

Pompey West Africa Links

November 2013

Issue No 14

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IDWAL Committee

- Chairman, Canon Graham Morris
- Secretary, Marion Syms
- Treasurer, Alan Hoad
- Publicity, Linda Forster
- Bishop's Waltham, Gillian Hurst
- Cathedral, Marion Syms
- Fareham, Linda Forster
- Gosport, *vacant*
- Havant, Angela Herring
- IOW, David Tamcken
- Petersfield, Barbara Shaw
- Portsmouth, Canon Tom Kennar

Also:

- MU, Alison Hubbard
- CMS, Robin Green
- Us, Marion Syms

New IDWAL Chairman – Canon Graham Morris

Akwaaba!

I am honoured to have been asked by Bishop Christopher to take on the role as Chairman of the Portsmouth IDWAL. My interest in Ghana began when a colleague came to talk to the Youth Group at All Saints' Gurnard, I was Vicar there at the time. Little did I know then that I would be moving to take up the post as Vicar of Ventnor and the said colleague, David Tamcken, would be one of the Readers serving the Ventnor Parishes! St Catherine's Ventnor has very strong links with St Paul's Wenchi and its Parish Priest at the time was Rev Canon Barnabas Okoh. Through that parish link a friendship began to develop with Barnabas and his family, cemented by his visit to the UK. Barnabas is an infectious, energetic priest whose enthusiasm of the Gospel simply rubs off on those whom he meets. Soon I was hooked, the opportunity of exchanging prayer requests, learning about the culture and seeing what a difference the link can make in enriching one's own context, I wanted to go and visit.

The opportunity for a period of extended study leave arose. My choice was to spend as much of that time as I could on a visit to see Barnabas, and discovering some 'new' friends from the North of Ghana. Bishop Emmanuel Arrongo the first Bishop of Tamale and friends in that Diocese have now become part of our extended family. My wife Angela was able to join me for two weeks as we travelled to Sunyani and then on to the North. Angela returned to the UK, leaving me to stay with Bishop Emmanuel for a further three weeks, returning to Wenchi and Fr Barnabas for my last week in Ghana.

Upon my return to the Isle of Wight I pledged that I would do all that was possible to encourage more links with parishes and schools here, and so continued to seek out support for the Anglican Training Centre in Tamale. I was made an Honorary Canon of Bishop Aglionby Memorial Cathedral in Tamale. The Cathedral is also linked with Holy Trinity Ventnor. The installation was carried out on my second visit to Ghana.

These links have been so enriching both



Canon Graham Morris with Hannah and baby Gabriel, the family of Canon Norbert Ayeebo, in Tamale.

spiritually and pastorally. My current parish All Saints' Ryde has made a link with the Ven Canon Moses Banungwirii Archdeacon of Tamale and Wa, based at St Aidan's Wa. A significant number of the clergy and people of these parishes are now part of our extended family, as we indeed feel part of theirs.

I have visited the Theological College at Cape Coast, I have stayed albeit briefly in Kumasi, I have enjoyed the hospitality of Canon Barnabas and I have experienced Accra! But I have fallen for the North and have appreciated the links with Canon Norbert and Hannah Ayeebo, with Bishop Jacob Ayeebo, and especially with Canon Moses and his wife Mary at Wa. As they would suggest in Ghana, Tamale is my mother Diocese.

I plan to visit Ghana next autumn to continue the work that Canon Terry has begun. This is in itself a very great privilege. I feel that I have so much to learn and I am extremely grateful to my colleagues who serve on the Portsmouth IDWAL committee who play such an active part in supporting the Diocesan links. Canon Terry Loudon has laid such wonderful foundations for true friendship in the Gospel with our brothers and sisters in our companion Diocese, I will endeavour to build upon this foundation.

Canon Graham Morris

Future Plans for IDWAL

Canon Graham Morris, as the new Chairman of IDWAL, was asked what he sees as his mission for IDWAL and his thoughts on the way forward in the future. Here is his response.

“As we work together in promoting the links across the Diocese of Portsmouth, my hope is that others will experience something of this incredible partnership that we have in the Gospel, and that our Diocese will continue to grow closer with the Diocese of the Province of the Anglican Church in Ghana.

Priorities for prayer and encouragement must be the further development of the Theological College (St Nicholas Anglican Seminary) at Cape Coast, ongoing support for the Spirituality and Retreat Centre at Nkawie in the Diocese of Kumasi, prayerful support for the success of the new ANG.U.TECH University at Nkoranza in the Brong Ahafo Region, and the fostering of new links throughout the eleven Diocese of the Province of the Anglican Church in Ghana.

For me personally the key drivers for all of this is to go on re-stating the resolutions approved by our Diocesan Synod at its meeting in November 2012.



- To reaffirm its commitment to mutual prayer, conversation and exchange between the Diocese of Portsmouth and the dioceses and institutions of the Anglican Church in Ghana
- To foster diocesan and parish engagement, with our partners in Ghana in understanding, discipleship and mission
- To empower the Bishop to second diocesan staff, with the agreement of the Bishop's Council, for sharing skills and experience with the Anglican Church in Ghana.”

All of us on the IDWAL Committee look forward to working with Graham and moving forward with these goals.

**The Diocese of
Ho celebrated
their 10th
Anniversary
on the 29th of
September
2013.**

New Bishop Elect in Ghana



The Diocese of Cape Coast met in Synod on Saturday, August 10, 2013, to elect a Coadjutor Bishop who will have the right of succession to the See of Cape Coast when Bishop Daniel Alotey retires in May 2014. According to the Provincial Constitutional requirement of 2/3 majority, after four rounds of voting, the Dean of St. Nicholas' Seminary, Cape Coast, the Very Revd Dr. Victor Reginald Attabaffoe was elected.

Dean Victor has been the driving force at St. Nicholas' Seminary for many years and will be greatly missed when he leaves. His consecration as Bishop is scheduled to take place in Cape Coast on Sunday, 17 November 2013.

A Ghanaian Funeral

Angela Herring, Denmead

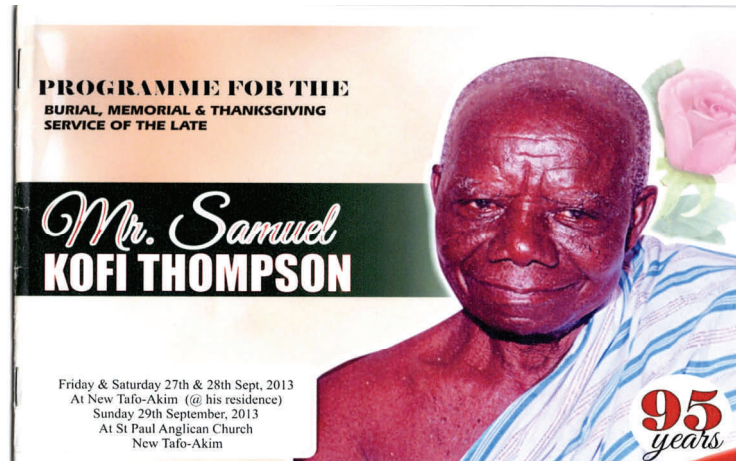
It was a pleasant change to make a completely informal visit to our link church in Ghana – St Paul’s at New Tafo Akim in Eastern Region. There were only 2 of us and we had both been on visits several times before, so no need to be shown ‘the ropes’!

We booked our tickets in June – only to find out in September that we would be arriving the day before a huge 2 day celebration funeral of the oldest member of our church – Mr S K Thompson – who had died aged 95. I had known him since 2002 and Nicola had known him since 2008 and we had always visited him, even when he became totally blind and unwell enough to be able to attend church. He lived in Tafo above the family shop.

The funeral consisted of 4 parts. It started at 5.30am on the Saturday morning with a pre-burial service and filing past the body. This lasted for 1 hour. At 8.00am a huge procession made its way through the town to St Pauls church – the coffin was carried in an ambulance (obviously second hand from England) and a brass band headed the procession.

Part 2 started at 8.50am, - the Mass and Burial service which lasted for 3 hours. There was extra seating outside for guests but inside all were dressed in Thanksgiving cloth of black/white or navy/white. Mr Thompson’s 7 children, 35 grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren all attended. The service was amazing and a truly great celebration of a very long life and a very devout Christian. There were 6 priests in attendance and the Bishop of Koforidua, Francis Quashie.

Part 3 was the burial at the graveside which lasted only 45 minutes although it took another 20minutes to get the ambulance out of the mud, in which it got stuck!



Celebrations then continued in the town, for the whole of Saturday, with plenty of food, music and dancing.

Part 4 was the next day, Sunday, when a memorial and thanksgiving service was held again at St Paul’s Church – this time it lasted for just under 4 hours – the whole family again attended with much dancing and spontaneous singing and our final hymn was ‘Now thank we all our God’. It was truly indeed a celebration of life and for life and we felt privileged to have attended.



It is very common in Ghana to use an ambulance as a hearse for funerals.

Anglican University College of Technology - ANG.U.TECH

The Anglican University College of Technology has formally opened admissions for prospective students to enroll in their undergraduate programmes in Agriculture scheduled to start in November at the Nkoranza campus. ANG.U.TECH’s current facilities can admit about 300 students.

Expected to grace the Official Opening and Dedication Ceremony to inaugurate the Nkoranza Campus on 25 October 2013 were the President of the Republic of Ghana; the Asantehene, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II; the Omanhene of Nkoranza Traditional Area, Okatakyie Agyeman Kudom IV; the Minister of Education and representatives

of the Anglican Church in Ghana.

The current Chairman of the Central Implementation Committee (CIC), Rt. Rev. Dr. Cyril Ben-Smith, on behalf of the Archbishop and Bishops of the Anglican Province of Ghana thanked everyone for their support at the start of a historic journey of transforming Ghana’s Science and Technology education. The programmes currently on offer at the School of Agriculture & Bio-Resources Engineering are: B.Sc. Agricultural Engineering & Mechanization, B.Sc. General Agriculture and B.Sc. Soil and Water Engineering.

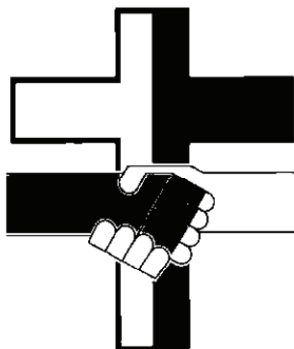


IDWAL

Pompey West Africa Links

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IDWAL, The Inter Diocesan West Africa Link, promotes companion links between the Dioceses of Portsmouth, Chichester and Guildford and the Anglican Provinces in West Africa and Nigeria. Most Portsmouth links are in Ghana. IDWAL links “people to people” and “parish to parish” in a two-way movement of people as partners in World Mission. These links have proved deeply enriching for everyone involved, with schools, churches, groups and organizations all benefiting from such relationships.

Visits offer a wonderful opportunity for developing friendships and learning from one another. Out of these are emerging all sorts of new ideas for working together as fellow Christians—links between schools, communities and church groups; a two-way movement of people, the opportunity to offer support to projects in the developing world; and the enrichment and broadening of our own church life and journey of faith.

Bits and Pieces

High Regard

Many of us who have visited Ghana can recall being a bit overwhelmed at times by being the “esteemed foreign visitors” and the high regard with which we are held by the Ghanaians. We consider ourselves to be just normal people at home and most of us do not mix with government ministers or royalty, but it seems to be the norm when visiting in Ghana.

On one of our early visits we were treated to breakfast at the official government residence of Mr. Speaker, the third most important person in the Ghanaian government, who happened to be a parishioner at a Fareham link parish. Following breakfast we became part of his official police motorcade and made the normal 4 hour trip from Accra to Takoradi in just 2 1/2 hours with police motorcycle outriders clearing all the traffic off the road for us. It seemed surreal. On another occasion, at a very formal reception for the High Commissioner of Trinidad and Tobago I am sure she was wondering who the 2 white people were, dressed in Ghana cloth, sitting with the Paramount Chief’s invited guests - who were mostly bankers, Port Authority officials and businessmen in suits.

Canon Tom Kennar was in Ghana in September and writes in his blog about another incident of ‘high regard’. He writes: “Just had an amusing incident. Water is sold in bags around here. They are a

cheap and less wasteful way of transporting water...and they result in less plastic bottles littering the countryside. Anyway, I am sitting with +Matthias on the podium. We’ve been here for two hours waiting for things to start. I was getting thirsty and stiff, so I went for a stroll around the stalls. I picked up a bag of water, and took it back to my seat on the podium. Immediately, one of the staff of the event came over and snatched the water from my hand. He apologised profusely for having left me thirsty... and then two other staff came over quickly to offer me and the Bishop some bottled water! The Bishop then explained that people considered of high status NEVER drink water from a bag at public gatherings of dignitaries! So... some of Bishop Matthias’ high status has rubbed off on me! If only they really knew me!”

Later he writes, “Well, now I feel right out of my depth! I have just sat and had lunch with the Regional Minister (think Governor in colonial days) and the Minister of Health, at the Regional Minister’s mansion.” A few days later he went with the Venerable Joseph Bain-Doodu to attend the degree ceremony at Cape Coast University and comments, “For the third time this week, I found myself sitting on a podium of dignitaries, when I have done nothing to deserve such honour! Felt like a right fraud!”

No matter how uncomfortable it makes us feel, we will always be held in high regard whenever we visit Ghana. It is just something we must learn to accept graciously.

Diary Dates 2013

**17 November—Bring
& Share at Cathedral
House**

**5 December - IDWAL
Committee meeting**

2014

**5 March - IDWAL
Committee meeting**

A PDF version of this newsletter is also available. Please email me at the above address if you would like to have the PDF version to share with others.

Linda