

# Alive!

News from  
Totley Rise  
Methodist Church

Nov 06 - Jan 07

## How far is it to Bethlehem?



In its first year, Journey to Bethlehem, or J2B for those of a texting nature, exceeded all the expectations of both those involved and those visiting. The second and third years were no different with additional visits being squeezed in to meet the demand, with over 700 people taking a journey round Bethlehem last year; and we are hoping for 1000 this year.

In 2006 it is even easier to visit Bethlehem with tours running from the Friday until Sunday (8 - 10 December). So if you have never been on a journey to Bethlehem or want to revisit, why not book a journey, and invite friends and neighbours. You will be led on a tour of the real Christmas story by a Roman centurion, from the prophecy of Isaiah, the inn and the market place in Bethlehem, to the shepherds by their fire and finally the baby Jesus lying in His manger.

## Not very far!

Three years ago as Christmas approached there were rumours of great things afoot! People talked of prophets, inns, shepherds and a stable. Small groups could be seen huddled round scripts, a collection of cardboard and hessian appeared in the schoolrooms and if you looked really hard you caught the odd glimpse of a carpenter and some very large pieces of wood! We were told what to expect; a kind of Jorvik experience but based in Bethlehem not York and it was clear that a lot of work was going into this 'Journey to Bethlehem' experience. However, nothing could really prepare you for the first time you walked into the market place, Isaiah's booming voice or indeed the hairy legs of the centurions (as a centurion nothing can prepare you for the shock of walking around in sub zero temperatures with bare legs and sandals). The experience was amazing and as you made your way into the stable and saw Mary, Joseph and Jesus, the wonder of the Christmas story was re-ignited in both young and old alike.



**When?** Friday 8 December, tours start between 7 and 9 pm. Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 Dec, between 4.30 and 7.30 pm.  
**Booking?** It is essential to book a tour by calling Gaynor on (0114) 2368726.

Don't miss our Christmas Services: Carols by Candlelight, Youth Christmas Service, Reflective Christmas Service, Crib Service, and Christmas Day Service - see page 7 for details

### Births

Congratulations to Paul and Jenny Lashmar on the birth of their second daughter, Eleanor Rose, a fifth grandchild for Angie and John.

Congratulations also to Rachel and Phil Michell on the birth of Ellie Grace on 16 October, a sister for Rosie (born on Rosie's birthday!) and a grandchild for Anne and Len Capper.

*This is the second 'Baby Jesus' for J2B, but still four more needed—any offers?*

### Baptism of the Month!

It was standing room only at TRM Church on the morning of Sunday 15 October. So what was the big attraction? It was the baptism of Garry and Dawn's new baby – Micaiah Nathan. He was the star of the show. At one time he appeared to be giving a papal blessing to the congregation, but it turned out that he was reaching for Garry's radio mike – with some success.

Visiting preacher Steve Clarke spoke on the importance of forgiving, both for the person doing the forgiving and the person receiving it, and linked this with God forgiving us. The usual congregation was swelled not only by family and friends but also by large numbers from Ipstone Methodist church where Garry was the minister until 14 months ago.

This hugely enjoyable occasion was rounded off with a hog roast in the car park for over 200 people and the most amazing selection of desserts seen at TRM for some time. We can't wait for Garry and Dawn to have another baby!!

### One of those special birthdays!

Hilary Grundy will be 70 on 3 November.

### Death

Arthur Bray died on 13 October aged 91. He was a member of TRM until 1980 when he retired with his wife to Worksop. He and June were married at TRM, and their two sons, Terry and Martyn, were baptised here. Arthur was a local preacher and also a founder member of TRM's Friday Club. He spoke occasionally at TRM's Wednesday Friendship, telling stories and showing photographs of his travels. He will be sadly missed by his family and friends from various churches.

## Do You Know?

*Which disciple took the place of Judas Iscariot?*

*Which of the following was not one of the original 12 disciples of Jesus: James, Bartholomew, Matthew, Mark, Thaddeus?*

Don't reach for your bible. It was the biblical questions that first posed problems to the competitors in the quiz to support FOIL AIDS. Although highly competitive the evening was thoroughly enjoyable with much laughing and joking. The winning team (with 88 out of 108) was accused of being too professional, and with great Christian grace they shared out their prize chocolates with all the other competitors.

During refreshments there was a sale of bead work that had been brought back from Ikhaya Lobomi by Peter and Pauline Dibben. Some of it was highly intricate and delicate, other items were bright and colourful. Sales of these and of books helped increase the total amount raised on the evening to £247. (Later contributions raised this to £262.) All of this will go to help the work of FOIL AIDS in the Valley of 1000 Hills in South Africa.

You can find the answers to the questions posed at the top of this article in Acts, chapter 2, and from the list at the beginning of Matthew, chapter 10. Just to keep you going – here is one of the picture questions. What and where is the bridge in this picture?



# Joy to the World

Dear Friends,

'Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;' This carol captures the message echoed by the prophets for hundreds of years, telling of God's chosen One coming into the world to draw us back to Himself. It captures the message the angels announced to shepherds, 'I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord.'

The carol of proclamation captures the actions of the shepherds who made their way to Bethlehem to see this 'good news'. For as they saw the baby and spoke with Mary and Joseph, they went and told people about what they had seen. The shepherds were the first witnesses to God's plan of reaching out to us as they saw it unfolding before their very eyes.

2000 years ago in Bethlehem, God became one of us and 'one with us'. This act of God reaching out to us is truly 'good news of great joy' because it is for 'all the people' regardless of nationality or beliefs.

God did not choose to reveal Himself to the world for the benefit of one particular group of people. What God did through Christ, He did for all people, including you and me. The question is, 'How will you and I respond?'. In the words of this great carol, 'Will your heart prepare Him room' in order that this good news proclaimed throughout the centuries might become 'earthed' in your every day life and my every day life. For that's where God wants to be this Christmas and beyond. Not in a stable, but in your heart and my heart, in your life and my life. He wants to be

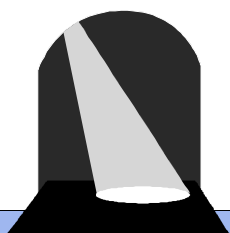
with you in your place of work, in your home, in your family, in your joys and sorrows. So, this Christmas, 'Let every heart prepare Him room, and heaven and nature sing.'

As you prepare your Christmas celebrations why not take some time out to revisit why we celebrate Christmas. Journey to Bethlehem and all of our other Christmas events and services provide an opportunity to stop and think for a moment what it means today that 2000 years ago God became one of us. I invite you to join with us as we celebrate and proclaim how God has become one of us and one with us in order to bring His light, love, hope and joy into our lives.

On behalf of TRM Church, I wish you all a joyful Christmas and New Year.

Every blessing, *Garry.*

## In the Spotlight



### Toddler Praise!

If you happen to be approaching Totley Rise early on the second Sunday in the month you may be mistaken for thinking that you are on your way to the farmyard not a church, for there is a strong chance that you will be greeted with the sounds of sheep 'baa-ing', horses 'neighing' and cows 'mooring', all as they praise God! Yes, Toddler Praise is certainly an all action service.

This special service is held every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday and starts at

9.30 am. The service is for all children, from 0 to 90, and lasts for about 30 minutes. There is lots of participation throughout, whether this is making animal noises in the above mentioned 'Mr Cow how do you, say to the Lord that I love you', the shaking of all sorts of instruments or the rowing of a boat during the bible story.

Asking a few people to comment on the service produced the following answers: 'What a wonderful way to start the day', 'The rapt expression on the children's faces brought tears to my eyes' and 'Well worth the early start - I felt like a child again.'

So next month why not come to Church a bit earlier (9.30 am, Sunday 12 November), when we will hear the story of the Big Storm, and see Jesus through the eyes of a child!

# Events

<i>November 2006</i>		<i>December 2006</i>	
<b>Thu 2</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club 7 - 8.30 pm Youth Club	<b>Fri 1</b>	9.15 am LEGO Walk
<b>Fri 3</b>	TRM Bonfire Evening Food at 6.30 and fireworks start 7.00 pm	<b>Mon 4</b>	8.00 pm Prayer Meeting 8.00 pm Hebrew Dance
<b>Sat 4</b>	9.30 - 11 am 'Dads and Kids' at TRM	<b>Tue 5</b>	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM
<b>Mon 6</b>	8.00 pm Prayer Meeting 8.00 pm Hebrew Dance	<b>Wed 6</b>	8.00 pm Carols by Candlelight
<b>Tue 7</b>	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM	<b>Thu 7</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club No Youth Club tonight
<b>Thu 9</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club 7 - 8.30 pm Youth Club	<b>Fri 8</b>	7 - 9 pm Journey to Bethlehem
<b>Fri 10</b>	9.15 am LEGO Walk	<b>Sat 9</b>	4.30-7.30 pm Journey to Bethlehem
<b>Sat 11</b>	10 - 12 am NCH Coffee Morning 7.30 pm Tootley Talent Evening	<b>Sun 10</b>	10.30 am All Age Toy Service 4.30-7.30 pm Journey to Bethlehem
<b>Sun 12</b>	9.30 am Toddler Praise, The Big Storm	<b>Tue 12</b>	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM 8.00 pm Tuesday Ladies Christmas Buffet
<b>Tue 14</b>	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM 8.00 pm Tuesday Ladies - The demise and regeneration of Sheffield Canal Basin, <i>Nora Rogerson</i>	<b>Thu 14</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club 7 - 8.30 pm Youth Club
<b>Thu 16</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club 7 - 8.30 pm Youth Club	<b>Sun 17</b>	10.30 am Youth Christmas Service, a celebration led by the youth of the church - 'The Best Gift Ever'
<b>Mon 20</b>	8.00 pm Prayer Meeting 8.00 pm Hebrew Dance	<b>Mon 18</b>	8.00 pm Prayer Meeting 8.00 pm Hebrew Dance
<b>Tue 21</b>	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning	<b>Tue 19</b>	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM
<b>Thu 23</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club 7 - 8.30 pm Youth Club	<b>Sun 24</b>	10.30 am Reflective Christmas Service, with songs, sketches, music, poetry, etc. 4.00 pm Crib Service
<b>Tue 28</b>	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM Tuesday Ladies—The History of Whinfell Garden, <i>Kathleen Cox</i>	<b>Mon 25</b>	10.00 am Christmas Day family service at TRM
<b>Thu 30</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club 7 - 8.30 pm Youth Club	<b>Tue 26</b>	No Prayer Meeting, Coffee Morning or Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM

## *Sundays at TRM*

Sunday Services are at 10.30 am and 6.30 pm  
The first Sunday of each month is All Age Worship at 10.30 am

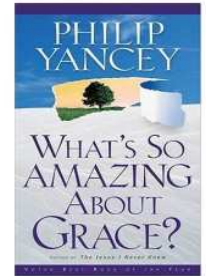
## January 2007

<b>Tue 2</b>	(No Prayer Meeting or Coffee Morning) 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM
<b>Thu 4</b>	No Pushchair Club today No Youth Club tonight
<b>Tue 9</b>	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM
<b>Thu 11</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club 7 - 8.30 pm Youth Club
<b>Fri 12</b>	9.15 am LEGO Walk
<b>Sun 14</b>	10.30 am Covenant Service
<b>Tue 16</b>	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM
<b>Thu 18</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club 7 - 8.30 pm Youth Club
<b>Tue 23</b>	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM
<b>Thu 25</b>	1.30 - 3.00 pm Pushchair Club 7 - 8.30 pm Youth Club
<b>Tue 30</b>	9.30 - 10 am Prayer Meeting 10 - 12 noon Coffee Morning 10 - 12 noon Woodseats Advice Centre at TRM

## Senior Citizens Harvest Tea

The Harvest Tea took place again this year, immediately preceding the evening service on Harvest Festival Sunday. Around 50 people were treated to a hearty and traditional meal followed by an opportunity to chat with friends over a cup of tea. This was followed by joining in with the traditional Harvest Festival Thanksgiving Service which again was well attended. Sincere thanks are due to the volunteer caterers, chauffeurs and general helpers for preparing the meal, providing transport and entertaining generally. If you are over 60 years of age you are cordially invited to attend next year and also other events, including the annual Summer Outing into Derbyshire, which is followed by supper and a concert. The companionship is second to none. Please contact Richard Lamb on 0114 2362807 if you want more information.

## Amazing Grace



In September the whole church started to read and study the book 'What's so amazing about Grace', through the Sunday morning sermon and Fellowship group study. To provide us with a flavour of this, *Alive!* commissioned its own Fellowship group Blog.

*Week 1:*

*We take turns to open in prayer: Lord we commit this time and place to gather in your name .....*

*We thought the opening chapters and DVD contained some useful teaching about grace (highest form of love - freely given/love divine all loves excelling/no strings attached/God's Riches At Christ's Expense). We also realised how frequently we used the word grace without appreciating the depth of its meaning. We didn't like the word 'ungrace' or the exploration of the semantics of grace, which we found confusing.*

*How hard it is to follow Paul's teaching; not to compromise with worldly values, to challenge sin but to show grace to sinners. We tried to reconcile this with the atrocities committed by a succession of 20<sup>th</sup> Century autocratic leaders. We also remembered that Paul himself had been 'one of God's enemies' but had become 'one of God's friends'.*

*While individual Christians clearly demonstrate God's grace, we agreed that public opinion of the church as judgmental has arisen from a lack of grace shown by the church in the past. We recalled a Christian mum being asked to leave the Mothers' Union at a local church as her marriage fell apart.*

*We thought the disclosure of child abuse in Philip Yancey's story poses many problems. Not only in the showing of grace to the mother and her perceived lack of grace from the church, but also the consequences to the child of the lack of intervention.*

*We closed with open prayers for our fellowship members and others we know in need.*

*Altogether a full and provoking evening with a lot to think about.*

As you can see from this one week the book has certainly provoked a lot of discussion and questioning. If you still haven't discovered 'What's so amazing about Grace', ask one of the stewards for a copy of the book or how you can join with a fellowship group.

# Summer in Uganda

In the summer of 2006 I went to Uganda for 6 weeks, and had a fantastic time! I helped organize a team of 20, the majority of them young people, to go and support the people there. We spent time building a church, leading discipleship courses, carrying out health and nutrition teaching, marriage seminars (led by the married adults), youth work and training church and community leaders. Most of our time was in the rural areas, where the people have next to nothing, yet are so gracious in the way they live their lives. They gave all they have for us and were so pleased to do so (a lesson for us all and a very humbling experience).



The majority of my time was with the Ugandan young people, leading discussions on issues they

have, some of which aren't too different from here in the UK, such as sex and alcohol. I led bible studies and spent time in a college where two of us were asked to do counselling and guidance sessions which we didn't know about beforehand! (This happens often in Uganda!)

As so often happens, when you give to others, you end up receiving yourself. This was so true in Uganda. We went to help and serve, yet we were well blessed in return, by them and by God. If grace is undeserved favour, the Ugandans, and many others worldwide, can show us what this truly means in practice. Though we have much to offer them, they too have so much to offer us.

If you would like to know more please come and ask me!

Oh and thanks to all those who donated money for me to buy goats there. They are a valuable commodity, and were well received.

*Seb Allwright*

Sue Merch of TRM Church tells *Alive!* that her daughter Rachel has recently returned from 6 weeks in Uganda, partly based in Kampala in some remote villages, working in schools and orphanages, also visiting hospitals to pray with patients and their relatives. She was able to spend time in local churches sharing her experience of God's love in her life and she was surprised to find that services lasted all day on a Sunday! (Rachel, 19, is currently based in Liverpool training to be a PE teacher, and is involved in Frontline Church.)

## Betty's Concert

Over 100 people gathered at TRM to hear the choir give its final tribute to Betty Bowring. At the beginning Marion Jepson reminded us how Betty brought music to life in both senses in which that phrase can be interpreted. She made music part of our lives and she made the music alive by her enthusiastic playing. Only last year Betty had been given an award for playing for worship for 50 years. This sacred emphasis was shown in the programme with many of her favourite pieces and three hymns for congregational singing.

Guest artist Jimmy McWilliams reminded us of how Betty had accompanied him on many occasions – even appearing with him on Yorkshire Television. The last song he sang most movingly was the last one that Betty had played with him – The Holy City. Betty's bubbly personality and sense of fun was recalled by Len Capper with a performance of Robb Wilton's sketch about joining the Home Guard. You could hear many of the audience saying *The day war broke out...* under their breath.

Husband Joe had put the programme together and conducted the choir; son-in-law John Skelton paid tribute to a lovely, lively lady, and we all left glad that we had known Betty.



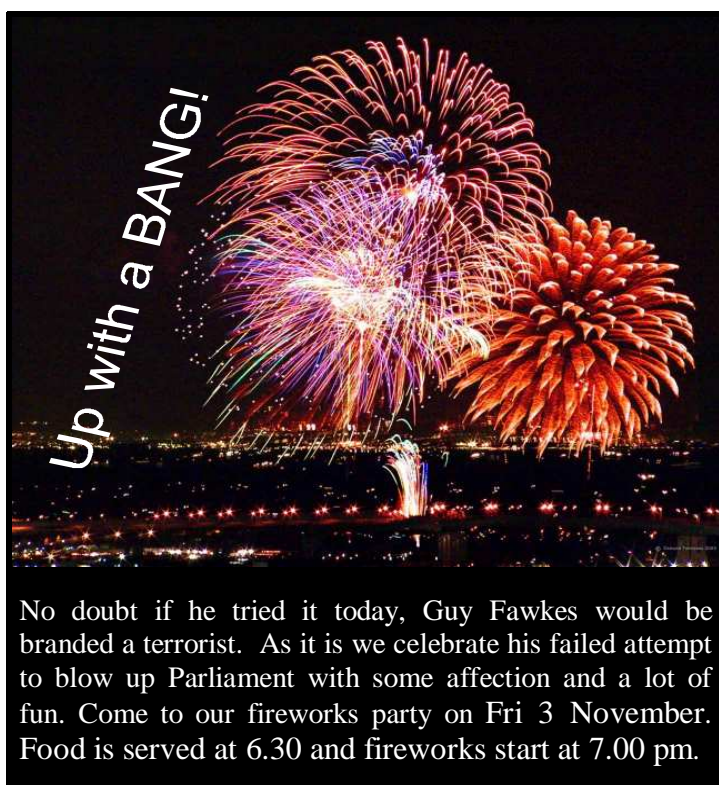
**Don't miss these!**



On **October 31** the Youth Church will be holding a **Light Party** in the form of a Circus Workshop led by *Upshot Circus*. There will be juggling, unicycles, plate spinning and clown makeovers. Admission will be **FREE** and will include refreshments. We are aiming at 4 -11 year olds, but as usual we are very flexible.

Do come and join the fun from **6 - 7.30 pm**.

**LIGHT PARTY**



No doubt if he tried it today, Guy Fawkes would be branded a terrorist. As it is we celebrate his failed attempt to blow up Parliament with some affection and a lot of fun. Come to our fireworks party on Fri 3 November. Food is served at 6.30 and fireworks start at 7.00 pm.

## TOTLEY TALENT

Be entertained while you support FOIL AIDS!

Write it in your diary now! **Saturday 11 November at 7.30 pm** is not to be missed. It's not the X-factor but highly enjoyable entertainment from the home-grown talent at TRM. At the time of writing, we know there will be comedy sketches, monologues, folk songs, piano and violin solos, comedy songs, short organ pieces and items by young people. The list is still being added to, and more and more people are volunteering to perform.

Tickets (£5, children £3) will be available beforehand and at the door. Light refreshments will be served. All proceeds will go to FOIL AIDS.

## Christmas Services

Yet again the Christmas services at Totley Rise promise a combination of the traditional and the new with the common purpose of helping us all to focus on why we are celebrating. Make a note of the dates below and come along to find out more:

**Wednesday 6 December at 8.00 pm**

### **Carols by Candlelight**

A traditional service of carols and readings led by the choir.

**Sunday 17 December at 10.30 am**

### **Youth Christmas Service**

Come and be led by the youth of our church in a Christmas celebration.

**Sunday 24 December at 10.30 am**

### **Christmas Service**

Christmas has become associated with children. Many of the Christmas services at TRM reflect this. The morning service on Christmas Eve will be different. In it we shall worship the God and Father of Jesus who came at Christmas in many different ways – songs, carols, music, sketches, poetry, bible reading – and reflect on what the real Christmas means to adults. Since God became man in Jesus at Christmas, what difference does this make to us?

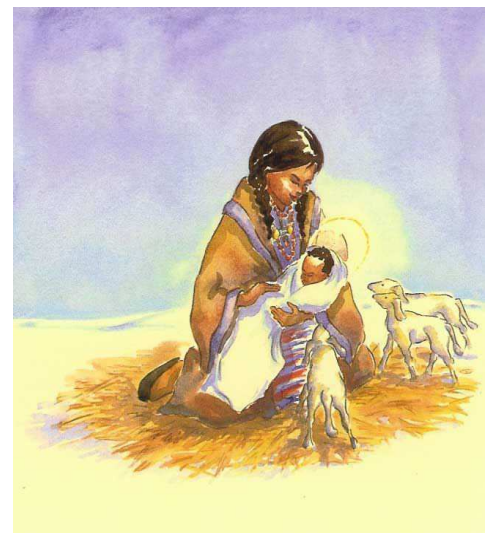
**Sunday 24 December at 4.00 pm**

### **Crib Service**

Last year we held a crib service for the first time at Totley Rise. If you have never been to a crib service you will probably wonder what it involves. The idea is quite simple but provides a great way to celebrate Christmas Eve for both young and old alike. At the centre of the service is Jesus lying in his Crib. As

the service progresses the Christmas tableau is gradually created from members of the congregation (normally those at the lower end of the age scale but not exclusively) until the story of Jesus' birth has been told in full, from shepherds to a bright star guiding the wise men. Nothing is

rehearsed but a fantastic time is guaranteed and a chance to place Jesus in the Crib at the centre of all the preparations for Christmas Day.



**Monday 25 December at 10.00 am**

### **Christmas Day Service**

Come and celebrate the birth of our Saviour.

# I Saw God in Action!

Rhona Marshall, my friend for 30 years, and Barbara Koffman, who has a Dental Ministry, work tirelessly for Christian Relief Uganda (CRU) by travelling between the UK and Uganda, fundraising and overseeing the projects that they support and which, importantly, are run by Ugandans.

Rhona and Barbara take groups of volunteers to Uganda, usually teaching, medical and dental professionals as well as others for a manageable 2 or 3 weeks, to use their skills and enjoy an optional safari.

In February 2006, 16 of us, aged between 19 and 82,



different occupations, denominations and some non-Christians, went with them to “The Pearl of Africa.”

The welcome at our first stop, Maria’s Care Orphanage, was incredible, and we started every day with the best

ever early morning wake up call, the sound of the children singing, ‘This is the Day that the Lord has Made’. The volunteers spent the mornings working in their chosen areas, the afternoons visiting the villages to check on the existing projects, and to identify new ones which needed help.

The visit coincided with the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Maria’s Care and the celebration was wonderful. It started at 4.30 am with ex-pupils who attend catering college, preparing food for 2,000 in huge cauldrons on open fires! The procession, led by a brass band, brought the town of Kumuli to a standstill – even the police formed a guard of honour. The day finished with a huge party with entertainment at the orphanage.

As well as concentrating on the orphanage and the up-country projects, we managed to enjoy some luxury on a safari, whilst



the General Election took place, relatively peacefully. We attended the wedding of the Headmaster of Maria’s Care and the bride, a teacher there, was 4 hours late - which surprised only the Muzungu (foreigners to you and me).

The final week I went to Kampala with Rhona and Barbara and it was like being one of the ‘Blues Sisters’ – every morning we prayed as “We were on a mission from God” - and boy did it work!

We visited an orphanage, whose staff take personal risks to rescue very young children from the war zone in the North, and also visited Mildmay Hospital, which provides care for AIDS and HIV patients. Everywhere, there was a ‘can do, by the grace of God’ attitude.

To reinforce this, when we visited the British High Commission, we were able to obtain funding for no fewer than six of our important projects. And the timing was perfect, in that the money was unexpectedly available from an unused allocation within another country, and was about to be lost altogether!

This trip had a profound effect on all my fellow travellers. I had seen that material poverty can lead to spiritual wealth and experienced real faith in action. I had begun to understand the concept of the Holy Spirit and the power of prayer.

I loved being a part of something so wonderful that on the third of March I made my prayer of commitment. Like many before me, I had lost my heart to Africa and found my soul.

*Christina Fitzsimmons*