

THE WELL IS DEEP

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

This PowerPoint looks at the work of the Anglican Church in Ghana.

Please feel free to adapt these notes to your own style. There are three versions of the PowerPoint: 1) Change image on mouse-click; 2) Looped with text; 3) Looped without text.

The Well is Deep

The work of the Anglican Church in Ghana

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The work of the Anglican Church in Ghana



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Today, I want to talk to you about Ghana, in West Africa. Let's start with some background information. Ghana has a multi-party democracy and is often held up as a model for political and economic reform in Africa.



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Ghana has largely escaped the civil strife and has a high-profile peacekeeping role in the region. It was largely because of its political stability, that Barack Obama chose to visit Ghana – meaning that, to date [October 2009 as we wrote this], Ghana is the only country in Africa that the new President has visited. The posters here show Obama with Ghana's current president [as of October 2009] Professor John Atta-Mills.



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During his stay in Ghana, Obama visited this place: Cape Coast Castle. The castle was built by the Swedish Africa Company, which traded in timber and gold. Later it was used by the British to hold slaves before they left for the Americas.



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Ghana is the world's second largest exporter of cocoa – pictured here – and is Africa's second largest producer of gold after South Africa. The country also has major untapped offshore oil reserves that could bring a major economic boost when extraction begins in 2010.

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Two-thirds of the population are Christian; 16 per cent Muslim. There is mostly peace between the faiths.

According to the NIFCON (Network for Inter Faith Concerns across the Anglican Communion): 'At all levels, Christians and Muslims mix and do things in common, right from the family to national levels. Christ.'

This is Christ Church Anglican Cathedral, in Cape Coast.



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The country also faces challenges. Ghana is a developing country. Much of the population struggles to eke out a living. There are cases of malnutrition. Many struggle to access healthcare. Much of the transport infrastructure is poor. (This photo shows a traditional outdoor fish smoking.) The Anglican Church in Ghana is helping to address these issues through a range of practical outreach programmes – many supported by USPG.



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Healthcare. USPG is supporting more than a dozen health centres and rural clinics (such as the one pictured here). Malaria, measles and HIV are serious problems. And this is a very upsetting statistic: one in ten children do not reach their fifth birthday.

There is a national health insurance scheme, but not many people can afford it. So the support of the church is vital.



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Eye care is an important aspect of the church's health provision. USPG has sent volunteer optometrists to work at Anglican eye clinics in Kumasi and Cape Coast.

Here is Vicky Ager, from Derby, who spent eight months on placement with the Anglican-started Bishop Ackon Memorial Eye Centre, in Cape Coast.



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The Mampong Babies' Home, in Kumasi, is saving the lives of abandoned and orphaned children. The home accommodates up to 40 babies at a time, providing the children with a caring environment until they are five years old, when they are put into the care of extended family.



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This is Gloria, whose mother died in childbirth.



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The chaplain of the babies' home, the Revd Francis Sencherey, said most of the children would not have survived if it were not for the home.



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The church is tackling human trafficking. Thousands of young children have been abducted and forced to work under brutal conditions – some of them in the fishing industry, many on commercial farms. The Anglican Church and USPG are supporting an organisation called the Centre for Initiative Against Human Trafficking (CIAHT), which is helping to alert children and parents to the dangers of abusive employers, and to rehabilitate children who escape.



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The environment is a major concern in Ghana as much as anywhere. USPG sent a grant of £4,000 to support a tree-planting project in the Diocese of Kumasi. Nearly 300 acres have been planted so far. Teak trees will restore land ravaged by bush fires, and fruit and nut trees will help generate an income to support important church work.



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The church is also supporting schools' work. A USPG volunteer spent time at St Paul's Anglican School, in Kumasi. She discovered there were almost no books in the school, so she decided to set up a library. As a result, reading skills improved dramatically. Many of the children were astounded when they saw an atlas for the first time.



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Undergirding the work of the Anglican Church is a team of dedicated bishops, clergy and lay workers. Yet many are over-stretched. There is a shortage of church workers and it is difficult for them to reach remote congregations. Heading up the challenge to train a new generation of church workers is St Nicholas' Seminary, in Cape Coast (pictured here). The college is equipping clergy to apply theology to the modern African context.



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This is Lovia Owusu-Asiedu – a trained nurse, married for 38 years – who decided to train for the priesthood when she was 61. She is one of the first two women to train at St Nicholas. Her hope for the future is to be able to offer both pastoral support and healthcare to congregations that are currently so remote they rarely receive visits from clergy.

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This is Elijah Alhassan Yakubu, 33, who is married with a daughter. He is a full-time teacher. He is also a voluntary catechist (lay worker) helping his local priest. sometimes cycling miles to visit churches.

I hope my talk today has given you taste of life in Ghana, including some of the challenges facing the people and how the church is responding, with the support of USPG.

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Perhaps we could leave the last words to the Rt Revd Daniel Sarfo, who is the Bishop of Kumasi:

'Mission is the basis of the church. It is the mission of God and we are participating in it...

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Please pray for the Anglican Church in Ghana.

And please remember USPG. USPG urgently needs your gifts of money, time and prayer to enable the world church to share God's love in Ghana and throughout the world.



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