

# The Voice

Summer 2018, No. 412



UK Connexional Conference 2018

*The Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion  
and the Sierra Leone Mission*

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## Letter from the Editor

*Hello and welcome to this edition of Voice! As I write this, it is grey wet and chilly outside but the promise of warm sunny days has been made by the forecasters so summer is almost upon us.*

*This edition looks back to conference only a few weeks ago, and it was lovely to see many of you there this year. Do enjoy reading about conference and youth conference in this edition, and do consider coming along if you haven't before. We would love for you to join us next year! (The photo below is proof I was there – and gesticulating about Voice and SLM social media – if you needed it!). Thank you to all who sent in articles for this edition, they are very much appreciated and it makes for fantastic reading, as ever this quarter. Particular thanks to those who have sent in articles for the first time, as well as those who consistently send in brilliant articles, I very much appreciate it.*

*Don't miss this edition's Bible study and reflexion kindly provided this time by Ben Quant, Pastor at Wormley. This edition we're also focusing on Tombo in Sierra Leone as part of our 'Focus On' series. Please do use the information you read in this article, and all of the articles to prompt your prayers for fellowships across the UK and Sierra Leone.*

*Please do continue to send articles in for Voice; it's really encouraging to hear news from many in our family, from churches in the connexion both in the UK and Sierra Leone.*

*May I please remind everyone who wants to send an article in for Voice that the cut-off date for articles is: 10<sup>th</sup> August 2018. Please send articles to [sarahwaters@outlook.com](mailto:sarahwaters@outlook.com).*



## Caption Contest!



Those of you who were at conference may recognise the photograph above – it was one of many available to be taken back to connexional churches but, as well as using it as a prompt for prayer for brothers and sisters in Sierra Leone, I also want to invite you to take part in a caption contest! The best caption will be printed below the photo in the next edition of *Voice* and the best runners up will also get a mention. Please send caption suggestions by email by the cut-off date. I look forward to seeing what you come up with!

## Reminder!

*Just a brief reminder that the new regulations about general data protection come into force on 25<sup>th</sup> of May. If you would like to receive UK connexional communication you now need to opt in. There is a quick and easy way to do this on-line. Simply visit the connexional website [www.cofhconnexion.org.uk](http://www.cofhconnexion.org.uk) and click on the GDPR tab and fill in the simple form to opt in.*

# Bible Study

## Acts 2:1-13 - What does this Mean?

This is one of the best known stories from the life of the Early Church, a dramatic tale full of action, colour and awe. The disciples are gathered after Christ's resurrection and ascension when suddenly there comes a sound like a violent wind filling the whole house. I remember one Wednesday night when I gathered with the folks at Westcott for Bible Study. Suddenly, there came an almighty screeching noise that stopped our discussions in their tracks. Had something fallen from the sky crashing into and sliding off our roof? Had something exploded? Had the tower collapsed? We rushed out to see. It was none of these, rather a car that had become out of control, hit our wall, turned on its side and scraped its way precariously along the road past us. Fortunately, no one was hurt, although the car was badly damaged. The violent wind of Pentecost had such a similar impact. It was attention grabbing, encompassing and no one would have missed it.

What was this wind? Wind is a symbolic word in the Bible. In the Old Testament, the word wind, *ruach*, is the same as breath and spirit. This is the word found in Genesis 1:1, the Spirit of God brooding over the water. We hear it again in Genesis 2:7, when God breathes life into the clay form of Adam. In John's Gospel we get a foretaste of Pentecost, our story in Acts, when Jesus appears to the disciples after his resurrection and breathes on them in John 20:22, blowing the Spirit symbolically into them - a second creation, a recreation. This is the rebirth or being born again/from above that Jesus famously spoke of to Nicodemus in John 3:3.

The drama continues as tongues of fire appear, again symbolic of the Spirit and God's Presence - remember the pillar of fire that led the Israelites through the desert at night. This divides with individual tongues of fire resting on each disciple's head. The Spirit given to us unites us through his common source, as Paul describes it in Ephesians 4:6 there is one body and one Spirit.

What I find most fascinating in this passage is the miracle that follows. We know that the Spirit is capable of all sorts of marvellous and dramatic deeds, but what is the first thing that the Spirit does after coming on God's people? He gives them the ability to talk in other languages, the languages of the multicultural crowd outside. Clearly, fuelled by what they have just experienced, the disciples are talking loudly, shouting excitedly perhaps, to

such an extent that the people outside hear what they are saying, and understanding, they too are filled with amazement, asking what this means. I am struck by how Pentecost's first miracle is the gift of communication to all people, an overturning of the curse of the Tower of Babel, which divided us by bringing incomprehension through the diversity of languages. Just as the tongues of fire have a common source, uniting the disciples, so too, through their speech they reach out to diverse people, in their language, giving them the opportunity to become part of God's uniting family. The Spirit crosses barriers of age, culture, riches and class.

Walking down the High Street of Wormley today I was struck by the different worlds I passed by. A Muslim lady pushing her child in a pram. A cluster of Eastern European gentlemen washing cars. An African waiting for a bus. A cluster of women having their nails done in a beauty parlour and teens walking home from school. Ok, the last two groups may also be British, but in many ways their different tastes, outlooks and even use of language marks them out as belonging to a different 'world' from me.

So what does this story mean for us today? What glimpses does it give of God's future Kingdom? What does it say of his priorities? And what might it take for the multi-cultural crowds around us to sit up, take note, and ask, 'What does this mean?!'

*Many thanks to Ben Quant for kindly writing this study for this edition of Voice, please do use it, consider the questions Ben raises, and share it with others. Please do get in touch if you would like to provide the bible study section for the next edition of Voice, whether it is based on a sermon series, something you have been doing in home groups or a passage from a prayer meeting, all contributions very welcome!*

## **Announcement**

Just a brief note to announce that Ron Benton, whom many of you would have known (not least because his wife, Dorothy Benton, was President), went to be with the Lord on the evening of the 19<sup>th</sup> of April 2018. Please keep Dorothy and the family in your prayers.

## **News from Turner's Hill**

Greetings from Turners Hill Free Church. December seems so long ago, however, the church held our annual Crib Service, this is where we send invites to all the children in the local school, we had about 40 come and join us. The church had arranged a tea for the children and then a very short story time to tell them why we celebrate Christmas, and the true meaning of Christmas, a baby born to be our saviour. Then on to Christmastime. We held out Carol by candle light Service on Christmas Eve, this date was chosen so that we did not clash with the local C of E church who had chosen the previous Sunday for their Carol Service. We did not really know if we would have many people joining us but we had an almost full church, thank you God. Such a lovely way to start the Christmas festivities, a very blessed time for us all.

Christmastime also blessed us with the births of three babies, two girls and a boy born to members of the church. Their numbers will soon be swelling the Creche which at present has four or five little ones each week. God has been so good to us as a church, our Rock Solid Sunday School now has at least 12 children attending each week, and at Easter we were blessed with 20 children including visitors.

February saw several members of the church attending the Life in the Spirit conference. This not only blesses those attending but also the rest of the church when they return. For Geoff, once back home it was time to prepare for going out to India to the church mission, the Gilgal college. Geoff and two other members of the congregation went to their graduation ceremony. Gilgal trains men and women for ministry in India, and each year a number of them graduate and return to their villages to spread the gospel. Please pray for these men and women, the paths will not be smooth for any of them.

- Beryl Malcomber, Turner's Hill

## **Youth Conference**

“My favourite thing about conference was making new friends!” (Michael Kobil, New Connexions, Ely)

“I really enjoyed the trampolining” (Jordan Kobil, New Connexions, Ely)

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# Youth Conference



I couldn't wait to get to Youth Conference, even if the 3:30 am start made me grouchy! We left St. Ives at 4:10am for High Leigh in a mini bus, with everyone who could come to conference from the Zion. It was a lovely road trip; we are like a little family.

When we arrived we were greeted by everyone at Youth Conference, and I enjoyed a hot chocolate even though it was very short lived (I dropped the cup and drenched myself in it). Thank you Robson, Grace and all the girls from helping me clear it up!

After an unplanned costume change we went downstairs for the usual youth conference games! It was a great way to welcome the new people who had joined our group such as Nina and Sophie. We played wink murder (yes, we are Christians!) and keeper of the keys as well as many other great games. Then it was time for Andy's first talk. We learnt about King Saul who was head and shoulders above the rest and good with a sword, but impatient with the Lord. We learnt that he relied on his own strength rather than God's, which served him well until he had to defeat Goliath (which he couldn't), we also learnt about David who trusted God's strength rather than his own, which lead to him being able to defeat Goliath. Andy also taught us that we shouldn't compare ourselves to others as we are all "God's masterpiece".

After sleep in our lovely rooms, or lack of in true Youth Conference style, we started our second day with a prayer session from Grace, talking about how sometimes we don't feel good enough to do something but it's okay because God is always there leading our way. We also had our second talk from Andy where we made posters about being "God's Masterpiece." Now, it wouldn't be Youth Conference without Robson's quiz and we were certainly not disappointed. (I also had a 'Skye moment' and spilt a cup of water everywhere, twice!) We had our AGM and have come up with ideas for new names for Youth Conference such as "Godference" and "Godcon". It was really nice to see Emily even though it was only briefly as she is very busy with uni. We then went to Jump City where I learnt to do a front flip, and we pushed Andy in the foam pit and threw the foam squares at him (I promise we are Christians!). And because I am Skye, I left my necklace, my birthday present from my mother, in Andy's locker, I am extremely thankful as Ben has now retrieved it and sent it down to me. I'm also thankful for Ben for putting up with us lot every year! And all our leaders for taking care of us. Then came the barn dance, which I enjoyed even though I have two left feet! I was a great chance to meet everyone and have a good laugh. It was especially nice to dance with Sarah and the whole Waters family, they made me laugh and it was lovely to speak to Sarah again, we all miss her and wish she was younger again so she can join us! It isn't the same without her.

The last day was bittersweet. I didn't want to go home already. Again, we started with a prayer session, this time lead by Charlotte. We all prayed together in little circles and we could all add a prayer, which was lovely as it wasn't as scary as praying on a large group. We then had our last session with Andy outside in the sun, where we played consequences and wrote a tweet about something we were thankful for. Thank God for Andy, I have learnt so much from him, may his good work continue. Then the whole conference came together. I was great to hear the Lord had been answering our prayers and healing people, what great news! I had also, like many others felt an unexplainable peace while at High Leigh, isn't it lovely to know God is looking after us? Youth Conference were asked to hand out communion, which I was happy to do, but worried after the whole hot chocolate accident, (I am extremely clumsy and shouldn't be trusted with anything that I can spill). We also had to explain what we had done during the last couple of days, and I messed up mid-sentence and walked away, but you were all extremely kind and spoke to me after, thank you all! I then ate lunch with my Youth Conference friends before sadly saying goodbye to everyone.

Once in the mini bus we prayed for a safe journey home. The journey back to St. Ives was very long. We left at two and I got home at 10:30! However God answered our prayer and we all got home safe and sound.

I want to thank God for our time together, I am truly blessed to be part of such a wonderful Connexion, we are all like one big family and I am thankful.

I have done so much and learnt so much over the conference, I am sorry if I have missed anything out! God bless you all.

I can't wait till Reunion in October!

- Skye Farrell-Brown, St Ives

## **An Aspect of Conference 2018**

There is so much that can be said about the Conference, but I want to touch upon a special aspect for me this year, and that was the tangible and personal togetherness I felt prevailed throughout our time together.

We rejoiced, as a family, to hear testimonies from Edith (Wormley), Peter (Sheppey), and Clive (Ebley) about the physical healing they had received during their time at High Leigh. Then, we heard the very touching and personal account from Morgan (Woodmancote). I had been placed in the same prayer group as Morgan, and with some courage he gently told us about the restrictive reasons that every year kept him from joining his friends and neighbours in "The Apple Tree Inn" to sing Christmas carols.

It was a privilege to pray together, as a group, for Morgan, bringing the situation before the Lord, and Morgan received the assurance he needed, through prayer, that he says will allow him to take part in this year's carol singing - you will be in my thoughts and prayers, Morgan.

Yes, the Conference brought us all together as a family - confiding in each other, as brothers and sisters in Christ. "Thankyou".

- June Collins, Broad Oak Chapel

# Annual Conference 2018

*Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April*

We arrived at High Leigh Conference Centre on the Tuesday after Easter after a drive through leaden skies and steady drizzle, to have our spirits lifted as we were welcomed by Keith and Joanna Waters and very soon began to meet up with old friends as others began to arrive.

After a quick coffee it was time for lunch, just the first of many delicious meals prepared for us by the catering staff.

Straight after lunch we were issued with our room keys and found our way to the very comfortable accommodation and a chance to unpack, before it was off to the conference hall to listen to the President, Dave Sweetman, give us a warm welcome and introduce us to the Thessalonian church which was to be the focus for our Bible studies under the title “Echoing the Master's words”, the theme which our main speaker, Gareth Lloyd-Jones (no relation to Martin) took us into as we explored the topic of Word, Spirit and Transformation.

All the talks were very encouraging and challenging in different ways. I won't try to explain them all, but would encourage you to ask your delegates for a loan of the CD's or listen online (<https://bit.ly/2HWeLil>). Stuart Aldridge did a great job working the sound system and making copies of all the sessions.

After dinner Joe Gregory led us through a time where representatives of those churches attending brought us news of their fellowships. It was good to hear of their joys and sorrows and to be uplifted and encouraged and better informed and enabled to support them in prayer.



We ended each day with a short time of worship and then to bed.

*Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> April*

For those early risers each morning began with prayer groups followed by

breakfast, with many saying there was so much food, but I didn't see any refusing!

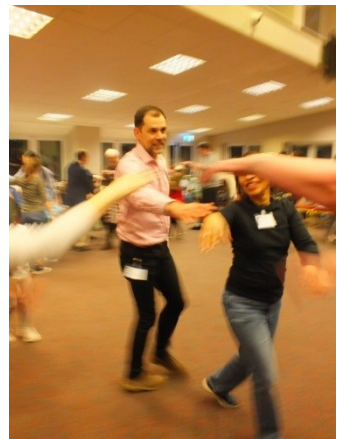
The morning sessions began with worship, led by Keith including a drama from the New Connexions Thespians, it had to be seen to be believed!

Noel Vallely then led us through the Trustees AGM dealing with various issues to do with buildings, safeguarding, website etc. and with skilful hands Graham took us through the finances. As we completed the agenda by lunchtime many were able to enjoy some free time in the afternoon, even though the weather didn't encourage too many outdoor activities. It was, however a good opportunity to rest, digest all that we had heard throughout the morning and the gorgeous lunch!

The late afternoon took us back to the hall for the SLM AGM our joint Chairmen, Ian Denyer and Tim Wells with information on shipments, Bethesda Children's Home, SL elections and other items, finishing with a report from Peter Riddle and Janet O'Shea's on their recent visit to SL. Well worth contacting Peter to get a copy of the film of their visit.

A closing offering raised over £6,000 for the mission's work there.

After yet another excellent dinner it was time to work off some of the extra pounds as we gathered for a Barn Dance. An excellent group led us through a range of dances including moves such as stars, dosey does (excuse spelling) and other moves which weren't too strenuous, but quite a puzzle for those with difficulty identifying their right hands from their left!



All good fun but sadly I don't think there is a video available to embarrass those who entered the activities too enthusiastically! Nevertheless, there were still a few left standing to enjoy the late night worship to end the day.

*Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> April*

All too soon we began our final day with prayer and after breakfast, All Age worship led by Ben Quant and an opportunity for Youth Conference to show

us all the things they had been learning under the excellent and enthusiastic leadership of Andy Roberts and also the younger peoples work led by Joanne Kennedy and Ellie Lake.

The young people clearly enjoyed all their sessions and of course it also allowed parents to enter into all the adult meetings. Thanks to all those involved for the hard work you put in.



Our last teaching session was brought to us by Sam Ward, national director of the message Trust's Eden Network and their mission work in many underprivileged areas in the UK. With a mixture of humour and heart moving testimonies he encouraged us all to consider how we could do more to reach those in need of a Saviour in our own communities.

This theme led us smoothly into our final session as Dave Sweetman led our time around the communion table.

Then it was time for our final lunch together and afterwards sad farewells after a great few days together, but also looking forward to meeting again in 2019.

Please consider joining us from 15th-17<sup>th</sup> April 2019-you won't be disappointed and the weather has got to have improved by then!

- Gordon Lowman, New Connexions Free church Ely

## Faithful Service



At Conference Clive Dale stood down as a trustee, after many years of faithful service. Thanks were given and prayers offered to both Clive and Sandra for all their hard work for the connexion during his time as a trustee.

# Echoing The Master's Words, Annual Conference

## 3-5 April 2018

I attended Conference for the first time this year, as a delegate of Cophthorne Chapel. So what were my first impressions?

I had been looking forward to the three days as a time of retreat from a challenging 'day job', working with acutely disturbed children. The combination of a comfortable and relaxing venue, excellent food and good company, and inspiring teaching and worship, provided what was needed to recharge the physical, emotional and spiritual batteries.

One of the strongest impressions of Conference, a couple of weeks after the event, is the memory of countless interesting conversations with people I was meeting for the first time, who quickly became friends and who I look forward to meeting again next year. There were over 120 in attendance, including perhaps 20 children and young people. I was struck by how close a family is the Connexion, how well delegates from different chapels know each other, and how much everyone enjoys spending time together.

One of the great things about attending such an event on one's own is that it is an opportunity to join different groups at meals, over coffee, in the conference hall, and to initiate conversations. In a short space of time, I learned much about my 'family in faith', about the Connexion, its churches and personalities. Several people I spoke to knew far more about Cophthorne Chapel than I, and very interesting it was to hear their reminiscences. The warmth and depth of so many conversations remains with me.



The Conference began with our President's welcome, with a message of love for one another exemplified in the first chapter of 1 Thessalonians. The theme of the conference was focused on mission, with contributions from three young men whose lives offer contemporary examples of mission, of profound dedication to

God's Word, directed by the Spirit and lived out in contemporary structures and contexts.



Gareth Lloyd-Jones offered a dynamic message focused on the transforming marriage of Spirit and Word - the need for both Spirit and Word, not a 'balance' of both but "as much as possible of both, as much of both as God wants to give us."

Sam Ward introduced us to his life and ministry in the challenging environment of the Openshaw estate in Manchester. He spoke with such self-deprecating wit and uncompromising passion for the Gospel, lived out in the most challenging of circumstances, under the guidance of the Spirit, that I think many of us were discreetly wiping away tears by the time he finished. Would that we might all see ourselves –

“called to love our neighbours with the best of God, who works out His love in us; to love with the overflow of Heaven not the leftovers of ourselves; as an endless proclamation of our Lord's good news; confident that there is an anointing of the Spirit for every contribution for those who take seriously the call of God; so that those to whom we minister start to wear the marks of transformation.”

As you can see, I found myself paying the closest attention to the Word flowing through this 'herald of the Gospel', and felt changed by the encounter.

Andy Roberts's contribution was as guest speaker for the Youth Conference. His impact on the group was evident when they joined up with the adult conference; he too is living out his faith in the context of a dedicated, communal, Christian life.

So this was a second lasting impression I have of Conference – the encouragement of three dynamic, contemporary lived responses to our nation's dwindling Christian faith, and the rapidly narrowing public space for its expression. The lending to us of their vision, energy and profoundly serious spirituality was key to the feeling voiced by our President that there seemed to be a spirit of renewal flowing through the Conference.

The third highlight of the Conference that remains with me was the beautiful film made by Peter Riddell of a visit to Sierra Leone. As one who worked in Africa over many years, and fell under the spell of this amazing continent and its peoples, I found the film deeply evocative, touching, and beautifully made.

All of this rich teaching and witness flowed through into our worship, from morning prayer in the stillness of an upper room, to family worship ably supported by a pair of Gospel troubadours on guitar.

There were many other enjoyable aspects of Conference I have no room to mention. The practical arrangements were carefully considered and beautifully executed – the Conference leadership ‘behind the scenes’ merits the highest praise. The Connexion’s business was ably conducted, and for me, with a professional interest in safeguarding, the expert support offered and made available by Bethany Green to any church that needs it, deserves mention.



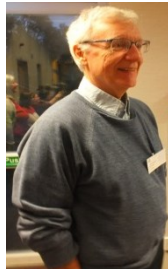
The audience in my mind’s eye as I write this report is all those members of the Connexion who have never before attended Conference. I do recommend you consider attending in future. Think of it as a retreat, a chance to meet your family in faith, and an opportunity for renewal. You won’t be disappointed.

- Stephen Blunden, Cophorne Chapel

# Photos of the Family

*Here are a few more photos from this year's annual conference. With thanks to Stuart Aldridge and Ken Hart for sending them in.*

News from the churches and the barn dance, can you spot a representative from your church?



# Interview with the President Elect

Those of you who were at conference will know that a new president elect, and first lady to-be have been announced in readiness for next conference. here they give an exclusive interview for Voice including likes, jobs and the presidential future!

## First, Quick Fire!

**Q: Which would you pick, tea or Coffee?**

**A: Ken: Tea**

**Marion: Coffee**



**Q: Do you prefer cake or Biscuits?**

**A: Ken: Cake**

**Marion: Biscuits**

**Q: Are you usually late or early?**

**A: Ken: Generally on time, but received family wisdom says otherwise!**

**Marion: Early**



**Q: Do you prefer Christmas or Easter?**

**A: Both: Easter**

**Q: Would you rather be indoors or outdoors?**

**A: Both: Outdoors**



**Q: Are you an Early bird or Night owl?**

**A: Ken: Night owl with early bird aspirations.**

**Marion:** Early bird

## Second, Let's get to the specifics!

**Q: How long have you been in the Countess of Huntingdon connexion?**

**A:** We're well into nine years

**Q: What were you doing before this?**

**A: Ken:** After school, National Service, teacher training, twelve years in primary schools, four years theological college, sixteen years pastoral ministry, two years waiting, six years teaching in a Christian school, then six years "retirement" before Cradley.

**Marion:** After school nursery nursing, working as a nanny, then back to nursery nursing. From 1967, wife, mother, and church member. From 1979, all these and supporting Ken in the pastoral ministry.

**Q: Where have you lived?**

**A: Ken:** I grew up West Scotland, then in South London excluding the RAF and teacher training in West London where Marion and I met at church. I taught till 1975 when I entered Spurgeon's College.

**Marion:** I grew up in Chiswick, West London, and met Ken in 1960. We were married in 1967 and lived in Hither Green, South London, till we moved [after Ken trained for ministry] to Essex, first to Hornchurch Baptist Church, then Grays Baptist Tabernacle. Both: We moved to Worcester in 1996, then Malvern in 1998. Ken taught at a Christian school in Worcester till he retired [exaggeration!] in 2003. Marion was carer for her parents from 2002 to 2008.

**Q: Tell us a bit about your family.**

**A:** We have two daughters, Debbie, Julie [married to Jon] and two adopted sons, brothers, Sean [married to Emma, with two sons Ryan and Joshua] and Mark [married to Terry]. Debbie lives in Leominster, Julie and Jon in Worcester, Sean and his family in Moreton-in-Marsh [Cotswolds] and Mark and Terry in Keddington Suffolk.

**Q:** Tell us something few people know about you.

**A:** **Ken:** On my initial attempt at archery I hit the gold with my first arrow, then spent half an hour trying to repeat it - in vain.

**Marion:** In my teens I was clear that I would never marry a teacher or a pastor. Bingo – got both. The Lord has a sense of humour!

**Q:** Tell us your favourite joke.

**A:** **Ken:** A black horse walks into a bar and asks for a drink. The barman gives it to him and, trying to make conversation says: “Do you know we have a whisky named after you?” “Really?” responds the horse. “Eric??”

**Marion:** I leave the jokes to Ken!

**Q:** Tell us a bit about how your journey as a Christian began.

**A:** **Ken:** I became friendly with a boy at school who was a Christian. I was searching fruitlessly in eastern religions and other things for some sort of meaning. I saw a commitment in him which I didn’t have. He eventually coaxed me to the Christian Union meeting, where I heard plain direct preaching for the first time. I said “Yes” to the Lord on the Wednesday of Whitweek [as it used to be called], May 1956.

**Marion:** I was in Campaigners at my home church. When I was about 16 the leader invited me to tea. During the evening she asked if I had received Jesus as my Saviour and Lord. I said, not really. But there and then I did.

**Q:** What is your favourite book of the Bible, and why?

**A:** **Ken:** John’s Gospel. the first book of the Bible I read through after conversion. The content and the portrayal of Christ gripped me then, and still does.

**Marion:** Ruth, because of her commitment to the Lord and to Naomi.

**Q:** Besides the Bible do you have a favourite author or book?

**A:** **Ken:** It’s a tie between John Bunyan and Jane Austen

**Marion:** I just enjoy reading biographies and true stories.

**Q:** **If we had a Biblical Tardis and you could go to any point or place in the Bible where would you go and why?**

**A:** **Ken:** Difficult. On balance, I think 9.00 a.m. in the Temple, Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost, just to see the beginning of the church's work.

**Marion:** Honestly, I don't know.

**Q:** **Who is your biblical superhero, and why?**

**A:** **Ken:** Caleb – because he trusted God and the promises of God all through the wilderness years and the conquest of Canaan into old age. Then he recognised his mountain, took it with the strength God gave him, and passed on that vision to the next generation.

**Marion:** Timothy. We might not have chosen him, yet he matured and continued Paul's work.



**Q:** **Do you have a favourite hymn or song?**

**A:** **Ken:** There are so many! But I'll choose "When I survey the wondrous cross." Charles Wesley rated it as best - who am I to argue?

**Marion:** "Amazing Grace". It may be a standard, but it says everything.

**Q:** **What aspect of being President/First Lady are you most looking forward to when your term of office begins?**

**A:** **Ken:** Meeting with and working with the people in our churches.

**Marion:** Seeing how other small churches work.

*And now from a President in waiting, to the President himself...*

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## Presidential Travel to ...

*The Lord leads us through both green pastures and the valley of the shadow of death, highs and lows, joyful times and moments of deep sadness. The last few months have been true to that kind of pattern, the spiritual highs of Conference for example followed, on the eve of our return, by learning that our neighbour's 5 month son has cancer and our friend Peter Nickless from South Street was seriously ill.*

*Similarly, we had the joy of meeting the folk at Rosedale early March looking again on Sunday morning at the gospel story of forgiveness in Philemon. Yet, it happened to be the first Sunday of pastor John Green's sabbatical and we learnt something of John's recent struggles with the loss of close friends. These things drive us to prayer as we seek the Lord's grace for each other, hanging on to his sure promise never to leave us till the end of the age. In truth, whilst it feels like we are "hanging on" in fact he holds us securely in his hands from which we cannot be plucked.*

*Phyl and I were at Shoreham last Sunday (15<sup>th</sup> April) where they use most Sunday mornings as a bible study going through "The essential Bible Truth treasury and journal", something produced by All Souls Langham Place. They are about halfway through the book and by the time they finish will be very knowledgeable about the scriptures. We looked at man's nature as it is described in Romans ch3, corrupted by sin and came face to face with what a mess we have made of God's creation. I was glad we could finish with Romans 8v1 "There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus". All our sins are forgiven and we are given Christ's righteousness. Keep up the studies Shoreham; it's good stuff!*

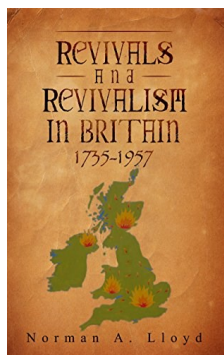
*I'm at Copthorne next Sunday, 22<sup>nd</sup> April then  
Ebley 20<sup>th</sup> May  
Shoreham 27<sup>th</sup> May  
Sheppey 3<sup>rd</sup> June  
Bolney 24<sup>th</sup> June  
Turners Hill 1<sup>st</sup> July  
Broad Oak 15<sup>th</sup> or 29<sup>th</sup> July  
Bolney 19<sup>th</sup> August  
Mortimer West End – Anniversary 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> October*

*Having completed my first year as President I am conscious of what a privilege Phyl and I have to be part of a very special group of churches. At Conference there was openness to seeking the Lord's presence and blessing by His Spirit which was very positive. Let's pray for one another, the trustees and the SLM committee, the Conference planning group, our ministers and one another that our Saviour will continue to bless us and make us a blessing in our communities.*

*God bless*

*Dave Sweetman, President of the Connexion*

## Revivals and Revivalism



Revivals and Revivalism 1735-1957 by Norman A Lloyd\*

Acorn Press 2018, 309 pp. £9.99 (available online or from Norman at 133, Warden Hill Road, Cheltenham, GL51 3EL)

### A Review

This is a detailed and careful analysis of the subject. It starts with the C18 century Awakening in Wales, England and Scotland. Britain was in a poor moral condition in the eighteenth century. The descriptions of what things were like do not make edifying reading, but God's power through several courageous preachers certainly does.

There are descriptions of the ministry of Howell Harris, John and Charles Wesley and George Whitefield, as well as various other well-known preachers. The Christian commitment of these men led them to preach despite sometimes receiving terrible opposition. This was widely regarded as a

sovereign visitation by God and this is still a challenge for our Christian witness today.

The second section deals with nineteenth century revival in Northern Ireland and Wales, as well as the revival inspired nationwide evangelistic endeavours throughout England and Scotland by many notable preachers, such as Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

The 1904-1905 Welsh revival, the 1922-1923 East Anglian revival and the 1949-1957 Hebrides revival are dealt with in the third section and the final section of the book explores the issue of Revival versus Revivalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. One key question is whether preachers should look for a public confession of faith (sometimes called revivalism) for example by 'going forward'.

I am left reflecting on various matters which are explored in this book. First it is sad that revival preachers sometimes opposed each other. It is surely notable that Christians readily divided and formed new denominations.

Another question, a key one in the twenty-first century, is whether new revivals can be hastened by fervent prayer or whether the initiative and timing are entirely in God's hands, or whether both are true.

Thank you Norman for such a clear and instructive book.

\*Norman was a minister of three Countess of Huntingdon churches from 1968-1997: North Place, Gotherington and Ebley and a Trustee in the 1990s.

- Dr Fred Hughes (formerly Head of the School of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Gloucestershire)

## Sierra Leone with Mission Direct 2018

A group of eleven people (five from Ely) spent two weeks of the Easter holidays in Freetown, Sierra Leone, working on a school building and refurb project.

When we decided to go to SL it was to understand more of the country and meet the people as well as contribute to some infrastructure. Mission Direct were aware of our links with Countess Churches and had previously taken out songbooks to Bureh Beach from us.

It was a joy to visit Daniel Koroma and his leadership team at Lumley Ebenezer Church where we received a very warm welcome and bottles of cold Sprite!

The team was showed round, including their building project of a new hall. We exchanged greetings and told the rest of the team the Countess story.



Karl, Anna, Karen, Andrew and Liz (with the sprite) at Ebenezer COH church, Lumley.

At the end of our trip, we were joined at Mama Beach by Magnus Bendu for dinner. Magnus recalled his trip to the UK including climbing the west tower at Ely

cathedral!

He shared his vision for children over 18yrs (when they would have to leave Bethesda). Magnus hopes to still be able to offer care for these young people who may not be ready for life on their own.

We gave him some new PE tops and a full football kit for the children. There was also the mandatory exchange of greetings from churches and individuals.

SL is hot and humid (upper 20's and low 30 degrees). It is noisy (their horn will wear out before clutch or brakes!)





And, they know how to party (election celebrations went on for days!)

We will share more of our amazing trip in the next issue.

Karl, Liz, Magnus, Anna and Karen at Mama B

- Karen Relton, Ely

## Future Dates

19 <sup>th</sup> May 2018	Ote Hall Chapel's Anniversary Service, 3pm.
16 <sup>th</sup> June 2018	Trustees Meeting
7 <sup>th</sup> July 2018	SLM Committee Meeting, Evangelical Alliance Library
21 <sup>st</sup> September 2018	SLM Golf Day, Foxbridge Golf Club
6 <sup>th</sup> October 2018	Trustees Meeting
13 <sup>th</sup> October 2018	SLM Day, Ote Hall Chapel, 12pm. All welcome.

*The 14<sup>th</sup> annual*  
*S.L.M.*  
*Charity Golf Day*  
*21<sup>st</sup> September 2018*  
*Foxbridge Golf Club*  
*West Sussex*

*9 hole Texas scramble, bacon  
sandwich or similar, 18 hole  
Stableford followed by a 2  
Course buffet, cost £48*

*Speak to Gordon Hamilton if interested*

*01293 537275*

*Or email [gordonhamilton@talktalk.net](mailto:gordonhamilton@talktalk.net)*

*Foxbridge Golf Club, Plaistow Road Kirdford, Billingshurst. RH14 0LB.  
Tel: 01403 753303*

## From Your Foreign Correspondent

This is written by a ghost writer but all the incidents are true, although some names have been changed.

*Hello. Good Afternoon. It's me again. I hope you are fine. We are fine but we know plenty friends and people who are not fine. That is sad. I will tell you about one of them.*

*But first I want to tell you that Joseph, Mo and me - we are all working hard for exam. We have extra lessons after school and we have homework and we work all day in school. Oh dear, trying to get to Junior Secondary School is not easy. Mo wants to go to JSS and then to Senior Secondary School and then he wants to go to University to a place called Njala where they learn to grow crops. Njala is in Sierra Leone so that is good.*

*Joseph wants to be a doctor and he wants to go to University also. He can study in Sierra Leone but he needs to be clever and get a scholarship, (what a big word), as his mother cannot pay the fees. He has made me sad by saying that in UK there is one health worker for 77 people but in Salone there is only 1 health worker for every 5260 people. That is plenty sad. But I do not think I can be clever to be a doctor too.*

*My little sister Aminata, she is 6 years old now, she wants to be a doctor and she seems to be clever and now that she can see with her eyes, maybe when she grows up she can be a clever doctor and help people. If I can get work with money then maybe I can save some money and help Aminata to go to study to be doctor. Oh dear I must work hard and try to go to Junior Secondary School. My brothers, Saidu and Suliman they want to be footballers and play for Sierra Leone and then for Real Madrid and Manchester United. I think they are crazy.*

*Christiana and Khadija, who are Joseph's and Mo's big sisters, are at JSS and they are working hard to be nurse and teacher one day.*

*Now I must tell you about a friend of Reverend. He is Reverend too but he cannot be a pastor for now as his leg is very sick. One leg looks like my leg only bigger but the other leg looks bad bad and is huge and big and has plenty sores all over it. I don't know how that Reverend got sick but he is very sick. He cannot walk with his bad leg. I asked our Reverend if his friend had seen*

*the doctor or had gone to the hospital but Reverend said his friend did not have enough money. Oh dear that was so sad. Just today at church Reverend told us that our prayers are being answered and some kind friends in UK sent money to help the sick pastor. We are all praying he can get better soon and return to his church to be a good pastor to the people there.*

*I must tell you about my naughty little sister in church. Reverend asked for us all to pray for each other and to pray for many many people who may be too poor to get help when they are sick. He said -Let's stand up and put one hand on the person in front of us and the people in the front of the church can raise their hand to pray for the people in the back row. So we all stood up but Aminata was too short for the lady behind to reach her and at the same time for Aminata to reach a tall man in front of her. So she stood on the bench and leaned forward. Reverend was praying for us all and we were praying for the one in front and for every one who is sick. Then suddenly Aminata fell off the bench and made a noise. I saw Reverend open one eye and see that she was not hurt so he went on praying and prayed for Aminata too. We boys were trying not to laugh. But we were asking God to help people and to heal them. Joseph told me he was praying for more doctors in Sierra Leone too.*

*Did I tell you how much we enjoy our toys and gifts from the shoe bags? When we are tired from studying we pick up our frisbees and go out to the school field and throw and run and run and catch and have lots of fun. I hope that will help our brains too.*

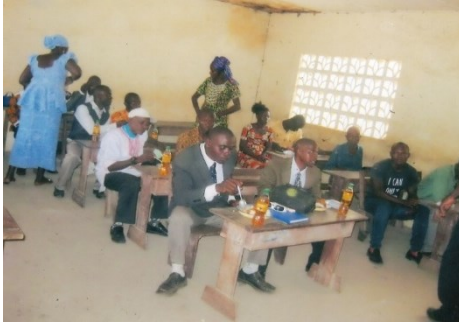
*Did you ever have to study hard for exam? I do not like exam but I need to study and pass and then one day I hope I can help people. I am going to pray about my exam. Maybe you could pray about our exams too and maybe Sierra Leone will one day have extra doctor, teacher, nurse, agriculturalist (teacher helped me to write that word) and a news reporter who can tell people how things are and what they can do about things.*

*Thank you for thinking of us here in Sierra Leone. We pray for you too in UK. I will pray for any one who is taking exam like me.*

*Joseph, Mo, Me, Christiana and Khadija all want to say Best wishes and God bless you. Oh boy, here comes Aminata and she says God bless you too. She is patting her eye to say thank you for your help and prayers.*

*Sorie Olufemi Sesay - SOS*

## Update On Fabaina Church

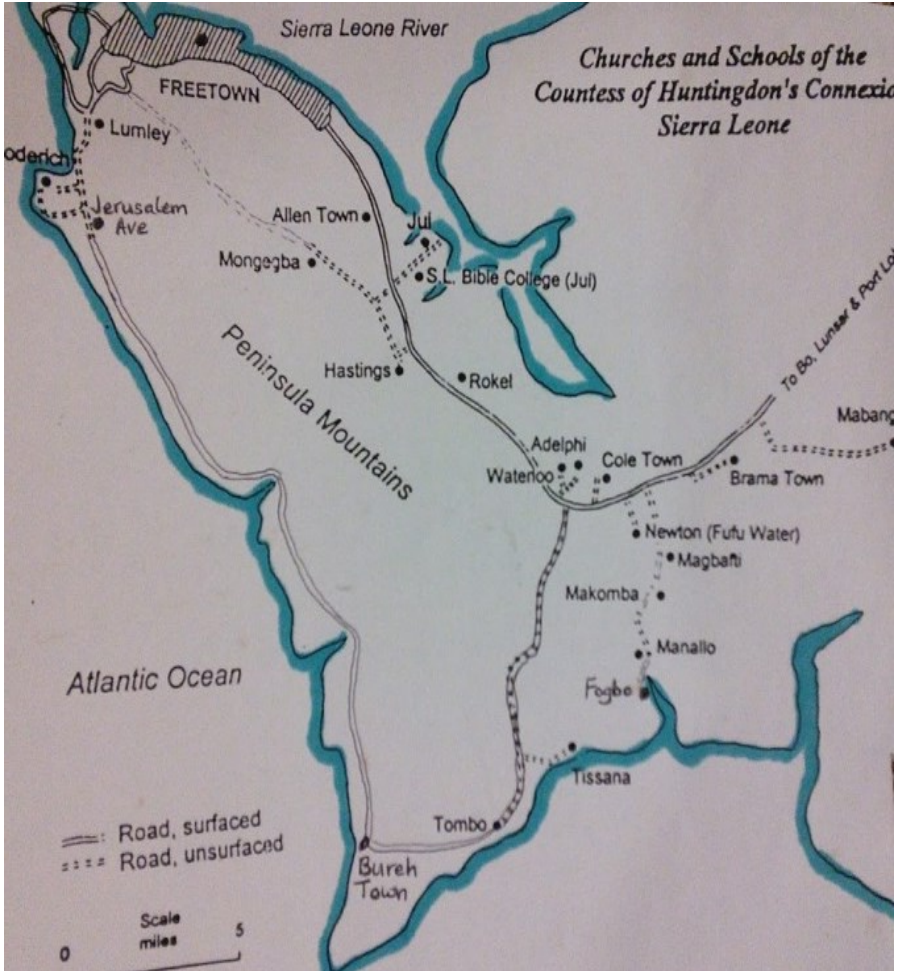


Since our Focus on Fabaina, the church worshippers have finished putting up the walls of mud and sun-baked blocks. The SLM and Conference offering has been sent out to put the roof on. It is a strong corrugated iron roof and has been painted blue.

Looking at the photos, sent by Revd Ambrose Junisa, there is still a lot of work to do. May God bless our brothers and sisters in Fabaina.

# Location, Location, Location!

Can you spot Fabaina (featured in the last edition) and Tombo (featured on the next page)?



## Focus On Tombo

Today we'll take a trip; this time it's not down a long dusty, rutted road but instead on a smooth paved seaside road down the west coast of the Peninsula from Freetown to Tombo. On the way we are hampered by traffic in Freetown but eventually get out to the Lumley area and we pass the Milton Margai School for the Blind. We drive on past the new church building of Ebenezer, Lumley, with the chaos of noise and bustle and blaring car horns. We resist the temptation to divert down to the beach at Lumley but instead drive on smoothly to Goderich. Again we resist temptation to say hello to friends there and stay on the main road. Soon we pass the turn off to Jerusalem Avenue and head on down the Peninsula passing the beautiful beaches at Lakka, Village No.2, Toke, York and Bureh Town. We then continue on the main road rounding the point of the peninsula passing Mamah Beach and on to the fishing village of Tombo. Spellings vary in Sierra Leone and the older maps call it Tumbu.



Freetown through the Peninsula route.

The Quinton DeAth Church, Tombo was the first church in that community and it was founded on 14 April 1904. This strong building eventually broke down but was rebuilt in about 1999. Originally it was on the main road but by the time the church was rebuilt there was a new road and the old one was



absorbed into the bustle of the village. There are currently 51 church members; with 10 male, 8 female, 18 boys and 15 girls.

Revd Sallu Koroma, who is the former Chairman and General Superintendent is now the Circuit Superintendent working with Revd Gibril Bendu as ministers of the Church. Revd R.G.O. Blackie, who is the retired Head Teacher of Huntingdon Secondary School in Jui, is working as a part time minister of the Church as well. Like most other Churches in the Connexion worship services are held every Sunday at 10.00am and Bible Studies on Wednesdays.



There is a Manse on the same road and opposite the Church. This is also a fairly recent building and has been well used by the ministers and for sewing lessons for the ladies.

The Church has a primary school, Huntingdon Primary School, Tombo, which was started in 2003. They met in the church until recently and, unusually for a Huntingdon primary school, their uniform is purple.



Not many years ago a new school was built adjoining the Church though all the classes are in one big room facing in different directions.



There are 171 pupils, 76 girls and 95 boys. The Head Teacher is Christiana. There are three other Teachers, Brima, Sheka and Precious.

It was a difficult time for the children when there was no toilet as they were in full view of the passersby on the street. Recently a toilet block has been built though the toilets are very challenging and there is no well for the water needed. The school roof of Corrugated Iron sheets has been corroding as a result of salty air from the Atlantic Ocean.



Surrounding the Church and the school a small wall has been built to prevent cars being parked on the only piece of land that the children can use. This was sponsored recently by the SLM. All the buildings, church, school, manse and toilets have been accomplished by the generous gifts of faithful Christians in the UK.



There are two nearby Countess of Huntingdon Churches; Bolney Church Bureh Town in the West and Trinity Tissana in the East.

It has been a long time of vital witness for the Church and congregation in spreading the gospel in this Muslim area. The school teachers, too, add their witness so that the children are taught about our Saviour and take the good news home with them. Please pray for the adults and children shining their light as a beacon in Tombo.

# Bethesda

When we were in Sierra Leone last May Peter and I talked at length to Magnus about a wide range of topics: from pastors to churches, teachers to schools, Bethesda to street children. One aspect of the work at Bethesda is to reunite children with their families, which is always a thrill. What about the orphan children? What will happen to the children when they complete their education? Magnus has become increasingly burdened for the older children and their transition from Bethesda into the world. We talked about a building that could be used for these young people, a place to become more independent yet still have the security and support of Bethesda.

Each year the shoe bags, salvage from the festivals and other essentials has increased in amount and last year a 40 foot container was almost filled. This year, already, we could at least half fill a container. So the idea was born that we could purchase our own container, fill it and send it to Sierra Leone. Once there it would be delivered to Bethesda where it would be emptied, sorted and distributed. The container would then be transformed into living accommodation for the older teens.

Christine Hamilton greatly encouraged the work with street children and it seems only fitting that money given in memory of Chris should be used to help this project.

In the next couple of months the folk at St. Ives are aiming to locate and purchase a 40 foot container. The church is already stacked with boxes ready to be moved. I am confident that between the Connexional Churches we will fill a container to the gunnels! Especially after Reading Festival.

In November Bethany and Esther Green from Rosedale, me and two others from St. Ives are planning to be at Bethesda when the container arrives. Exciting.

Please can I encourage you to 'sort out': toys, children's books, children's clothes, bedding, towels. We can make a difference!! Come to Reading and salvage. We can make a difference!! Hold a coffee morning towards shipping costs. WE can make a difference!!

- Janet O' Shea, St Ives

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The Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion

**Chairman and Secretary of the Trustees: Noel Valley**

21 Lyttons Way, Hoddesdon, Herts EN11 9NH  
(01992 461766)

**Honorary Treasurer: Mr Graham Squibbs**

15 Springfield Road, Middleton M24 5DL  
(0161 6537401)

**Sierra Leone Mission donations to: Mrs Janet Foord**

2 Cheyne Close, Church Milton, Sittingbourne,  
Kent ME10 2SQ (01795) 437358

*Connexional website: [www.cofhconnexion.org.uk](http://www.cofhconnexion.org.uk)*

The Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, Sierra Leone

**Chairman & General Superintendent:** Rev. Theophilus Nicol

**Assistant Chairman and General Superintendent:** Rev. Alex Dixon

**Agent for the Sierra Leone Mission:** Rev. Daniel Koroma

*S.L.M. Website: [www.sierraleonemission.org.uk](http://www.sierraleonemission.org.uk)*

**Voice Editor: Sarah Waters**

92 Oxford Road, Old Marston, Oxford,  
Oxon OX3 0RD (07706449939)  
E-mail: [sarahwaters@outlook.com](mailto:sarahwaters@outlook.com)

**Distribution: Brian & Ann Mitchell**

25 Debden Green, Ely, Cambridgeshire  
CB6 3BS (01353) 610525  
E-mail: [brian\\_ann.mitchell77@ntlworld.com](mailto:brian_ann.mitchell77@ntlworld.com)

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