

Pebbles News



Christmas 2022

Another big thankyou to all our supporters, especially at this time of high inflation and economic uncertainty.

New Trustees.

Since my last newsletter Stuart and Alli Chorley have retired from the board of Trustees and Caroline Couzens and Martin Lunnemann have offered their services. I want to take this opportunity to thank Stuart and Alli for helping to set up Pebbles and for their support over the past ten years and to welcome Caroline and Martin to the board. We look forward to their advice and help in the coming months.

The global recession.

As we face the challenges of higher food prices, energy and fuel costs, the continued financial support by all our Pebbles supporters is very much appreciated. Our friends in Uganda are facing challenges without any of the buffers we have. As I look back on the reports sent by Pr Alex over the last 6 months, prices for basic food stuffs have increased by about 30%. This makes your contributions so much more valuable, but it puts much pressure on our budget.

The end of term

For Ugandan schools, December sees the end of the academic year. There is a lot of pressure on pupils who have exams: if they pass, they will be promoted to the next year group, but if they fail, they will have to repeat the year again! After the exams, they can look forward to a long vacation. This however presents a challenge for the parents in Wabigalo who will have to find food for their children while the school is closed.

For teachers, the end of the year is an opportunity to find other work. Many teachers do not get paid during the long vacation and must find alternative sources of income. The school run by Choice Baptist church is exceptional in that it pays the teachers during the long vacation. This means that they will most probably return in the new year.



Christmas

How do you celebrate Christmas? One of the things that marks out Choice Baptist Primary and Nursery school is that it provides a Christmas celebration for all the parents, children, and the wider community at this time of year.



On Sunday December 5th they held their annual celebration and enjoyed meat, rice, potatoes, matoke (green banana), posho (corn flour), beans, and vegetables, all washed down with a soda.



There was loud preaching, singing, dancing, and a whole lot of fun! Our

money helped the school and church provide for this important celebration.

It is customary for people return to their home villages for Christmas. For slum dwellers, this may not be possible as transport costs will stop many from travelling this year.

What will you get for Christmas?

We spend a lot of time choosing presents for family and friends at Christmas. Our Ugandan friends also like to get presents for their families. However, the Ugandan culture is less materialistic than our own and people will spend what little they have on clothes and extra food at Christmas. One of the things we have in common as we celebrate Christmas is the singing of carols. For us, it would be a strange experience to sing "In the bleak mid-winter", in 27 degrees of heat! But for people in the slum, as they sing carols they won't notice the heat, but will identify with a child being born into poverty!

By continuing to support Pebbles, we are standing with people who face the challenges of poverty, who we may never see. On their behalf, I would like to thank you again for your continued support.

With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year
Chris Leach.

(cncleach@yahoo.com) *Pebbles-Uganda is a registered charity with the UK Charities Commission No: 1179611*

