

Barry Willetts

In 1959 I was called to serve my two years National Service. I was fortunate to be sent to Kenya in October 1960. While there myself and a few friends went into the town of Nakuru to their Christmas evening service. The small church was by necessity illuminated by candlelight. After my army service ended and I was back in Two Gates, I suggested to my father, who was Superintendent of Two Gates Ragged School, that I thought we could reproduce the effect I had experienced in Nakuru. His response was, “well get on with it.” So for the next 40 years we had a Christmas candlelight carol service that came to be a most popular event in our calendar.

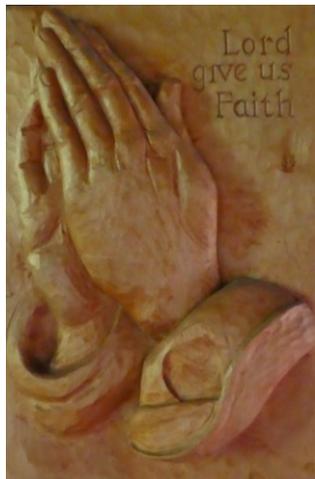


Keeping with the Kenya connection, when things settled after National Service I set myself a project to revisit Kenya. I set a target of our 25th wedding anniversary. The money was acquired and we landed at Nairobi in September 1968. The holiday was wonderful; close to our hotel was a small gift shop. On the shelves was a hand carved Nativity scene. After looking at it for a couple of days the decision was made to buy it. So it came to Two Gates to be displayed each Christmas time in the chapel.

A couple of years ago I received a pack of palm crosses for distribution in the chapel over Easter. Among the

packaging was a drawing of the journey these crosses had taken all the way from central Kenya to the coast at Mombassa, through the Suez Canal and the Mediterranean to here at Two Gates.

Twenty years ago the top of the Chapel was altered and the new Kitchen was installed. This work was carried out by



David Skidmore. In his formative years he had been a scholar at Two Gates Ragged School. One of his other talents was the ability to carve wood. He came one day and presented us with the beautiful reproduction of the carving by Albrecht Durer that can be seen in the chapel today.

Many years ago a man called at the home of Mrs. Hazel Clifton and asked if he could look round the chapel. He had passed through Two Gates on his way from work and was curious about the chapel, some time later he called again and asked if we would like the gift of a baptismal font that he had in his car Hazel looked and accepted I with pleasure it was from a church at Stratford -on- Avon that was being demolished at that time. It has been used for baptisms since that time.