

MY MESSAGE AT THE CELEBRATION DAY

To be asked to be President was so unexpected. I was uncertain about it but Tom assured me that this was something I could and should do. I am therefore pleased he is preaching at the Commissioning and will be leading the Bible Study this afternoon. I now have a real assurance from God, particularly after my recent pilgrimage, that being District President is a blessed opportunity me.



My theme is **Abundant Life**. My inspiration comes from John's Gospel. In chapter 1 Philip brings Nathanael to meet Jesus. In the ensuing conversation Jesus says to him. *'I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you'* (meaning that he is a true Israelite who studies the law) Nathanael replies: *'Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!'* Jesus answered *'Do you believe because I said I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.'* God is telling us **'You ain't seen nothing yet!'**

There is always more to learn and more to discover. The same message continues in the following chapters: at the marriage at Cana, in the conversations with Nicodemus and then with the woman at the well, with the man by the pool, in the feeding of the 5000 and in the resurrection story of the enormous catch of fish with which the Gospel ends.

Does MWiB enable people to discover Abundant Life? It certainly does! Its motto is 'Equipping, Encouraging, Enabling'. In our Southampton District we have an amazing record of partnerships of sharing, learning and giving. Did you know that over the past few years we have raised over £150,000?

2000/01	Edna Adan Maternity Hospital Hargeisa Somaliland	£13777.00
2002/03	Matthew Rusike Children's Home	£20,056.57
2004/05	Mercy Ships – Operating Theatre	£28,921.72
2006/08	Sierra Leone – Rebuilding Manses	£34,500.00
2009/10	Wells for India – clean water- empowering women	£21,360.00
2011/12	Hamlin Fistula Hospital, Addis Ababa (and blankets)	£16,750.00
2013/15	Partnership with Bulgarian & Romanian Women	£17,000.00



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So what do you understand Abundant Life to be?

For Nathaniel — of seeing things beyond his perspective.

At the Wedding Feast — the gift of intoxicating joy.

For Nicodemus — to become young when are old.

For the Woman at the well — to drink living water and share your story.

For the Man by the Pool — to face the future with courage.

For the Feeding of 5,000 — to share your resources with the needy

For the Easter Disciples — to have a real purpose for living.

In a nutshell it is:

**Vision, Joy, Energy, Vitality, Optimism,
Generosity, Purpose.**

As I travel around the district, it is my hope and prayer that together we can discover and live this 'Abundant Life' .

PRAYER.

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

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The address was followed by an act of worship in which Tom preached. The



morning concluded with me interviewing two of my pilgrim companions - Linda Chester and Allison Judd. In the afternoon we stayed in



the Hall and following MWiB news there was a Bible study led by Tom on the Lord's Prayer followed by Holy Communion.

Christine