

# **PARISH PARTNERSHIP**

## **Wivelsfield's link with St Matthew's, Aberdeen, Sierra Leone BETTER TOGETHER**

### **NEWSLETTER 56**

**November 2018**

#### **CHRISTIAN/MUSLIM LINK**

When, some 10 years ago, it was decided to create a link with a third world community, the main incentive to choose St. Matthew's was the fact that the Christian and Muslim communities were working together to provide scholarships towards the costs of secondary schooling.

Since then we have sometimes been asked why there is no such link here in Wivelsfield. We are happy to be able to say that there are the beginnings of some form of contact.

A group of us, including our vicar Rev. Christopher Powell, recently met informally with two representatives of the mosque which is located in a former church opposite Dinnages Garage in Haywards Heath. They were Mr. Abdul Bashir and his friend Mr. Mujir, with whom we spent a pleasant evening on October 16<sup>th</sup>.

There are no plans for a joint operation but it was a very useful "Interfaith" exercise where people of differing convictions were able to talk (and laugh) together. Our guests were interested to hear the details of our parish link.

It is our hope that we can maintain and develop this friendship.

#### **FROM HERE TO THERE**

When we last sent out a Newsletter in August we were able to give you details of a visit to Wivelsfield by some of our friends in Aberdeen.

Now we are able to start giving you details of a visit in the opposite direction at the end of October.

Sheila Blair, Fenella Holmes and sixth form student Rosa Marks spent a few days in our link parish and have come back with a lot to tell – so much that we will spread it over more than one Newsletter.

## **MEDICAL SUPPLIES**

**As a result of collections at the back of our church, at our village school and elsewhere, they were able to take out two suitcases of small medical items such as bandages, plasters, packets of paracetamol and the like. A suitcase was placed at the back of the church and people were invited to put in it any items for which they no longer had any use or which they felt they could purchase. A similar suitcase was placed in the entrance lobby of the village school for the same purpose and we are very grateful to all those who put items in it.**

**The contents of the suitcases were given to Vikki Luke who is a nurse in Freetown – the capital of Sierra Leone, on the edge of which Aberdeen is located. She, like so many who work in hospitals and the like, often have to provide their own surgical gloves and other items such as plasters. She was very grateful for what we were able to take over.**

## **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

**People were also invited to put into the suitcases things such as pens, pencils, small exercise books and other items. These were shared between the Shida pre-school and our sponsored secondary school students who also received a Wivelsfield bag to put them in.**

**In addition £200 was taken to Aberdeen (in dollars) to be spent in the local economy to buy items for the school such as paper and chalk. The pictures show what was bought and Sheila spending £140 making these purchases.**

**The money had been raised by the village school which has very kindly agreed to donate some of the proceeds of this year's Christmas activities to our link.**



## **NEW FURNITURE**

**The £60 left over was given to the school to go towards some decent furniture for the teachers who each had only a simple table and a decrepit chair. The picture shows the new furniture which was sourced locally. Three lucky teachers now have reliable chairs and two have the luxury of proper desks with two drawers.**



## **GRATITUDE**

**Each year we contribute to St. Matthew's Christmas charity fund where money is distributed to some of the poorest in the parish. While they were in Aberdeen our party was approached by a widow who had benefitted from the 2017 Christmas fund.**

**She expressed her gratitude for our help this enabled us to realise how much our link means to people in one of the world's poorest countries.**

**Our link may not seem much on the grand global scale but Tesco has a phrase for it!**

## **MORE TO COME**

**In our next Newsletter we will be able to tell you more about the children we sponsor and also give you details of an Assembly we performed at the village school on November 21<sup>st</sup>.**

**This is planned to happen before Christmas but, should that not be the case, we send you seasonal greetings!**

**Paul Welch  
24/11/18**