

Oil from Nigeria: The human cost

Here is a story about the Niger Delta where a lot of oil is being extracted. My friend Abba, a Christian, who is a Nigerian national, got this information for me.

The oil companies were given land by the Nigerian Government in the 1960's.

The Ogoni people and other tribes, who owned the land, were removed from it with no consultation and minimal compensation. The oil companies have worked there ever since. Despite ongoing battles with the local people, little has happened to improve their lot. When the Ogoni people began to protest, the Nigerian government responded by banning public gatherings and declaring that disturbances of oil production were acts of treason.

Military repression escalated in May 1994. By mid-June, the security forces had razed 30 villages, detained 600 people and killed at least 40. This figure eventually rose to 2,000 civilian deaths and the displacement of around 100,000 internal refugees (all so we could drive our cars!). In May 1994, nine activists from the protest movement were imprisoned and were denied due process. Upon being found guilty they were hanged by the Nigerian state. One company claims it asked the Nigerian government for clemency, but its request was refused.

Although things improved after democracy was reinstated in Nigeria in 1999 the lot of the poor in the Niger Delta has not changed. It is complicated by internal problems over land ownership (less land, more people and so they fight), and ongoing inability of the government to pass on revenue from the oil production to the people

Abba, my friend, states that the main reasons for the Niger Delta crisis are largely due to:

1. Neglect by the Nigerian federal government in developing roads, schools, hospitals and other social amenities. The people are left without any incentive or help from the government.
2. The ruling class steals the revenue they get from the oil to the detriment of the people.
3. Local people are usually marginalized when it comes to employment in the foreign oil companies. They are not given the opportunity because they lack the skills.
4. The land becomes unfit for crop production due to oil spillage. Oil gets into the river systems thereby making the water unfit for drinking. Aquatic life i.e. fish for protein is also affected.
5. Pollution of the environment from factories destroys ecosystems.

Abba says "the main issue here is the growing poverty amongst this people without proper compensation by the multinational corporations and the government itself. This people are famished, killing each other and government security forces are also killing them." This is because both companies do very little (in real terms) for the people and because the Nigerian Government and its elite are very corrupt.

Deb Bushell

Please consider changing your offerings by becoming a GIVING DIRECT member.

- You can opt to give weekly, fortnightly or monthly
- No-one at St Andrews knows how much you give
- You can increase, decrease or stop the deduction at any time. You control it!
- No more looking for change on Sunday mornings!
- And our counting team has lots less work to do, so they can enjoy their cuppa!

See Bruce Fairhall for further information - it's painless and free.

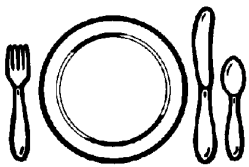
Special Needs Transport

Dear Friends, Last Month's Newsletter included an appeal for volunteer drivers for this important Ministry. It is not often required, but it is very important to meet the need when it does arise.

In the past few days, a volunteer was needed and my own vehicle was away for brake repairs. A driver came forward and the need was met. However, I found that everyone on the list is committed to excess already, and it is very difficult to ask these generous folk to do more.

If you feel you would like to help, but need to speak about it first, please call either myself, Sandi Herbert or Rev. Je-Kon Oh.

Lester Vincent (Home) 4575 1507 (Mobile) 0416 081 260



Request for hospitality for UWS students

Would anyone like to host a meal and be welcoming? Please contact UCA Chaplain Rev Christine Gapes (0422 498 371).



Can you spare two hours per week?

In just two hours per week you can:

- Meet new people in your community
- Relieve the loneliness for a frail older person
- Help someone who cannot otherwise leave their home
- Be part of a fabulous team of volunteers
- Help a frail older or disabled person retain their independence

You will get:

- Free induction training prior to visiting a client
- Free ongoing training
- Free morning teas for peer support/Volunteer Support Day lunch
- Opportunity for group outings with other volunteers and clients
- Reimbursement of some travel expenses

Phone Kerri today at Hawkesbury Neighbour Aid for more information 45870209

A world of contrasts

- “Too many public servants think integrity is an old-fashioned, optional concept”
(Report of NSW Ombudsman, October 2009)
- “So put on God's armour now! Then when the evil day comes, you will be able to resist the enemy's attacks. So stand ready, with truth as a belt tight around your waist, with righteousness as your breastplate.”
(Paul's letter to the Ephesians, Ch 6, v 13,14)

Worship Planner for March 2010

Date	8:30am	9:45am	6pm	Remarks
7 March (Lent 3)	Je-Kon Oh (HC)	Je-Kon Oh	Je-Kon Oh	
14 March (Lent 4)	Je-Kon Oh	Je-Kon Oh	Je-Kon Oh	
21 March (Lent 5)	Je-Kon Oh	Je-Kon Oh (HC)	Je-Kon Oh	
28 March (Palm/Passion)	Tony Blake	Tony Blake	Tony Blake	Kids' Sunday term one ends.

* Note: This plan can be changed at any time.

PLEASE NOTE: The previously scheduled 2pm service on Palm Sunday **will not** take place.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 9.30 Playtime	2 7.30 Church Council	3 9.45 M.O.P.S.	4 9.30 Fellowship	5 10am and 7.30pm World Day of Prayer	6
7 8.30/9.45 Worship <i>Sundays@6.00</i>	8 9.30 Playtime	9	10 Fashion Parade	11 10.00 Coffee 'n Chat	12 7.00 Youth Group	13
14 8.30/9.45 Worship <i>Sundays@6.00</i>	15 9.30 Playtime	16	17 9.45 M.O.P.S. Presbytery	18	19	20
21 8.30/9.45 Worship <i>Sundays@6.00</i>	22 9.30 Playtime	23	24	25 12 Seniors' Lunch	26 7.00 Youth Group	27
28 PALM SUNDAY 8.30/9.45 Worship Kids' Sunday end T1 <i>Sundays@6.00</i>	29 9.30 Playtime 9.30 StA Singers	30	31 9.45 M.O.P.S.			





Because of the danger to members and visitors with an allergy to nuts, the church premises are declared to be NUT FREE. Please do not bring nuts in any form.

WHAT'S ON DURING THE WEEK

SUNDAYS

Paddlers – Age 3 to Kinder: 9.45-11.00am (Heather Fairhall 4571 1019)
Kids Sunday – Years 1-5: 9.45-11.00am (Robyn Duignan 4572 7517)
GWU – Junior High Youth Years 7-9: 9.45-11.00am (Greg Inskip 4573 1002)

MONDAYS

Playtime – 9.30am-11.30am – Parents and preschoolers (Michelle Dacey 4574 1312)
Andy's Hands-on-Help – 9.00am to 1.00pm – Maintenance and Fellowship (Bob Thuaux 4578 2309)

TUESDAYS

Church Council – 7.30pm 1st Tuesday in odd-numbered month (Greg Inskip 4573 1002)
Pastoral Leaders Team – 7.30pm 1st Tuesday even numbered month (Je-Kon Oh)

WEDNESDAYS

MOPS – 9.45-11.45am Fortnightly in school terms for Mums and preschoolers (Michelle Dacey 4574 1312)

THURSDAYS

1st Thursday: Adult Fellowship (Irene Milne 4578 1482)
2nd Thursday: Coffee 'n Chat – 10am (
3rd Thursday: Seniors All Together – 10am – 12 noon (Crafts)
4th Thursday: Seniors Lunch 12 – 1.45pm
Senior's Bible Study – 12 noon-1.30pm Bible Study (except 4th Thursday)
(for info on Thursday seniors activities contact Sandi Herbert (4573 1517))

FRIDAYS

Op Shop – 9.00am – 12.00 – clothes and wares (Carmel Hagedoorn Phone 4567 7448)
Open Church Prayer – 9.30am - 10.30am and more (Margaret and Keith Bailey 4776 1487)
Youth Group (Years 6-10) 7pm every fortnight during school term (Greg Inskip 4573 1002)

SATURDAYS

Blokes 'N Sheds –Breakfast bi-monthly (Bob Thuaux 4578 2309)

SMALL/HOME GROUPS are a valuable and integral part of St Andrew's ministry. We encourage all members to join a group. For further information please speak to our Minister Rev. Je-Kon Oh - phone 4578 3421 (Home)