

## Weekend Fun in Northampton

Many thanks to everyone who came along to our Vision Refresh Weekend 17-19 June. It was lovely to renew friendships and make new ones with members of the Speaker Team – you are a wonderful group of people, and I count it a privilege to serve alongside you. We also invited some of the key Volunteer Trainers from Open the Book to join us. I so enjoyed listening to everyone sharing stories and getting to know each other over a meal. For those of you who couldn't make it, I hope that you have received your memory stick of new presentations. If not, please do get in touch with us at [volunteers@biblesociety.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@biblesociety.org.uk)

### Inside

100 years young	2
Volunteer team news	3
Hand knitted Bible	4
Felixstowe Concert	5
Worthing Bake Off	6
Diary Dates	7

### What's your story?

Please let us know if you have any interesting people you'd like to feature in Speaker Team News. Do you think you have the youngest Action Group member? Someone who used our Bibles as a missionary and is now supporting the work here? Or just a colourful character you think we'd all love to know!



# Speaking Appointments

A recurring theme for many of you is the difficulty of getting appointments to share your passion for the Bible and the work of Bible Society. I have had several conversations with Sandra, Dai, Kristin, Hannah, Andy and others and everyone seems to echo your comments. Here are the top tips I have for you.

**Relationships** – Many church leaders will only permit someone they know to talk. Use your existing contacts and make an effort to build new ones.

**Network** – Consider visiting a group to make new friends before asking if you can tell them about what we do, and why.

**Proactive** – Jenny Collins in Cornwall, described how she held a cream tea in aid of Bible Society in her garden and asked people if she could come and talk at their churches. This has given her several new openings.

**Resources** – Offer information on our resources first and then follow that up with an opportunity to talk about why we produce those as well as working abroad.

## Bible Sunday resources

Equip yourself with our great resources to use between now and Christmas.



[biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/bible-sunday/](https://biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/bible-sunday/)

# 100 years young

**Genesta Harris proves you're never too old to support Bible Society!**



Genesta has been on the Hertfordshire-Cambridgeshire Border Action Group for 37 years.

But only in August, on her 100th birthday, did she step down – by announcing she was going to focus on being a Bible Society prayer warrior.

Frank Pearson, Group Chairman, said, 'Genesta moved to this area in 1979 and that was when she became a supporter of Bible Society – although she has known about the Society for as long as she can remember.

## Motivation

'What motivated her was the importance of the Bible – and this is borne out by her insistence that our committee promote Bible a Month.

'During the last decade she has regularly proposed the vote of thanks following the talk by our guest speaker at the annual open meeting.

'She only stopped driving three years ago and is still able to be a committee member but feels it's time to bow out gracefully!'

# Speaker team news

## Resources for you

If you have not already received a new resources display, it will be coming to you very soon.

Please fill the stand, copying this picture and use it in your church. You can tuck a copy of *Word in Action* inside each *Prayer in Action*. Putting all of our information in one place should make it much easier for you to keep track of what needs replacing.

The pack also includes a name plate so people know who to contact. If you are no longer the Church Representative in your church, please ask the correct person to get in touch with us so that we can update our database, [volunteers@biblesociety.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@biblesociety.org.uk)



Please put any out of date literature you have in the recycling waste. Some of the wording is out of date and in the worst cases, outside current legal guidelines.

We hope that you enjoy having these new packs to promote the work of Bible Society to your church.

## Serving at Events

Judith and Philip North who have supported Bible Society for many years through the Chichester Action Group stepped up to try something new this summer. They came along to New Wine to serve in the Bible Society café for a week. As you'll see from the picture, they had a good time getting to know other volunteers, learning how to use an espresso machine and serving more hot drinks than appeared possible at the start of the week! We are so very grateful to our Event Volunteers who make it possible for Bible Society to attend large events. We would love to welcome you to a team next year, so

watch out for details in the February *Word in Action* magazine.



*Chris Freed and Judith North in the Bible Society Café, New Wine*

## Staff News

In April we told you that Heather Clements was retiring which has led us to recruit some new staff and change some postcode areas for our Church Relationships Team. Rachael Spender is our newest member of staff, joining us mid-September. I am sure you will want to join us in welcoming Rachael to the Bible Society family.



*Rachael Spender*

At the start of September our new CEO started. I am sure you will join me in welcoming Paul Williams to the Bible Society family. At an All Staff Meeting recently Paul outlined his desire to use his first 100 days to listen closely to supporters, staff, volunteers and most importantly, God.



*Paul Williams*

# Hand knitted Bible raises £1,000

**Bellingham Methodist/URC Church raised over £1,000 for Bible Society when they exhibited the Hand Knitted Bible earlier this year.**

Deacon Anne Taylor said, 'St George's United Reformed Church in Hartlepool knitted over 33 scenes of the Bible in 2008 and have been loaning the pieces for people to run exhibitions ever since. We thought it would be good in getting the message over so we booked it and had it for eight days in the church.'

'As we're only a small congregation we asked for help from other churches in the village, to be there when the display was open. We ran from 10am – 4pm Monday to Saturday, with tea and coffee, and on Mothers' Day we offered afternoon tea. We had people coming through all the time, including four schools who loved it.'

## Incredible response

'The response was incredible. People came from miles and miles away and we had hundreds of visitors so it was a marvellous thing to do. People were visibly moved by it and came back and brought other people back. It worked very well.'

'We had a jar for donations and were amazed by how many people gave. It moved people to tears. The exhibition is very clever and is really easy to organise. It was a wonderful thing. People in the village still talk about it.'

'It was a great confidence booster for the chapel to do something like this. It was well attended and appreciated.'

'It just goes to show how powerful Bible stories continue to be today.'



## Visitors' book comments

**'Brilliant. Really loved it. Great to bring the Bible alive.'**

**'A wonderful display which gives a new window into the whole Bible. [People have] used all their gifts and talents so we can share his wonderful word.'**

**'Wonderful message and wonderful work, what a witness.'**

If you'd like to raise money by displaying the Hand Knitted Bible exhibition (after 2018 as it is fully booked until then), please contact Alan and Betty Woodall on 01429 277176 or email [betty.woodhall@ntlworld.com](mailto:betty.woodhall@ntlworld.com).

To find out more about the project please visit their website: [stgeorgesurc.co.uk/?page\\_id=448](http://stgeorgesurc.co.uk/?page_id=448)

**'It just goes to show how powerful Bible stories continue to be today.'**

# Action Group Reports

## Great Concert for Felixstowe

**David Dyer, of Felixstowe Action Group, was delighted with their summer concert, which raised almost £800.**

With over 300 people in the audience and 70 people in the orchestra, it was a packed house at the River of Life Church, where the event was held.

David explained, 'The concert was a real success and enjoyed by all. The Community Light Orchestra (CLO), under the baton of Roger Jones, treated us to a concert of light classics and music from the shows.

'I used to play trumpet in the CLO and as an Action Group we're constantly looking for ways to raise funds so it was the coming together of these two areas that gave us the idea of putting on a concert.

'We're only a small group and in advancing years so it's always a challenge finding new ways of raising funds.

## Truly wonderful

'With a large orchestra we needed a very large venue and we've been extremely blessed with the River of Life Church allowing us to hold the concert in their lovely church.

'They not only provided the venue but also masses of help arranging, advertising, refreshments and helping on the night – they are truly wonderful.

'We raised funds to provide Bibles in other languages with particular emphasis on the migrants in Austria.

'Our chairman Revd John Andrews warmly welcomed the audience, the orchestra, and the Mayor of Felixstowe, Councillor Jan Garfield, and her consort, as well as the retiring mayor Councillor Doreen Savage.

'The choir Tutti Frutti, under the direction of Chandra Grover, also supported the orchestra.'



## What's your story?

Please let us know:

- how your fundraising event goes
- or how your group is Bringing the Bible to life
- or just why you're doing what you're doing
- Where a large church has attended to help run an event.
- What does the Bible mean to you?

# Action Group Reports

## A Great British Bake off!

**Volunteer Mary Stewart reports that Worthing Action Group hosted an evening with Miranda Gore Browne (right), a finalist of the very first Great British Bake Off.**

'The evening started with an enormous summer storm and we wondered if Miranda would get through the floods,' Mary said.

'But she arrived smiling and laughing and the evening that followed was great fun. Miranda described her experiences during the first Great British Bake Off show and how she reached the finals.

'At the time she had a very small daughter and a five-year-old son. It sounded gruelling but she had us laughing at all her adventures

## Biscuit Queen

'During the second half Miranda showed us her baking skills and we tried some delicious biscuits because, in Mary Berry's words, she is the "Biscuit Queen"! She subsequently wrote two recipe books, one called Biscuit.

'We also learnt some new skills and Miranda even gave a helpful critique about the Action Group Members' brownies and cheese scones!

'Did you know mustard brings out the flavour of cheese?'

Bible Society Church Manager Kristin Stevenson joined the evening and a video was shown about Bible Society's refugee work in Austria.

'It was a special evening and we were able to support the work amongst the refugees by providing funds for Bibles.

'Thanks to Miranda for giving her time and expertise.'



## New resources with new look

Bible Sunday resources are now on the website at [biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/bible-sunday/](http://biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/bible-sunday/)

Christmas books, video and stickers are available to order at [biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/christmas/](http://biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/christmas/)

We also now have new:

- Bible a Month forms
- Bible Society leaflets
- collecting boxes
- gift envelopes
- and a fresh Bible Society stand for you to take to your church.

These will be sent to you soon along with A4 posters featuring the four key areas we're concentrating on right now – Africa, China, Middle East and England and Wales.

If you'd like more resources, please email [contactus@biblesociety.org.uk](mailto:contactus@biblesociety.org.uk) with your request.

We also have extensive PowerPoint presentations for those key areas to show to your church, Bible study group or mission prayer meeting. Email [volunteers@biblesociety.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@biblesociety.org.uk) to be sent the presentations by email or on a memory stick.

# Focus on Africa

## This Summer we've been focussing on raising awareness about our work in Africa.

It's the world's second largest continent – and the second most populous, home to almost 1.2 billion people. Violence is on the rise and communities are at war; two in five adults are illiterate.

But Christianity is growing faster here than anywhere in the world. By 2020, just under half of all Africans are expected to be Christians.

If you have a fundraising event featuring Africa in the future we have an Africa PowerPoint presentation, from which you can pick and mix stories.

Testimonies like Bernard's from Uganda, who became blind when he was 12.

He said, 'My parents were very scared. They'd never seen a blind person. People in my home village thought I was cursed and that I didn't deserve to be educated.'

## It changed my life

Bernard told us how much the Braille Bible we provided for his school has changed him, for good.

'I love to come to the library and open the Braille Bible. It has changed my life so much. I don't depend on others to read to me.

'Any time I feel like reading the word of God, I can do this. God has talked to me through the Bible.

'When I read stories such as how Jesus reached the leper – that encourages me. Inside myself, because of what I read in the Bible, I know that God can do anything.'

This season: we're focussing on our work at home.

Please contact [volunteers@biblesociety.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@biblesociety.org.uk) if you'd like our home PPT, our Bringing the Bible to Life PPT or go to [biblesunday.org](http://biblesunday.org) to see this year's Bible Sunday materials.



Bernard with his teacher. Photo: Clare Kendall

## Events diary

We'll soon be planning for 2017 and we always need event volunteers. Watch out for February's *Word in Action* with details of how you can get involved in bringing the Bible to life next year.

### 2016 – 2017

October: Festival of Life (date tbc)

23 October: Bible Sunday

12-13 October: CRE, Maidstone

1 November: MJ World closes for the winter

14-18 December: Wintershall Nativity

26 March: MJ World reopens

April: Festival of Life (date tbc)

4-8 April and 8-13 April: Spring Harvest Minehead

10-14 April: Spring Harvest Skegness

27-28 May: Big Church Day Out South

2-3 June: Big Church Day Out North

15-21 July and 22-28 July and 29 July-4 August:  
Keswick Convention

22-29 July: New Wine (tbc)

30 July - 5 August July: New Wine (tbc)

Bank holiday August: The One Event

October 2017: Festival of Life (date tbc)

Susan Wingrave  
Volunteer Development Officer  
Bible Society, Stonehill Green, Westlea, Swindon SN5 7DG  
T: 01793 418222 [biblesociety.org.uk](http://biblesociety.org.uk)  
Registered charity 232759

