



Updates and Horizons

March 2023



St Paul's
DORKING



DAVE, WIFE ANNE AND THEIR FAMILY

Update from Dave Bookless, Director of Theology for A Rocha International



A Rocha is a global family of conservation organisations, working together to live out God's calling to care for creation, and equip others to do likewise. It was formed 40 years ago, and as part of their 40th birthday celebrations, a new short film has been created [I am a conservationist](#). A new ["Global Covenant"](#) process to strengthen how A Rocha works as a worldwide family of organisations has also recently been completed, an important document drafted and led by Dave, which Dave hopes will be helpful to churches and organisations.

In 2019, three key A Rocha leaders were tragically killed in a car accident, leading to some major internal changes at A Rocha. Renowned conservationist Simon Stuart has led the organisation since then, with wisdom and vision, but always considered his leadership as transitional and now, for family reasons, Simon is retiring in May.



The recruitment process for a new Executive Director for A Rocha International is underway – pray for God to find the right person, for all involved in the selection process, and for the hiatus between Simon Stuart leaving and the new appointment starting.

Dave's work continues in equipping the A Rocha family and worldwide Christian networks with biblical and theological resources. Later this year, Dave's plans include two speaking tours in South Korea, and in Taiwan, Lebanon and Jordan. These will be building on the impact of the Korean and Chinese translations of *Planetwise*, helping to organise a major interdenominational theological conference in Beirut on climate and creation theology, as well as equipping Middle Eastern students in Jordan.



Dave's major speaking tour in South Korea and Taiwan from 21st April – 12th May. Pray for stamina, the ability to speak into very different cultural contexts, and for Anne managing home and Church whilst he's away.

A Rocha continues to grow around the world, not just with 20 national organisations, but their 13 new *Friends of A Rocha Networks*, which are groups or organisations that share the A Rocha vision and want to associate with it.



A Rocha's 40th birthday celebrations including a major fundraising campaign from A Rocha International, seeking 40 donations of \$40,000 to support the global work, either from individuals, churches or groups working together. Pray for a series of meetings around the world connected with this.



News from New Hope Children's Centre in Kenya with thanks to Sue Smith, CEO of Hand in Hand, who visited New Hope in February.

Anne, who founded and continues to run the orphanage and children's centre, remains well and adjusting to life without husband Tiras (who died last year). Her children, especially Catherine and Caroline, have certainly stepped up in terms of taking more of the responsibilities off Anne which leaves her to do what she does best; being there for the children, communicating with people and their needs or letting people know about the work of New Hope. She is still very much 'mum' to all and seen as head of the family, but without some of the burden of running all that goes on at New Hope.

Oakridge Primary, New Hope's own primary school, is doing really well. Last year there were two cohorts of class 8 (end of primary) doing their KCPE (Kenya Certificate of Primary Education), the end of primary exams. With the first cohort, the children came 6th in the county of about 70 schools and similar with the second, but their mean grade had increased by 59 points which they are very proud of. With the smaller class sizes it really makes a difference to all of the students. They have a full set of very committed teachers. The current primary population is 147. Since January, some secondary classes (forms 1 and 2) have started to bring the same opportunities to this age group. The head teacher they have employed has had a lot of experience setting up schools and he is a lovely bright Christian. At the moment, they have 31 in this secondary section.

The teachers are having to embrace a new curriculum which is competency based, so the teachers are having to adjust to new methods and will have to continuously assess. Unfortunately, there has not been much training provided towards this system in the country, so everyone is a little cautious about its impact. The children enjoyed some of the lessons that our visitors were able to deliver, embracing some of the new style.

There are still children being brought to New Hope, and needs are probably increasing as Kenya faces an economic downturn, made worse by the lack of rain leading to rising prices. New Hope itself has had to buy cabbages for the first time in a long while as their own 'shamba' is not producing as much food as usual, in line with the rest of the country.



MORNING ASSEMBLY



OAKRIDGE PRIMARY TEACHERS



Let's
Pray!

Pray for two little boys with special needs. Anne is trying to find a suitable place for them to study as they struggle with normal schooling. The teachers within Oakridge are doing their best, but really they need something that is more appropriate for their needs.



One encouraging point is a Hindu Indian Community in Nairobi has connected with New Hope to distribute some basic food supplies to the needy in the community. Recently they delivered 500 packs of supplies and have given some to New Hope for onward distribution. They are using New Hope as they know they can trust them to give to those



most needing it within the community. This is a great testimony of New Hope's values and Christian faith.



**Dates for
your
diary.....**

We are delighted that Penny and Juan Carlos Marcés will be with us on

16th April at both morning services. Then join us for a shared lunch at noon when Penny and Juan Carlos can answer questions about their life in Peru. It was only last December that their brand new president was impeached and imprisoned, and for the first time they had a woman president in his place, so they will have plenty to share with us. Do come to the lunch, bringing, if possible, cold meat, cheese, quiche, salad or a pudding for us all to share. worldchurch@stpaulsdorking.org.uk if you need more details.

On May 21st, members of Oasis India are coming to St Paul's.

In 2020, St Paul's church family visited Mumbai in India, including Oasis India who has now become one of our Mission Partners. Vishwas Udgirkar and Jessica Gunjal are visiting UK from Oasis India and will come to speak at our services followed by a tea when they can answer any questions. They fly to Ireland the following day, so are **looking for accommodation in Dorking over that weekend**. Please consider this prayerfully.



**Let's
Pray!**

Father God, we pray for our world today. We pray for peace and hope to abound. Many parts of your beautiful world have been devastated by natural disasters, by conflict, and by the results of a global pandemic. In these sad and challenging times, help us to turn to you as our source of strength and hope. Merciful Lord, we offer a prayer for your peace to be with all those who have suffered and continue to do so, strength for those who endeavour to bring aid to those in dire need, and wisdom to those in power. In your precious name. Amen

For information about any of the above, please contact **St Paul's World Church Team: Carlton Beasley, Annabel Blanch, Sally Hulbert, Jonathan Papworth and Elizabeth Shaw** worldchurch@stpaulsdorking.org.uk
More information about our Mission Partners: [Dave Bookless A Rocha, Centre de la Réconciliation - Lille; New Hope Children's Centre - Kenya; Jenny and Stuart O; Oasis, Mumbai - India; Open Doors - Syria; Penny and Juan Carlos Marcés - Peru](#)