

# The Diocese of Ho, Ghana HODA NEWS

www.dioceseofho.org

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**Greetings to all supporters of the Ho Diocese, and many thanks for your continued support.**

We were fortunate in June to have Bishop Matthias over in the UK after a visit to Canada to set up a companion Diocese there. The Diocese of Fredericton invited him over and kindly paid his fare via England, so he was able to stop off to visit some of the supporting parishes. It was a very hectic and demanding schedule, with the Bishop only staying two or three days in each place before moving on. Nevertheless, he gave of himself most generously to his hosts and encouraged more support for the Diocese. Here is some of the news.

## The Situation in Ghana

Ghana has just re-denominated the Cedi, taking four 0s off the end. You used to get GH¢18,000 to the £1, now it is just GH¢1.8 which One Ghana Cedis, Eight Ghana Pesewas. Together with this re-denomination, Ghana is also suffering from inflation, which gives its own problems to poor communities trying to raise funds. As a consequence there have been several industrial actions for more pay, including both doctors and teachers. Schools were closed for several months last year because of the strikes.

Clergy pay in the Diocese of Ho is considerably lower than in neighbouring Dioceses. This affects how many priests we can attract to the Diocese. The Diocesan Synod has now decided only to ordain priests to a non stipendiary ministry for the time being.

The Diocese of Ho ministers in a financially poor rural part of Ghana, although the people there are rich in faith and joy. Increasing the Diocesan Income from parishes has not materialised as much as was hoped for when the Diocese began.

So as to help the priests of the Diocese, HODA has stepped in to raise the amount we send over for the Parish Priests from the initial £40 per priest per month we started with, to £55 per month from this September. We have also added allowances for some support staff in the Diocese who assist the Bishop. We would love to be able to do more

## Power Cuts hit Ghana

Over recent months many parts of Ghana, including Ho, have had their electricity supplies rationed to alternate days. The main problem appears to be a lack of rain feeding the Akosombo dam. At full capacity it runs on 6 turbines and provides around 65% of the electricity for the whole of Ghana. Due to lack of rainfall in the areas that feed the dam, the hydro electric power station has had to cut back to running just two turbines for several months now, as there is not the volume of water to allow for full capacity. This has meant that only 30% of the electricity needed has been produced. To help ration it, it has had to be cut on different days throughout the country.

The good news is that levels have begun to rise again, but slowly, and they hope to be able to turn on two more turbines by October.



## Wheels Appeal

For the last two years Mr Albert Ryder of the 133rd London (Haringey) Company, Boys Brigade, has run a Christmas Appeal for motorbikes for the Diocese.



The Wheels Appeal has raised £650 and £1,058 over the two years. This has enabled the Diocese to purchase two motorbikes, with hopefully another two to come. Pictured above are the clergy from Penyi and Worawora Parishes receiving their bikes, as the distances to travel within those parishes were amongst the greatest.

We hope that we may be able to eventually provide all the clergy with motorbikes to make visiting and taking services easier. It costs around £500 to get a suitable motorbike. Would your parish be willing to raise funds for one?

## Canon Robert Brunswick

Our sincere thanks to Canon Robert Brunswick who has continued raising funds for the Diocese since his retirement from parochial ministry by after dinner speaking and by writing a book that is selling very well in support of the Diocese and the Church in Ghana. Canon Brunswick was made a Canon of Koforidua in 1994, which then also included what is now Ho Diocese.

As Christmas approaches, why not have a special appeal for the Diocese of Ho. Or, follow the example of Great Ayton Parish which have held Auctions of Surplus Christmas Gifts over recent years in support of the Diocese. Last year they raised £771 and had great fun in the process.

## New Church at Lome

During 2006 the Diocese has spread out into neighbouring Togo with the formation of a new Parish at Lome. The people of the area are also Ewes, but speak French as a second language, as Togo was once a French protectorate, whereas the Volta region - on the other side of the road, began under the Germans then came under Britain. Ho Diocese is now healing the divisions in a people that the Europeans kindly left behind!

Pictured below are the two Ordinands in Training at St. Nicholas' Seminary, Cape Coast under the sponsorship of Ho (Left)- a Roman Catholic Monk turned to be Anglican and a Server at St. Paul's, Agbozume for more than fifteen years (Right) A Reader from the Province of Nigeria who was assisting the faithful of Lome until his entry into seminary



## Back Off the Road Again

Many friends of Ho Diocese will remember raising funds for a 4 wheel drive car for Bishop Matthias just three years ago. Sad to report that this car is now off the road with it's engine blown. One of the problems in the area is when filling stations dilute the fuel to make it go further and make more money. Unfortunately this is not good for engines, and the Bishop's car gave up the ghost in June. A new engine, if a suitable one can be found, will cost at least £1,000. We have sent this money from HODA now in the hope that we can get Bishop Matthias back on the road. In the meantime he is getting the local bus to visit his parishes and has had to curtail many visits scheduled for outside the Diocese.



## Visit of Trish Haywood



The Diocese of Ho was very much on the world map with the visit last summer of Mothers Union Worldwide President, Mrs Trish Haywood, to Ho Diocese for a Conference. Her visit brought together not only the Diocesan Mothers Union Branches, but also members of women's groups from other Churches and was cause for great celebration. It is always good when we see such a new Diocese playing such a part in the world wide Anglican communion.

As in many parishes in England, the Mothers Union often form the backbone of the parish and can always be relied upon to support the work of the Church. Why not get the branch in your Parish, if you have one, to link up in prayer support to one of the branches in the Diocese of

## Schools and Clinics

Although struggling financially, the Diocese has vision through their Bishop of what they would like to achieve.

Talking when he was here, Bishop Matthias explained how many young people from the region left for Accra to become street hawkers, as they had no trade with which to earn money. This isn't good for them, or the region.

The vision was shared of an Anglican Vocational School in the region, to help train the young people in certain skills to help them remain at home and contribute and receive from the local economy. We will give more news as the vision grows, when we may need your help.



The two Canons installed last year, Canon George Asaimah and Canon Joseph Bentum

## CONFIRMATIONS

Next time your PCC worry about the state of the Church roof, bear a thought for some of the Churches in Ho Diocese that need roofs or walls! St Mark's, Djoanti was the setting for this Confirmation last year. The flimsy structure



gives shade on a good day, but when it rains you need to be somewhere else.

It is not just the Churches that are in a poor state, but many of the clergy houses. A British priest on a visit to Ho last year witnessed the plight of one of the priests who had been washed out of his house with the rains. He was stood outside with his few soaking wet possessions, whilst tears ran down the cheek of the visitor.

We would like to do more to improve these dwellings, but the Church has to be seen doing things for all the people, and not just the clergy. Hopefully we can address these issues in time, but African time seems to go at a slower pace than our frenetic British time.

Please remember the clergy of the Diocese in your prayers who work in very difficult conditions.

## HODA ACCOUNTS 2006

<u>CASH FLOW STATEMENT</u>	£	£
Carried fwd 1/1/06		17075
<b>Accrued Interest</b>	17	
<b>Interest</b>	71	
 <u>Donations</u>		
<b>Great Ayton &amp; Newton</b>	4397	
<b>Middlesbrough St John</b>	78	
<b>Darwen St Peter</b>	222	
<b>Sherburn in Elmet</b>	1377	
<b>Newbury</b>	3512	
<b>Ordsall</b>	216	
<b>Fransican Aid</b>	115	
<b>Croston</b>	500	
<b>Stanton St Mary</b>	75	
<b>Sneyd</b>	691	
<b>Bishopthorpe</b>	1700	
<b>Stokesley</b>	1082	
<b>Barnsley D S</b>	248	
<b>Cottingham</b>	213	
<b>Denstone</b>	70	
<b>Blackburn Cathedral</b>	500	
<b>Fareham</b>	<u>490</u>	
	15486	
Sub-Total		<b>32649</b>
 <u>Payments</u>		
<b>Stipends &amp; Expenses</b>	8540	
<b>Church Land Purchase</b>	1300	
<b>Computers</b>	1115	
<b>Tove</b>	879	
<b>Wora Wora</b>	900	
<b>Internet</b>	262	
<b>St George's School Roof</b>	1000	
<b>Motorbikes</b>	600	
<b>Bank Charges</b>	<u>105</u>	
	16701	
Carried forward 31/12/06		<b>15498</b>

## From the Treasurer

"As you will see from our summary accounts HODA continues to provide vital support to the Ho Diocese, its Bishop, clergy, catechists, and parishes because of the great generosity of a small number of parishes and individuals around the Church of England. We are immensely grateful to those parishes and the people within them who make this missionary work for Christ possible!

Our accounts are in good order and the balances we carry mean that we can assure the Diocese of Ho of our continued support for at least one year even if hard times come upon us. However, we do rely on the support and generosity of a small number of parishes. I am pleased to say, though, that this number is growing. We do hope that there will be other parishes or individuals who feel that this pioneering work in Africa is a very appropriate overseas mission that they would wish to support in the future.

We were delighted in 2006 to welcome our first Cathedral Church - Blackburn - amongst our benefactors. Thank you to you all once again!"

**Philip Gray**

Revd Canon Philip Gray  
79 Ribchester Road, Salesbury, Blackburn,  
BB1 9HT

*I will be moving in November to be priest in charge of St Margaret's Ilkley. Please send any donations after that date to:*

*St Margaret's Vicarage, Wells Road, Ilkley, West Yorkshire LS29 9QJ*

## From the Chairman of HODA

First of all my continued thanks to all who have supported HODA and have made it possible for the Diocese to continue and to grow. The Diocese depends on us for three quarters of it's income, so without our help it would not survive.

Secondly, please remember the Bishops of Ghana especially as the Lambeth Conference approaches. They very much value their links with the Church of England and would wish to come, but also have to see the wider picture of what is happening in their own country, where large parts of the Anglican Church led by Nigeria and threatening a boycott. The issues of sexuality causing so much tension within our Communion can only be appreciated by realising the very different cultures involved. There is no easy answer. Please pray for grace and understanding for all .

**Paul Peverell**

Supporting the Church in Ho, Ghana

**HODA NEWS**

Contact Bishop Matthias on: [matthoda@ucomgh.com](mailto:matthoda@ucomgh.com)

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