

Dear All,

This has been quite a busy summer. Taking three youngsters from Dursley and Birmingham to Taizé was a privilege. It is rather humbling to be in the minority as an 'oldie', when more than four thousand 17-30 year olds are coming together to praise God. What so impresses me is that they willingly attend worship three times per day and many come half an hour early to sit and pray. Once inside the church, there is silence. We are no good at that in our churches. We don't do our catching up with each other beforehand or over coffee, so we tend to chat right up to the giving out of Notices! There is an advantage in being quiet, however. Our business in the world can be put in the context of God's creation and we can draw breath and thank God in the quiet of our hearts for God's blessings and mercy on us.

We should not be afraid of silence. That is something else Taizé is good at. They have ten minutes' silence in each service, in which I find I am chatting with God in my mind far more easily than in my daily life. I am not advocating you spend ten minutes per day in silence but a short period of quiet reflection may be beneficial.

In August a URC minister was inducted into the Forest Group of churches. This is indeed a time of celebration. Glyn Jenkins has been their Interim Moderator for a long time! This brings the URC tally of ministers in the county up to seven, with vacancies in Gloucester & Brockworth and Nailsworth. Seven ministers and twenty churches.... We must all be aware of difficulties in the future, as ministers are asked to look after more churches and churches are asked to form more groupings. We in Cheltenham should thank God for richly blessing us at this time. I pray we can share those blessings by being active in our Area and in our Synod.

Our young people have received their exam. results and have done exceptionally well. Their hard work has paid off and they deserve our praise, rather like the Olympic athletes we have recently applauded for their superb efforts. 'No pain, no gain' is a familiar motto. 'No effort, no depth' I would say about faith. This autumn, let's read our Bibles more, pray more regularly and truly thank God for the privilege of being in fellowship with one another.

Yours in Christ,

*Maz*

## **THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH IN CHELTENHAM**

From the church registers:

### **In Memoriam**

Margaret Thomas, who lived at Prestbury, passed away on 5 August, at the age of 95, after 19 months at the Summerfield Nursing Home. She had attended St Andrews since March 2006. A private family funeral took place on 12 August. Please remember her daughter, Felicity, in your prayers

### **Weddings**

Congratulations to Kelly Manton and Jeremiah O'Callaghan and Kim Williams and Edward Oakey who were married on 2 August. We wish both couples every happiness in their future life together.

**Our prayers:** we hold in our prayers those who are ill as well as those who are or have been in hospital: Ann Ashworth, Peter Coulthurst, Dennis Goldring, Mary Howes, Paulette Hyde, Dorothy Lamb, Sandy McKenzie, Sadie Smyth and James Spence.

We send our prayers and very best wishes to Betty Roberts who has now moved to Australia to be close to her family. Betty was with us in Cheltenham for a number of years before moving to Edinburgh in 2005.

### **Congratulations to:**

- Joy Coskery who recently celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday;
- Mary and Bob Neil who recently celebrated their 65<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary;
- Richard Hall who has been accepted for Durham University;
- Geoffrey Hall who has been accepted for Oxford University
- Warden Hill in Bloom Association (supported by Church in Warden Hill) who received a Silver Award from the Heart of England in Bloom competition in the Urban Community category.

### **Birthday Teas**

The September/October Hatherley tea is on **Sat. 18 October** 3-5pm. All with birthdays these months are welcome. Future date is 13 Dec.

### **Thanks**

As many of you will know I am up and about again following a recent hip replacement operation. This is to thank the church for the support, flowers and the kind thoughts and enquiries from individuals following my re-appearance on the scene, thankfully so soon after the operation. This seemingly very carefree chap was very touched by the support and love of the church. Again thank you all. Hip replacement number two to follow in due course.

*Peter Ricketts*

### **Pensioners' Forum**

The next event will be held at St Andrew's on Wednesday **3 September**, 10.30am – 11.30am: Solicitors from Christopher Davidson, will talk on **Wills and Powers of Attorney**, including so-called 'living wills'. There have been many changes in the law in the last twelve months and this will be an opportunity for everyone to review (and update) their arrangements

### **Qi Gong**

The next Qi Gong session will take place in the Garden Room at St Andrew's on **3 September** at 12.15pm. Cost is £4.

### **Literary Group**

Will meet on **3 September** at Prestbury URC at 7.30pm to discuss the book "The Lovely Bones" by Alice Sebold. All newcomers are welcome.

### **Reform**

If you enjoyed your free copy of the URC's national magazine and would like to order a monthly copy please contact Edith Stalker or your Church Secretary.

### **Tuesday Forum**

Tuesday **9 September** at 2.30pm will be the opening meeting for our new season. Our speaker will be the Revd Dr Jon Morgan who, we hope, will tell us about the holiday in the Gower Peninsular. The meeting will take place in the Garden Room at St Andrew's when we hope to have the pleasure of welcoming old and new members. This will be followed by tea and biscuits.

Tuesday **23 September** we re pleased to welcome a new speaker, Jane Johnson, who has been for many years Wardrobe Mistress for The CODS. She will tell us about their recent success, The King and I, for which she was in charge of costume.

### **Bible Study Groups**

The bible study groups start again this month. The morning group on **Friday 5 September** from 10.30am-12noon at 51 Bournside Road. This group is led by Maz and are continuing the study of St Mark's gospel.

**Wednesday 10 September** is the first meeting of the evening group in the vestry at St Andrew's at 7.30pm. The theme of the Autumn course will be trying to place the Old Testament in some order, looking at the prophets and how God dealt with the Israelites. It may sound dry but the discussion is very stimulating and we don't always agree with Jon.

Newcomers welcome in both groups.

### **URCiC Church Meeting**

The meeting will be held on **25 September** at Warden Hill at 7.30pm This is your opportunity to hear what is going on across the three churches and express your own views Please make every effort to attend.

## **KENYA 2008/9**

Once outstanding monies come in, our total stands at £18500. Thank you for your continued support.

If you are in Woolworths, please consider buying us a pack of 4 **pencil sharpeners** for 29p. These will go out to Kenya for the children.

*(Please do not give fancy sharpeners, as this will not be fair on some children.)*

Talk by John Bell, two sessions starting 10am and 1.30pm on 'Rediscovering our Roots' & Rediscovering the Bible as the People's Book'.

### **Forthcoming Events**

#### **Cheltenham Inter Faith – Monday 8 September**

'The Bible and the Qur'an', speaker Bishop Kenneth Cragg at Francis Close Hall at 6.00pm. Book through Roger Symon on 01242 700645, full details on noticeboard.

#### **Gloucester Cathedral Day – Saturday 4 October**

'Intimacy & Involvement' speaker Revd Steve Chalke MBE, author, broadcaster and founder of the Faithworks Movement. From 10am-3pm, tickets £12, full details on noticeboard.

#### **Gloucestershire Churches Together – Tuesday 14 October**

'Criminal Justice: A Christian Perspective', speaker Dr Jonathan Burnside, reader in criminal law at Bristol University. Talk to be given at Dursley Methodist Church at 7.30pm.

#### **Conference North Yorkshire – 16-18 October**

"Free to Believe" – details from Roger Little

#### **Dursley Tabernacle Bicentenary Celebrations – 15 November**

# Community Film Night

At

WARDEN HILL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

On

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> September

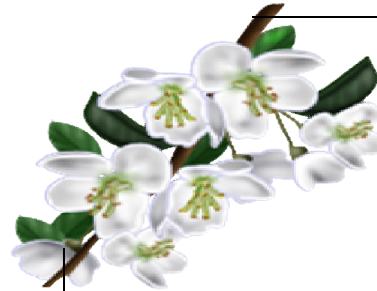
at 7pm (doors open at 6.45)

**POLICE ACADEMY**

Certificate '15'

Free entry Bring your friends

Refreshments available



Prestbury United  
Reformed  
Church



with the

Prestbury Flower Arranging Club

## Harvest of Flowers Festival

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September  
10.00am – 4.00pm daily

There will be a Harvest Service at 10.30 on Sunday  
Everyone welcome

Admission to the Flower  
Festival 50p per person



Tea, Coffee, Homemade Cakes will  
be on sale  
Raffle



# **COPING WITH KIDS!**

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**EACH FRIDAY IN OCTOBER**

**3rd 10th 17th 24th 31st**

**7.30—9.00 p.m.**

**at WARDEN HILL United Reformed  
Church, Salisbury Avenue, Cheltenham**

**This 5 session programme is open and  
free to all parents and carers in the area.  
Full details on noticeboards**

## **General Assembly 2008 at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh**

The new incoming Moderator to the General Assembly is the Reverend John Marsh from our West Midlands Synod and will serve for the next two years as there will not be a General Assembly during 2009. A special gathering for those wishing to attend, under their own finance, will be at Loughborough University next July for a long weekend of Religious University.

As usual there was the Children's Assembly interwoven with the General Assembly bringing refreshing insights into matters that adults think they know all about. There was a higher standing of presentation through the greater use of technology, professional staging, web casting, film reports and recorded interviews. Also better provision this year for those with sight and sound disabilities, signing for the deaf and decision making through consensus.

To break the monotony of the debates and voting, a highly entertaining 'Parkinson' style interviews was arranged honouring three hymn writers, Alan Gaunt, Fred Kaan and Brian Wren, three very talented people who have created fabulous hymns for us.

A summary of the General Assembly will be made at the United Church Meeting in September, where an appraisal of the resolutions will be discussed will be reviewed.

*Martin Clarke  
West Midlands Synod Rep*

**URC in CHELTENHAM MORNING PRAYERS**  
**9.30am – 10.00am EVERY Tuesday at Warden Hill**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Prayer Issues</b>
2 September	Psalm 91 Matt 18 15-20	Up Hatherley area St Andrew's Elders, Newent URC Prayers for the world
9 September	Psalm 92 Matt 18 21-35	Shurdington area Local GP practices, Brockworth URC Prayers for the world
16 September	Psalm 93 Matt 20 1-16	Benhall area Moderator & Staff, Gloucester URC Prayers for the world
23 September	Psalm 94 Matt 21 23-32	The Reddings area Nuffield Hospital, St Andrew's Toddlers Club Christchurch Abbeydale Prayers for the world
30 September	Psalm 95 Matt 21 33-46	St Mark's area The Knoll, Christchurch Nailsworth Prayers for the world

## **Prestbury News**

### **Prestbury Murder Mystery**

Thank you to all who attended and contributed to the fun of the late Earl of Coddington's farewell party in July. It was not as happy an event as it could have been due to several deaths taking place during the course of the evening (including the very noisy demise of Queen Victoria !) and the arrest of the Earl's third wife for his murder. However, £175 was raised for the building fund.

### **Open the Book**

Please pray for Open the Book and the new teams that will be starting at St Mary's and Lynworth School.

### **Friday 5th September**

The new Prestbury drama group, CHADS (Churches Amateur Dramatic Society), will present a review at Prestbury Hall, Bouncers Lane at 7pm. Tickets are available now at £5 which include cheese and wine. All proceeds will go to Let The Children Live! Contact Marion Beagley on Cheltenham 674959.

### **September Coffee Morning**

The September Coffee morning is on Saturday **6th September** 2008 at 10.30, please come along and enjoy the Coffee, goodies and fellowship.

### **Beating the Bounds – Saturday 6 September**

We have been invited to join with our friends from the Parish in the ancient tradition of Beating the Bounds. This is a walk of 17 miles in total (but you can do as little or as much of it as you like). Start (9 a.m.) and finish are at the Prestbury Hall. It will be marshalled and the Parish Office (Cheltenham 244373) will need to know names and numbers for safety reasons.

### **Harvest of Flowers**

The church will be open to view the wonderful Flower Arrangements provided by Prestbury Flower Arranging Club. The arrangements will depict Harvest and will include a rich tapestry of flowers, shovels and all sorts!

### **Opening times ;**

**Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2008 10.00am - 4.00pm**

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2008 10.00am- 4.00 pm**

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2008 10.00am - 4.00 pm (including our Harvest Service at 10.30 am)**

There will be a small entrance fee of 50 pence to help cover the cost of the flowers. Refreshments will be available all day at a small charge.

There will be a grand raffle drawn at 3.30 on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2008. Prizes include a Waitrose, Fairtrade Food bag (worth £40.00) kindly donated by George Wimpey Bristol, Family Steam Train ride on the GWR, Day passes for Sudeley Castle, Westonbirt Arboretum and lots of other great prizes. Books of raffle tickets are available from Church Secretaries, Prestbury URC congregation and Julie Jefferies. In addition, tickets will be available at the Flower Festival and Coffee Morning.

A big thank you to those organisations and individuals who have sponsored Flower arrangements ; George Wimpey Bristol, Premier Products, Prestbury Post Office and staff, Gwen Barrett and Irene Webber, Sylvia Turfrey and Eva Pendlebury. We are still waiting to hear from some sponsors but if you would like to help our building project and would like to sponsor an arrangement then please contact Julie Jefferies on Cheltenham 232892.

An extra special thank you goes to all the ladies from Prestbury Flower Arranging Club who will give up their time and skills to help make this event a big success for our building project.

### **Prestbury Parish Fete – Saturday 13 September**

Please come along and support the URC and Kenya stalls at the Parish Fete during the afternoon. This year the event is back at the Scout Hut on The Burgage - refreshments, raffles, many stalls, fun and games for the whole family !

### **Elephant Drive Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2008 at Prestbury URC**

Well, it's only 4 months until Emma and I go off to Kenya with Maz. Our whole group has worked really hard to try and raise the £25,000 we need to build the Health Centre. We are currently £7,500 short of our total, but we have sent the first £10,000 for work to start. We just need the final push now to raise the last bit. So if you can, please come along and support us on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2008 when we will be holding another Elephant Drive (just like beetle). Tickets will be available from Julie, Emma and Maz at a cost of £3.00 per adult and £1.50 per child including a hot dog or beefburger and a drink or tea and cake – Julie Jefferies.

### **Junior Church**

From September to December, Junior Church will take place only on the second Sunday of the month. Our Family Services will continue to take place on the fourth Sunday of each month.

### **Congratulations !**

To Richard and Geoffrey Hall on passing all their A levels with straight A grades. In the Autumn Richard will go to Durham to study Maths and Geoffrey to Oxford to study Maths and Computer Science. Their expertise in nursing the church sound system will be missed!

### **The Passion Play 2009**

The Prestbury Passion Play will take place again on Good Friday, 10th April 2009.

Originally inspired, in 1985, by the then Vicar, Canon Ian Hazlewood, it has been performed six times and also at the Millennium by Cheltenham Churches Together through the streets of the town.

The Play sets out to dramatise the powerful message of the Last Supper, the Betrayal, the Trial and the Crucifixion but alongside the familiar story the production highlights the relevance in today's world of show trials, military occupation and official injustice.

The cast is ecumenical, involving not only the congregations of the North Cheltenham Churches but also the Roman Catholic and United Reformed Churches. There are many male characters; Jesus, the Twelve Apostles, the Elders, Barabbas, Pilate and the Roman Soldiers, but the Crowd, inevitably mainly women and children, plays a vital role.

The production is directed by Daphne Philpot, co-producers are Cyril Beer and Bob Lyle, supported by a team of stage hands, costumiers, front of house etc.

The Play takes place on Good Friday at 11am and 3pm on the Scout Field on the Burgage, Prestbury (opposite the Royal Oak Pub). Admission is free but a retiring collection is made and given entirely to charity.

The production will be launched on **Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October** at 8 pm at St Nicolas' Church, Swindon Lane to which **everybody and anybody** is invited. The script will be read through, preliminary plans discussed and a rehearsal schedule issued.

*Bob Lyle, Co-producer*

## **St Andrew's News**

### **September Communion Offering**

Northern College, Manchester, exists to educate men and women for various ministries principally within the United Reformed and Congregational Churches, as well as being involved with lay education in various ways, but particularly through the Partnership for Theological Education - this is now composed of six theological colleges and ten denominations and is based at Luther King House in Manchester. It hopes to help people live by their Christian faith, through reflection, action and worship in everyday life and also through particular Christian ministries. It aims in particular to show what God is doing in the world, in the church and in their personal life, helping them to participate in the work of God with greater confidence and commitment. The College places a strong emphasis on learning by reflection on experience gained in placements designed not simply to expose people to aspects of contemporary society and the work of discipleship and ministry, but also to enable them to learn skills of analysis, reflection and doing theology.

### **From the Elders' Meeting**

**Welcome Leaflet** - A leaflet is to be available to people new to the Church, explaining what the church stands for and what to expect at services.

**Name Badges** - The elders have supported a suggestion that everyone that regularly attends services at St Andrews be encouraged to wear a name badge, which the church will supply, on request, at a small cost. This will help visitors and people new to the church to remember the names of those who have made them welcome. It will also help everyone who attends our services regularly to get to know the names of everyone else in the congregation – who amongst us could name everyone that attends a Sunday service? If you would like a badge, please contact the church secretary.

**Synod** - Mary Cummings and Sandra Jeans are to be appointed Synod Advisors for "Safe Church Policy"

**Toddlers' Group** - The group has requested a half hour service on Tuesday, 9 September, to be led by Jon Morgan. All Church members welcome.

**Stewarding at Concerts and Other Events** - There is a shortage of Stewards for events in the Church, and volunteers are sought to carry out these duties. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Tony Jeans.

**Harvest Service** - The service will be held on 28 September, led by Revd Dr Jon Morgan and the Worship group.

**St Andrew's Choir** - Are you interested in becoming a member of a choir to sing at St Andrew's services? Volunteers are sought, (in the first instance to find out whether or not there is any interest in establishing a big (or small) group of singers) to enhance our services, once a month. Long serving members may remember the previous choir, and if any former members of that group are interested, we would love to hear from you, as well as from anyone else who might like to take part. If you would like to find out more, without obligation, please contact the church secretary.

### **Music at St Andrew's**

**Summer Sundays at 3.15pm**  
**Concerts of music, tea and cake**  
**Tickets £7.50**

**7 September Serendipity**  
Melanie Armitstead and friends

### Security of Church Premises

A further incident occurred recently when the Church premises were not locked up after use. This resulted in the activation of the intruder alarm when a member of the public entered the building through an unlocked door, and the police attended. The police had advised the church in March that a further false activation would result in a penalty, and this was, therefore, implemented on 23 July. Since then, they have reconsidered the situation and the penalty has been withdrawn. However, they have made it plain that it will be re-imposed if the police are called to any further false alarm before January 2009. Everyone is reminded that whoever finds themselves the last to leave the building (even after a short visit) is responsible for *actively* ensuring all external doors are locked, the whole building is clear of people, and the alarm is properly set. If this routine is adhered to, it may be possible to rectify any security lapse by a previous user, before the alarm is triggered.

### Correspondence – placed in the Link Gallery

- A Roller Coaster Ride – A Reflection on twelve years as West Midlands Moderator, from Revd Elizabeth Welch (available from the church secretary on request)
- West Midlands Synod Vacancies
- Racial Justice Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> September – Churches Together in Britain
- GEAR – Group for Evangelism And Renewal within the URC
- ‘Faith and Feathers’, a weekend special to see the birds of Holy Island with fellow Christians – Oct 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>.
- Christian Women’s Fellowship Conference, 27<sup>th</sup> Feb – 1<sup>st</sup> March 2009: ‘Hotline to Heaven’
- ‘energy4life’ – URC Inter-assembly celebration, Loughborough University Campus, 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> July 2009
- Visit to Oberammergau, 8<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> June 2010, with Sutton Coldfield URC

St Andrew’s

‘JUMP FOR JOY’



**songs**

Sunday 14 September

9.30am – 10am

Informal Short Service for all the family

**stories**



This will be a regular service on the second Sunday of the month



## Warden Hill News

Here we are almost into September already – the time has just flown since we last received ‘In Touch’ in July. However before we look to future events there are some items worth recalling as memorable.

Some weeks ago we were surprised and delighted to receive a visit at morning service from Rev Ruth Caughley and her husband John from New Zealand. They are over here staying with their family in Chippenham and decided to look us up. Some years back the Rev Joan Winterbottom did a three month pulpit exchange with the Rev Ruth and John. The service held in the URC was led by Rev Owen and there was a full congregation to welcome Ruth and John.

Moving on to 12 July a ‘Home Produce Sale’ was held with all kinds of homemade or homegrown goods on sale together with drinks, lunches and goods from the Traidcraft stall. This event was very well supported around £740 being raised. This money has now been used for provision of blackout blinds for the high level windows in the church to improve the quality of pictures projected onto the screen.

On 19 and 20 July, St Christopher’s celebrated their 47<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. This particular event was advertised as a BBQ ‘with puddings’, we don’t know if the ‘with puddings’ part attracted people but after earlier inclement weather the event was attended by over 50 who were able to enjoy the food outdoors. On the following morning the Anniversary continued with a Service of Dedication of a bookcase and two chalices. Holy Communion followed and was celebrated by Rev Owen and Rev Jon.

One other item of note is that some weeks ago we were pleased to welcome Steve and Amanda Holder to our Sunday morning service. They are currently responsible for the Timothy House project in Romania and Steve and Amanda came to give us an update on progress. A retiring collecting raised £91 for the work - thank you to all who gave so generously.

August events are still in progress as we write so here are items of note for September.

**Sunday 7 September** will be the 48<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Warden Hill URC. Family Worship will take place at 10.30am led by Carole Pennington.

**Tuesday 9 September** there will be an Open the Book Training Day at St John’s Church in Churchdown from 9.30am to 4pm.

**Thursday 11 September** a Community Film Night has been arranged at Warden Hill URC at 7pm. The film to be shown will be Police Academy. It is hoped that his event will be well attended and those who do attend will be asked to help choose the next film. Have some suggestions ready folks!

**Monday 29 September**, Harvest Supper will be at St Christopher’s at 7pm. Further details to follow.

**Wednesday 1 October**, please make a special note of this date!. There will be a Church Meeting at Warden Hill URC starting at 7.30pm. Please keep this date free and try to be at the meeting if you can.

### Services for September at 10.30am

- Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> 48<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at URC – Family service led by Carole Pennington
- Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> Holy Communion at St Christopher’s led by Rev Owen
- Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> Holy Communion at URC (including cooking club) led by Rev Maz
- Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> Harvest Festival with Holy Communion at St Christopher’s led by Rev Owen

<b>Weekly Meetings</b>			
<b>Mon</b>	<b>9.30am</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>Mah Jong</b>
<b>Mon</b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Prestbury Urchins</b>
<b>Tues</b>	<b>9.30am</b>	<b>WH</b>	<b>Circle of Prayer (until 11.50am)</b>
<b>Tues</b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>Toddlers' Group</b>
<b>Wed</b>	<b>9.15am</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>Little Shepherds at term time only</b>
<b>Thurs</b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>Morning Coffee Revd Jon's 'Sip and Chat' until noon</b>
<b>Thurs</b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>"Bumps and Babes"</b>
<b>Sat</b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>Saturday Cake Stall and Coffee Bar</b>
<b>Sun</b>	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>STAND (meets every other week)</b>

**PLEASE NOTE. PLEASE ENSURE THAT ITEMS FOR THE OCTOBER 2008 ISSUE REACH THE NOMINATED CONTRIBUTORS OR THE CHURCH OFFICE BY TUESDAY 9 SEPTEMBER.**

**THIS IS EARLIER THAN USUAL AS THE EDITOR IS ON HOLIDAY AND ROGER LITTLE IS ACTING AS DEPUTY THIS MONTH. ALL ARTICLES MUST BE WITH ROGER BY 14 SEPTEMBER.**

**DISTRIBUTION DAY IS SUNDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2008**