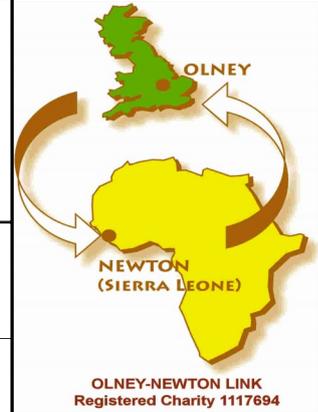


# Olney—Newton Link



*“To advance education and to relieve poverty*

*in the village of Newton, Sierra Leone, by the provision of charitable assistance”*

**March 2025**

[www.olneynewtonlink.org.uk](http://www.olneynewtonlink.org.uk)

**ONL**

## *News from Newton*



Happy News—Komba’s engagement and marriage

James with his congregation



We were so sorry to hear that James Kabia had died.



Construction of the well at Goshen High School

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# A Tribute to Brima James Kabia



Everyone at the ONL was shocked and saddened to hear that one of our most reliable and trusted contacts in Newton died on 27th November 2024 at the age of 56. He had been diagnosed with high blood pressure and diabetes but that didn't affect his commitment to his work as Baptist minister nor his determination to improve the lives of everyone in the community—

providing help and advice during the Ebola crisis, and setting up schemes such as tailoring apprenticeships and the farming baskets. Recently he was responsible for the building of the new community centre.

Trustees and others who knew Brima joined together to send a donation to Brima's family to cover some of the costs associated with the funeral, as is the custom in Sierra Leone. We send our sincere condolences to his wife Marie.

This is a tribute from Sarah and David Dewey, who hosted James when he visited Olney in 2005.

## **Brima Kabia**

*It was our joy and privilege to get to know and to work with Brima through the Olney-Newton link while David was Minister at Olney Baptist Church; a friendship and commitment that continued after we moved on.*

*In 2005 Brima came to the UK in order to spend time with us at Olney Baptist Church and to attend (along with 12,000 others) the special centenary World Baptist Alliance Congress in Birmingham. We had the pleasure of hosting him for a few weeks.*

*We realised very quickly what a culture shock visiting the UK was for Brima. Several things needed explaining including that the purpose of taking the dog out for a walk across the fields wasn't to hunt rabbits for breakfast!*

*We made a return visit in late 2006 and experienced the same culture shock but in reverse. For one thing, traffic rules seemed non-existent. No wonder the buses had messages on them such as 'In God we trust.'*

*Together with his whole village we attended Brima's graduation from Jui Theological College. It was a privilege to witness Brima's academic achievement and to worship at his church. We, and Brima's friends and family, all wore matching outfits for the graduation which had been made for us by the village seamstresses. A few weeks after our return, we learnt that Brima's first wife, Adama, had died of complications from chicken pox. The fragility of life in a place like Sierra Leone suddenly hit home. And now Brima has gone to glory too. We give thanks for his life: may he rest in peace.*

Sarah and David Dewey



# The Community Centre

Brima's death meant that we needed to take action to ensure that the project would continue, find out who would be managing the project and establish a new contact for the bank account we use.

When we send money to Sierra Leone, we set up a requirement for two people to collect it and to sign for it. One of the original people would still be able to do this but we needed a second person.

We have established that Ibrahim Bangura (youth chairperson) and Sullaiman Sillah (headman) are taking on the responsibility for the Kpoubu-Newton community centre and it seems that Mr Sillah will also be able to access money sent, with Abdul Kabia (Goshen headteacher).

We have also received photographs of the work at the site and some estimates for future costs. There has been a delay in the work, obviously and during the summer there were problems with the weather.

We are happy that progress is being made again.



# A Wedding

We send our congratulations to Komba Nfalie, former headteacher of the Christ Evangelical Primary School on the occasion of his engagement and marriage.



We wish them a long and happy life together.

# Schools' News

## Goshen High School

In the last newsletter I was pleased to be able to show you photos of the completed toilet block at Goshen High School. There is more good news this month; the well we sent money for has been finished too. It will certainly be a great boost, keeping all the students healthy and safe. Thank you to the headteacher Abdul Kabia for sending us the photographs.

### Supplies arrive on site



The well is finished

## Christ Evangelical School

Christ Evangelical School in Newton has had to move to a new site on land donated by the local community. However, they no longer have permanent buildings and their classrooms are now temporary structures covered with blue tarpaulins. The land is not fenced in and recently they had a burglary where the thieves ripped open the tarpaulins and stole some of their resources. The Village Schools Federation is planning to fundraise to help their link school.



The school has recently welcomed a new Headteacher, the Rev Francis J.M. Lavalie.



Marilyn Watkins

# Fund Raising

## CHRISTMAS TREE



We enjoyed decorating a Christmas Tree in St Peter's and St Paul's Church again. Our theme (obviously) was Sierra Leone so the decorations included bunting in the flag colours, bits and pieces from Africa and baubles in shades of blue and green.

Thank you Rose and Anne for your efforts in making it look so good.

## DICKENS—The Bottle Tombola



The weather was a little better this year, thank goodness, though perhaps not so many people attended for some reason. We had a steady stream of customers, some were very lucky, others didn't do so well!



A huge thank you to all who helped in any way - with donating bottles, setting up, manning the stall, providing cups of tea and mince pies and taking it all down afterwards. And apologies if I didn't manage to include you in a photograph!

We raised an incredible amount, just over £1000, which will be put to very good use in Sierra Leone.

## CAROL SINGING

A merry band of at least 26 of us set out from the Market Place on the Monday before Christmas. Despite the rain, we walked the streets of Olney for an hour and a half, singing our favourite carols to the brilliant accompaniment by Matthew Ball on his trumpet. Meanwhile, a small (but cute!) group of collectors knocked on doors and were welcomed by appreciative residents who generously donated to the Olney Newton Link. In all, a total of £161.32 was raised.

Look out for us again next year!

Sally Jones



## FORTHCOMING EVENTS 2025

Soup Lunch 4th April	Details to follow, 12.00 onwards, tickets from Anne
AGM 20th May	Provisional date. Confirmation of speaker and further details to follow.
Musica Concert 7th June	7.30pm St Peter and St Paul's Parish Church More details will follow soon
Cherry Fair 29th June	12 onwards. Donations of tombola items very much appreciated.

More details can be found on our website: [www.olneynewtonlink.org.uk](http://www.olneynewtonlink.org.uk)

**A big THANK YOU to all of you who have continued to donate to the ONL through standing orders.**  
**If you'd like to contribute, check our website, [olneynewtonlink.org.uk](http://olneynewtonlink.org.uk) and select 'donate' from the menu**  
**- or drop an envelope through our treasurer's door -**  
**Tricia Selwood, 16 East Street.**

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