

All Saints Alive

VICAR'S VIEWPOINT

G-O-D-I-S-N-O-W-H-E-R-E

Dear Friends,

How do you read this? I hope that you immediately read it in the positive way. In order to do this, though, we do need to be thinking in a positive way and we may need to look at the World Cup to help us in this!

How are you preparing and celebrating? For the last few months, our shops and supermarkets have been encouraging us to prepare for the World Cup. Crates of Beer, huge quantities of meat for the barbeque and massive bags of crisps have been piled high on the shelves. We have been "tempted" to buy flags, tee shirts and other England souvenirs and the advertising has reached fever pitch. Even if we have not indulged in any of this, we cannot fail to notice the excitement about the Big Event.

Can we as Christians learn from this great excitement? Jesus often used current or local events to inform his parables and teaching. Would he have told the story of the player who was unprepared, the host of the barbeque and the invited guests who failed to come, the lost passport.....? A great deal of Jesus' teaching was about making sure that we are prepared, and showing us how important it is to notice God's loving presence in the world.

Even if we are not preparing ourselves for the World Cup final we do know how much we prepare for other things - holiday and the research and preparation that goes into them, ensuring that we set aside time to watch our favourite TV programme or film or read that all important book! Might the challenge be to us to spend as much time, if not more, on matters of faith, prayer and study of God's love?



We are all pretty good at noticing when others seem to do something that we regard as not right or hurtful, we notice when we feel that we have been left out, slighted or criticised and we can spend a great deal of time analysing our feelings and anxieties in a negative way.

Surely, Jesus would point out we need to spend longer on contemplating how much God loves us and how he draws us to himself, and how he is at work in the world around us. Then there is our faith in action. Does our faith mean that we live our lives differently than if we had no faith?

We rightly expect the players in the World Cup and those watching the matches in South Africa to prepare and celebrate - and hopefully here at home, too. Will we do this in our lives of faith? Sometimes we all feel more like Robert Green than Steven Gerrard.

If we prepare ourselves by looking carefully and seeing God's love at work in the world, in desperate situations, in difficult times, when some are tempted to think that God is nowhere, as well as in good times when we may be inclined to take God for granted, we can find ourselves celebrating and being able to say truly and joyously, not unlike any cheering football crowd at the time of victory : God is now here!

Love, Jo

News from Steve and Stella Banks

Dear Friends,

We're pleased to tell you that the Internet is working again, so we can give you an

update on our first three weeks back in Chad. We are living and working at the Wycliffe Bible Translators centre in N'Djamena. We have a one-bedroom apartment which is fully equipped with everything we need. One advantage of living on the centre is that there is a generator, so that when there are power cuts, we can still have electricity and water.



We have both been working in our respective offices, learning our jobs from those we'll be replacing. This is quite daunting, especially for Stella, so please pray that we can learn quickly and well. We must say that everyone at Wycliffe is being very kind and helpful.

We have been back to the Chadian church where we used to worship and were given a very warm welcome. Several other Chadian friends have come to visit us - one family brought us two live cockerels!



As we expected, the hardest thing to get used to is the heat. As we write at 6pm in the

evening, the temperature in our apartment is almost 36°C and this only falls slightly during the night. So sleeping is not always easy and our energy levels seem to be pretty low most of the time!

It's strange to be here without the children, but we keep in contact through Facebook and Skype. We are very happy to tell you that James and Mino plan to get married in August 2011. Please pray for them and also remember Helen and Johnny who are having some ups and downs.



*With our love,
Steve and Stella*

Steve and Stella BANKS
Association SIL
B.P. 4214
N'Djamena
Tchad

sbanks@pmbx.net

Parish Barbeque

with an American Theme



Sunday 4th July 12.30 p.m.

In the grounds of St John's Hall

Tickets (free) from the Wardens

Donations welcomed on the day