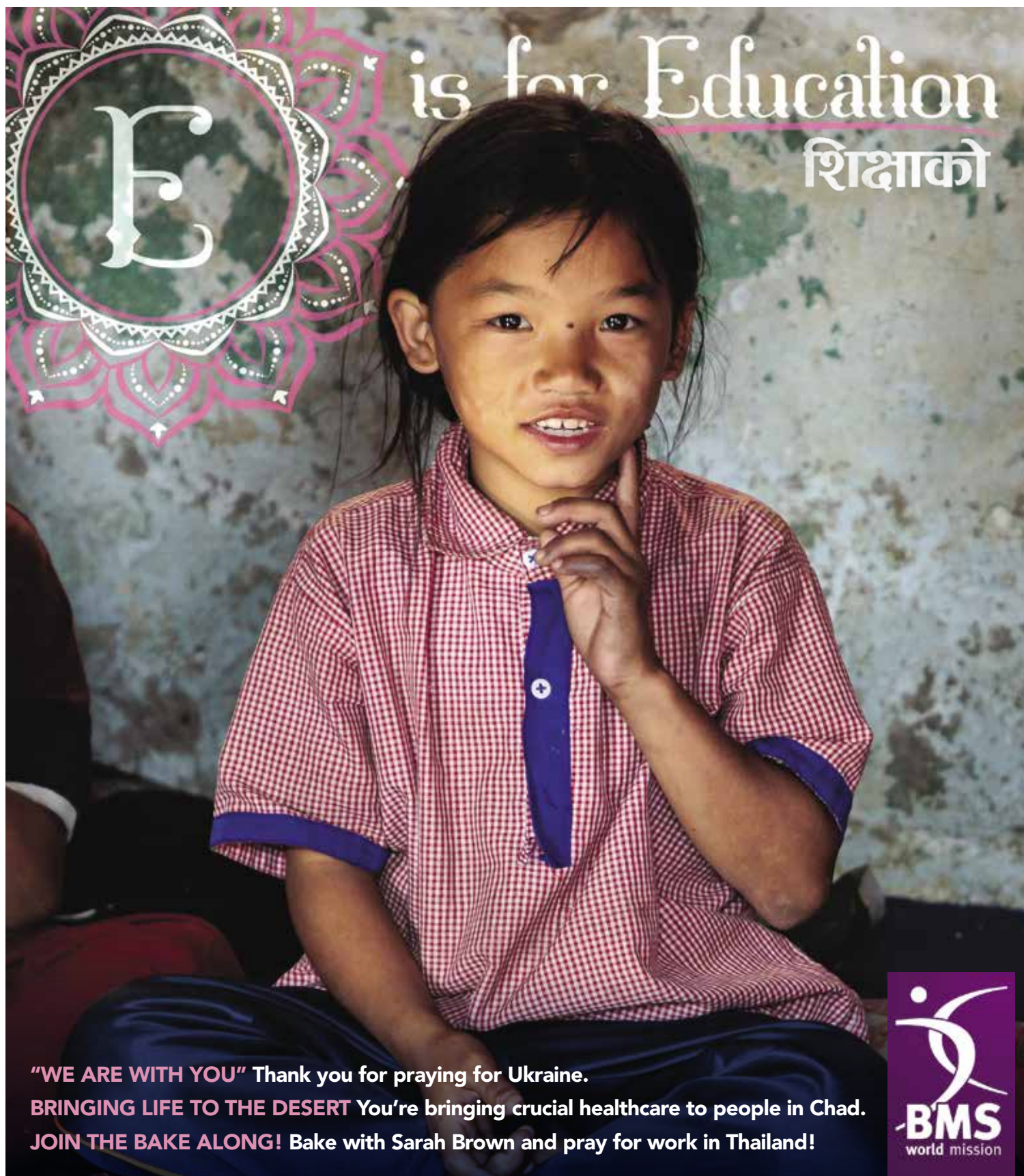


# ENGAGE

The BMS World Mission magazine



is for Education  
शिक्षाको

**"WE ARE WITH YOU"** Thank you for praying for Ukraine.

**BRINGING LIFE TO THE DESERT** You're bringing crucial healthcare to people in Chad.

**JOIN THE BAKE ALONG!** Bake with Sarah Brown and pray for work in Thailand!





## WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

**BMS World Mission is inspired by our heart to bring the gospel where it's not known, to bring hope to a troubled world and to bring help for the journeys of the displaced. We respond to suffering and injustice with the promise of abundant life in Christ.**

Through your support and alongside our trusted partners, we send UK Christians and equip local disciples in over 30 countries across four continents. Our highest goal is to see people come to faith in Jesus Christ and experience life in all its fullness.

## Have something to say in response to this issue of *Engage*?



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Use the freepost envelope included in your mailing to send us a note, a cheque or anything else in response to this issue!

We look forward to hearing from you!



## Editorial

# IT'S ALL ABOUT TEAM WORK

Laura Durrant

August 2023



**I** think it's a sign of God's Kingdom on earth to be surrounded by strong teams. Having a dedicated community of people around you, helping you do your best work for the Lord is absolutely crucial. And I know first-hand that putting together an issue of *Engage* takes the efforts of many: from photographers and designers, to printers and overseers (the people who I run my ideas past are in some ways the most important cogs in this machine!). And in all the work that's done at BMS World Mission, overlapping teams of people, fuelled by the Holy Spirit, make everything run smoothly.

And there are some amazing teams and communities featured in this issue of *Engage* magazine. Teams of young BMS supporters coming together to pray for people in Ukraine (page 6). Teams of Nepali workers who will be taking over from BMS worker Joy Ransom to keep bringing vital education to children (page 10). Teams of doctors and nurses bringing life-saving healthcare to people in Bardai, Chad (page 13). What an amazing thing, to be part of such a devoted, world-spanning team!

Thank you, as always, for being part of the BMS team, and for ensuring, through your crucial prayers and giving, that all the work you'll read about in this issue is possible. Please do get in touch using the email address below to share any of your thoughts about this issue – I'd love to hear from you!

God bless,  
**Laura**  
Editor

 Write to me at [magazine@bmsworldmission.org](mailto:magazine@bmsworldmission.org)



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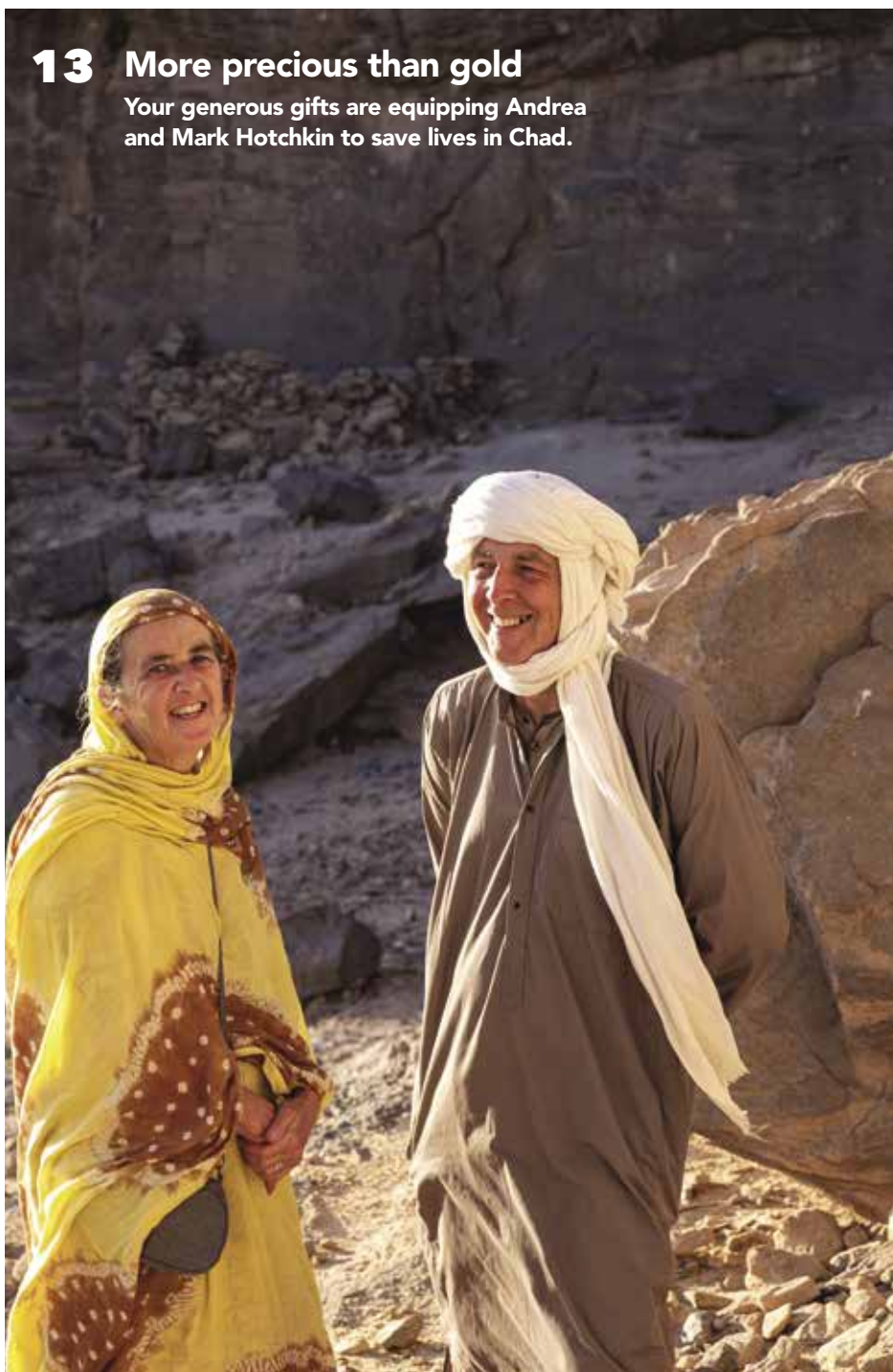
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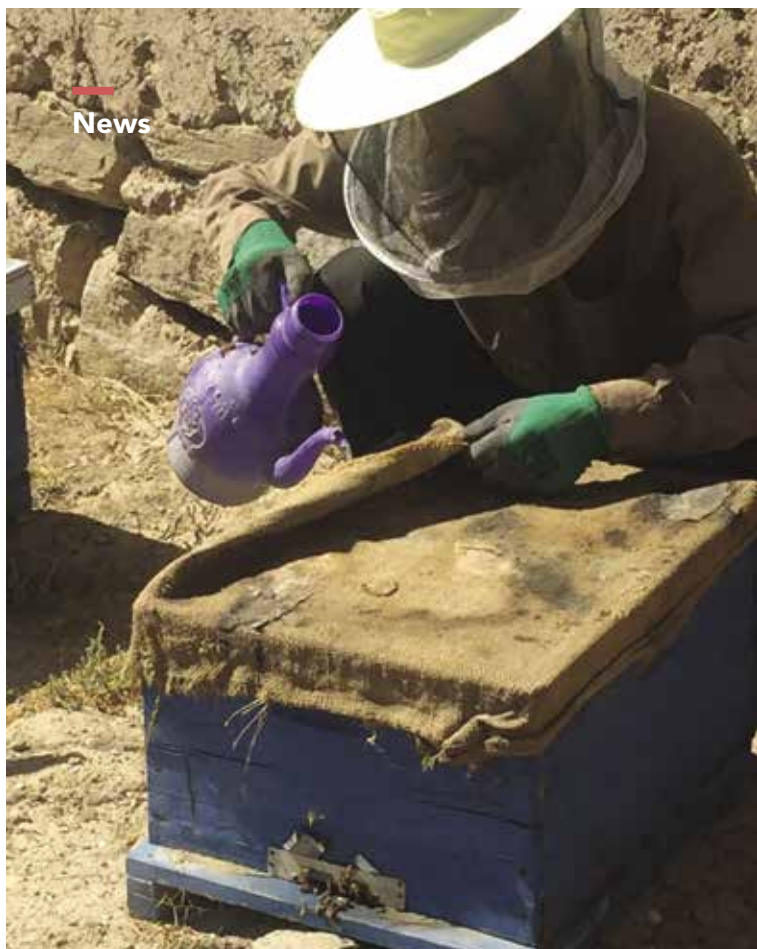
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# THE BEEKEEPER OF AFGHANISTAN

**Despite many continuing challenges, there is new hope for BMS World Mission worker Ruby's\* agricultural project – in the form of a buzzing beehive...**

**I**t's not what you would expect to find in the highlands of Afghanistan, but having survived the harsh Afghan winter, these bees are here to stay. And they're a symbol of hope, in more ways than one.

The bees are there to help Ruby's community orchard thrive. Crops growing high up in the mountains need all the help they can get, and these crucial pollinators will help not just the orchard, but also surrounding vegetation to flourish. These bees may be small but they're playing an enormous part in ensuring that local communities have enough

healthy food to eat.

The bees too signify a hope of changes soon to come in Afghanistan. We shared in the last issue of *Engage* that Afghan women have been banned from working at non-government organisations (NGOs). While the ban still holds, our Afghan partner is working hard to find ways to keep women in work wherever possible. The ban has an exemption for health work, so our partner has been working to show how crucial so much of their work is to people's health – including Ruby's agricultural projects. "Ruby's work has restarted now, which is fantastic," says BMS

worker Tim\*, who is our partner's director. "But there are still things that we are negotiating on and working through." For example: women where Ruby lives may soon be able to work with NGOs again, but only if they are accompanied by a male relative.

Please continue to keep Afghanistan in your prayers. Pray that the seeds of hope planted by Ruby's work would help bring about freedom from poverty, that God's peace and justice will be seen in Afghanistan, and that women will be valued once more by the nation's de facto leaders.

*\*Names changed.*



From the  
General Director

## CHRISTIANITY THROUGH CRISES

Kang-San Tan



### HOPE FOR THE WORLD

**W**e live in a time of unprecedented troubles as we see poverty, persecution, climate injustice, war and suffering of people on the move increase. Thus, the Collins English Dictionary sums up the year 2022 with one word: **permacrisis**. In such a world, it's easy for us to lose heart and give in to spirits of discouragement. However, German theologian Jürgen Moltmann challenges us in *The Living God and the Fullness of Life*, "Why has Christian theology allowed this theme of hope to escape it? Are not God's promises and human hopes the scarlet thread running right through the prophets of the Old Testament and the apostles of the New?"

### HEART FOR THE GOSPEL, HELP FOR THE JOURNEY

BMS World Mission is grateful for friends, partners and supporters who enable us to deliver impact to people in difficult and desperate circumstances. Today, BMS workers joyfully proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ through planting new fellowships in hard-to-reach places such as Bangladesh, Nepal and India, as well as community development work in some of the world's poorest countries such as Chad, Tunisia and Uganda.

Whatever personal struggles or global challenges might dampen our spirits, let us persevere in doing good, for "hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us" (Romans 5: 5).



## TAKING A STAND FOR CREATION

**B**ack in April, BMS World Mission staff and supporters proudly displayed our 'Hope for the World' banner at The Big One climate demonstration.

It was a fantastic opportunity to gather with members of Christian Climate Action and other Christian organisations to show the

world that not only do we care about how we treat creation but also that, in Christ, we have hope for our world. Sara Simms, a BMS supporter and Creation Care Co-ordinator at her church in Guildford, shared why she joined us on the day: "I see God's mission as threefold: to reconcile us to himself, to each other and to the planet that we live on."

## NEW AUDIOLOGY EQUIPMENT IN GULU!

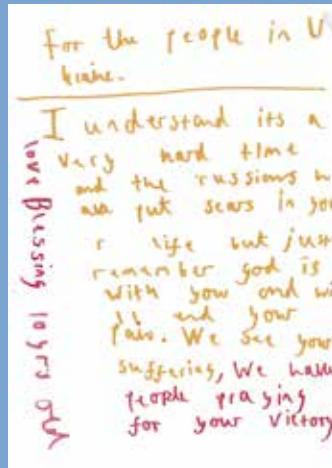
**Y**our generous support has helped provide new audiology equipment at the BMS World Mission-supported Speech and Language Therapy clinic in Gulu, Uganda!

This equipment will make it that much faster to assess a patient's level of hearing – a test usually done manually

by BMS-supported worker Isaac – meaning that there'll be much more time to make sure patients receive the care they deserve. BMS worker Benon, head of our Ugandan partner Justice, Livelihoods, Health (JLH) asks that we "pray that JLH will be at the forefront of doing good and offering a platform for rehabilitative services for hearing loss."

Thank you

# Your amazing fundraising!



## Lifting up prayers for Ukraine

Check out the prayers from the children at Darnall Road Baptist Church.

Thank you to all the BMS World Mission supporters who shared prayers for Ukraine, one year on from the start of the conflict in response to the Ukraine Anniversary appeal. An amazing

400 prayers were sent in, and you can be assured they'll be a huge encouragement to our brothers and sisters still living under the threat of war. We want to give a particular shout out

to the children of Darnall Road Baptist Church who sent in some prayers for Ukrainian children – we hope you find this selection encouraging!

## Share abundant life, for generations to come



Beryl and Tony Lawford have been committed BMS supporters throughout their lives.

Many compassionate BMS World Mission supporters choose to leave legacy gifts to BMS in their Wills, and ensure life-transforming work can carry on for generations

to come.

Beryl and Tony Lawford are two of those supporters, and we asked Tony whether he'd share his and Beryl's story with you.

Tony's earliest memory of BMS is collecting halfpennies in a William Carey money box when he was younger, and has been a dedicated BMS supporter for most of his life. His wife Beryl, who sadly recently passed away, was particularly dedicated to running the BMS Birthday Scheme at Bloxham Baptist Church, where she and Tony were members for over 40 years.

All of us at BMS are so incredibly grateful for Beryl and Tony's life-long support and for their continued faithful dedication to bringing abundant life to people in need. On leaving a generous gift to BMS in their Will, Tony says: "BMS has exercised a wonderful service in spreading the gospel, and providing a valuable medical mission in addition."

If you'd like to find out more about leaving a gift in your Will to BMS, visit: [www.bmsworldmission.org/legacies](http://www.bmsworldmission.org/legacies) for all the information you'll need.

# HEART • HOPE • HELP

Three simple words.

The massive difference you're making in the world.

Words: **Hannah Watson**

**H**ave you ever tried to explain to someone the work that BMS World Mission does?

When you've been around for 231 years, as BMS has, there's quite a bit of ground to cover! You might start with the range of countries we've worked in over that time – from Brazil to Afghanistan – on almost every continent.

Or explain the variety of work that's been done, from founding churches, hospitals and schools in the early days of the Baptist Missionary Society, to coming alongside trusted local Christian partners in recent years to provide critical training, vital skills or to bolster work already being done. Perhaps you focus on the evangelism-meets-social-justice aspect of BMS' work, summed

up in our vision statement, "faith in Christ, abundant life". And that's without touching on BMS' other commitments to uphold gender justice and promote creation stewardship!

The work you make possible is amazingly wide-ranging, and there's a lot to cover! That's why we've come up some new titles for BMS' ministry areas that sum up all the work you make possible: Heart, Hope, Help.



## HEART

FOR THE GOSPEL

At the centre of the Great Commission was Jesus' command to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28: 19). BMS workers have been taking that command seriously since 1792, and it's meant that in the past 200 years, local expressions of the Baptist Church have sprung up on almost every continent! These days, BMS supporters are still committed to the Bible's call that everyone should have the chance to know and follow Jesus.

We call all this 'Heart for the Gospel' – whether a project is equipping ministers in the Peruvian Amazon to reach their communities, making Jesus known in rural Cambodia or growing a fledgling church in Wang Daeng, Thailand.

It looks like BMS evangelist Ben Francis heading up a disciple-making movement that's seen thousands of house churches take root across India, each with a message of hope for people like Parin\*. Working as a Hindu priest, to the outside world Parin looked the picture of moral uprightness. In his heart, however, he harboured a dark secret: he was lying to people coming to the temple in order to profit from their offerings. Parin's lifestyle left him restless and unable to sleep. In fact, he described feeling a "vacuum" in his heart. Heart for the Gospel work



BMS worker Ben Francis is dedicated to sharing the gospel message with people who've never heard it before.

looks like a BMS-supported evangelist listening to Parin as he shared his secret, comforting him that God loves him and wants him to turn to him. It's inspired by the person of Jesus, seeking to meet people where they're at and to let them know they're loved by a Saviour God. We rejoice in each story we hear of someone like Parin coming to faith and having a personal encounter with Jesus their Lord. It's all made possible in God's strength, and because of you.





# HOPE

FOR THE WORLD

How do you sum up BMS work that seeks to bring life in all its fullness, taking seriously Jesus' promise that he came that people should have life, and have it to the full? (John 10: 10). Whether it's informing people of their legal rights in Mozambique, empowering Ugandan farmers to reap successful harvests, training teachers in Nepal or Bangladesh, or saving lives in desert hospitals in Chad, many BMS projects are striving towards the same goal: bringing hope to the world.

'Hope for the World' projects are motivated by faith, powered by compassion and deliver real changes that make life easier for the most marginalised. They help people like Anshu, the Nepali mother who was carried to a BMS-supported hospital after going through a complicated and life-threatening labour. When staff realised Anshu needed an emergency operation to remove remnants of her placenta, Anshu begged them not to cut off her outfit: she was wearing her last items of clothing. Hope for the World looks like BMS supporters delivering emergency healthcare to



Praise God that Anshu's children don't have to grow up without their mother.

Anshu, and delivering it for free. It looks like walking with the poor and marginalised in the countries where BMS works, with Christ as our guiding light. And it looks like supporting BMS' local partners to become the hope they want to see in the world.



## CREATION STEWARDSHIP



## GENDER JUSTICE



At the top of this article, we mentioned BMS' two core commitments to creation stewardship and gender justice. We call them our 'cross-cutting themes'. Think of them not as individual projects, but as through-threads which touch every single aspect of our work. Look out for these logos that indicate a project has a particular focus on creation stewardship or gender justice. And join us in prayer for a world where both God's people and his creation are cared for as God cares for them.





# HELP

FOR THE JOURNEY

How do you sum up work that answers Jesus' call to love our neighbour? By supporting Syrian children back into school in Lebanon, helping Afghan refugees find safe haven in Lesbos and welcoming migrants from every walk of life into churches in France.

We call these projects 'Help for the Journey', and they've been a core part of how BMS has sought to bring transformation since this ministry area was launched. Help for the Journey work supports refugees like 14-year-old Jana\*. Her family fled Aleppo when the Syrian civil war broke out, and soon found themselves sharing one mattress and blanket during a freezing cold winter in Lebanon. Jana would love to become a paediatrician, and Help for the Journey projects such as a BMS-supported learning centre are helping her make up for years of education lost to war. Wonderfully, the witness of Christians through the centre has led Jana's father to explore the Christian faith for himself, too. Jana's mum calls the centre their "safe haven" – what Help for the Journey work is all about. It's holistic too, looking at how BMS supporters can improve life for people in the country they call home. In a world where the threats of religious persecution, political instability, natural disasters and the climate crisis continue to push people beyond borders, BMS supporters are there to provide help for even the most desperate of journeys.



Your gifts have helped make children sure children like Jana (middle) stay in education, despite the threat of war.



We hope that this Heart, Hope, Help framework has given you a clearer vision of the world that you're making possible through your support for BMS. Thank you for your steadfast generosity and prayers that have touched and changed so many lives. •

*\*Jana and Parin's names have been changed.*



Education



# is for Education

You're giving thousands of children in Nepal the opportunity for a better future... by training their teachers.







Throughout her time in Nepal, Joy has lived up to her name and brought joy to so many in her community.

**“Oh, Joy ma’am has come, Joy ma’am is here!” cry the students as Joy Ransom completes her ascent up to a primary school in the lush, mountainous region of Lamjung in Nepal.**

Joy’s journey to the school is long. By scooter and then by foot. Across the river, past the tea shop where the scent of fresh samosas drifts from the open door, and up the steep hill, chatting with teachers and students as they climb together.

BMS World Mission worker Joy has been a teacher for 38 years. With your support, she’s spent the last four of them training teachers in remote areas of Nepal, where there are many barriers to education. Children often have to support their families by farming, fetching water and firewood and taking care of younger siblings.

That’s how Kapil’s childhood began; born in an isolated area of Nepal, he lost both of his parents at a young age and was taken in by his uncle who taught him how to farm. He’d always wanted to go to school, but it wasn’t until he was 11 that he got to sit in a classroom for the very first time. “That was the turning point of my life,” says Kapil.

School wasn’t easy. Kapil had to walk an hour each way, collecting firewood in the jungle before and after classes. His homework was done at night by the dwindling light of the fire, often with an empty stomach. His secondary school was

even further away and for five years he walked for four hours a day to complete his education. After self-studying for his college degree, he was hired by a local mission hospital where he worked his way up, until he was eventually appointed as Executive Director at BMS partner Human Development and Community Services (HDCS). Now, Kapil oversees projects that impact the lives of many thousands of Nepali people with childhoods not dissimilar to his own, supporting them through education, healthcare, community development, and disaster management.



“**GOD PREPARES SIMPLE PEOPLE FOR HIS PRECIOUS PURPOSE.**”

“The lives of the people in remote areas of Nepal are very difficult, as I have experienced,” says Kapil. “But God prepares simple people for his special purpose and uses them for their nation.”

Joy works with a branch of HDCS called the Kathmandu International Study Centre, in their Education Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP). With your support, Joy and the other EQUIP teacher trainers partner with schools in different areas of Nepal for five years or more, helping teachers move away from traditional theoretical teaching and equipping them to develop interactive, child-friendly learning environments.

“We’re seeing teachers who are more confident to try new things,” says Joy. “Teachers who are enjoying teaching, who care for their students, who know which student needs extra



TO HAVE THE CHANCE  
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PRIVILEGE



help in certain things and are able to meet that need.

"Traditionally, children would be expected just to sit and listen, maybe answer a question, and then repeat things. But to see classes where there's more interaction, more songs, rhymes, dance, even group work interaction, and critical thinking being used, that's what inspires me."

In her role with EQUIP, Joy has been focusing on primary school education, and most recently on phonics which, despite being part of the new curriculum in Nepal, is unfamiliar to most teachers. Learning English is essential for Nepali children who want to go on to study higher education, so during the Covid-19 lockdowns Joy created a contextualised course called Phonics Fun, to help Nepali teachers better teach English.

"There's not much independent thinking or independent reading," says Joy, "so a lot of pupils, even in grade six and seven, can't read very well independently in Nepali or English. I think phonics is the answer to that."

Having started training teachers in phonics, Joy and her colleagues are already seeing a big difference in the way the children can read. And it's not just children who are being impacted, the method is sticking with adults in the communities too. Joy remembers an encounter with one lady she bumped into as she was

walking home from church. "She got very excited when she saw me. And she said 'Oh, Aa-Aa-Apple!'. So she had obviously observed some training somewhere and had remembered."

Joy's time in Nepal is now drawing to a close, but the work is continuing – and growing. Joy is handing the phonics training over to her Nepali colleague Santona, an English trainer who learnt about phonics from Joy. Santona will continue supporting the teachers whom she and Joy have already trained, as well as training others.

"Sometimes I'm driving along on my scooter and I think, 'wow, who would've thought that an over 60-year-old, at the end of her career, would be driving along beautiful country roads with the mountain views in the background, heading to a school to spend time with teachers

who are keen to learn'," says Joy. "At the end of my teaching career, to have the chance to pass on things that I've learned in my experience to other teachers has been a real privilege and a blessing."

More than 4,000 students have already benefited from EQUIP-trained teachers in the Lamjung region alone, and 122 scholarships have enabled some of the poorest children in each area to keep going to school. Your support is unlocking education for thousands of Nepal's children – giving them hope, and the opportunity to be future leaders in their country, like Kapil.

"You're not just supporting EQUIP's work, but the work of all the schools," says Joy. "Ultimately, children are getting a better education, and you're making that possible. That is an amazing thing." •

**Thank you for supporting Nepal's future teachers, politicians, NGO leaders, mothers, fathers, role models and change-makers.**

We don't know what the thousands of children Joy's training has impacted will go on to do, but we do know this: through Joy's work, these children will have the education they need to be able to choose a brighter future. That's only been possible because of your faithful prayers and financial support for Joy. Thank you so much for choosing to make a difference.



# More precious than gold

BMS World Mission surgeons Andrea and Mark Hotchkin are bringing health and hope to one of the world's most neglected places.

**W**hen Benjamin moved to the remote town of Bardai in northern Chad, his goal was to provide a more stable life for his wife and children by finding work as a builder. What he hadn't bargained on was an infection that almost destroyed his future health and livelihood. Thankfully, the staff at BMS World Mission-supported Bardai Hospital were there to help.

"The infection simply started on the back of my hand and spread up my arm," says Benjamin. Before long, his arm had swelled to twice its usual size and was covered in ulcers.

Benjamin knew he desperately needed treatment, but was reluctant to be admitted to the hospital. Too sick to work, he knew he couldn't afford even the nominal fees. But thanks to

your support, the hospital was able to cover the full cost of his medical care. Now, after weeks of regular dressings and a successful skin graft operation, Benjamin will soon be able to provide for his family again.

"It's exciting to think that he should make a full recovery and go back to work, thanks to the help from BMS funds and the surgical operation we were able to do," says BMS surgeon Mark Hotchkin.

## Medicine at the rockface

Mark and his wife Andrea, also a surgeon, have served at the government hospital in Bardai since 2017. It's the dictionary definition of 'the middle of nowhere': a mountainous oasis rising up in the middle of the Sahara Desert. The hospital is the only one for over 400 miles. Before, local people faced a



Your support can help even more people like Benjamin access the healthcare they desperately need.

treacherous two-day journey to reach the nearest hospital within Chad – an expense they could ill afford. Some people might even cross the border into neighbouring Libya for hospital care. For urgent cases, this could have tragic outcomes. But now, people can access vital medical care right on their doorstep.

For Andrea and Mark, their work is both a joy and





a challenge. They can see the huge difference the hospital makes, but struggle with a chronic lack of staff, temperamental equipment and an unreliable supply of medicines. However, their faith that God has called them to this place keeps them going.

Benjamin is just one example of the many patients Andrea, Mark and the team at Bardai Hospital help every day. They treat children with pneumonia; people suffering from tuberculosis, babies with gastroenteritis, and an impressive range of surgical cases. In a country with the second-highest maternal mortality rate in the world, they help expectant mothers give birth safely. They even offer some basic dental care, which local people previously had no access to whatsoever.

Nadji, a local nurse who works closely with Andrea and Mark, has no doubt about how life would be without the hospital: "A complete disaster," he says emphatically.

## Gold rush

Recently, a new wave of patients has begun appearing at the hospital. In 2012, gold was discovered in Bardai. A

Wild-West-style gold rush ensued, with more people arriving every year to work on the gold fields. In one of the poorest countries on earth, this is hardly surprising. But while the overseers have become rich, ordinary miners often face terrible hazards, exploitation and poverty.

"The work is dangerous, with violence, work accidents and disease causing much suffering and death," says Mark. He and Andrea have treated countless gunshot wounds, car crash injuries, stabbings and mine accidents. For the miners, the hospital's services have proved life-saving time and again.

"We need to remember that it was among the oppressed, the poor, the religious outsiders, that Jesus lived and worked," says Mark. In this most hostile of environments, Andrea and Mark are showing that somebody cares, embodying the sacrificial love of Christ in all they do.

## Glimmers of hope

The incredible work at Bardai Hospital wouldn't be possible without your generous gifts and prayers. As well as supporting Andrea and Mark, BMS provides essential supplies such as



oxygen masks and drip sets for giving children fluids – crucial in an area where life-threatening diarrhoea and dehydration are all too common.

Your support has also funded solar panels for the hospital, supplying clean and reliable electricity. Last year, you helped provide a digital x-ray reader, meaning diseases such as pneumonia and tuberculosis can be diagnosed quickly and easily without the need for an invasive biopsy. And of course, BMS offers an emergency fund for those like Benjamin who simply can't afford treatment.

Since Andrea and Mark's arrival, Bardai Hospital has

“  
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WORKED

”





Andrea and Mark Hotchkin have dedicated the last 13 years to bringing life-saving medical care to people in Chad.

become a beacon of hope in the middle of the desert. But as well as working hard to care for patients, the Hotchkins are eager to pass on their expertise to the local staff. With a more experienced and skilled local workforce, the hospital's work will be more sustainable.

This includes nurse Nadji. Alongside his regular duties, he's learning to operate the new X-ray machine. "I like the fact that I'm actually being trained to do that," he says. "[It] is really helpful for me to get some training."

Nadji recently performed yet another crucial role. He was

the one who fetched Benjamin back after he left the hospital, giving him the good news that the hospital would cover the cost of his treatment. "I find it really good that as a Church, as Christians, we can help people like Benjamin," says Nadji. "It's something that makes me feel happy."

Nadji is immensely grateful to BMS supporters for making the hospital's work possible. "If you could keep on helping, that would be good," he says, "because there are still lots of things we need here so that things can improve even more." •

## Could you help to transform even more lives in northern Chad?

The amazing work carried out by Andrea, Mark and the team at Bardai Hospital is only possible because of your generous support. With every gift, you are helping to show Christ's love in action in this neglected part of the world.

**£14** could provide specialist equipment such as oxygen masks and drip sets to treat two children suffering from respiratory illnesses.

**£25** could cover the cost of one person's treatment, so they don't have to choose between caring for their family or losing their life.

**£92** could cover the cost of one day of Andrea and Mark's work providing life-saving healthcare in the Chadian desert.

Please visit

[www.bmsworldmission.org/bardai-hospital](http://www.bmsworldmission.org/bardai-hospital) if you'd like to make a donation.



# A SPOONFUL OF SPIRIT



DISCERNING YOUR GIFTS THROUGH BAKING

Words: Laura Durrant

**Y**ou're driving up a bumpy mountain track. The scenery around you is beautiful, but treacherous. On one

side, lush green trees, on the other, a steep drop off the mountain – one sudden swerve and you'd be over the side. In the rainy season it would be worse – steep roads, slippery with mud, are practically impassable. Still, you press on. The track opens up into a bustling village. The sun beats down as people in bright traditional dress go about their days, waving hello at their neighbours as they pass. And threading through the busyness of the day, the unmistakable smell of... cake?

This is the vision for a new bakery project starting soon by BMS World Mission's partner the Thai Karen Baptist Convention (TKBC) and BMS mission worker Sarah Brown. You might be familiar with Sarah's work, she and her husband Paul have been serving with BMS for over ten years, and Sarah's previously seen great success with a bakery project for at-risk women in Bangkok. The Browns



first connected with TKBC when they arrived in Thailand, but it would be another ten years before they felt God's call to work with them. "We met with TKBC back in 2019," explains Sarah. "And we just had this sense of peace. It felt like this was the next step, this was where God wanted us to be." It's taken three more years for the

Browns to start their roles – a global pandemic and seemingly endless visa issues haven't made things easy – and as they begin to settle into their new responsibilities, they've naturally begun to consider how best they can serve their new community.

The Karen people are warm and generous, always welcoming you in





Paul and Sarah Brown have been helping bring abundant life to communities in Thailand for over ten years.

and giving gifts, even if they don't have much themselves. There's been a strong Christian presence among the Thai Karen for a long time, and BMS has been partnering with the TKBC for over 30 years, supporting them through their Bible institute, youth work and thriving women's ministry. But despite this strong community spirit and commitment to one another, there are still many challenges that face the Karen people.

These people – with a rich culture, traditions and history – have no country to call their own. Split across Myanmar and Thailand, they are claimed by neither nation. Even Karen people who are born in Thailand are

often denied documentation, refused permission for even a birth certificate. It means they can't legally work, they can't enrol in school, even accessing medical care is a challenge. And it tragically means that many people are vulnerable to trafficking – how can you register someone missing if they never officially existed at all?

It would be easy to feel despondent, rejected, by these difficult truths. But the Karen people have always been resilient, and the TKBC have always stood by the wider Karen community, to help them find abundant life. It's in the face of these trials that the TKBC's women's ministry have asked to start this baking project. It's not just to teach people a new skill, but to give people the opportunity to work together, to discern their own gifts and talents, and see how they can use them to better their lives and their communities. "It's not about the baking," Sarah says. "It's about people realising they have the ability to do something." It's about Sarah standing alongside people, to help them discern their gifts and how they can use them to better their lives and communities.

“  
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”

Sarah hopes to begin the project very soon, starting with the women's ministry and then branching out from there. But there's still a lot to figure out: how to regularly meet with people in remote locations, especially when roads are impassable in the rainy season; what to prepare when few people have ovens (refrigerated desserts like tiramisu and panna cotta will definitely be on the menu!) and how to best encourage people to get involved. But Sarah has high hopes for the outcome of this project: "The fruit from it," she says simply, "will really be to empower the women." •



**Could you commit to praying for Sarah's work**, and the work of the TKBC? Sarah's shared a video recipe of a homemade tiramisu (a bake she's planning on teaching on the bakery project) with some scriptural prompts – why not make a tiramisu yourself and pray for Sarah as you bake?

Head to [www.bmsworldmission.org/bake-along](http://www.bmsworldmission.org/bake-along) to find the recipe. And make sure you share photos of your creations with us on Facebook and Twitter!

 [www.facebook.com/bmsworldmission](http://www.facebook.com/bmsworldmission)  
 [@bmsworldmission](https://twitter.com/bmsworldmission)



# A letter from Lebanon

Nabil Costa is the Executive Director of BMS World Mission's longstanding partner in Lebanon, the Lebanese Society for Educational and Social Development (LSESD). Last year, generous BMS supporters enabled a grant of £28,500 to go towards LSESD's salaries during a severe cost of living crisis affecting Lebanon. Nabil shares how God has been sustaining his ministry.



**Dear brothers and sisters,**

It is both a humbling and empowering experience to co-exist together in the global Body of Christ, working through his Church for his glory. Like BMS, LSESD's ministries strive to provide a dignified life for the most marginalised, whether they are refugees, individuals with special needs, or vulnerable Lebanese people. With the vision of seeing communities transformed and churches flourishing, we seek to strengthen the witness of the Church in the Arab world through community development, inclusive education, and church discipleship.

While the blessings in our ministry's journey are boundless, the road has not been without hurdles. Since 2019, our country has been assailed by a devastating multi-pronged crisis, starting with an economic collapse and further exacerbated by the Covid-19 outbreak and the Beirut port explosion. 80 per cent of the population now live below the poverty line, half a million children are out of school, and the Lebanese

pound has been devalued by more than 90 per cent. This caused our salaries to lose their value, decreasing the purchasing power of almost every family as inflation soared. However, through your prayers and financial support, we were able to sustain our ministries and the teams that serve within LSESD. In a time when Lebanon is facing the mass exodus of its qualified people searching for better living opportunities, your support enabled us to maintain our presence here.

God has revealed to us the value of being the light in the tunnel when the illuminated exit seems to fade away. What seemed to be fatal circumstances brought an awakening and hope that has sustained a Christian presence in Lebanon.

Please continue to pray for LSESD's teams, beneficiaries and services. Let us together change the common understanding of "survival of the fittest", and instead, uphold the weakest.

Blessings,  
**Nabil Costa**



**WHAT SEEMED TO BE FATAL CIRCUMSTANCES BROUGHT A HOPE THAT HAS SUSTAINED A CHRISTIAN PRESENCE IN LEBANON.**







# LETTERS FROM... THE UK



## Seeing the impact

Dear friends,  
Thank you for *Engage* and the Impact Report. It was so encouraging to read how the Lord is blessing the work of BMS in so many ways.

Yours sincerely,  
**Margaret Lafferty**

## From the Editor

Hi Margaret,  
Thank you so much for your kind words, I'm so glad you've been encouraged by how the Lord is at work in us! Thank you for everything you do in support of BMS.

Every blessing,  
**Laura**

## Thanking past Editors!

Hello, Laura!  
Trust you are enjoying and being blessed in your new role as Editor of *Engage* magazine. It's such an informative magazine and the stories so inspiring, we are grateful to you and all past Editors for the time and effort put into it. May God continue to bless you, Hannah, and all at BMS and equip and enable you in your ministries to do the very best you can with all of your heart always keeping you encouraged and inspired.

**Jenny Duncombe**

## From the Editor

Hi Jenny,  
It's great to hear you've been enjoying *Engage* magazine, thanks so much for your kind words – I hope I can live up to the standard of the Editors who've gone before me!

Every blessing,  
**Laura**

## God's growing Kingdom

Dear friends,  
Thank you also for all you are doing to make Jesus known in remote places – the news you give in *Engage* is amazing – God is working out his plans and purpose as we look forward to Jesus coming again.

A very warm welcome to new Editor Laura.  
God's blessings to you all.

Love in Jesus,  
**Prema**

## From the Editor

Hi Prema,  
I'm so glad you enjoyed the previous issue of *Engage*! It's always so great to see God at work through his Church and to have the opportunity to give him thanks.

Every blessing,  
**Laura**

## Get in touch!

If you've been inspired or challenged by anything you've read in *Engage*, we would love to hear from you! Use [magazine@bmsworldmission.org](mailto:magazine@bmsworldmission.org) to get in touch with our Editor, Laura!

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