

# Serving Him

Summer 2019



SERVING IN MISSION  
SIM



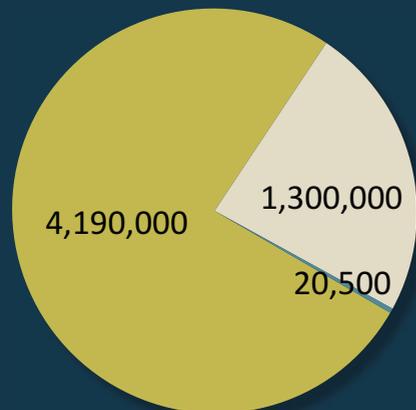
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Convinced that no one should live and die without hearing God's good news

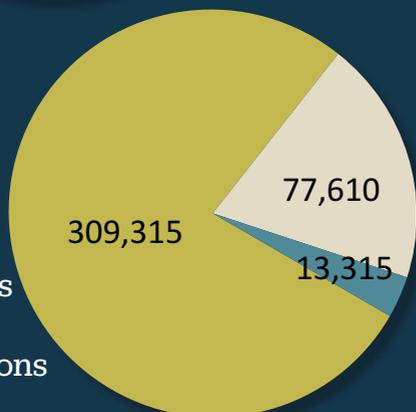
## By the numbers



There are 5,500,000 Christian workers worldwide



400,000 missionaries from all denominations



£540 billion



Given to Christian causes

Annual income of Christians in the USA... £32 trillion

£34.5 billion



Given to mission



# Who can you encourage to be a faithful witness?

**I**received a call earlier this month from a church wishing to give an Easter offering to church-planting work in hard-to-reach places where resources are few.

Trying to choose from the 30 or more places in which Serving In Mission is doing such work wasn't easy.

But the church landed on one they felt they could pray for and support because of the way the team loved people and the way the work was led in dependence on God.

Crossing barriers with the gospel overseas is always a work of God's Spirit in the hearts and minds of people as they hear God's word.

What are we doing with the gospel message that Jesus entrusts us with?

In this magazine you'll read about how SIM teams are engaged in faithful witness around the world.

There are examples of people coming to Christ in the Middle East, in Greece,

in Bangladesh and in South America through the work of those SIM teams.

The teams are made up of ordinary people who are following Jesus globally in response to his gospel call, all with a shared conviction that if people go through their lives without hearing of Christ they will be unprepared to meet him when he returns. Hearing the gospel is essential.

Jesus said: 'People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God.' (Luke 13:29)

This statement is a response to a question from his disciples, who want to know whether only a few people will be rescued from death and judgment into the kingdom of

heaven. Jesus' answer cuts to the heart of the matter.

What matters isn't how many people meet Jesus or hear his teaching — but whether Jesus recognises them by their response to his message (see Luke 13:22–30).

If hearing is essential, our response to Christ is even more critical. Our prayer is that when Jesus returns he will know many as his people because of the faithful witness of his church across the globe.

That's why Serving In Mission exists! We are here to serve the church in Christ's commission to his church, to be faithful disciples who make disciples in all nations.

Who could you encourage to serve Christ in communities where he is least known?



*Steve*

Steve Smith, UK Director

**PS: I'd love you to sign up for our weekly prayer email, SIMpray. Just go to [sim.co.uk/simpray](http://sim.co.uk/simpray) or email [kevin@sim.co.uk](mailto:kevin@sim.co.uk)**

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# Troubled teen Eli finds true hope in Jesus

By Tim Allan



**T**eenager Eli's life was a mess — stumbling from bad decision to bad decision, with no direction and little clear motivation.

Sure, he was coming to the church youth group in the Middle Eastern city where he lived, but he wasn't engaging with the gospel.

His life was spent going to illicit parties where alcohol was often available, trying to find new girlfriends and, perhaps hardest of all, keeping all this a secret from his parents and wider family.

But that was when he met John, a young Serving In Mission worker who came to the church to lead the youth group and had been through similar experiences to Eli.

John explained: "I first met Eli when he was 15. He was one of the regulars at the youth group but he had lot of

issues in his personal life that needed sorting out.

"He had this second life that his parents and family had no idea about and, because of his culture, he couldn't ask anyone for help.

"As I prayerfully entered into a friendship with Eli, I felt again and again a strong prompting to talk about specific issues I had faced in the past - sharing some of those hurts and pains.

"Over the course of a few months, Eli opened up more and more to me about things that were eating him up inside and we were able to bring them to God together."

Slowly, Eli and John built up a close friendship. As they talked more, Eli realised he couldn't carry on living as he had been. He knew he had to give his life to Christ.

John said: "I was talking to

Eli one evening at my kitchen table and just said: 'You know you can't go on like this, right?'. He looked up at me and said: 'I know, but I'm not sure how to change.'

"I told him: 'Well, the first step to changing is confessing your sin to God, and asking Jesus to change you from the inside. Once you have the Holy Spirit in you, it will all make more sense. God makes it clear that we can't stop sinning by ourselves, but it's his Spirit in us that gives us the strength.' Eli looked at me and said: 'I'd really like that.'

"So together we prayed a prayer of repentance, asking God to strip away the old Eli and replace it with a new one.

"As we finished, and with both of us in tears, Eli and I looked at each other and embraced as brothers."

Since that night many

things have changed for Eli. He has moved on from the patterns of life and sin he used to be caught up in.

He now helps John at the youth group and is growing in leading worship and music. He is more diligent in prayer and in reading the Bible. His life has truly turned around.

John said: "His relationship with Jesus is obvious to everyone and he has matured in the way he acts, speaks and thinks.

"He is even considering moving into ministry full-time.

"God truly does use people to bring about his will, and it's an unspeakably beautiful process to be a part of."

*If you'd like to be part of what God is doing in the Middle East then please email [enquiries@sim.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@sim.co.uk) for more information and advice.*

## Please pray

- For Eli to continue his walk with God and grow in his knowledge of, and love for, the Lord Jesus.
- For John as he disciples Eli, that he will lead by example and keep walking with Jesus and that by doing so, more people will come to know the one true Lord.
- For Christians in the Middle East, that they can be distinctive in their lifestyles and so prompt others to want to know more about the hope they have.

**Want to serve in the Middle East?**  
See pages 26-27



# CUP of kindness

## City programme gives gospel hope to street women

By Kerry Allan

**W**hen Sofia was pregnant, alone and begging on the streets, she never expected to hear how the good news of Jesus Christ could transform her life.

The eldest of five children, she grew up in a rural part of a populous south Asian country, where her father eked out a living as a subsistence farmer.

Like many, Sofia's father believed he could earn more money by moving the family to the capital city — a magnet for those escaping rural poverty.

But within months of arriving in the city, Sofia was orphaned — her mother had died from a severe stomach ailment; her father two months later, from a suspected heart attack. Aged just 14, Sofia was the family's sole breadwinner.

Helpless and confused, she found work at a garment factory, working in appalling conditions for a pittance.

But when the bulldozers began to demolish the slum where she lived, Sofia had no choice but to return to her



## What is CUP?

The Children's Uplift Programme (CUP) operates in one of the largest cities in south Asia. It began in 2008 with a vision to help mothers and children who had been living on the street. It offers them skills training so they can earn a living, helps educate their children and shows them God's love in practical ways. There are daily Bible devotions at the CUP centre, led by the Christian staff.

home village with her two brothers and two sisters.

With relatives unable to support them, Sofia moved to work in another sweatshop.

At the age of 23, she met the man who was to become her husband. When they married, he insisted she give up work.

But he became abusive and abandoned Sofia when she was five months' pregnant with their first child, forcing her to beg for a living.

The husband quickly disappeared from her life but returned when their son Joshua was seven months' old, thinking he would have a better life with her. But he became even more violent

and, most of the time, there was little or no food to eat.

Once again, he abandoned his family and Sofia was forced to leave her son with relatives to find work in the city.

While she was there, her husband came back again.

Sofia gave him another chance and, two years later, she fell pregnant again.

But that was the signal for her husband to leave once more - this time for good.

Once Sofia was nursing her baby girl Ruth, she was unable to find work and so resorted to begging in the slums, where, by the grace of God, she was found by workers

from Serving In Mission's Children's Uplift Programme.

Today, Sofia, 30, has a new job making clothes and blankets for CUP's social business partner Basha Enterprises Ltd after completing two years of employment training.

She has been introduced to Jesus through the daily devotions at CUP, as well as through a book of 101 Bible stories.

She still has loads of questions about Christ and the CUP staff answer them patiently and diligently. She may not yet be part of a church family, but she wants to know more about Jesus.

Joshua, now seven, is at school while Ruth, two, goes to Basha's day care centre.

Sofia has no doubt CUP has helped her offer her children a better future — and the staff keep praying that the whole family will come to know Jesus as their personal saviour and so guarantee the best future of all.

**Want to serve in south Asia?**  
See pages 26-27

## Please pray

- For continuing transformation in Sofia's life and that God will bless CUP by providing funds and staff.
- For the nine children who have been admitted to the local government school from CUP.
- For all the children and women suffering from illness and for their husbands, who are often addicted to drugs, that they will be healed and restored.

# Clean water is bringing living water to Andes villagers

By Tim Allan

**T**he living water of Jesus Christ is breaking down barriers to the gospel in a remote village high in the Peruvian Andes.

Where once the fledgling church was opposed by just about everyone, it is now accepted; where once the members were refused permission to even put up their own building, there is now a meeting room; where once the Christians were looked on as strange, they are now seen as an asset to the community of Chinchinya.

Gregorio is the church

leader and his journey into that role has been anything but straightforward. He is a recovering alcoholic and, before he came to Christ, spent most of his days drinking with friends and not taking care of his family.

But for reasons known only to God, he decided to go to some talks being given by a couple — Hugo and Elizabeth — who had come from a church in the nearby city of Abancay in 2015.

Through those talks, he became a Christian, although with little understanding of



Lizzie shows villagers how to use the filters (left). Church members gather outside (above) and in their new building (below)

what that would mean for his life. But he started bringing his wife, Marcosa, who had some church background, and their children, to church meetings.

Hugo and Elizabeth continued to come to the village and were thrilled when Marcosa's aunt and another family joined the church.

But still the wider village refused to accept them. Indeed, they ridiculed these strange people who had given up their traditional beliefs to follow Christ.

Despite the villagers' scorn, they could not deny Gregorio had changed. He no longer drank and was looking after his family, working to put food on the table.

Slowly, the villagers came round to a grudging respect

for him and his family — but allowing them to build a church was still a step too far.

It was only when the local authorities got involved in 2017 that they finally caved in, because all believers have a legal right to meet together.

And that was when the water filters played a vital gospel role. They were first given to Marcosa and her cousins' families by AIDIA, a project in which Serving In Mission's Lizzie White works.

Initially, Marcosa and her cousins' families bought water filters. They were shocked by how much mud was in their drinking water and, as word spread, more families wanted the filters.

Lizzie said: "Gregorio told me the filters, as well as giving

visible improvements in water quality, have helped change attitudes towards the church.

"There has been a lot of opposition since his family became Christians and started the church a few years ago, but now people are starting to see that the church wants to help the community.

"What an encouragement!"

The Chinchinya church building was completed last year. It is far from luxurious, but it is a communal place to meet, to worship and to celebrate.

And through the filters, which have transformed lives across the Andes by ensuring clean drinking water, Lizzie is able to share the truth of the living water that is Jesus

Christ. That has led to more conversations and even people, who once would not have invited Lizzie and her colleagues in, are now opening up their homes.

Lizzie said: "Our work has helped the believers show they care for all aspects of life and want to help others in their community. Visits from a

doctor, a dentist and my projects with the water filters have helped break down resistance

and led to more acceptance in the community.

"I visited the new church a couple of months after it was built and it was wonderful to see what they had achieved and how many new people were attending."

**Want to serve in South America?**  
See pages 26-27

## Please pray

- For a pastor to be raised up for the fledgling church and for Gregorio, who is doing much of that work in the interim, supported by Dina who visits the church each month from the city.
- For continued wisdom among the church members about how best to share Jesus with neighbours.
- For Lizzie, as she tries to sustain occasional visits to the church, even when the road is impassable, so that she can encourage her brothers and sisters.

# Pastors on a steep LEARNing curve

By Tim Allan



APPY DAYS (l-r) - SIM Zimbabwe director Caiphaz Ngarivhume, Mark Armstrong, Rosaliene and Geoff Donaldson

**A** new programme to help evangelical pastors withstand the growing gospel challenges in Zimbabwe is now being rolled out.

The Leaders Equipping and Resourcing Network (LEARN) is designed to give pastors the essential tools and information they need to understand

and teach the Bible faithfully.

Delivered through an app on a solar-powered tablet, which is given to each pastor on the programme, the resources can be added to at any time in future.

Serving In Mission worker Mark Armstrong, who with wife Lorraine has helped develop the programme, explained: "How can a leader with responsibility for teaching God's word be effective with only one other book alongside the Bible?"

"How can a leader trying to nurture and develop the discipleship of the church do so without guidance and insights? But, this

is exactly the situation for many leaders in Zimbabwe.

"Some have had no formal training and those that are trained have few resources, a situation that is unlikely to change with the current economic challenges facing the country. Alongside this, the



Zimbabwe church leaders have identified the challenges they face: combating false teachings, the invasive prosperity theology and inadequate patterns of discipleship."

LEARN was officially launched earlier this year and two conferences are planned before Christmas – one in Harare and the other in

Mutare. Two more, in Masvingo and Bulawayo, are planned for 2020. There will then be a review in 2021, to assess the true effectiveness of the programme.

The aim is to provide the tablets to around 1,300 pastors. Each tablet



will have around 50 books pre-loaded, all of which are geared to strengthening the pastor's ability to teach God's word in a way which makes and encourages disciples in the local church.

The resources will enable pastors to be confident in strengthening Christian values in individuals, families, churches and in Zimbabwean society as a whole.

They will equip them to counter the emergence and rapid growth of Islam and other religions as the Zimbabwe government opens up space for other religions in a bid to promote multi-faithism.

The tablets are linked to a central database so programme leaders can see who has read what.

Mark and Lorraine work closely with SIM's Zimbabwe director Caiphaz Ngarivhume and Zimbabwe-based SIM missionaries Walter Madimutsa and Geoff Donaldson. Together they have built partnerships with the Zimbabwe church and with Langham

Partnership, who have made several of their books available on the app.

As the programme rolls out, it is already having an impact.

Mark said: "When we handed the tablet to one rural church leader, he started looking through the material and just said: 'I won't be dry.' It's our hope that none of the pastors we work with would ever feel dry."

Mark Armstrong (above right) with a Zimbabwean pastor and (left) the front page of the tablet app

*If you would like to support LEARN financially, please use the form on the flap at the back of the magazine.*

**Want to serve in Africa?**  
See pages 26-27

## Please pray

- For the pastors who receive the tablets to engage fully with the materials and use them for God's glory as they make disciples in their churches.
- For the project leaders to have wisdom about the future of the project and to work out how best to deliver the materials and ensure they are being well used.
- For supporters to come forward willing to support the project with prayer, money and by offering to help Mark in the work.

Give thanks with Richard and Ana Selby for an Iranian man and a Syrian woman who help in their Bible study group, and for the testimony given by a well-known former imam, who is now a Christian.

Praise God for the launch of Serving In Mission's LEARN project, which trains and provides pastors in Zimbabwe with tablets loaded with books to help them make better disciples in their churches.

Give thanks that an SIM team in south east Asia was able to meet for its annual conference in January, after fears it would have to be cancelled. Praise God for the good time together.

Give thanks for three new discussion groups in Bolivia, made up of university students and young professionals, who have lost their faith or have none, and meet regularly to discuss discipleship.

## answers to prayer

Praise God that Irene Westendorp received the paperwork and arrived safely in Angola in February. Irene is serving as a fistula nurse at the Evangelical Medical Centre of Lubango. Please pray she settles well into life and ministry.

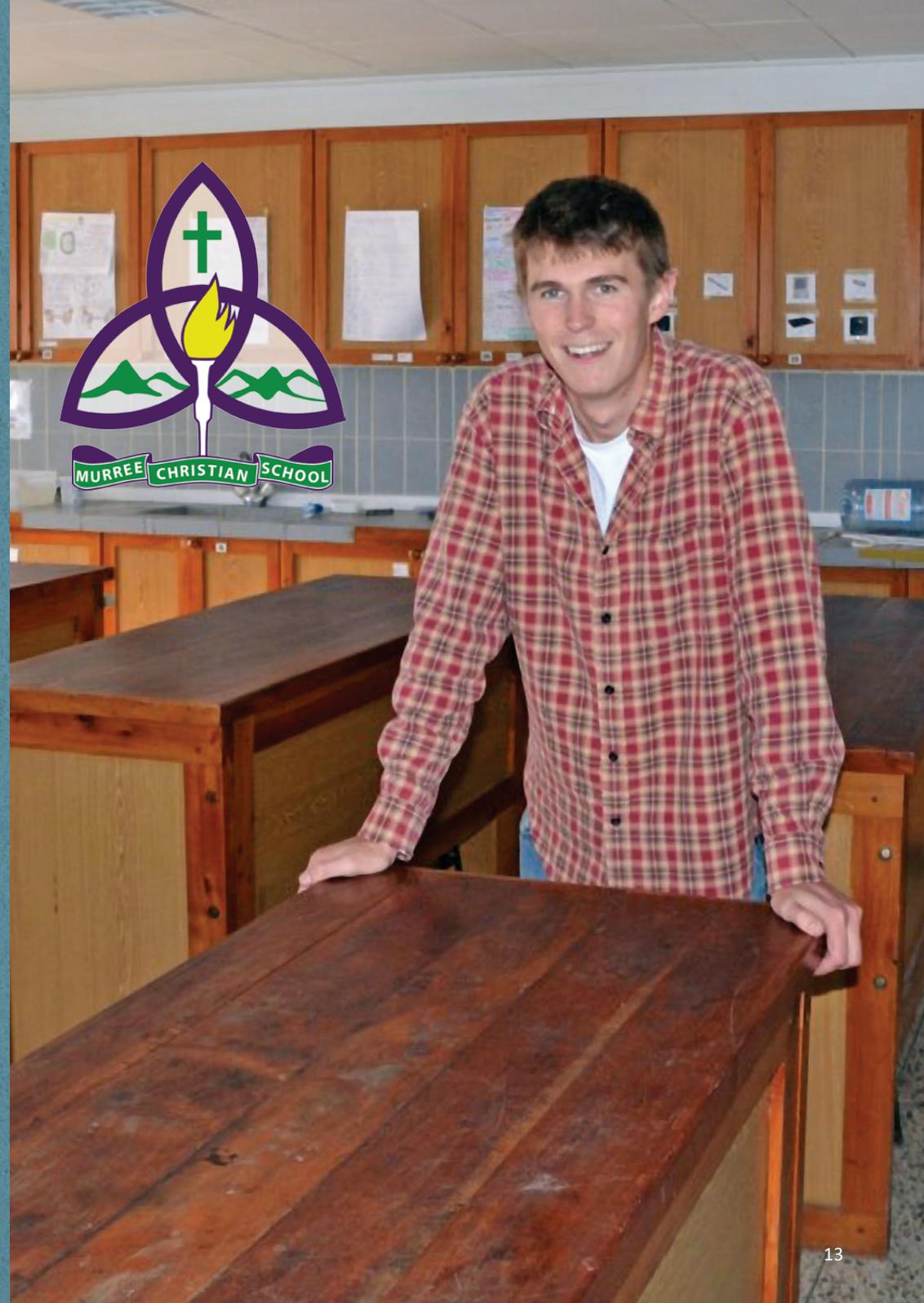
Give thanks with and for Edna Gibson, who is celebrating God's faithfulness having served overseas with Serving In Mission for 20 years. Pray as Edna prepares for the major transition of 'officially' retiring later in the year.

Give thanks for the meaningful conversations and opportunities to distribute Christian media on SD cards during meetings with the men of a west African village. Pray the Lord might open a door to the women of the village.

Give thanks for Debbie Simpson, who is in Madagascar enabling translation of Luke's gospel into Tsimihety by local people. Praise God for the way he has helped Debbie master the language and for the progress being made with the translation.

Praise the Lord that Serving In Mission UK's 2018 Christmas gifts catalogue helped raise more than £6,300 for 23 projects around the world. Thank God for the sacrificial generosity of our supporters, who continue to pray for and to fund our gospel work.

Give thanks for Trinity Dental Clinic's new purpose-built premises in Liberia and for Simon Stretton-Downes and his team, who have worked so hard to complete this project. Pray for the safe and timely delivery of new equipment, which is expected to arrive in May.



hand the joy of working in that refreshing environment.

He said: "I went to Murree in the winter of 2016 as an inexperienced teacher and came back in the summer of 2018 with two-and-a-half years of teaching and mission exposure under my belt.

"I learned a lot about myself in my teacher training year and I had the chance to put my training into practice in a safe, friendly and forgiving atmosphere.

"I had great opportunities to explore my own teaching practice without the weight of accountability which is commonplace in the UK teaching system."

The school has a rich history of providing a solid Christian education for children up to the age of 18. It was founded more than 60 years ago and plays a vital role in enabling mission workers to stay in south Asia, knowing their children are being well-educated.

Murree follows the UK curriculum and offers GCSEs, IGCSEs and A

Levels. Many students go on to study in the USA or Korea; some stay in Pakistan and others head to Europe.

With class sizes of between four and 12, there are great opportunities to build gospel

relationships with students and so help them grow in their faith. And with a staff of around 20, teachers and house parents build strong friendships quickly.

But Nick also has no doubt that

**"I had opportunities to explore my own teaching practice without the weight of accountability which is commonplace in the UK teaching system."**



teaching at Murree helped his faith grow too, as he learned to work in an environment that was both loving and accountable.

He said: "My faith was tested but it definitely grew. I met many Christian brothers and sisters and I was forced to live a much more minimalist lifestyle and could not separate my visible life from my hidden life.

"So, within the community, my colleagues became my friends — and a big part of me really misses that now I'm back in the UK."

The school is very well-equipped, with reasonable internet access, plenty of computers, lots of laboratory equipment, whiteboards and all the relevant textbooks. There is an indoor gym, with basketball

hoops and small goals, as well as an outdoor court and pitch for badminton, basketball and football.

The gospel is firmly embedded in school life, with chapel every Friday and 10 minutes each day in which so-called home-room teachers usually facilitate a devotional with their students. And, of course, every teacher is completely free to share the gospel in normal lessons, in day-to-day conversations and during camp-outs or on the spiritual emphasis weekends.

Nick also had opportunities to witness beyond the school, as he built relationships with Pakistanis in the nearby village.

He said: "I'd like to think that I was a positive witness in the way I did things and how I came across

to anyone I met and whose home I was invited into. I preached at the Sunday services at school and delivered chapels, which I believe God is using to work in the lives of these young Christians.

"I had many good conversations with the students about faith, especially when questions arose in science or about global issues in

*Nick enjoys the open air with his Murree students*

### **Please pray**

- For God to raise up more teachers keen to serve at Murree Christian School.
- For the future of the school, that it can remain a beacon of gospel hope.
- For the pupils and their parents to trust God as he works out his purposes in Pakistan.

geography. I'd like to think my awe for God's creation came across, especially in science!

"Of course, lots of opportunities come up naturally in the boarding context, and anyone going to serve at Murree will be invited to share a testimony at chapel and share at youth group too.

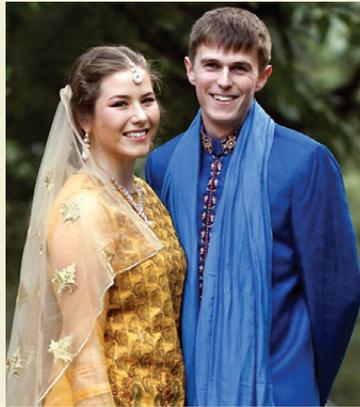
"So there were some really special moments when as a more mature Christian, I was able to speak into the lives of these young people."

As you can tell, Suffolk-born Nick has very fond memories of his time at Murree – not least because that was where he met his wife Kate (pictured right).

And he has no doubt that a spell at Murree would be invigorating for any Christian teacher, or aspiring teacher, who is perhaps a little disillusioned with life in a UK school.

He said: "If you are thinking that teaching might be for you and you would be confident in delivering Key Stage 3-5 in your subject area then Murree is for you.

"If you have talents that you feel aren't being used and want to involve more of these in the way



that you serve day-to-day, then Murree is for you.

"If you want to hit the hard-reset button, and take a break from a consumerist, narcissistic culture and serve in a small Christian community with a different pace of life, then Murree is for you.

"If you want to work with impressionable, young Christians who are in need of good Christ-centred role models, then Murree is for you.

"If you want to enjoy the fresh mountain views and pine-infused air of the Himalayan foothills, then Murree is for you!"



## Could you teach at Murree?

Murree is facing a severe shortage of teachers and house parents. It faces the real possibility of closure if the problem is not solved quickly.

That could have a profound effect on mission work across south Asia because there is one sure way to bring mission workers back home early — don't give a good school for their children.

If you can help solve this pressing problem, then please contact [enquiries@sim.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@sim.co.uk) as soon as possible.

# Relief aid mobilised to help Cyclone Idai survivors

By Kerry Allan



**S**erving In Mission relief workers took to the skies in the aftermath of Cyclone Idai to reach the hardest-hit regions of Mozambique.

A helicopter delivered life-saving supplies to the flooded region of Panbanisa near Dombe, after a lorry carrying aid had taken three days to drive 150 kilometres along roads covered by mud, fallen trees and debris.

The truck's contents — 30 sacks of rice; three tonnes of beans, 20 sacks of sugar and 400 sacks of cornflour — were eventually dropped to help trapped survivors, after the cyclone caused overflowing rivers to create "an inland ocean" in southern Mozambique.

SIM's efforts were focused on the Dombe district, which lies inland, south of Chimoio and east of the Chimanimani area of Zimbabwe, because all the rain that fell in Zimbabwe

### Please pray

- For relief aid to continue to reach the injured and homeless as quickly as possible.
- That SIM workers will be able to show the love of Christ in all they do to help those affected and as they partner with others to deliver aid.
- For God's mercy in a situation that has devastated so many lives.

caused rivers to overflow through Dombe, washing away homes, crops and infrastructure, as it made its way to the ocean.

At the end of March, a shipment of clothing and food arrived for the cities of Lichinga and Cuamba in Niassa province, where SIM's team worked with others to identify needs, gather resources and deliver aid.

As more roads reopen, SIM will coordinate its efforts with other mission agencies, churches and local Christian business owners to continue sending trucks with food and

other essential supplies to where it is most needed.

Earlier this month (April), SIM's Disaster Relief Fund extended its efforts to cover both Malawi and Zimbabwe.

In Zimbabwe, the aid will be concentrated around the Chimanimani area, with plans in place to rebuild a bridge, provide food and deliver other essential household and school materials.

*To donate to the SIM Disaster Relief Fund, go to [www.sim.org/donate](http://www.sim.org/donate) or see the flap at the back of this magazine.*

## Robbie the story-teller

**D**uring one of my language lessons, my friend Tanko told me a traditional Sisaala story about a lion, a monkey and a rabbit.

Since I didn't understand all the words, I recorded it as he told it. Then the two of us listened to it slowly several times, and Tanko found creative ways to explain the new words to me using zero English. It was like a game because he had to use Sisaali words I already knew in order to describe a word I didn't know at all!

When I knew the story well enough, I decided to head into town and tell it to a few friends. It was great practice, but what it really showed me was how much Sisaala people love stories. They laughed at parts I didn't even know were funny and they loved talking about the meaning of it.

Once, when I was telling it to a friend of mine, a lady came up and was amazed to hear a white man telling a story in Sisaali. My friend then proceeded to tell her the whole story up until that point, and then asked me: "What happens next?"

Moments like those let us see clearly the value of continuing to learn Sisaali.

We aren't just learning words. We are learning about the issues people face, their sense of humour and the things that make them excited. The process of language learning is a window to understand and to be understood, so we can share with the Sisaala the goodness of Christ!



**Robbie and Heather Oleniuk are Serving In Mission workers and have been in Ghana since December, 2017.**

**Their stories here give an insight into what it means to utterly immerse yourself in language and culture-learning.**

**Robbie and Heather have even moved home within Ghana so they can be in an area in which people speak**

**the exact dialect of Sisaali they most want to learn.**

**The couple are on home assignment in Canada after the birth of their first child Elliot in March, but Robbie says: "Our future plans include continuing to learn how to follow Jesus as friends of the Sisaala, and encouraging Sisaala believers to passionately live out their faith."**

## Heather and her friend Ruth

**I** love visiting my friend Ruth and her four boys. It is such a blessing to sit with her, especially because she is so kind and speaks Sisaali patiently for me.

Another woman on the compound loves teaching me to make Sisaali food, so I've had a few rather pathetic attempts at stirring TZ (pronounced tea-zed) and making Banku!

As I spend more time at their compound, I realise I may slowly be becoming part of the family community there. This is the Kobala family, and these women have even said to me: "Lele ma naa Kobala niaa!", which means "Now you are Kobala people!" Even this morning I was honoured that some of the Kobala women came to our home to greet us.

Is this what the early stages of seeing 'people transformed' look like? Becoming part of their lives, knowing their hearts, and being known by them, so that we can see Christ at work in one another?

I'm praying we'll have many more opportunities to live life with people and to be part of things in their lives, big or small. Praise God that we can look to Jesus as the greatest example of entering our world, facing trials and joys alongside us. He is the one who brings true life and transformation.

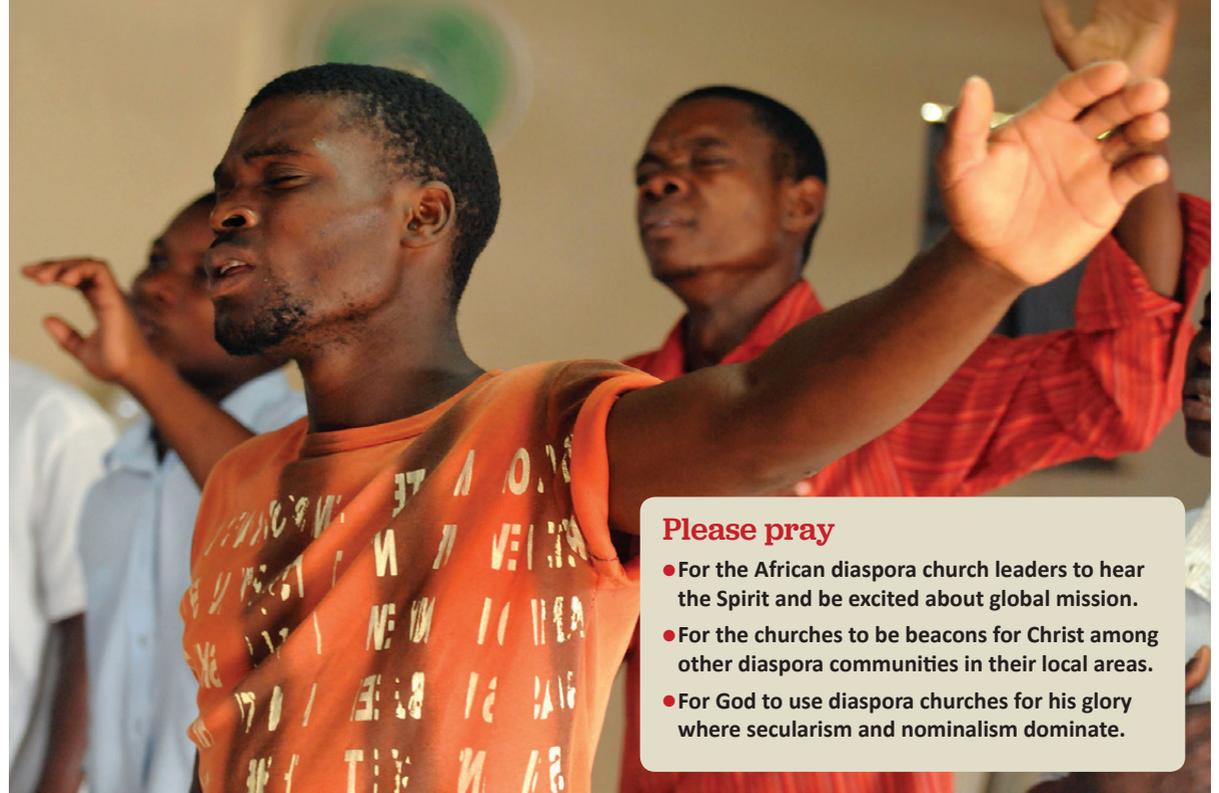
Please join me in praying for our language learners. Pray for grace to persevere and for encouragement, for ears that hear and for tongues that are able to articulate strange sounds.

# African churches can be salt and light for mission



By Peter Oyugi, AIM missionary

Originally from Kenya, Peter Oyugi leads diaspora ministry in the UK for Africa Inland Mission (AIM), focusing on the least-reached. He works alongside UK churches to establish church-based outreach teams to equip church members to engage cross-culturally with the world at their doorstep.



**Please pray**

- For the African diaspora church leaders to hear the Spirit and be excited about global mission.
- For the churches to be beacons for Christ among other diaspora communities in their local areas.
- For God to use diaspora churches for his glory where secularism and nominalism dominate.

**W**riting from the UK, I observe a steady increase in African diaspora churches — the churches of Africans who have been scattered far from home.

I believe God is using migration to allow the body of Christ to be present in countries where secularism and nominalism have led to a decline in church attendance.

African diaspora churches have diverse beginnings.

Some have been intentionally planted, as part of the missionary effort of churches back in the continent; others result from African diaspora peoples seeking to create worship experiences mirroring what they were used to in Africa.

Although there are genuine

concerns about the theological orthodoxy of some diaspora churches, many African believers have a deep faith and passion for God and his word. They are happy to share their faith in Christ with those they meet.

This is an important asset in taking advantage of opportunities to share the gospel. Being communal and people-orientated, Africans are keen to enquire about the well-being of their neighbours; pray for those in need around them and introduce them to the gospel of Christ.

Diaspora churches are often seen as an answer to prayer for reversing the spiritual decay in the West.

However, sometimes such churches are heavily focused

on looking after their own members. Like many typical churches, they become preoccupied with sustaining the life of a local congregation — with its myriad concerns about pastoral issues, financial stability and balancing life-work demands.

They can receive help in remaining missional by sending their leaders to consultations where mission needs and priorities are discussed, and where mutual accountability is enhanced.

There is a need for a renewed understanding of the purpose and mandate of the local church to participate in God's mission.

However, in many diaspora churches, global mission is seen as an activity for

Westerners in particular — an assumption often learned in the churches from which they came.

Although there is increased recognition in the global church that mission is now 'from everywhere to anywhere', church leaders need to cast that vision, nurture believers in radical discipleship, and educate their members about their responsibilities to fulfil the Great Commission.

Vision, discipleship and education must work together.

My vision for diaspora churches in the UK is to see them committed anew to being people of the word and Spirit. I pray they would hear what the Spirit is saying.

They are surrounded by

fellow diaspora peoples who have come from places where they had no access to the gospel. Many newcomers are now searching for the truth because they have greater freedom to seek it.

Meanwhile, many in the host culture live in ignorance of biblical truths and do not see the relevance of Christianity. They, too, need the gospel that these diaspora churches can proclaim.

A godly influence in such a maze of world views, cultures and opinions can only be achieved through a prayerful engagement with the Bible as God's complete revelation of himself to humankind.

Believers in diaspora churches need to be equipped to see their role as

missionaries where God has placed them. In this way, they may be salt and light, and a witness of the resurrected Christ, who is both Saviour and Lord.

This requires that they integrate into their new environment, pray for the peace of their localities, and become people of peace where God has placed them.

This is not easy in a political climate where immigrants are viewed negatively.

Nonetheless, God is accustomed to using the weak things of this world to make his power known in reconciling rebellious humanity back to himself through Christ.

He can and will use his scattered church to accomplish his purpose!

# Gospel window of opportunity is now

**Mike and Maria, who are serving as missionaries in Thessaloniki with a local church through the #HowWillTheyHear campaign, have seen first-hand how Jesus' power is transforming the lives of refugees and migrants. This is their story...**

**L**ast month, five new believers from Iran and Turkey were baptised into new life with Christ.

A few weeks beforehand, four former Muslims also gave their testimonies and shared how Jesus had set them free from their past lives and fears.

As the faith of these new Christians became known in their refugee camps, many others have also asked to be baptised and the church now plans further baptism preparation classes in April.

One of these believers had been awaiting execution in an ISIS prison, and cried out to God. A voice

repeatedly told him to walk out of the prison gate, which for some reason had been left unlocked, and walk right past the guard.

He gave his life to the Lord and ended up becoming a disciple under Pastor Andrew Brunson, who himself had been imprisoned for some time in Turkey.

Another man had fled his homeland on a crowded boat across the Mediterranean, bound for Greece but terrified they would end up in trouble.

A few Christians in the boat began praying, and he joined in. They reached shore safely, and he too placed his trust in Jesus. He was hard to baptise because he was still scared of water, but his faith is firm.

Mike and Maria are committed to building up the new believers in faith and helping them continue to trust in the Lord, even as their futures become ever more precarious and uncertain.

Many refugees and migrants end up further inland or are moved elsewhere in Europe, but it is Mike



and Maria's prayer that those who have heard the gospel whilst in the camps near Thessaloniki will respond by faith.

Mike said: "Ministry is really amazing. God is working in people's hearts. Even though many are just passing through Greece, God begins a work in their lives.

"For example, two teenage girls who came to faith in baptism class

were smuggled to be with their mother in Holland before they could get baptised. The refugee's status is unstable, but ripe for harvest. The window of opportunity is now."

*To find out more about serving among refugees and migrants in Europe, please email [mobilisation@howwilltheyhear.net](mailto:mobilisation@howwilltheyhear.net), or visit [howwilltheyhear.net](http://howwilltheyhear.net).*

**Want to serve refugees?**  
See pages 26-27

**Please pray**

- For the #howwilltheyhear campaign to grow in strength and impact as the mission agencies involved collaborate more effectively.
- For more refugees and migrants from the Middle East to meet Christians who will share the good news of Jesus with them.
- For more workers to be raised up who are eager to share the hope they have in Christ.

# Meet some of our new mission workers...

**I**t's great to welcome so many new gospel-hearted workers into Serving In Mission this summer.

We've profiled some of them in the panels alongside but we have several others who are in the process of becoming members and/or heading to sensitive locations. Some of them will be featured in future magazines, others will prefer to remain under the radar.

Our new workers are serving everywhere from Madagascar to central Africa, from the Middle East to Zambia. It's wonderful to see so many people of all ages ready to make Jesus Christ known among the nations.

We'd love you to keep these people in your prayers. If you'd like to be a prayer partner of any of them individually, then please do sign up on our website at [www.sim.co.uk](http://www.sim.co.uk).

If you're interested in exploring your place in mission work with Serving In Mission, or just want to know a little more about who we are and what we do, then please email [enquiries@sim.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@sim.co.uk).

## Summer Migrant Ministry Team

Matt Paschall, #HowWillTheyHear (HWTH) Migrant Ministries Coordinator, will be leading 6–8 adults from various countries, to Lesvos and Thessaloniki, Greece.

On the island of Lesvos the team will work alongside GEM Refuge, who run an outreach centre and serve within the Moria Refugee Camp. There will also be opportunity for informal outreach in the local port.

In Thessaloniki, the team will be able to serve in a church-run refugee care centre and assist with outreach ministries which are introducing Middle Eastern refugees to the truths of the Bible.

There is still space to join this team, for

## Lauren & Laurence Wicks

**Church:** Avenue Community Church, Leicester

**Where will you be serving?** Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**What will you be doing?**

Laurence will be working as an orthopaedic surgeon at Cure International.

Lauren will be working with SIM doing Bible teaching and discipleship.

**Pray:** For Laurence's father, who is recovering from stomach cancer; that Laurence will be able to find a temporary orthopaedic job in Leicester between October and December before they leave; that they'll be able to find someone to rent their house while they are in Ethiopia; and for raising both prayer and financial support.



further information, email: [mobilisation@howwilltheyhear.net](mailto:mobilisation@howwilltheyhear.net)

**Pray:** For the team, who are communicating via Skype, that good relationships will be formed and a spirit of unity in Christ prevails as they come together. Pray they would be both bold and sensitive in sharing the gospel.

## Karin & Joe Medley



**Church:** Our main sending church is Hawkesbury Valley Baptist Church, North Richmond, Australia. We also have a German sending church: FEG (Free Evangelical

Church), Westerburg

**Where will you be serving?** Nairobi, Kenya

**What will you be doing?** We will be the Associate Team Leaders for Life Challenge Africa serving with leaders, Walter and Christel Eric Gschwandtner.

**Pray:** For safety in travel and fitting well into our new roles.

## June Beveridge

**Church:** Perth Christian Fellowship

**Where will you be serving?** As part of the SIM UK team, mobilising missionaries from Scotland.

**What will you be doing?** Dealing with new inquiries from would-be mission workers. Working with them from beginning to end — from the application process to supporting them when they become members, and also when they return.

**Pray:** For wisdom to help new enquirers; good relationships with missionaries and their churches; for more missionaries to come from Scotland.



## Naomi Bashford



**Church:** Abbey Church, Gloucester

**Where will you be serving?** Mukinge Hospital, Zambia

**What will you be doing?**

Maintaining medical equipment for the hospital and helping set up a vehicle workshop

**Pray:** That God would use me and my skills to make a positive contribution to the Mukinge community.

## Neil Parmenter

**Church:** Woodgreen Church, Worcester

**Where will you be serving?** In the UK

**What will you be doing?** SIM UK Mission Placement Officer for the ENGAGE programme and Projects Co-ordinator for SIM South Africa.

**Pray:** For the adjustment to the new combination of ministry roles and combining these with secular 'tent-making' work. Pray for an ability to learn well and quickly what is required for the work with the ENGAGE programme.



## Rebekah Hiscocks

**Church:** Christchurch Mayfair, London

**Where will you be serving?** Mukinge Hospital, Zambia

**What will you be doing?** Children's nursing on a four-week elective.

**Pray:** That I would trust God with all the planning and preparations and rely on him while I'm working and living out in Zambia.



## Nathan Lawrence

**Church:** Euston Church, London

**Where will you be serving?** The Good News Hospital in Mandritsara, Madagascar

**What will you be doing?** Working as a doctor on the wards and also building relationships to encourage believers and call others into God's kingdom.

**Pray:** That I would build deep and lasting relationships at Euston Church in the months before I leave for Madagascar. For prayerfulness and godliness as I jump through all the hoops of visas, interviews, fundraising etc.



### **International student worker**

**South Asia, one year plus**

Work with students from south Asian, east Asian, African and even 'closed' Middle Eastern nations like Yemen. Many of these countries are attracting students from predominantly Muslim nations, who wouldn't go somewhere as Christian or expensive as the UK.

### **Radio Technician/Mentor**

**Uruguay, two years plus**

Have you ever wished you could reach thousands of people at a time with the good news of Jesus? Now you can by radio! The potential for the future of Uruguay's church is enormous by using radio to reach places where workers cannot go.



### **Occupational/Physical Therapy**

**Tunisia, one year**

Bring transformation to marginalised, vulnerable and disadvantaged people. Focusing on the less favoured parts of the country, you would oversee and support local disability centres, assisting people with special needs through regular visits. You would encourage local staff to build their capacity and increase their expertise.



### **Mental Health Professional**

**South Asia, less than a year**

Imagine the impact you could have, both spiritually and mentally, by using your experience to develop resources and equip those who serve people with mental illness and their families.

# Do you want to serve?

We have hundreds of opportunities and these are just a few. Go to [sim.co.uk/opportunities](http://sim.co.uk/opportunities) to find more, or contact [info@sim.co.uk](mailto:info@sim.co.uk) to talk things through



### **Community Outreach TESL**

**Canada, less than a year**

Run a TESL programme in a cross-cultural setting. You would work in a Canadian church with many ethnic origins and working with other SIM Canada missionaries. You would also help equip the church to be more effective in its outreach and then assume full responsibility in this area.



### **Pharmacist**

**Malawi, two years plus**

Partners in Hope, an HIV and AIDS ministry in Lilongwe, is looking for a dedicated pharmacist to assist with drug dispensing, patient education, drug forecasting, accounting and procurement, and liaising with clinical staff. Introduce people to Jesus while ministering to their physical needs.

### **Media Specialist**

**USA, two years plus**

Capture stories and create videos, web content, social media content and photo albums to communicate what God is doing through the Sports Friends ministry to various audiences (donors, ministry partners, recruits, trainees, etc).



### **Physical Education Teacher**

**Pakistan, two years plus**

Help a local Christian school that is forming a bridge to the Punjabi community and providing support to the Marwari Church Planting Project by making education available to disadvantaged Marwari children.



# #HowWillTheyHear ROADSHOW 2019



Discover how you and your church  
can reach out to immigrants and  
migrants in your community

7:30-9pm

Free entry

Refreshments  
provided

**Exeter**, St Leonards, June 3

**Southampton**, June 4

**Cardiff**, Grangetown Baptist, June 13

**Birmingham**, June 18

visit [howwilltheyhear.net/events](http://howwilltheyhear.net/events)  
for updated details

Reserve your place, email: [info@howwilltheyhear.net](mailto:info@howwilltheyhear.net)  
or sign-up at: [howwilltheyhear.net/events](http://howwilltheyhear.net/events)

## ENGLISH TEACHING & OUTREACH



FRIDAY  
21 JUNE  
2019  
9:30AM - 4:30PM

Oak Hill College, London N14 4PS  
'Early Bird' £19 / After 27 April: £23

Includes refreshments and lunch

Details and booking:  
[www.twonineteen.org.uk](http://www.twonineteen.org.uk)

2:19