

ENGAGE

The BMS World Mission magazine

PEOPLE OF PEACE

STILL FINDING HOPE IN AFGHANISTAN

The light of Christ is
still getting through.

THE IMPACT YOU'RE MAKING

See how your gifts
made a difference
in the BMS World
Mission Impact
Report 2024.

THE CHURCHES TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES

See how people
in Uganda are
innovatively
transforming lives.





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



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mailing to send us a note,
a cheque or anything else
in response
to this issue!

We look forward to
hearing from you!



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You might spot these icons on the pages of *Engage* – they're there
to show you which ministry area the work comes under.



Smaller size, same amazing stories

Laura Durrant

April 2025



Engage is looking a bit different! I'm so excited to share this newly resized version of *Engage* magazine with you. Throughout this process, there were two things I wanted to maintain: accessibility and quality, which I know many of you reflected in your feedback as well. Your thoughts and suggestions on the redesign were invaluable, and I really hope you can see where you've helped shape the design.

In this issue, you'll find pieces exploring change at BMS World Mission and some of the new steps on our journey. On page 15 you'll meet Charles and Rebecca, who are transforming their local community in Uganda. On page 8 you can read some reflections from former mission worker Daniel Clark on his time of service, and on page 11 you'll find the BMS Impact

Report, newly incorporated into *Engage*, and see how your gifts made a difference in 2024.

We also sadly said an earthly goodbye to a cherished member of the BMS family at the end of last year, when long-standing mission worker, Ann Bothamley, went to glory. It's a privilege to share the story of her life in this issue, as well as the opportunity for you to pay tribute to her on the BMS website.

Thank you so much once again for continuing to read *Engage* and support BMS. If you have any feedback on this latest issue, please do get in touch with me on magazine@bmsworldmission.org – I would so love to hear from you.

God bless,
Laura
Editor



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After major flooding destroyed the church in Bardāï, your support is helping the community rebuild.

REBUILDING A CHURCH IN THE DESERT

In August 2024, the church in Bardāï, northern Chad, was destroyed in catastrophic floods. Your support is helping rebuild the church building and encouraging this long-standing Christian community.

The church in Bardāï was first built in 1991, and in 2023, a wall, a toilet and a Sunday school room were added to the building. An initial flood last summer, with waters reaching over 5m, wrecked part of the wall, leaving the church unprotected. Subsequent extreme floods destroyed the mud brick church building. Thankfully, the new extension, made with concrete bricks, stayed standing. While the loss is tragic, it's helped bring the church in Bardāï together to rebuild this crucial pillar of their community – and you're standing

with them.

Thanks to the generosity of BMS World Mission supporters to our disaster recovery fund, the church can not only be rebuilt, but be built stronger than ever. The plan is to rebuild the whole church in concrete bricks to help it withstand extreme weather in the future, and to build on higher ground, out of reach of flood waters. As well as using the funds from BMS to buy building materials, church members are banding together to donate financial gifts and labour to help finish the job. Please keep this cherished church family in your prayers in the next few months as they work to complete this building project. Pray that the community spirit exhibited by the church will be a bold witness in a Muslim-majority community.



Over a million people were displaced by the conflict in Lebanon. Thank you for stepping in to help people in dire need.

Your response in Lebanon

B MS supporters responded with incredible generosity to help people in desperate need in Lebanon after Israeli forces invaded southern Lebanon in October 2024. You raised over £130,000 and made an enormous difference to people who had to flee their homes. That total helped provide 4,000 mattresses, 3,000 emergency food parcels and 10,000 hygiene items for people in need. Thank you so much for stepping in during this tragic conflict. A ceasefire remains in place between Israel and Hezbollah, but tensions remain high in the wider Middle East. Please keep praying that God's peace will reign across the region.

From the General Director

THE ONLY HOPE

Kang-San Tan



B MS World Mission is committed to sharing Jesus as the only hope in our world. However, our mission is

less about Christians offering an evacuation plan to heaven and more about seeking transformation for the world's poor and the planet while they continue to suffer. We pray that you are encouraged that BMS' work represents your concerns for real-life changes on earth as we respond to global crises.

Firstly, we face an environmental crisis. Creation is groaning with devastating environmental and ecological destruction. Secondly, we face a crisis of poverty, where power and wealth do not alleviate suffering for the marginalised. Thirdly, we face a crisis of peace, as political leaders fail to resolve increasing wars, ethnic divisions and racism. It's a scandal of our times when our shared resources fail to impact the crises facing the majority of the world's poor and least evangelised communities.

Today, you can partner with BMS workers serving in some of the most difficult places. Could you encourage your church to partner with a mission worker, as an expression of our joint proclamation that Christ is our only hope to challenge the crises of our planet, poverty and peace? Visit www.bmsworldmission.org/churchpartners to find out more.

Ann Bothamley

gone to glory,
aged 86



We're sad to share the news that Valerie Ann Bothamley, who served with BMS World Mission in India for over 50 years, has died aged 86. So many people encountered Christ's love through Ann, and she will be missed by all who knew her and were impacted by her dedicated service now that she has gone to be with the Lord.

Ann first stepped out in faith to serve with BMS in India in 1968. After a gruelling six-week-long journey by ship, she began working as a nurse at Vellore Hospital. The first six months were very challenging, as Ann suffered from ill health. But she knew that God had called her to serve in India for the rest of her life, and she trusted him.

God guided and blessed Ann in so

many ways. She founded a hostel for the children of mission doctors. She helped thousands of people through her nursing service. She led Bible studies for a group of 30 student nurses, who would sit and listen on the floor of her little two-bedroom flat.

Ann was humble and always wanted to be with the people she served. She once nursed a newborn baby on Christmas Day, sitting cross-legged



Ann Bothamley in 1967.



on the floor of a home where half the cardboard roof was missing. Years later, she would look back on this special birth and wonder if this was the nearest she would get to understanding what it was like when Jesus was born.

When patients met Ann, they would often ask her why she had come such a long way to India, and why she had stayed for so long. She would tell them that God had sent her to share his love with them because that was what he'd asked her to do. Although she often did not see her patients immediately come to faith, she always knew that God would be at work in their lives.

After Ann retired, she continued to counsel haematology patients and lead Bible studies for medical staff at the hospital, and in 1999 she was awarded an MBE for services to healthcare in India. God kept on calling her back to

India to help people experience his love and see it in action. Ann inspired so many through her faithfulness to Christ and the love that she showed to the people of India.

Please pray for Ann's family, and ask God, the Father of all compassion, to comfort them.

So many people have been inspired by Ann's dedicated life of service over the years.

If you have a memory or tribute to share of Ann's life, why not visit www.bmswm.org/Ann-Bothamley to share it with the wider BMS family.

FOLLOWING THE CALL



Back in 1793, William Carey first set sail with a bold vision to share the Word of God in India. He followed God's call. Today, the world looks hugely different to the one Carey saw – and yet, people are still faithfully following God's calling to bring his gospel to the nations. We spoke to former BMS World Mission worker Daniel Clark and Steve Sanderson, BMS' Director of Strategy to explore what 'following the call' looks like in 2025.

India today is vastly different from the India of 1793. And yet many people still face the same challenges – struggling to provide enough food

for their families, to access good healthcare, and living without the hope of Christ in their lives. Which is why we're still following that call to bring the abundant love of Jesus to those

in need. "Depending on God and following where he leads, remains at the heart of everything we do at BMS," says Steve. "As we listen and collaborate together in partnerships around the world, we are frequently surprised and blessed at how God opens up new and extraordinary opportunities."

This conviction isn't always easy. But it is necessary. And it means stepping outside our zone of influence and paying attention to what is relevant to individual contexts. "There are a wide range of ideas which flow around in academic theology which, when you take it to the grassroots, just don't fly," says Daniel, who spent his years at BMS serving at the Baptist Seminary in Lima, Peru. It's why our Indian partners use tablets with videos explaining the gospel message, and why they're training people to make disciples in their own communities: they recognise that reaching people with the Word of God looks different in India than it might in the UK or in Peru.

Following God's call does, of course, lead to some endings. It's why we've sadly ended some long-standing partnerships in Mozambique and Guinea over the last few years, and why some mission workers, like Daniel and his family, feel called to other places. "Some doors open and others close," says Steve. "But it reminds us of God's ownership of his work



Daniel and Regiane Clark have seen first-hand how important it is to keep listening to the Global Church.

and his sovereignty in all our mission adventures." We're so thankful for the opportunities God has given us over the years and we pray that we'll be able to use what we learnt from these partnerships as we look to the future.

Despite these challenges, God is already leading us in exciting new ways. Daniel spent the last few years of his service in Peru helping set up a mission board with our Peruvian partner. It's never been done before, but the partner saw the need and we wanted to help them follow that call. Daniel was invited to help set the board up, and now they're supporting mission projects across Peru as well as in India, Uruguay and Spain. We can't wait to see the fruit this work will bear!

As well as continuing to support our partners in their overseas endeavours, we're also helping people as they seek to improve their own communities by supporting more church and community mobilisation (CCM) work. CCM is a way



Across the world, our partners are following God's call to explore innovative ways to do mission.

to bring God's love in abundance to yourself, your family, your community and your environment. We're already seeing some amazing fruit coming out of this work in Uganda, which you can read more about on page 15 of *Engage*.

These are just a few of the ways we're seeing God at work as we follow his call. But we still need your prayers and support to make all this possible.

As world mission evolves and changes, so too does the role of the UK Church, as we look to engage in mission as equals. As Daniel says: "It's essential for the Church in the UK to engage in equal partnerships with the Global Church to ensure that our mission is truly collaborative and impactful".

We hope that the recent updates to the BMS Church Partners programme are helping many of you do just that, giving you the opportunity to support

locally-based mission workers serving their own communities, as well as mission workers who are sent overseas. Because your prayer support really is incredibly valuable. "Knowing that there are Christians in the UK who are supporting and praying for us makes a significant difference," Daniel shares. "It provides comfort and encouragement in challenging times."

Nothing has changed about BMS following God's calling. Nothing has changed about how vital your gifts and prayers are. Nothing has changed about the desire of Christians on the ground to share the gospel message. All that's different is how BMS is following God's calling to deeper connection and partnership with our brothers and sisters in the Global Church. We can draw on each other's strength – and God's – as we follow his call. •

Transforming lives:

IMPACT REPORT 2024



Our vision is for a world where all can experience faith in Christ and the abundant life only he provides.

We hope the numbers of impact you see below encourage you to know that, through your support, BMS World Mission is being transformed by God to play our part as the Church across the world continues to grow at a phenomenal rate.

You won't see them represented over the following pages, but two numbers bring us particular joy from our work last year. The first is 777 (there must be everything of God in that!). With 173 added last year, 777 is now the total number of mission workers from

the Global Church whom you have supported over the last four years (our target back in 2020 was 600!).

The second number is 340,000. Based on our calculated assumption that the almost 23,000 new church fellowships planted contain on average 15 people, then in total you helped support over a third of a million new followers of Jesus on their discipleship journey in 2024.

Thank you for your incredible and continued generosity – none of this is possible without you.



Dr Kang-San Tan



Rev Marc Owen

200,137

**people impacted
by BMS projects
in 2024**



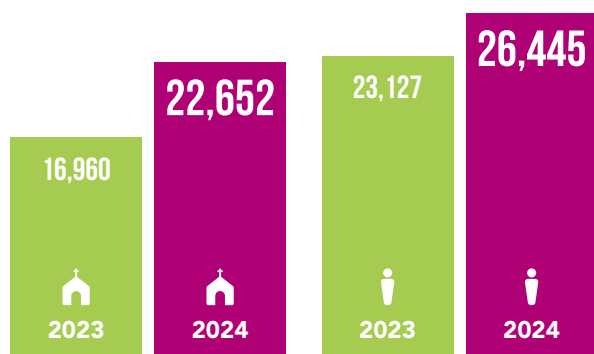


HEART

FOR THE GOSPEL



Your support for BMS takes the good news of Jesus to where it's hardly been heard, so that all the world can experience abundant life in Christ. Our partnerships with discipleship makers across Asia and North Africa give us hope that we are growing workers to reap a plentiful harvest.




Church fellowships planted in Asia

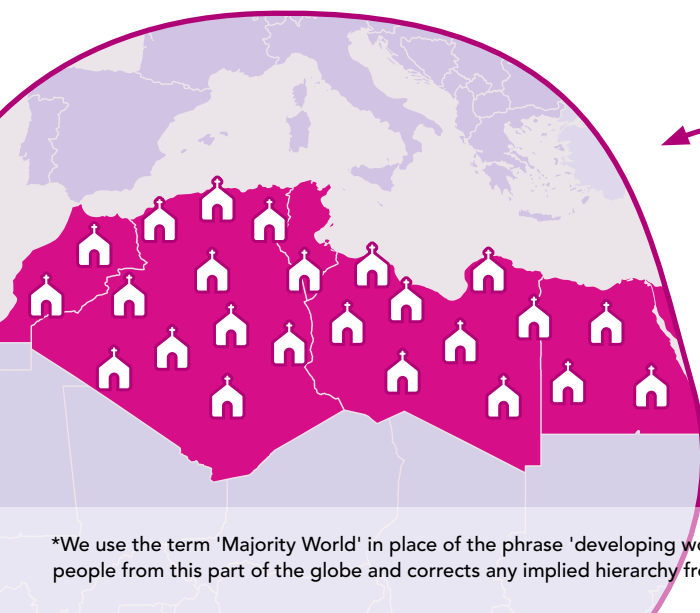
People trained as disciple makers



173

mission workers from the Majority World* supported

 = 10 Workers



50

New church fellowships planted in North Africa

226

Total churches planted from 2020-2024

*We use the term 'Majority World' in place of the phrase 'developing world'. It's a phrase widely accepted by people from this part of the globe and corrects any implied hierarchy from the use of the word 'developing'.



HOPE
FOR THE WORLD



You help tackle the injustices facing those living on the margins, where those who bear the least responsibility suffer the most. Throughout 2024, we worked to dramatically increase our partnerships with local churches, who are best placed to bring long-term community transformation.

77,854 **10,709**

People receiving life-saving help in the poorest countries

Members attending churches involved in BMS-supported community projects

154

2023

619

2024

People trained to mobilise churches to serve communities



HELP
FOR THE JOURNEY

You walk with those forced to leave home, in a time where more people than ever before are displaced – whether within their own countries or having crossed borders. This unprecedented displacement is a sign of the world's fragility. It has led to BMS expanding its focus on supporting people spiritually and physically when their enforced journeys come to an end.

13,739

Refugees receiving support on the move
(2023: 13,107)

12,070

Number of refugees supported at journey's end
(2023: 692)

211

Number of partner workers supported by BMS through networks whose work focuses on refugees

DISASTER RECOVERY

When disaster strikes, you respond. In fact, you stepped in 26 times in 2024, including when Cyclone Remal hit Bangladesh and when Nepal was struck by catastrophic flooding. You directly support people on the ground who understand the situation. You help us look forward, which is why BMS gives even more grants to long-term recovery than immediate relief.






49,485

People helped after disaster struck
(2023: 18,077)

Countries where BMS responded:

-   **Nepal** (floods)
-   **Bangladesh** (cyclone)
-   **D R Congo** (conflict)
-   **Lebanon** (conflict)
-   **Ukraine** (conflict)
-   **Afghanistan** (floods)
-   **Chad** (floods)

EXPENDITURE

-  **44% Hope for the World**
-  **22% Heart for the Gospel**
-  **19% Help for the Journey**
-  **13% Raising awareness**
-  **2% Historic partners***

*Historic partners represents work that is being phased out over a period of four years since the introduction of the new BMS strategy in 2021. Historic partners have continued to achieve impact in our previous strategic areas





NOW I CAN SEE

A new wave of transformation is sweeping through communities across Uganda. And at its heart? The Church.

Charles was hopeless. He and his wife, Rebecca, constantly struggled to make ends meet and care for their five children. They rarely had enough food at home and they were always getting sick. And Charles didn't see how he could change anything. Perhaps, he thought, this was just the way God had made him.

It's a story that many people in rural Uganda can relate to: if all you've ever known is poverty, it's extremely hard to get yourself

out of it. Lack of stable income meant Charles and his family lived hand to mouth, never knowing where their next meal would come from. Charles felt isolated from his neighbours and community, making it harder to find work and help when he needed it. But when Charles was invited to attend church and community mobilisation (CCM) training, everything changed.

CCM, put simply, is a way to bring God's love in abundance to yourself, your family, your community and your environment.

“ LIFE IN ABUNDANCE IS NOT ONLY SPIRITUAL ”

It begins with a Bible study in a local church, and then facilitators from the church are trained to bring people together and seek out the resources God has already granted them to transform their church family and wider community. And it's not just about sharing the Word of Jesus. It's about bringing about the life in all its fullness that only Jesus can provide. "Life in abundance is not only spiritual," explains BMS World Mission worker Genesis Acaye. "It's about [recognising]: I have a good relationship with God, I have food to eat, I have good relationships with my neighbours, I can send my children to school. That should begin from the church."

Thanks to your support, BMS' partner in Uganda, Justice Livelihoods Health (JLH), rolled out their first round of CCM training in 2024. Over the next three years, they'll be working with rural churches spanning three different denominations, training facilitators to engage their church members in CCM. And the possibilities of what these churches could achieve are endless. It all depends on the challenges they identify in their communities, and the innovative ways they come together to



tackle them. If people are struggling to grow enough food, you might pool some funds so you can plant fruit trees on your land. Then you can share what you have, and your farming knowledge, with your neighbours. If your home is regularly damaged by strong storms, you might plant native trees to protect your homestead and help fight deforestation. If you see people left on the margins, you might start a non-profit to advocate for people with disabilities, single mothers or those at risk from gender-based violence. These are all real examples of community action thanks to CCM. There's no limit to what people can do when they're strengthened by the Lord and confident in their ability to make a difference. For Charles, that invitation to CCM training was the start of a new life.



Thanks to the CCM training they're doing, Charles and Rebecca see their life through new eyes.

"I started appreciating the resources around me and all that I had in my possession," he says. "I also discovered that I have a responsibility of taking care of the people around me as well." Charles bought some chickens and planted cassava and beans to help feed his family, and sold any excess to keep their income steady. That steadiness helped improve his family relationships, and his relationship with his community – and he's keen for more people to receive CCM training and be empowered to keep the transformation going. "As a church, we plan to continue with Bible studies and establish community outreach programmes

to empower the youth and collaborate with other churches in our community," he shares.

Thank you for supporting JLH to help make this exciting new branch of work take place. You're also helping establish CCM work with our partners across the world, in Nepal, Ethiopia, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Rwanda and Burundi! Please keep praying that this work will help even more people like Charles experience the transformation and abundant life the Lord has planned for them. "I thank the living God for giving me the opportunity of being part of this training," says Charles. "My eyes have been opened and now I can see." •

PEOPLE OF PEACE

Hidden hope in Afghanistan



In 2024, Afghanistan was ranked bottom of a UN World Happiness Report. What hope is there for the least happy country in the world?

For BMS World Mission worker Tim*, hopelessness can be read on the faces of his Afghan friends. People look wearied, depleted. “Even going back into Afghanistan less than a year after the Taliban takeover, it had aged our colleagues,” he says. “People just want to have a normal life.”

If a normal life seems a long way off for the people of Afghanistan, then hope and happiness are an even more distant goal. The UN’s annual World Happiness Report scores countries

across six categories. Afghanistan has made the bottom of the list for years: financial wealth, social safety nets, life expectancy, freedom of choice and protection from corruption are at an all-time low.

In the face of these statistics, it seems impossible that BMS-supported projects could be breaking through the darkness. But glimmers of hope appear all the time, explains Tim. Suddenly, what seems broken is revealed to be letting through just enough light.



The impacts of BMS' teaching, water and agricultural projects are still bringing hope.

For such a time as this

The rolling back of women's rights by Afghanistan's de facto government is well documented. But even under the previous government, explains Tim, there were challenges for women's education. Parents wouldn't send their daughters to school unless there was a female teacher. And a lot of trained teachers didn't want to go and work in remote areas of the country outside their own tribal groups. To tackle this issue, BMS' Afghan partner trained up a group of promising young teachers – all women – from rural areas. Learning by rote was replaced with participatory learning. Corporal punishment was

“
**PEOPLE JUST
WANT TO HAVE
A NORMAL LIFE**
”

replaced with positive classroom management. And even though the project finished just over a year ago, most of those teachers are still working, still able to teach young girls up until the age of 11.

The teachers trained alongside women from outside their tribal groups



– a countercultural experience that will be crucial in helping the people of Afghanistan pull together in the face of so many challenges. Their sense of self-worth also massively improved, and lots of the teachers are now serving within their village committees, advocating for the rights of women and girls. And of course, they’re still teaching. One teacher was able to prevent a young girl from marrying a much older man by speaking with her parents about the importance of keeping her in school. BMS supporters couldn’t have known it at the time, but their crucial support has ensured these remarkable women are active in their communities for “such a time as this”.

BMS agricultural projects, led by worker Ruby*, have faced similar restrictions, rolled back to teach only men. But those men are able to go back and share their knowledge with their families, women included. As Afghanistan is exposed to more extreme

weather events like flooding, sustainable farming and fresh water projects are more important than ever – something BMS supporters have been preparing Afghan communities for for years. “We heard stories of people dying because they were going to collect water, there was an avalanche and they were buried in the snow,” Tim says. By God’s grace, and thanks to BMS support, projects to install clean water sources in villages are still going strong, eliminating life-threatening waterborne diseases and saving lives in more ways than one.

Called to stay

“It would be easy to look at the restrictions and think, ‘It’s time to shake the dust off our feet and leave,’” Tim says. “But I think God does call BMS to be present in times of difficulties. That’s why half of the book of Psalms are psalms of lament.” BMS workers have had to evacuate Afghanistan several times at the advice of UK



“ GOD CALLS BMS TO BE PRESENT IN TIMES OF DIFFICULTIES ”

authorities, most especially during the Taliban takeover. But it's not the need to evacuate that strikes people – it's the fact that BMS workers return. “People say to us, ‘If I could leave, I would not have chosen to come back.’”

These conversations often turn to matters of faith, and BMS workers are able to be open about their motivations. “People are interested in why we believe what we believe,” Tim adds. The fact that BMS workers dearly love such a troubled nation encourages colleagues at BMS’ partner organisation to keep going too. “A lot of our Afghan colleagues wonder, should they stay in Afghanistan or do they try and leave?” Tim explains. Knowing the amazing work they’re doing through BMS’ partner is a huge factor in deciding to stay.

In fact, the vast majority of the people Tim meets are “people of peace”, who have invited BMS workers into their homes. And despite everything, they are dreaming of a

better future for themselves and their children. Hope may be hidden, and it may not show up in UN statistics. But Tim hears God’s voice more loudly than ever in the midst of struggle, calling for Christians to keep loving Afghanistan.

What’s next for Afghanistan?

BMS workers Tim, Ruby and Grace* are moving into volunteer roles in 2025 before ending their service in Afghanistan, with BMS workers Arthur*, Reeta* and Oksana* continuing their service. Please continue to pray for glimmers of light to burst through, lifting Afghanistan and its people from despair. Tim returns time and time again to a famous quotation from William Carey: “I will go down the mine, if you will hold the rope.” Please keep holding the rope for BMS work in Afghanistan. Go to www.bmsworldmission.org/247 to support a BMS worker in Afghanistan through regular giving. •

**Names changed for security reasons.*



LETTERS FROM... THE UK

Thank you so much to everyone who sent in feedback on our change to A5. Here's a selection of the thoughts you shared with us:

Hi Laura

I found the latest issue of *Engage* and *Mission Catalyst* totally absorbing, and, despite all the other items on my to-do list, I felt that I needed to thank all of you for two excellent productions. If you are wondering about what needs to be included in the future, may I simply say, keep telling the stories?

Yours, still in his service,

Barry Walton

Hi Laura,

In response to your editorial in *Engage*, I applaud the idea of cutting costs but hope that if *Engage* is reduced to A5 size the font size will stay the same. For me, the font size in the new A5 *Mission Catalyst*, is uncomfortably small to read – and I do want to read it!

Best wishes,

John Matthews

Dear Laura,

A number of organisations with which I am in touch provide digital magazines

rather than printed ones. Moving to an A5 paper format is probably a simple way to save on costs but I would urge you to look beyond that to a more integrated approach involving both paper and digital communications.

John Hudson

Dear Laura,

I think it's a great idea to change the magazines to A5 size, to save postage and packing.

Blessings to you and all staff at BMS, keep up the good work.

Sue Jennings

Dear Ms. Durrant,

In the latest copy of *Engage* magazine, you mention the options you are considering to reduce the costs of producing this valuable tool for your work and I should like to make the following suggestion. First, perhaps you could also use a lighter weight of paper. It is the content that is important – not so much the glossy pictures, important as they are!



Also I would be very happy to receive an 'e-version' of the magazine rather than a hard copy, and I am sure many of the current recipients would also find that version acceptable. So many companies are now going online that we are getting well used to receiving information in that format, which would be very effective for cost saving.

With every blessing to you and your colleagues,
Sue Urquhart

From the Editor

Thank you so much to everyone who shared their thoughts on *Engage's* redesign. It was so helpful to hear your feedback, and I hope we've created a magazine that you can still enjoy just as much as before! Please do share any more thoughts you have on the magazine by getting in touch with me on magazine@bmsworldmission.org – I'd love to hear from you!

Laura



**Share
abundant
life, for
generations.**

**Leave a gift in
your Will today.**

Call: 01235 517615

Email: legacies@bmsworldmission.org

