

PARTNERPLAN

An ecumenical appointment with

The **Methodist Church** 

Pat Jamison - Bangladesh April 2014

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Hello Everyone

This month has been so busy and very different. I spent some time in Malaysia first at Port Dickson with about 150 others from CMS for a conference, then Kuala Lumpur for a few days sight-seeing and then a friend arrived for four days on her way to Sydney.

It was wonderful in KL eating lovely Chinese and Malaysian food, drinking delicious teas and coffees and eating such yummy treats. I even found Debenhams and M&S at one of the shopping malls!! Transport around KL is fantastic with the rail and metro easily accessible from my hotel and buses and taxis very reasonably priced.

The conference complex is owned by the Methodist church in Malaysia and was only opened last year. I enjoyed sharing a room with Jane who is a CMS mission partner in Pakistan. She has been there for over 18 years and just recently received a MBE in the New Year's honours list. It was also a privilege to be at the launch of Asia CMS before we left for Port Dickson and enjoy hearing about how it all began, listening to wonderful singing, meeting amazing people and eating delicious food.



The conference was also a great time to get to know other UK mission partners who are working in many areas of Asia from Afghanistan to Taiwan and many others in between and co-mission partners also working in Asia. These are other MPs from NI. Andrew with his

wife Kate, baby Theo, Wilbert and Munroe their two other sons are running around. Sheelagh and Kylie with baby Joshua from India (not sure where her husband had gone). There were a number of workshops, good praise, brilliant Bible studies and time for prayer. I even had the opportunity to help with the children's work as some of the children's team were unable to attend. Being a big kid at heart this was one of the highlights of



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the week singing, dancing, making crafts and playing parachute games with about 20 children.

I arrived in Malaysia the same day as the flight bound for China disappeared. There were lots of requests for prayer on walls, shopping malls and here, where there is construction being carried out. Many people wrote prayers and they are on display.

This month it was great Ireland winning the six nations rugby title. I was able to watch several of the games while in

Dhaka however for the last few I was in Malaysia where rugby is not popular and not on TV. The nearest I got to the Italy game was checking on BBC web and watching my rugby top sitting over the TV. I was delighted however to be able to find somewhere in KL airport on my way back. Two young men from Estonia on their way back from Thailand and one from Longford on his way to Thailand who were killing time and started chatting to me. There was a television and a young barman willing to search the channels. To sit watching the first half of the game in Malaysia with these guys was just such fun. I was actually sorry to leave at halftime for my flight home although a friend kept me updated on FB until my flight left KL.

As I write this letter the Ireland team have been knocked out of the T20 cricket world cup held here in Bangladesh. Unlike 2011 when we got free tickets to see Ireland this time all the Irish games were held in Sylhet in the north of Bangladesh and not possible to attend. There has however been such excitement in Dhaka with Bangladesh winning their group and getting into the last ten although not doing well.



Having my friend Shona arrive on St. Patrick's Day was just brilliant. It's a holiday here, for another reason obviously, and we had fun. This is Parliament Buildings nearby my home the start of a very quick tour of Dhaka. We visited some craft shops nearby and went out for a St. Patrick's celebration dinner. On Tuesday we went with Sarah and some of her new MCC staff to the pottery and brass villages outside of Dhaka.



This is Rebecca age almost nine who I feel did a better job than me making a pot. We all got the opportunity to take part and will receive them later once they have been completed. There are two Master Potters in the area and several others making different size pots and other items from pottery. Some of the items are exported although most of the pots are sold in around Dhaka. Many of the pots are broken in transit so export numbers are much lower than they would like. It is a

great place and as always the Bangladeshi hospitality was shown with snacks, fruit and a decent toilet (very important) supplied for us all. We moved onto the brass and copper village next where we were also greeted by very enthusiastic Bangladeshi people. Here we witnessed a craft which

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has been in this family for over 200 years and has been going for almost 6,000 years. The owner explained how the moulds are made, waxed and metal poured into them. Many of the pieces take several weeks and even months to complete. Just recently they have received a large order their first major one in ten years. We had our picnic lunch and other treats, tea and the obligatory toilet supplied for us once again. A busy, hot and brilliant day enjoyed by everyone and so glad Sarah arranged it to coincide

with Shona's visit.

We had a great day at Old Dhaka visiting several projects from CBSDP. The street children were delighted to have another visitor and the young boy in front with the black tee-shirt sang two songs. We visited the ladies sewing project and then took a rickshaw to the river side. This is a part of Dhaka where many people from slum areas come across the river regularly, some to work, seek work or sell items they have made. I opted out of taking Shona on a boat having gone across the same smelly, black water river several times before and it was frightening.



I was taking prayers at central office on 24th March and shared from Luke 4:16-19 about preaching good news to the poor. I was reminded as I prepared that I am sometimes so caught up in doing so much that I forget why and who I am doing it for. This month has been very different for me. It was full of fun and excitement seeing different places, meeting new people and having a friend to stay however I am now very tired and yet need to refocus on my work. I looked at my office wall and a poster of a rainbow after a raging storm with the words of Jesus from Matthew 11:28 'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.' I realised this is the only place I can truly find rest. I read further in the chapter and the words of the last verse of this chapter spoke to me. 'For the yoke I will give you is easy and the load I will put on you is light.'

Calm me, O Lord, as You stilled the storm, still me, O Lord, keep me from harm. Let all the tumult within me cease, enfold me, Lord, in Your peace. Celtic Traditional

Thank you for praying for me and my work here, for cards and gifts, e-mails and many messages I received and prayers for the families who lost everything in the recent fire.

Please continue to pray for Bangladesh especially the political situation in the country, the homeless, the hungry, the sick, the unemployed and those who are alone.

Many Blessings to you all Pat 🌈🍀

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