church services. This is a great opportunity for you to discover the history and culture of Poland! For more information please contact Tim or April Matchett by phone: 07745146687 or email: tim.matchett@btinternet.com. You can also visit the Exodus website to apply: www.exodusonline.org.uk.