

The Churches in the Circuit have been fully involved in project overseas, this last year, which have helped many communities but also have enriched those involved through the vibrant hope and faith they have encountered.

We start with **Wallingford** where Philip Burns visited Kenya in liaison with Karibuni Children.

Trip to Kenya with Karibuni Children – February 2017

In February 2017 I joined a work party arranged by Karibuni Children to visit some of the projects that they support in Kenya and to carry out remedial work on two of the projects. This gave me the opportunity to see the work of Karibuni Children on the ground as this was the overseas charity which we were supporting at Wallingford. Over the two-year period that we were supporting them we raised over £3000.

The trip lasted three weeks with the first week working on the projects while in the second week we visited some of the other projects and we were able to undertake a short safari and visit other tourist sites in the third week.

There were eleven of us in the party with most of us being retired. We also had with us the Superintendent Minister from Aylesbury, the manager of the Methodist Bookshop in Stoke and the person who is this year's Youth President. After visiting some of the projects in the Nairobi area the party split into two teams. The group I was with stayed with church members in Nakuru which is North West of Nairobi. The project we were working on is at Njoro where the Methodist Church runs a nursery school in the grounds of the church. During the five days we were working there together with two local workmen and some help from church members, we repaired and repainted the two class rooms and repainted the church which is also used as a hall by the school. We also reconfigured the office and store and repainted them, repaired the kitchen walls and repaired and repainted all the tables and chairs used by the children.

The other team carried out similar work at a project on the outskirts of Nairobi.

Karibuni Children provide some financial support to fourteen projects in Kenya with the money being Channelled through the Methodist Church in Kenya. In many cases the proportion of the overall costs contributed by Karibuni is quite small, but this enables them to attract other funding.

One of the main two aspects to the projects is to support feeding programmed at the schools as it is widely recognized that children learn much better if they are not always hungry. Most of the projects are in slums or in areas with large numbers of refugee families and they cannot afford to buy enough food.



Children collecting food from the repaired classrooms at Noro



Young people supported through their education by Karibuni

The other aspect is the support with the costs of education for a limited number of children. These are carefully selected and come from the poorest of the poor. At Njoro we were told that in the last annual assessment programme 17 cases were identified by the school social worker as fully meeting the strict criteria, but support could only be given to 8 children that year. When a child is selected for support Karibuni undertake to support that child through the whole of its education up to and including university or college courses.

We visited some of the family homes where children were being supported and we also had the privilege of meeting some of the young people who had either qualified or are currently at university.

Philip Burns

Wantage have been involved with Community support, raising money for Jordan and Zack Smith – two young people from Church – to spend 4 months with Latin Link, a Christian charity, helping communities in Ecuador and Columbia in March last year.

Milton have supported Alice's charity which helps blind women and their children in Harare. At the beginning of November we held a coffee morning to support a "Ray of Vision" run by Alice Chikomo. Alice is the sister of one of our congregation – Emma Mendera. Alice was kind enough to send me this good selection of pictures, telling the story of how they spent the money we sent (Emma went to Didcot and wired the £450 directly to her sister). We were very pleased to see the large party bags offered at the bottom of the tree and the presents each child received and look forward to our next fund-raising effort for this charity.



Malcolm Newton reports from **Trinity** about their Toilet-twinning project...

Toilet-Twinning: Trinity's Chosen Charity for 2017-18

Trinity has supported the toilet-twinning initiative in 2017-18, (alongside its permanent charitable giving). Our aim was to twin every toilet in the Church and the Conduit Centre with a new toilet somewhere in the world where water and sanitation are a big problem. JaM children counted the number of toilets we've got, and our target was to raise £60 for the twin of each of them.

£60 is the average cost per household for a water and sanitation programme across the 25 countries where toilet-twinning works with Tearfund. It provides access to a proper latrine, clean water, and the information people need to stay healthy.

1 in 3 people across the world don't have somewhere safe to go to the toilet – something we take for granted. 900 children die every day from diseases linked to dirty water and unsafe toilets.

Toilet-twinning doesn't just provide the building. It makes sure people understand the need for hand-washing and keeping clean. They find out why diarrhoea lays them low during the rainy season and why diseases related to it send women, children, the old and the sick in particular into hospital – some to die there because of it.

Now, all 14 of our smallest rooms at Trinity are twinned across 9 different countries around the world, and display a framed certificate, complete with a colour photo of its twin – and GPS co-ordinates so that we can look up its location on Google Maps, and pinpoint them for power point display to the congregation. In addition to our smallest rooms, Trinity has also funded a toilet block for a school in Uganda, and public conveniences in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

We launched our initiative at a service in October with an envelope collection; and there was a church lunch in support of it in January. People have contributed throughout with an extravagant, Christian generosity.

Anna T from **Peachcroft** visited an outdoor centre in Lesotho and the Mission Aviation Fellowship airbase nearby.

Lesotho-Durham Link and Mission Aviation Fellowship

I work as an outdoor activity instructor for Rock UK and this January for two weeks, some of the instructors went out to the Lesotho-Durham Link, an outdoor centre in Lesotho, Africa. Our main aim was to build a relationship with that centre and start a long lasting partnership between the two organisations. Lesotho is a completely different world to the lives we live here in the UK. Where we live in comfort, they live in poverty. Where we live in health, they have the highest rate of HIV/AIDS in the world. Where we take things for granted, they don't have those things at all. And yet, at the same time, they have so much more joy than us as a people.



Our activities out there split largely into building relationships and serving people. As outdoor activity instructors, we like to play in God's creation so we spent a couple of days out in the mountains in Lesotho with the Link's instructors; their small team of 4 bonded with our team of 11 with ease, and by the end of our time out there the idea of going back to our centres without them seemed odd! We also had an opportunity to serve the centre, by taking them some much needed equipment, looking at session structures out on their lake, and doing menial tasks around the site (like destroying the large rock below the climbing tower).

The main event of our visit, if you like, was the Child Headed Household Residential we ran at the centre for a long weekend. Young people (between 13 & 18) who have to look after siblings since being orphaned as a result of HIV/Aids came to the Link from the rural villages in the North of the country for three days of fun, friendship and fellowship. The 36 young people were split into four activity groups and each group did canoeing, archery, climbing and team games. Each day we also had a session entitled 'What About God' time, where we worshipped together and looked at a parable Jesus told and what that could teach us about God or our lives. The residential has to be one of the highlights of the trip - the 9 children who were in my group were such amazing people and so full of potential and that was just incredible to see.



After the residential we went further afield to the Mission Aviation Fellowship airbase down the road. Rock UK have a pre-existing partnership with MAF so it was amazing to be out in the field seeing how the work they do truly impacts lives. Our last stop on our African adventure was not in Lesotho but Bethlehem, South Africa, where we visited a church plant and mission working with the street boys in the town there. Again, it was eye opening to see how they live and the things they have to deal with on a daily basis. Throughout the whole trip God's hand was evident, both in the work we did and the work existing through the people who're out there. God works in all situations and through all of his people, and being a part of his global church is incredible.



Anna T – supported by members of Peachcroft Christian Centre

Sue Russell from [All Saints](#) writes about All Saints and her involvement with the Nasio Trust based in Zambia...

This was my 13th trip to Musanda. I have been going since 2005 when I went to help paint the first Day Care Centre ready for opening.

I have been involved with the Nasio Trust since 2004. My stepdaughter Lou, used to work part funded by the council & TVP with ASBO youth. Her aim was to make sure they stayed out of trouble with the police. Nancy, now co-funder and Director of the charity also worked for TVP. Nancy's mother had found a baby abandoned and crying in her sugar cane field. Having tried to locate the parents she decided to care for the child despite being 75 years old. When she became worn out Nancy made her place the child in an orphanage but she visited every week and eventually took the baby.

On realising the HIV crisis in the area another of her daughters offered at church to feed hungry children. Over 60 turned up at the small kiosk. 15 desperately needy children were selected and the first centre was opened in 2003. Nancy suggested to Lou that she take her ASBO group over to Kenya to help build the first day care centre, and so Exit 7 UK began. Over 100 young people have now been to help on various projects. Lou came to show her Dad and I a video of what she was going to do. Unfortunately that night her Dad died from a stroke so I believe God had a hand in my involvement and I have supported her ever since.

I have helped teach classes in our ECD daycare centres as well as deeded Primary schools. I have assisted at 3 medical weeks, the biggest being in 2015 when over 800 people turned up to be treated by volunteer Doctors & Dentists. We have worked alongside the Red Cross and Toms shoes to hold jiggers clinics.

Once the admin of the charity grew too much for Nancy alone I was. Employed as their first employee. My responsibility was child sponsorship. I also did promotional talks and led volunteer groups as well as organise fund raising events. So, as a trustee now I travelled to Kenya this year to organise work ready for our sponsors. They receive a new photo each year (I had to show a photographer how we needed the picture set) and a picture drawn by their child, or a letter from an older child. The social workers also needed guidance on what to write about the child's ability to learn taking into account their guardians circumstances (many are illiterate grandparents) I also had to source baskets for sale in the UK and lead Adult Literacy classes for th guardians workshop no on the Spirulina project.

All Saints support Nasio and Future Pillars, Zambia as both charities have trustees in the congregation so get regular feedbacks on progress.



Sue Russell with her sponsored girls

Grove has supported Yotam Theu and his Church since 1999. Yotam is an Evangelist, Pastor and founder of a new denomination - “Christian Church” in Malawi.

Mark met Yotam when he visited his Sister who taught him at School while she was on a VSO teaching placement in 1988. This was the start of a life-long friendship and partnership in the Gospel. Grove contributed to building a number of Churches and in 2014, to a Truck which played a key role in Yotam’s community and the network of Christian Church congregations,.

Yotam came to stay with Mark in 1998 who introduced him to Grove Church.

In 2015 Yotam had a vision to build a training facility (the “campus”) to train preachers and leaders for Christian Church (actually about 20 congregations throughout Malawi but mainly in the Northern District). Grove supported him in this work and the buildings have been constructed. However they have yet to be roofed.

This will be done with corrugated iron sheeting. Mark has appealed to the Circuit to help raise £1000 by Summer 2018 towards the roofing costs. .



Donations have already come in which will enable an initial amount to be sent in March.

Yotam