

Tearfund Talk Toilet Twinning in Kilgetty

(By Sharron Hardwick - Tearfund Voluntary Media Officer, Pembrokeshire)

Invited to talk about his recent trip to Ethiopia, Tearfund Pembrokeshire Volunteer Coordinator Francis Maull, with wife Ann, joined New Life Christian Fellowship at Kilgetty Community Center last Sunday.

Francis shared that, although many Christians met in secret during Ethiopia's troubled past, Tearfund partner's The Ethiopian Kale Heywet Church, has 5,000 church groups, totalling over 7 million people.

Francis said: "We went to be immersed in Ethiopian culture, and learn from them. Some people had nothing, and I really mean nothing; yet they were praising God."

Across dusty roads, climbing rocky mountains, Francis met with locals whose lives have been transformed by Tearfund and Kale Heywet Church's self help groups. Each group, made up of mostly women, meet regularly to pray together and support one another, whilst sharing and saving the little that they have.

Odd coins, a few coffee beans, eventually mount up enabling people to invest in small business ventures, giving them a means of supporting themselves. Self help groups teach family planning, setting up a business, and adult literacy.

This is how Tearfund work, sharing the love of Jesus in practical ways: "The grace of God was so evident in the Ethiopian Christians we met. The Church is alive and active in the heart of their local community, bringing help and hope through the love of Jesus. This is an encouragement to us in the UK, we should follow their example and be part of Tearfund's vision to release 50 million people from poverty through local churches. " said Francis.

Following Francis's presentation, Ann shared a unique way to help transform lives in poor communities. International charities Cord and Tearfund have linked up to create *Toilet Twinning*:

"Imagine not having something so simple as a toilet. Instead, you have to trek into secluded areas, where people are often lurking; waiting to attack, rape and murder; just because you need the loo!"

2.6 billion people, 40% of the world's population, do not have somewhere safe, clean and hygienic to go to the loo. Everyday 5,000 children die from preventable diseases caused by dirty water and poor sanitation.

Ann shared: "For just £60 you can twin your toilet at home, work or school with a latrine in Burundi, Africa. If you do this you will receive a framed photo of a Burundi latrine, as a public declaration to all who visit your cloakroom that you think it is out of order that 1 in 3 people in the world don't have access to a decent loo."

To find out more about Tearfund or Toilet Twinning please visit:

www.toilettwinning.org www.tearfund.org or call Francis on 01248 723086.

