



Jottings April 2009

‘So they think it’s all over’, but really ‘It’s only just begun’! Two well known phrases that have been with us for ages, one from a T V quiz show and the other a song by the Carpenters. They contradict each other but in our reality they make us think about what has happened. Jesus is raised from death into everlasting life, so death is over, but for us, because of the Easter event we have only just begun to be called to a new life, a new way of living and living out this Easter faith.

The first part is so much easier than the second, ‘it’s all over’, done and dusted, ‘Jesus is alive; Alleluia’. We can be forever thankful of the event, the love of The Father towards the Son and therefore we selfish wretches are forgiven and offered new life. We can sing his praises and show people how lucky we are and them that we are the new chosen people because not only did he die for us, but was raised for us.

STOP!! – REWIND TO HIS TEACHINGS AND THE REASON FOR HIS SACRIFICE. He died to set us free, but he was raised because of his obedience to the Father, and nothing to do with our obedience to him or his message. Jesus was the Son of God, born as and in human form, a God who lived our lives and knew our pains, temptations and joys, the nails that hurt, the love he had for Mary; yet through all of this he remained faithful to a message, that of the love of God for all people.

The short ministry of Jesus was punctuated with new beginnings, changes, developments, progressions; although there was an ending and a new beginning, he called us to start again, to accept that his death and resurrection was just the beginning for those who would take on the fulfilment of the Hebrew Scriptures; the Messiah had come and would intercede between the people and the father, the God of all creation.

**URC in CHELTENHAM MORNING PRAYERS
11.30am – 12noon EVERY Tuesday at Warden Hill**

Date	Readings	Prayer Issues
5 May	Psalm 119 49-56 John 4 7-21 John 15 1-8	Tewkesbury Road Area, The Samaritans, Mid week groups, Urchins, Toddlers’ Club and Bump and Babes Prayers for the World
12 May	Psalm 119 57-64 John 5 1-6 John 15 9-17	Carlton Road Area, Highbury Church including day centre, Social Services Our Covenant with Oggersheim Prayers for the world
19 May	Psalm 119 65-72 John 5 9-13 John 17 6-19	Charlton Kings Area, Schools, Glenfall House Adult Christian Education Prayers for the world
26 May	Psalm 119 73-80 John 15 26-27 John 16 4b-15	Dowdeswell and Andoversford Areas, Care of the Environment Prayers for the World

So maybe this is where we start our new beginning, people of the Easter faith. Not just another year, waiting for Pentecost, then the next special day and the next until we arrive a Christmas again and do the whole thing again; but really take on a new beginning with the excitement that comes with something that has just begun, a life changing event that carries us forward on the crest of a wave for a while, then lets us put in the work, with the power of the Spirit continuing this new beginning.

Easter is an event that changes us not once, but every time we call on God and proclaim the risen Lord. However in doing that, we ourselves need to take on a new beginning, a new birth, a life changed and lived, not empty words that tell a story of long ago, but a truth witnessed by others, seen in us.

Happy Easter; 2We've only just begun, to live, while lace and promises, a kiss for luck and we're on our way, we've only just begun'. (The carpenters, 1972)

Blessings JON

Jon is having a total knee replacement on the 20th of April and will not be in action until the 24th of May. Please contact Maz with pastoral issues.

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH IN CHELTENHAM

From the church registers:

In Memoriam

Walter John Manley (known as John) died in hospital on 9 April. John was a member and secretary at Warden Hill for a long time and was also their organist. Please remember the family in your prayers.

Membership

We were all delighted that Mary Zakotti was received into membership at Prestbury on Easter Sunday after regular attendance for several years. Mary welcome to the family of the URCiC.

Baptism:

We welcomed into the family of the Church on 30 March at St Andrew's James Sean Frederick Ford by Adult Baptism. God be with you James as you start your Christian journey.

Our prayers: we hold in our prayers those who are ill as well as those who are or have been in hospital: George Apps, Ann Ashworth, Jeane Combes, Mary Cummings, Carol and Lorna Dewhurst, Dennis and Joyce Goldring, Hylda Greening, Mary Howes, Paulette Hyde, Dorothy Lamb, Joy Marsh, Mair McIndoe, Peter Meason, Jon Morgan, Betty Price, Joy and Nick Smith, Sadie Smyth, Jean Smith, Maisey and Don Weekes.

Congratulations:

To Eileen Attwood and Annette Tucker on their election to the Eldership of the URC. Eileen and Annette will be ordained into Eldership at the Pastorate Service on 26 April along with the induction of Diana Miles, Brian Miles, John Hutton, Martin Clarke and Tim Odell. We ask for God's blessing on their service as Elders within the URCiC.

Lent Groups

Thanks to those in Maz's Lent groups, plus Prestbury URC for participating in the 'Jars of Change for Jars of Water' appeal. £84.60 was raise for Water Aid.

Friday Bible Study

Will begin again on 24th April, 10.30am at 51 Bournside Rd. We will be studying John's Letters. All newcomers welcome.

Prom Praise 2010

Please note the date of next year's Prom Praise at the Royal Albert Hall. **Saturday 8th May 2010.** Put it in your diary now!

Soup & Chat

SOUP AND CHAT has been a great success and I would like to thank Lyn and Peter as well as Megan for their help. We have decided to have a summer break from the Soup and Chat and reopen in September for the winter season. Anyone who would like to join in with the very convivial team in the kitchen, please see one of us so we can put together a rota for the autumn/winter/spring sessions

Literary Group

The next Literary Group meeting will be on Wednesday 13 May at 7.30pm at Prestbury URC. We will be discussing 'Girl in the Blue Dress' by Gaynor Arnold. New members always welcome.

BIRTHDAY TEAS AT HATHERLEY MANSE

April – June - Sat. 6th June

July – Sept. – Sat. 29th August

Oct. – Dec - Sat. 12th December

3-5pm

All are welcome don't forget to put the date in your diary

Pensioners' Forum – Wednesday 6 May

The speaker this month will be Mike Harrison who is the Recycling Champion Co-ordinator.

Want to know what happens to all the recycling collected, why don't the Council collect plastics or what is the 'Slim your Bin Campaign' then Mike will have the answer.

The coffee Bar will open at 10am and the talk will begin at 10.30am to last about an hour. All are welcome, there is no charge.

Qi Gong

Next session will be in the Garden Room at St Andrew's on **Wednesday 6 May** at 12.15pm. All are welcome; cost is £4 per session.

Tuesday Forum

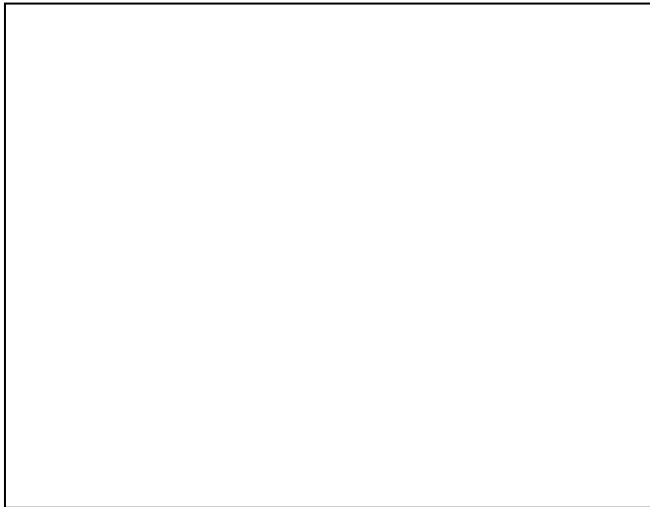
Tuesday 12 May is our social meeting, which we have called Bistro Café! The Melodians – a quartet with some of the finest male voices in Cheltenham – will be entertaining us in the Garden Room at 2.30pm, followed by a Bring and Share tea. All are welcome, do join us.

Tuesday 26 May is the Outing. This year we are going for a trip round The Forest of Dean followed by a visit to the Heritage Centre where we shall have tea. Pick-up points will be Westal Green at 1pm and Warden Hill at 1.15pm. The price will be £14, to include entrance fee, tea, coach fare and river's tip.

A Date for URcic Diaries:

The Christmas social for all URcic elders and URcic church officials and representatives will take place on **Thursday, 3rd December.**

URcic Walking Group



Ten people (and one dog) took part in the walk around Cranham, in the warm April sunshine, last month. The panoramic view of Cheltenham and Gloucester on the Severn plain provided a beautiful setting for a tea stop at Rose's tearooms on the Cotswold Way

at Coopers Hill, run by Rosemary Hellerman (Brockworth URc), and was worth the visit.

The next five-mile walk will take place on **Friday, 15th May**, starting at 10am. Please sign up on the sheet on the notice board in your church, where further details can be found.

Please note change of day to Friday.

CAKES NEEDED PLEASE

for The Church in Warden Hill
Spring Fair
9th May

Please let Maz know if you can contribute cakes, preserves or home-baked bread.

STAND yg

WILL RESUME IN THE LAST WEEK OF MAY

**AND WILL BE HELD AT THE CHURCH IN WARDEN HILL
STARTING AT 6.30pm**

All are welcome between the ages of 13-17.

Meeting to be held at 7.30 on Tuesday, 5 May
at St Andrew's URC, Cheltenham.

The speaker will be Revd. Professor Michael Taylor, Emeritus Professor of Social Theology, University of Birmingham and former Director of Christian Aid. The subject of the meeting is *World Development: A Christian View*. This topic is particularly apt because the following week is Christian Aid Week.

Refreshments will be available before the meeting. **All are welcome.**

The Church in Warden Hill

Quiz and Supper

Date to be announced

energy4life

The United Reformed Church
Inter-assembly celebration

Friday 10 July to Sunday 12 July
Loughborough University Campus

Come and be energised for mission in today's Church
Adults £30 Children £15

Public Meeting
Friday 16 May at St Matthew's Church at 7.30pm

Israel & Palestine
'What Chance a Lasting Peace?'

Speakers: **Graham-Watson MEP**
 Dr Liz Burroughs
 Dr Chris Burns-Cox

Chair: **Reverend Dr Jon Morgan**

Admission Free

Prestbury News

Temporary Closure of Prestbury URC

It is expected that the last service at Prestbury before the repairs to the School Room begin will be the United Pentecost service on May 31st. The Elders have decided that for practical and Health and Safety reasons that there will be no services held at Prestbury URC whilst this work is in progress. Mike will be able to work without interruption and have a working and preparation area in the Church. The contents of the schoolroom, kitchen and vestry will need to be stored in the Church whilst the work is going on. It is expected that the repairs will take about 4 weeks.

During the period of temporary closure, members of the congregation will be warmly welcomed at St Andrew's, The Church in Warden Hill or at St Mary's or St Nicolas'. It is hoped that the Urchins group will continue to meet and negotiations have been started to hire the Scout Hut on the Burgage.

However, there is one important exception to this – on **Sunday 28th June** our service will be held at St Nicolas' at 11.00 and during the service Jasmine Skinner will be Baptised by Maz. The Elders will organize a car pool to enable as many as wish to be there to attend.

Schoolroom Wall Panelling Update

At the time of writing this I am pleased to be able to say that out of the 130 panels needed to refurbish the lower part of the schoolroom walls we have received sponsorship for 118. This is a great response to the appeal for help and I am pleased to say that many of the donations given will be able to be 'gift-aided' which will go towards the materials needed to fix the panels to the walls. Many Thanks,
Wendy Gledhill

Membership and Dedication

We were all delighted that Mary Zakotti was received into membership on Easter Sunday after regular attendance for several years. We are looking forward to the Dedication of Emily Wager Cusack on **May 24th**.

May Fair

Our last fund-raiser before the closure will be the May Fair on Saturday **2nd May** from 10.30 to 1.00. Lunches and refreshments will be available as well as a raffle, tombola, cakes, plants and many other stalls. Please do come and support us.

Lay Preaching final assessed service

Well it is hard to believe that almost three years have passed and I am now in the final stages of my Lay Preaching training. On 10th May 2009 I will take my final service at my placement church - Dursley Tabernacle. This service will be assessed by a national assessor as well as my own Support Group and Supervising Minister. If you feel you would like to come and support me it would be great to have some of you there. The service starts at 10.30 am and the folk at Dursley are very welcoming.

Julie Jefferies

Churches Together in North Cheltenham United Service

Please note that there will be a CTiNC United Service for Christian Aid Week at Holy Name at 6.30 on Sunday 10th May.

Prestbury Passion Play

The moving spectacle of the Passion Play took place on Good Friday. The morning performance took place on the Scout Field but the afternoon performance had to be in St Mary's due to the torrential rain. Richard and Geoffrey Hall and Emma Jefferies were non-speaking cast members and Tony Jeans was part of the 'front of house' team. Attendance was estimated at about 400 in the morning and 300 in the afternoon. The retiring collection raised £1417.17 and will be shared between the charities 'Let the Children Live' and 'Winston's Wish'.

Easter at Prestbury

This year no one could be forgiven for not noticing Prestbury URC or that it was Easter! As in previous years the Parish Cross was erected at our front door on Palm Sunday and adorned with palms, a Crown of Thorns was hung on it on Good Friday and on Easter Sunday a bright floral wreath adorned it symbolizing the Resurrection. We would like to thank Lindsey McGowan of St Mary's for making the wreath.

Like last year, the Cross was floodlit at night and in addition we have had a large banner hanging across the front of the church urging us to 'Experience Easter with all the Churches of Prestbury'.

SOUL CAFÉ

Sunday 24th May 6pm Prestbury URC

Theme: 'Music'

Half-hour informal chat. All welcome.

C4 CHILDREN'S CHOIR

ADVANCE NOTICE of PERFORMANCES OF

DANIEL

VENUE TO BE CONFIRMED

19 JUNE AT 7.00PM

WARDEN HILL URC – 20 JUNE AT 3.30PM

St Andrew's News

May Communion Offering

Cheltenham Samaritans

Samaritans is a confidential emotional support service for anyone in the UK and Ireland. The service is available 24 hours a day for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide. Volunteers offer support by responding to phone calls, emails and letters. Alternatively people can drop in to a branch to have a face to face meeting. The service is offered by 17,000 trained

volunteers and is entirely dependent on voluntary support. There are 202 branches of Samaritans in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

"There's very few places you can go to in the world where you can pick up a telephone and another human being, no matter why they're doing it, will listen to you unconditionally. If you want to pour out in a phonecall, they will listen for hours." *Samaritans caller*

From the Elders' Meeting:

Elders' Sabbaticals – there are currently 12 serving elders (a further 3 are on sabbatical and one is seconded to Prestbury). New rules require elders to serve no more than 2 consecutive three-year terms, after which a sabbatical year must be taken. Most of the current elders were first elected during the early to mid 1990's but there are some who have served continuously since the 1970's. In 2010, five elders are due to take sabbaticals, and in 2011, there will be seven due for sabbaticals. This will reduce the number of serving elders to a level that will require increased support from the membership, and the church will need to confront this situation.

Notice Boards – the elders supported the idea of raising the profile of the mission and outreach of the church, and charities, through more effective use of notice board and leaflets displays. Posters advertising non-church events may be displayed, provided suitable space is available. Review of the notices and displays is delegated to the church secretary.

Church Heating System – after nearly six weeks without heating due to a failure of a heating component, a part has been obtained from Germany and the heating will be restored shortly (**Note:** repairs were effected on 17 April).

Coffee Bar Prices – after many years of pegging prices, the elders agreed to modest price increases, which will come into effect this month.

Safer Community Team – St Andrew's has been identified as the Montpellier venue for monthly meetings of local Police Community

Support Officers, who will hold surgeries to deal with problems raised by the local community. The meetings will take place on the first Saturday (morning) of each month.

St Andrew's AGM

45 people, including the ministers, braved a church without heating to attend the meeting, under the chairmanship of Revd Dr Jon Morgan, held after the morning service on 29 March. Thanks were expressed for all the hard work of those retiring from office, and those seeking re-election. The following appointments were made:

Church Secretary**	<i>Mr Roger Little</i>
Clerk to the Elders' and Church Meetings**	<i>Mrs Marie Birchley</i>
Stewards Secretary	<i>Mrs Jean Wilson</i>
Flower Secretary	<i>Mrs Barbara McGregor</i>
Church Council additional elder	<i>Mrs Marie Birchley</i>
Minute Secretary	<i>Mrs Madeleine Hyde</i>
Bookings Officer	<i>Mr Brian Smith</i>
Deputy Bookings Officer	<i>Mr Peter Meason</i>
Lead Concert Steward	<i>Mr Phil Lewis</i>
Wedding Steward	<i>Mr Tim Odell</i>

Finance:

Church Treasurer	<i>Mrs. Donna Sutherland</i>
Independent Examiner	<i>Andorran Limited</i>
Free Will Offering Secretary	<i>Mr. Marcus Dann</i>
Free Will Offering Treasurer	<i>Mr John Standring</i>
Banking Rota	<i>Mr Peter Kerr</i>
Gift Aid Secretary	<i>Mr. Roger Little</i>

Worship and Education

Communion Table	<i>Tim and Dorothy Odell, Mrs. Ann Lewis</i>
Church Organist	<i>Mr Peter Meason</i>
Assistant Church Organist	<i>Mrs Andrea Board</i>
Pulpit Supply	<i>Mrs Ann Lewis #</i>

Transport Officer & deputy	<i>Mrs Joan Thomson & Tim and Dorothy Odell</i>
Junior Church staff	<i>Miss Anne Gimingham, Mrs Andrea Board (Music) Mrs Dorothy Odell, Mrs Ann Lewis, Mrs Elizabeth Floyer-Moss</i>
Information Officer for work with Children and Young People	<i>Mrs Carol Drummond</i>
Church Readings Secretary	<i>Mrs Diana Miles #</i>
Wedding Secretary	<i>Mrs Alison Kerr</i>
Wedding Registrar	<i>Revd Maz Allen, Mrs Carol Drummond, Mrs Ann Standring</i>
Additional Authorised Persons	<i>Mr Bob Alger #</i>
Prayer Fellowship Handbooks & Bible Reading Fellowship	
<u>Catering/Hospitality/Social events</u>	
Sunday Coffee Rota	<i>Mrs. Florence Dann</i>
Thursday Coffee Rota	<i>Mrs Margaret Harmsworth</i>
Saturday Coffee Rota	<i>Mrs Alison Stagg</i>
Kitchen Management	<i>Mrs. Margaret Harmsworth, Mrs Alison Stagg, Mrs. Florence Dann</i>
Christmas Fair 2009	<i>Committee to be appointed</i>
<u>Representatives</u>	
Commitment for Life & Christian Aid	<i>Dr Andrew Veal</i>
Traidcraft	<i>Warden Hill team #</i>
West Midlands Synod	<i>Mrs Ann Lewis</i>

Committees

Premises Committee *Mr Peter Meason (Convenor), Miss Alison Riddell (Secretary) Mr Bob Alger. Mr Marcus Dann.
Ex Officio members: Bookings Officer, URcIC Treasurer and Catering Representative.*

Finance Committee *Mr. David Black (Convenor), Dr Tony Jeans, Mr Peter Kerr (Secretary), Miss Anne Strathie, Mrs Lizzie George
Ex officio: Mrs Donna Sutherland – Treasurer; Church Secretary; Bookings Officer; Mr. Roger Little – Gift Aid, Mr John Standring – Free Will Offering*

URcIC Appointments ** Appointed by the Elders

Tim Odell and Martin Clarke were reappointed as serving elders for a further three-year period. The Chairman asked the meeting prayerfully to consider what could be done to increase the number of serving elders in the church, as the number of new elders had not kept pace with the number departing in recent years.

Various reports were received and adopted, and thanks were given for all the hard work involved. The following special Resolution on church repairs was made:

“This meeting asks the Premises Committee to proceed as quickly as possible with the repairs and improvements to the St Andrew’s Church Hall roof, the roofs of adjacent structures, and windows. The meeting authorises the employment of professional advice to produce a specification of works and urges the Committee to obtain Listed Buildings Consent for the works without delay. In this, the Premises Committee should take into account the implications of this urgent work on any future redevelopment plans”.

The meeting also resolved to accept Helen Bell into membership, on transfer from Furrough Cross URc (*Note: Helen will be received into membership at the service on 24th May*).

The meeting concluded with a debate on what the church membership expects from Pastoral visiting.

Easter Services

17 people attended the Maundy Thursday Service, in which Communion was served within a shared Agape meal, 25 attended the Good Friday Service, the first at St Andrew’s, and about 60 people attended St Andrew’s for breakfast after taking part in the Easter Day Sunrise Service in Imperial Gardens.

Evening Services

Please note that the evening service to take place on **Sunday 3 May**, will start at 5pm to allow a Jazz Festival event to be held in the church immediately after the service.

The joint service with the Portuguese church will now take place at 6pm on **7th June**, which will be a communion service.

Gift Aid

The annual Gift Aid certificates will be available during May. If you require a certificate, please contact the Gift Aid Secretary, Roger Little, on 01452 730848.

In Touch - contributions

Contributions of articles, or points of view, for inclusion in the magazine are always welcome. Please contact Roger Little (01452) 730848.

Correspondence – placed in the Link Gallery

- *Vision4life* material
- Barnes Close Newsletter
- Spirituality programme at Sarum College, Salisbury
- Miscellaneous posters

Miscellaneous appeals

‘JUMP4JOY’

Sunday 17 May
9.30am – 10am

Informal Short Service for all the family

Music at St Andrew’s in May

Saturday 2 May
Gloucestershire Youth Jazz Orchestra
with Trinity Jazz Ensemble
at 8.00pm – tickets £10 from Town Hall

Sunday 3 May
Gloucestershire Jazz Live Big Band
at 8pm – tickets £6 from Town Hall

Saturday 9 May
Jazz Art Showcase – Youth Bands

Saturday 16 May
Jazz Art Showcase – Primary School Bands

Warden Hill News

Anglican Holy Communion at the URC - whatever next! Those of you who were in church on Sunday 19th April would have, I hope, enjoyed a Church of England Communion service at the URC using Anglican Rites. It was intended to help both of our memberships to appreciate togetherness and later in the year we will be holding a URC Communion service at St. Christopher’s. I really hope that you appreciate what the Partners committee is trying to do by holding services like this in each others church.

A couple of Saturday activity reminders – on 2nd May we are showing **Much Ado About Nothing** at our Community Film Show. 2.30pm start

with the usual refreshments available at half time. The projector and sound equipment that is to be used is our own, recently bought, after agreement at the AGM. On 9th May there is our annual **Home Produce Sale** commencing at 11am till 2pm. This is a joint event and both Churches in Warden Hill will be organising it. Maz would like donations of Cakes, Preserves and Freshly Cooked Bread. Eric would appreciate receiving a few prizes for the Raffle.

Following our AGM recently, Eileen Attwood was elected to our Eldership and John Hutton, Diana and Brian Miles were re-elected for a further term.

During the next month our Sunday morning services are as follows-

3rd May – Family Worship at the URC

10th May – Holy Communion at St. C's conducted by Owen

17th May – Holy Communion at the URC conducted by Rev. Ernest Marvin.

24th May – Holy Communion at St. C's conducted by Owen.

31st May – Pentecost – Holy Communion at the URC conducted by Maz.

Brian Miles

The Church in Warden Hill
Home Produce Sale
at
The United Reformed Church

SATURDAY 9th MAY
11am – 2pm

Cakes & Preserves
Tombola, Cards & Raffle
Refreshments and Lunches

Community Film Afternoon

Saturday 2 May

At 2.30pm (doors open at 2.15pm)

‘Much Ado About Nothing’

Certificate 12

Free Entry - Family and Friends Welcome
Refreshments available

Every May, during Christian Aid Week, something amazing happens: 300,000 people from 22,000 churches across the UK take to the streets to raise money that will transform the lives of people living in poverty around the world. Last year the money raised during CA Week provided nearly one fifth of Christian Aid's total income of £86.5 million.

Volunteer to be a collector

Please consider volunteering to be a collector this year – the URC in Cheltenham collects in several different areas and we can arrange for you

to collect in your own neighbourhood if you prefer. Please contact Andrew Veal (if you can spare a few hours in CA Week).

Gift Aid your donations

Please complete the Gift Aid declaration with your donation. Last CA Week, Christian Aid reclaimed around £1 million through Gift Aid. Just £10 could provide a destitute girl with enough material to complete a 12-month tailoring course with Humanité Nouvelle, £1,000 could help 100 girls, and so it goes on. It's not hard to work out the scale of the difference that your Gift Aid contributions could make. And the good news is that it comes at no extra cost.

Christian Aid receives thousands of donations without Gift Aid declarations, each of which means less money to work with the world's poorest communities. So please take a moment to fill in the Gift Aid form, and encourage other people to do so when you are collecting. A minute of your time could help thousands of the world's poorest people.

Donations can be made via the CA Week envelopes or online – see the website: <http://www.caweek.org/>

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK : 10-16 MAY 2009

Democratic Republic of Congo

Nadia Kabula's story is featured in this year's Christian Aid Week materials.

Her mother, struggling to bring up her family alone after the death of her husband, tells us: 'It's really hard to bring up six children on my wages. You can't buy them half a sack of rice with that money. It's nowhere near enough.' The family live in the Democratic Republic of Congo, but their story of deep poverty is characteristic of the communities where our

partner organisations work. Christian Aid partner Humanité Nouvelle has taught 18-year-old Nadia tailoring skills, giving her the chance to continue to earn a living in the future.

'They've given me education for life,' says 18-year-old Nadia Kabula. When her father died, Nadia's family struggled desperately to make ends meet. But a tailoring course run by Christian Aid partner Humanité Nouvelle in the Democratic Republic of Congo has allowed Nadia to imagine a brighter future – and she hopes one day to open her own business. Meanwhile, Nadia is giving others the chance of a fuller life by passing on her skills and her love of fashion to other young girls in her community.