THE CMS COMMUNITY
WELCOME
Join us around the teapot
Community: why?

It began around a teapot.

In the turbulent late 18th century, a group of Christians known as the Eclectic Society began meeting together over tea to answer the question: “How can we effectively share Jesus today?”

It was at one of these gatherings, on 12 April 1799, that CMS was born. This new society was supported by a group of Christians referred to as the Clapham Sect.

Some people, including other Christians, thought they were a bit mad.

But these passionate people of faith, including William Wilberforce and John Newton, worked together to abolish the slave trade; they fought for the rights of oppressed people at home and they launched out on dangerous seas to share Jesus with the world.

Starting with a good cup of tea, a mission movement was poured out across the globe.

Today, in the pioneering spirit of our founders, CMS is calling Christians to “return to the teapot”: to pray for mission together, to learn from mission together and to participate in mission together.

We are a community with a purpose: to share Jesus and to see lives changed. We do this as a community, because we can do more together than we could ever do on our own.

“It was a society not formed for itself, but formed for the sake of others, and formed indeed for the sake of the Lord, to love and to serve his world…”

– Philip Mounstephen, CMS executive leader
“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

– Margaret Mead
Thousands of people from all walks of life are part of the CMS family. Though we come from diverse backgrounds, we are united in our commitment to God’s mission.

“Being part of CMS feels more like being part of a community or even a family…. Coming together we have all the advantages of family gatherings: food, conversation, a shoulder to cry on, a listening ear, a hand to hold, a fond roll of the eyes at familiar quirks or irritations, the challenge of being somehow united by blood while often holding differing perspectives or theological peculiarities…. We have the space and trust to live out our calling and carve out our own lives while always carrying the strength, prayers and support of that family…. We love the mix of people and places. We love the way it maintains intimacy but [is] always open, inviting, shifting its edges. We even love its exasperatingly dysfunctional bits, because it seems somehow more human. We love being part of something rooted, redemptive, eye opening, world changing, community building, boundary pushing, risk taking, faith informing. Yeah, hard to put into words really.”

Anna and Chris Hembury, mission partners in Hull for more than a decade
“CMS is an inspiration to my Christian life. It encourages me to think about my real reason for being a Christian, which is mission.”
Ann Bower, Birmingham

“I’m a member of CMS because I want to change the world and meet and collaborate with others who want to change the world. CMS seems full of this kind of people! Their motivation comes from their love for Jesus, love for the world and love for people and that is infectious. I have learned so much about mission, about God, about the world, about myself. I have been inspired by so many people I have met and in many ways I have found a home base. Like many pioneers, I am a creative person and always have new ideas and see possibilities for transformation. Rather than feeling threatened by this, CMS is a community with pioneering in its DNA so seems effectively to say ‘bring it on!’”
Jonny Baker, CMS director of mission education, London

"Being a member of CMS keeps me sane because in CMS I see the work of the gospel embodied and worked out, here and across the world, in a way that is appropriate to people today…. CMS understands mission — that we are all called to be witnesses to the good news, and that the way we are called to witness may be different from the way many others may expect — and celebrates, encourages and trains people to pursue these God-given vocations."
Peter Hemming, chair of the Yorkshire CMS group, Leeds
Community: what?

What do members of the CMS mission community do? We get involved in global, local and every-day mission in a variety of ways.

**PRAYING TOGETHER FOR MISSION**

“The history of missions is the history of answered prayer.” – Samuel Zwemer

John Venn, one of the founders of CMS, was committed to five key principles, one of which was to make prayer a priority. Today CMS produces several resources to help members join in prayer for mission together, from our daily prayer guide, Prayerlines, to our Prayer Focus podcast to creative pieces of liturgy. Throughout the country, small groups of CMS members meet regularly to pray for mission with one another. You would be welcome to join one of these or to start your own. We also have regular days set aside for the whole community to pray together for mission.

**LEARNING TOGETHER FROM MISSION**

“We must be global Christians with a global vision because our God is a global God.” – John RW Stott

CMS is constantly sharing stories and reflections from people in mission, past and present. Through the lens of mission, we learn together about other cultures, global issues and about how God is at work in our world today. We also challenge each other to put our mission learning into practice, to cross boundaries wherever we are. Learning opportunities within CMS include everything from our community newsletter, Connect, to short-term Encounter trips to an innovative pioneer mission training course to our renowned mission library. As a member of the CMS community, you will be among the first to hear about all of these opportunities to share learning.

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another...”

Hebrews 10:24–25
“We are called to be part of God’s new creation, called to be agents of that new creation here and now.”
– NT Wright

All Christians are called to be in mission. For some, this call will take them overseas. Others will live out this call in their own country. The CMS mission community is here to help equip and connect people in both global and local mission and to help Christians live out mission in their day-to-day contexts. Each of us has a part to play in bringing challenge, change and hope to our world – the question isn’t if, but how?
Community: when & where?

It’s all about connecting with other people who love mission. There are several ways to do this.

LOCAL GROUPS

There are over 30 groups of CMS members meeting across the UK, from Exeter to Edinburgh, the Isle of Wight to the Isle of Man and Stockport to Scarborough. CMS members’ groups meet together to put energy into mission through prayer, discussion and action. As a member we can put you in touch with a local group or help you to start your own. CMS produces a variety of resources for groups to use including prayer diaries and podcasts. There are also annual conferences run by CMS groups in the North and South of England, Scotland and Wales.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Weekend conferences, community action days, spirituality retreats, mission immersion experiences, learning and conversation days...it seems like there’s always something going on in the CMS mission community. Some of these events focus on a particular theme or region, some are more informal. All members of CMS are warmly invited to participate in these events. The more the merrier!

“One of the marvellous things about community is that it enables us to welcome and help people in a way we couldn’t as individuals.” – Jean Vanier
CMS members with particular mission passions often gather together. Current examples of this are the Africa Forum, the Latin America Forum and the Asia Forum. Again, you can take part in a current forum or begin a new one. Perhaps you have an interest in creation care, human trafficking, leadership development or another mission issue — the possibilities are limitless. Forums often organise their own conferences and events.

Hundreds of people connect via CMS Facebook groups, Twitter and email. When you join an online hub, you’re instantly linked up to a world of ideas, discussions and ways to be involved in God’s mission that would have been impossible a few decades ago.
How does someone join the CMS mission community?

Once you complete the CMS membership form, you’ll be kept up to date with all CMS opportunities for praying for, learning from and participating in mission through our regular community newsletter and email.

You’ll be invited to be part of our “rhythm of life”, which includes things like our annual vision day as well as times of learning, reflection and action. You’ll be encouraged to think and pray about what living out mission might mean for you. If as a member you choose to financially support CMS mission, we would welcome that kind of involvement.

“The CMS community is a vibrant one, full of so many stories and so much wisdom about mission. Over the years God has done many amazing things with and through CMS members all over the world and it is always both encouraging and challenging to spend time together. Like a family we are all different yet we are one because we love the same God and share the same passion to see the world changed.” – Mark Berry, Community Mission Mobiliser

“A growing community must integrate three elements: a life of...prayer, a life of service...and a community life through which all its members can grow in their own gift.” – Jean Vanier
“For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.”

Romans 12:4–5
Community: you?

You are warmly invited to be part of the CMS story, a story that spans hundreds of years and thousands of miles. A story that you will help tell and shape.

Please consider joining us “around the teapot” as we pray for, learn from and participate in mission. Together.

THE CMS COMMUNITY AFFIRMATION

“I’m a member of the CMS mission community because I believe God is still working in our world and I want to be part of this. I want my life to be about mission and I know that mission isn’t someone else’s job—it’s mine. I want to live for Jesus daily and I realise I need fuel for this journey. As a member of the CMS mission community, I desire to help my local Christian community keep mission a priority. I also wish to join other CMS members in regularly renewing my mind and spirit and my commitment to mission.”

CMS COMMUNITY VALUES

We aim to be pioneering, evangelistic, relational and faithful in all we do.
YES,
I WANT TO JOIN
THE CMS
COMMUNITY

Please fill in the form overleaf and return to:
Church Mission Society,
Community Mission Team,
Watlington Rd, Oxford, OX4 6BZ
YES, I WANT TO JOIN THE CMS COMMUNITY
so I can pray for mission, learn from mission and participate in mission with others.

Title: [ ] Name: [ ] Date of Birth: [ ] [ ]

Email: [ ]

Address: [ ]

Town/City: [ ] Postcode: [ ] Church: [ ]

COMMUNICATION FROM CMS:
As a member of the CMS community you will receive regular communications, including items for prayer, stories of God at work and information about upcoming events.

☐ Please tick this box if you would prefer to receive communication by email whenever possible.

MEMBER-TO-MEMBER COMMUNICATION:
From time to time, CMS community members may wish to be in touch with each other to invite one another to local gatherings for prayer, action or fellowship.

☐ Please tick this box if you are happy for your contact information to be shared with other CMS members.

Your signature: [ ] Date: [ ] DD / MM / YYYY

Please return to: Church Mission Society, Community Mission Team, Watlington Rd, Oxford, OX4 6BZ

We promise to treat your data with the respect it deserves. We will use your data to keep you informed of our impact and to help you to pray for our work. To change what you get from us, and how you get it, please call our Supporter Care team on 01865 787519, or email them at supporter.care@churchmissionsociety.org. You can read our full data privacy policy at churchmissionsociety.org/privacy-policy or request a hard copy from our Supporter Care team on 01865 787519.
Lord, as you have entered into our life and death and in all the world you call us into your death and risen life, forgive us our sins; and draw us we pray, by the power and encouragement of your Spirit, into an exchange of gifts and needs, joys and sorrows, strength and weakness with your people everywhere; that with them we may have grace to break through every barrier, to make disciples of all peoples and to share your love with everyone for your glory’s sake. Amen.
“Maybe we are a little crazy. After all, we believe in things we don’t see... (Heb. 11:1). We believe poverty can end even though it is all around us. We believe in peace even though we hear only rumours of wars. And since we are people of expectation, we are so convinced that another world is coming that we start living as if it were already here.”

– Shane Claiborne