

A Night to Remember!

The Sunday evening service of 29th June was a very special occasion for all the members and friends of Durham Road Baptist Church. For the first time in eight years, our baptism pool was opened and filled with water so that six new believers could testify to their new-found faith in Jesus Christ in the way he has commanded. It was an occasion of great joy for all concerned, especially for those who were baptised.

➤ **An International Flavour**

But what made this particular service of baptism so special was not simply that it had come after such a long wait for the Church and its members; nor that it was a service in which so many were baptised. What made the occasion so special was the *international* dimension to the service. Five of the six who were baptised originated from a country currently closed to the Gospel. God had brought them to this country as refugees, fleeing political persecution.

➤ **Freedom to Find Faith**

One of the five shared his testimony before the service at our monthly International Tea (a Tea which broke all our previous records, with over 70 present for it!). The young man shortly to be baptised explained how deeply he had been influenced by a Christian believer in his homeland. Such people were, and still are, very rare in this particular country. But this particular believer's faith had shone brightly. His sense of peace and joy was so evident that it caused our friend to ask him questions about his life and beliefs (an example of 1 Peter 3.15 being outworked).

Shortly afterwards, our friend was forced to flee his homeland. But here in the UK he has been able to explore the Christian faith more fully and freely, and having done so has gladly embraced it as his own by making Jesus Christ his Lord and Saviour. It was through him that the other four men who were baptised came to the church, and also found a living faith in Jesus Christ.

➤ **Good Use of the Internet**

The one woman who was baptised also came to us

from overseas. Remi Fasipe was born in Nigeria into a Catholic family. She later married the son of a Baptist pastor and emigrated to the USA to work as a doctor. Whilst there, she was led to put her trust unreservedly in Jesus Christ as her Saviour and Lord.

She came to the Northeast from the USA to take a course at Newcastle's Royal Infirmary. Her area of speciality is bone-marrow transplants for children. Remarkably, she came into contact with DRBC via the Internet! She was searching for a Baptist church in the area, and up popped the name of Durham Road (something of a miracle, because it was *before* we established our website!). Sadly for us, Remi returns to the United States in the autumn - where gladly for her, she will be re-united with her husband once again after their two years of living 3000 miles apart whilst Remi has been increasing her skills and qualifications. We will miss her and her two young sons Derin and Bayo greatly, and are praying that the Lord will send us further families to take their place.

➤ **Christ for All Nations**

We were reminded of the global appeal of the Gospel at our baptism service, not only through those being baptised. It was also apparent in the make up of the congregation that night. The Bible Reading was taken by a young refugee from *Zimbabwe*. Our guitarist originated from *Ghana*. And in addition, there were representatives from a further eleven different countries in the 100-strong congregation: *China, Taiwan, Iraq, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Congo, South Africa, and Brazil* - not to forget *England* and *Scotland*, of course! So all in all, we had people from sixteen different nations united in their worship of their one Saviour and God. It was appropriate that the message was based around Paul's words in 2 Cor 5.14-15:

Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all ... that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

We were encouraged after the service by three young people who asked for a copy of Nicky

Gumbel's *Why Jesus?* booklet. We should pray that they too will come to find a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We give God all the glory for such a night to remember!

For your Prayers

Please remember **Andrew and Richard Hunt** in your prayers as they head-off to far-flung places for summer mission work.



- Richard is in Thailand with OMF from 6th July to 8th August. He will be working alongside established missionaries seeking to share the Gospel with students in the university town of Phitsanulok in central Thailand. There will be an opportunity to participate in English language classes and also help run Bible Studies for the small Christian Union group.
- Andrew is heading for Cuba with Latin Link, and will be there from 11th July to 29th August. He will be based in the coastal town of Santiago de Cuba, not far from the American Naval base at Guantanamo Bay (home to many Afghanistan detainees). Andrew will be involved in construction work for the Cuba Para Christo office, and will be helping with Vacation Bible Schools for children in nearby churches.

Prayer Letters for both Andrew and Richard are available from David or Elma. Please ask if you would like a copy.

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. [Colossians 4.2-6]

Please remember **Frank and Jackie Headon** in your prayers, as Frank returns to the Royal Victoria Infirmary for further surgery this month.

Please continue to remember our forthcoming **126th Anniversary Mission** in your prayers. Full

details of our planned activities were given in the June edition of our DRBC News. Let me know if you would like a copy to prompt your prayers.

The latest edition of the **IREF(UK)** Prayer Letter is available. Please ask if you would like a copy. On behalf of my fellow trustees, let me say a very big 'Thank you' to all who gave so generously for our May Bank Holiday Charity Barbecue. Over £150 has been raised towards the start-up costs for a village Child Development Centre (Day School).

The **Open Heaven Christian Centre** is the wonderfully colourful name that has been chosen by the group of Ethiopians, Eritreans, Somalians and others from north-east Africa who meet at DRBC on Sunday afternoons for a service of worship, teaching and fellowship. The group began in Newcastle only a few months ago, meeting in a private house. They soon outgrew that home and have been using our facilities since Easter. The group now numbers almost 40, and is continuing to grow rapidly. How we thank God for the amazing work he is doing amongst the various refugee communities in Britain! There was a time when Britain pioneered cross-cultural mission by sending willing volunteers all over the world. But now the world is coming back to us, and we are enjoying the immense privilege of seeing God build his world-wide international Church in front of our very eyes!



Dates for the Diary

- **Summer Barbecue:** Tuesday 8th July, 7.00-8.30pm.
- **International Outing:** Saturday 2nd August to Hadrian's Wall and Hexham Abbey. See Brian or Helen Sharp for further details.
- **Coffee Morning:** Saturday 19th July, 10.30am - 12 noon in aid of BMS 28.19 Action Teams.
- **Quarterly Church Meeting:** Wednesday 16th July, 7.30pm.



David Hunt