

# PRAYERLINES

APRIL – MAY 2021



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*The call in action*

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# HOW IS YOUR PEACE?

Dear praying friends,

My hope is that the UK and much of the rest of the world will be emerging from lockdown by the time you read this. I wonder how you are feeling as we approach Easter? Are you experiencing the joys of spring or are you feeling more tired and fearful?

It's striking in John 20:19–21 that Jesus' disciples were together inside a home with the doors locked in fear. It's at this moment that Jesus breaks through the walls and appears to his disciples to say, "Peace be with you." This must have been important because he then repeats it: "Peace be with you."

We sometimes think of peace as the absence of conflict or noise. But the Hebrew word for peace, shalom, means something broader than that – well-

being, health, the restoration of life in all its fullness.

How is your peace at the moment?

My prayer is for all of us to "seek peace and pursue it" (Psalm 34:14). That as we receive again these words from John this Easter, we would all experience the joy of Jesus' resurrection and increasing freedom from fear. And that we are equipped by the Holy Spirit to go and make peace in the world. During this season, may "the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace." (Numbers 6:26)

Yours in Christ,

Alastair Bateman  
Chief Executive Officer

## APRIL 2021

### 1 APRIL (MAUNDY THURSDAY) MOLDOVA

Mission associate Sharon Rose works in Dancu, using her professional skills as a speech and language therapist to support children with disabilities and their families. Currently in the UK, Sharon asks for prayer for a clear sense of when God wants her to return and for help to discern the best way to support the children and team from a distance. Pray also for good relationships to be fostered among all those working in Dancu.

### 2 APRIL (GOOD FRIDAY) LEBANON

Pray for God's enabling and equipping of Audrey and Colin Gibson for their roles with Christian conservation organisation A Rocha Lebanon, Audrey as education and church liaison officer and Colin as national director. Pray for God to grant them creative ways to bring glory to him and engage with those around them.

## WEEKEND FOCUS

### Saturday–Sunday 3–4 April Easter Sunday

#### GO AND TELL

**BY FELIPE AND SARAH YANEZ, WHO HELP RUN TWO DIFFERENT FOOD BANKS IN MALAGA, ARE ACTIVE IN THEIR LOCAL CHURCH AND INVEST TIME IN INFORMAL DISCIPLESHIP**

*After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.*

*There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.*

*The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you." Matthew 28:1–7 (NIV)*

We are living in a world of uncertainty, fear and failing economies. Coupled with our own inadequacies, this can present us with a hopeless picture. After Jesus' death, fear and despair also affected the disciples. But in the finale of Matthew's Gospel, there's encouragement: the work of Christ has

been accomplished, death is defeated and the disciples are empowered to carry the news of his life, death and resurrection into the world. This major event enabled them to become braver, overcoming their fears and giving them the conviction that Jesus' teachings and legacy were the foundations their world needed. Jesus is a tremendous gift to humanity: the God who lives within us and stands beside us, no matter what we face.

**He is risen! Pray for encouragement** for Felipe and Sarah in their work as they encounter people struggling with uncertainty, fear and hopelessness.

### 5 APRIL (M) ASIA-WIDE

Give thanks that two couples recently responded to God's call on their lives to explore long-term mission in Asia. Pray for these two couples as they listen to God's leading. Please also pray for wisdom for CMS staff who work with them and our overseas partners to match them to the right location. Continue to pray for God to call people to mission in Asia and pray that those called would respond and take the first step.

### 6 APRIL (T) SOUTH ASIA

Local partner S has multiple roles alongside his main one of working with local musicians and churches to adapt and develop local musical forms for Christian worship. Pray for S's recovery from recent health issues and as he plans to travel again to resume his primary ministry in person soon. Pray also for a new talk show

he has helped develop which focuses on the specific challenges first-generation Christians face in South Asia.

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## 7 APRIL (W) SOUTH ASIA

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A local partner involved in discipleship among a minority people group asks for prayer for M, a young man who is exploring faith and aiming for a job high up in the government. After meeting M in a village, our local partner invited M to stay with him and his wife in town so he could have better access to the internet, allowing him more study time, as well as to learn more about Jesus. Pray for God to work in M's life and prepare him for his future.

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## 8 APRIL (TH) ASIA-WIDE

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Mission partners E and R write, "Mental health is little discussed, but more and more of an issue here. R and Asia-CMS have put together online resources to help people check how they are coping and, if necessary, to work out what or who can help." Pray for these resources to be distributed widely, across Asia and beyond, and prove helpful to many people in these stressful times.

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## 9 APRIL (F) SRI LANKA

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Due to the pandemic, local partner Nevedita Jeevabalan's work with and on behalf of disadvantaged and traumatised children has been somewhat restricted over the past year. Praise God for the opportunities he has provided for her to

minister to children throughout this time, including through distributing educational and recreational packs. Pray for wisdom for Nevedita and the team as they move forward.

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# WEEKEND FOCUS

Saturday–Sunday 10–11 April

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## SIGNS OF HOPE

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**BY CATHERINE LEE, WHO SUPPORTS THE CHURCH, CHAPLAINCY AND KINDERGARTEN MINISTRY OF THE DIOCESE OF TAIWAN FROM HER BASE AT ST JOHN'S UNIVERSITY IN NEW TAIPEI CITY**

**"We must treat those who disagree with us with the same gentleness as the Japanese treat the cherry blossom."**

So said Pedro Arrupe SJ (1907–1991), despite being arrested and imprisoned while serving as a priest in Japan during World War II. On his release, he served in Hiroshima, where he and his fellow Jesuits survived the atomic bomb in 1945 and immediately set about helping the victims.

It is not just the Japanese who treat the cherry blossom with gentleness, respect and love. During the 50 years of being a Japanese colony (1895–1945), cherry blossom trees were planted all over Taiwan, and wherever they grow, people flock to enjoy their beauty. The appearance of the cherry blossom is a sign that spring is coming, a sign of hope for a new year. Their delicate

flowers only last a few weeks, and then fall, carpeting the ground in a pink sea of petals. Truly beautiful while it lasts!

As I write this, it's late morning and I can hear the piercing calls of the crested serpent eagles as they rise on the thermals high above. I am reminded of Isaiah 40:31: "Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint". Some versions say "hope" instead of "wait", reminding me of the words of Tertullian, an African theologian, bishop and writer (155–240AD) who famously said, "Hope is patience with the lamp lit." Indeed, that's us, waiting, praying and hoping.

For those of you also desperately waiting for an end to the pandemic, and for a calming of the political tension in the US and with Brexit, I pray your lives may be filled with hope, and your strength renewed.

**Pray for God to use Catherine to encourage others and bring hope during this difficult time.**

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## 12 APRIL (M) BRAZIL

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Today is CMS's 222nd birthday – give thanks for God's faithfulness to us.

Short-termers Rosie and Stu Bayford are based in Recife, where they support at-risk children through ReVive, a charity ministering among children who are victims of sexual abuse, exploitation and neglect. Currently in Leeds, they ask for prayer for the city's Junk Food Project, which resells surplus supermarket stock cheaply: "Pray for good relationships

between local supermarkets and churches and for the project to help the community, the church and the world God gave us to look after."

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## 13 APRIL (T) PERU

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Anna Sims, engaged in prison ministry with Walking in Liberty, writes, "Please pray for the Bible study group inside Santa Monica prison. Give thanks for the women in that group who are reading their Bibles and praying together. Pray for them to continue to grow in their relationship with God and for us to be able to visit them to lead Bible studies again as soon as it is safe."

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## 14 APRIL (W) BRAZIL

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Pray for local partner Amanda Borges, who is helping to train young people to serve in their local churches through Vineyard Floripa's New Wine Discipleship School. Pray for Amanda to be an encouragement to each student as she seeks to serve through her work of planning and administration.

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## 15 APRIL (TH) CHILE

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Local partner Nicolas Fuentes leads a church plant which focuses on evangelism through intentional, authentic friendships. As the church family continues to meet virtually due to coronavirus restrictions, pray for Nicolas to find ways to make virtual church meetings more creative and dynamic and for the Lord to help the church plant persevere with digital formats.

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## 16 APRIL (F) BRAZIL

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Evaldo and Rebecca Reid Rodrigues work with ReVive, a charity supporting children who are victims of sexual abuse, exploitation and neglect. Evaldo advocates for adoption and fostering for the charity, while Rebecca works with ReVive's children at risk. Pray for ReVive staff to follow God's direction so that children and babies are cared for in the best way and for doors to be opened for children to either return to their biological family or be adopted into new families as soon as possible.

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## WEEKEND FOCUS

Saturday–Sunday 17–18 April

### PEACE BE WITH YOU

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**BY IAN ADAMS, MISSION SPIRITUALITY ADVISER**

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**How might we, as the body of Christ, live in the light of the resurrection of Jesus?** As told in John 20, on the evening of the day of his resurrection Jesus appeared to the fearful disciples who had hidden themselves away in a house. He stood among them, and said, "Peace be with you."

What might it look like for us today to quietly stand among the people to whom we have been called, and in action and words proclaim God's peace to them?

Risen Jesus,  
help me today to stand among your

fearful people,  
and in action and in word proclaim  
your peace to them.  
Amen

Email: [ian.adams@churchmissionsociety.org](mailto:ian.adams@churchmissionsociety.org)

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## 19 APRIL (M) UNITED KINGDOM

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Pioneer student Margaret Fisher, a licenced lay minister, asks for prayer for all those training in pioneer ministry during this difficult time of the COVID-19 pandemic as they experience new ways of learning and using technology. Pray too for those who support them.

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## 20 APRIL (T) NORTH SOMERSET

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Please pray for pioneer student Christine Ramshaw as she seeks to reach out to people who feel wounded by institutional church through her network, More to Life, and her roles as chaplain to a care home and her local NHS social prescribing service. Pray for Christine and those she works with to share God's love and healing with all those they encounter.

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## 21 APRIL (W) BIRMINGHAM

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Pioneer Ruth Jeavons works to raise awareness in mission agencies, dioceses and churches across the nation with regard to the safeguarding of children of missionaries. Please pray for vision for those working in safeguarding and that many people will heed Ruth's message and work together to keep children safe.

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## 22 APRIL (TH) EAST LONDON

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Marcus Giddy, children and families pioneer minister and first-year ordinand, asks for prayer as he looks to develop a primary school chaplaincy hub within local primary schools in Collier Row. Pray for Marcus to be able to demonstrate God's Kingdom values within these schools, create a deeper sense of community and communicate Jesus through what he says and does.

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## 23 APRIL (F) BIRMINGHAM

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"We are exploring new ways of being a more missional and outward-facing church, using mindful prayer walks and taking prayer requests," writes pioneer and lay minister Rachel Luckman about her church in south west Birmingham. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide Rachel and others in the church, and for those they encounter to be open to God.

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## WEEKEND FOCUS

Saturday–Sunday 24–25 April

### ALREADY EQUIPPED

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**BY ANDY MASON, CMS PIONEER GRADUATE BASED IN POOLE WHO NOW JUGGLES SEVERAL ROLES, INCLUDING MANAGING A DROP-IN FOR ROUGH SLEEPERS AND DEVELOPING A SCHOOL OF MISSION WITH SOME FRIENDS**

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The Bible says that God has given us "all we need for life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3). We know that those God calls he also equips (Hebrews 13:20–21) and yet we so often believe that God has not gifted and skilled us for the task ahead.

I believe that much of the work of ministry in the Church is about unearthing that which God has already placed within us rather than expecting some supernatural download to happen out of the blue.

When we launched the School of Mission, my friend and fellow pioneer Jackie spoke about unblocking wells, by which she meant that God has already placed great treasures within us – amazing Holy Spirit springs of fresh, life-giving, bubbling water, but for whatever reason, often our springs have got blocked up. Perhaps someone ridiculed or belittled your idea? Perhaps you have been disappointed in the past? Many people have wonderful dreams waiting to be released into the world, they just need some encouragement.

I often wonder what the key is to seeing the Church in the UK rise in transforming love in this nation, but in that moment I realise that God has given us the keys already – we're just not using them.

What's your dream? What has God already put inside you? I believe he's gifted us all to change the world. Are you in?

**Pray for us**, the Church, to uncover the gifts God has already given us and use them.

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## 26 APRIL (M) RWANDA

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Gahini Hospital welcomed a paediatrician, an orthopaedic surgeon and a physician anaesthesiologist earlier this year, several years before they expected to receive any specialists. Praise God for this progress towards mission partners Catriona and Steve Bennett's goal of developing a sustainable, quality surgical and anaesthetic service at the hospital. Pray for the new doctors as they settle into the hospital and for Catriona as she hands over much of the clinical work she has been doing.

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## 27 APRIL (T) DR CONGO

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Short-termers Anthea and Martin Gordon, working with Tearfund and the Anglican Church respectively, give thanks for God's sustaining provision for the Diocese of Goma during a difficult year. They ask for prayer for local leaders to continue to be equipped to share the gospel and plant churches, for progress with various building and income-generating projects across the diocese and for reconciliation across the region.

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## 28 APRIL (W) AFRICA-WIDE/UK

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Based in the UK, mission partner Ann-Marie Wilson is founder and executive director of 28 Too Many, a charity working to end female genital mutilation (FGM). Pray for the board as they consider future direction of the charity, and for Ann-Marie as she speaks at various events this year.

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## 29 APRIL (TH) DR CONGO

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After almost a year away, pray for mission partners Patricia and Peter Wyard as they have returned to Aru and resumed their work there. Pray for Patricia as she supports local medical staff and develops palliative care in the diocese and beyond, and for Peter as he teaches students preparing for ministry and works to establish a discipleship course for the diocese.

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## 30 APRIL (F) TANZANIA

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Mission partner Heather Johnstone leads the Rehema Project in Mara, which seeks to empower the most disadvantaged women and children in the area. Rehema's cafe and craft shop reopened in January after having been closed for almost a year. Pray for encouragement for the women running the shop and for the customer base to increase, as the women rely on the shop's income to provide for themselves and their families.

# MAY 2021

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## WEEKEND FOCUS

Saturday–Sunday 1–2 May

### PARABLE OF THE MULBERRY BUSH

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BY DAVID AND HEATHER SHARLAND, WHO ARE USING AGRICULTURE TO SERVE STRUGGLING AND MARGINALISED FARMERS IN THE NAME OF CREATOR GOD (DAVID) AND SERVING AS A COMMUNITY HEALTH COORDINATOR (HEATHER) IN ARUA, UGANDA

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**Recently, when walking to Eden Demonstration Farm through a dry and crispy valley, thirst and heat assailed my body and thoughtfulness my mind. The farm was almost deserted. Even the trees seemed sad. But walking through the farm, expecting nothing good, I noticed a green hedge amid the dun browns. The mulberry bushes were thriving!**

On approaching, I noticed that the bushes were covered in ripe, juicy fruit! How could that be? Two months ago we expected no more fruit. Jesus spoke of the vine and the fig; today he showed me the Parable of the Mulberry Bush!

Even when all around is dry and barren, here is plenty! What a picture of Kingdom redemption.

I gathered about four pounds of fruit, where I expected none. As it's a less appreciated fruit here, I took it home

and we made five pots of jam and some ice cream. So appreciated at a hot time of year!

Was 2020 a wasted year or a year of useful learning we intend to hold onto?

Let's take to heart the mulberry bush lessons: productivity in hard circumstances, surprises of grace amid a harsh society; pruning, though hard to take, leads to blessings beyond measure, deep roots nourishing a selfless life of service, leaves set to catch the rays of the Son and the water of the Spirit empowering us invisibly but effectively. May 2021 be a year of fruitfulness from a spiritual health nourished from God's Word and his Spirit within us – whether in West Nile, the UK or beyond!

**Pray for David and Heather to continue to take to heart these lessons and share them with others.**

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## 3 MAY (M) KINGSTON

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Called to serve people who would describe themselves as "spiritual" rather than "religious", mission partner Andrea Campanale asks for prayer for SpiritSpace, a monthly cross-Atlantic online gathering where people gather to engage with Christian videos with reflections and meditations, art, prophecy, prayer ministry and more. Pray for God to meet with people powerfully through this growing event.

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## 4 MAY (T) LEEDS

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Mission partner Awais Mughal, based in Seacroft, helps asylum seekers and refugees with language skills, connects with women from different cultural and faith backgrounds, and supports local churches sharing the gospel. She asks for prayer for the comfort and healing of all families in Seacroft who have lost their loved ones to the virus. Pray for Awais to help bring new life and hope to everyone she speaks to.

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## 5 MAY (W) CARLISLE

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A year after coming home from Uganda, mission partner Garry Ion is now working with the Diocese of Carlisle and their charity Restore Cumbria, helping to set up a carpentry workshop in central Carlisle called Men's Shed. Here, men from all walks of life can try out their carpentry skills and chat over a cuppa. Pray for this ministry to help spread the gospel and build community.

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## 6 MAY (TH) BIRMINGHAM

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As the coronavirus pandemic has continued, mission partner Ruth Radley and other members of Birmingham Children's Hospital's multi-faith chaplaincy team have increased their support for staff alongside their core purpose of connecting with sick children and their families. Pray for Ruth as she supports staff and patients – for her presence, words and actions

to bring comfort and hope to those she interacts with.

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## 7 MAY (F) SOUTHALL

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Kailean and Kim Khongsai are serving through creation care in West London, including the Wolf Fields land transformation project. Despite COVID-19, the Wolf Fields site still needs to be maintained. Please pray for the safety of volunteers and for Kailean and Kim's family. Pray for wisdom and clarity for Kailean and Kim as they plan activities on the site and outreach work for the rest of the year.

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# WEEKEND FOCUS

Saturday–Sunday 8–9 May

## REPAIRER OF BROKEN WALLS

**BY ANNA AND CHRIS HEMBURY, WHO ARE SHARING LIFE WITH PEOPLE ON THE MARGINS IN HULL AND HELPING THEM TO CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER AND GOD**

**Last year, our community garden suffered a sustained onslaught of damage. The pretty wall inlaid with recycled bottles, the pizza oven and the barbecue, all of which we built with local children and young people from the neighbourhood, were kicked in and reduced to piles of rubble, and the raised beds and planted vegetables have also borne the brunt**

**of some lashing out.**

It has been a heavy hit on our spirit. And yet we are called to listen, to hear beyond our own lament. The actions played out in our little garden, meant to be a place of hope and peace and life for the community, speak of an unvoiced frustration and even anger. There are things (as well as people) that have died over the past year: connection, attention, playfulness, singing, even the usual flirting and banter and horsing around that used to be such a usual part of teenage negotiation of life skills. But nothing is any longer as it was and we don't yet know what any of it might mean, or change, or when, or if.

During Easter week last year we put up a large wooden cross. Months later, it was still standing there, untouched, while every other thing in the garden suffered blow after blow of violence and violation. The cross seems to make tangible the good news of Jesus, Emmanuel: God is with us in the midst of all this unspeakable lostness. "The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs ... and will strengthen your frame... Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings." These verses from Isaiah 58 have been a helpful metaphor for our calling here in Hull, but the garden right now is a reminder that sometimes we have to take God literally at his word!

**Please pray** for Anna and Chris to sense what God would have them build, and with whom, and when, as they find themselves in very different times.

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## 10 MAY (M) SOUTH EAST ASIA

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Pray for a local partner ministering and planting churches among deaf people. Praise God that deaf church services have led to new people accepting Jesus into their lives and that our local partner was able to find work for some deaf people who lost their jobs last year. Pray for plans to reach deaf people in unreached groups and through upcoming vocational training workshops. Pray also for plans to find a new place for the deaf church services, as they currently worship in private homes and urgently need a new place.

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## 11 MAY (T) THE PHILIPPINES

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Jigsaw Ministries, which works with vulnerable children in four areas of Manila, evolved and expanded its activities last year through delivering meal packs, Bibles, therapy packs and education and craft packs directly to local homes. Praise God for how the gospel has been brought into local homes, and pray for the Jigsaw team as they consider when to reopen their kids' clubs.

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## 12 MAY (W) CAMBODIA

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"Pray for our ministry among the Bunong people – they know so much of the oppression of the devil and so little of the gospel and its power to save," local partner Chhinho Saing writes. Chhinho, who oversees 32 house churches in Cambodia, has been working to reach the Bunong people with the gospel, providing primary

education for Bunong children through an outreach and ministry centre. Pray for spiritual breakthrough among this people group.

## 13 MAY (TH) SOUTH EAST ASIA

Mission partners A and L, supporting people recovering from a wide variety of troubling behaviour patterns and working in special educational needs provision respectively, write that they are choosing to stay in South East Asia this summer rather than visit the UK as planned. They are looking forward to putting down more roots, continuing to solidify as a family of five and reaching further into the community. Pray for them as they balance their life in South East Asia with connecting with supporters in the UK via Zoom.

## 14 MAY (F) SRI LANKA

Church relations and training coordinator at LEADS (an organisation working with abused and traumatised children), local partner Russell de Alwis asks for prayer for the local church, which is suffering some persecution from their neighbours. Pray for God's protection and that Russell and other Christians will be faithful witnesses to show a living, loving God.

# WEEKEND FOCUS

Saturday–Sunday 15–16 May

## SO I SEND YOU

BY IAN ADAMS, MISSION SPIRITUALITY ADVISER

**We continue to reflect on how we, as the body of Christ, might live in the light of the resurrection.** In John 20, on the evening of the day of his resurrection Jesus appeared to the fearful disciples. He stood among them, and said, “as the Father has sent me, so I send you.” This was a pivotal moment for each of the disciples – would they embrace or reject their calling?

Reflect on your own calling to this point. In the light of the resurrection how might that look in this stage of your life? To whom are you being sent?

Risen Jesus,  
I hear again your call to me.  
Give me courage and imagination to  
go wherever you send me,  
to follow wherever you go.  
Amen

Email: [ian.adams@churchmissionsociety.org](mailto:ian.adams@churchmissionsociety.org)

## 17 MAY (M) PERU

Together with strategic partners across Latin America, Paul Tester, with his wife Sarah, is leading the development of CMS's mission work throughout the region. He

writes, “Pray for the Holy Spirit's continued leading as we seek to share the gospel with the least reached in the region and beyond. Pray too for Sarah and our daughters as online schooling enters its second year in Peru.”

## 18 MAY (T) BRAZIL

Give thanks for the appointment of Andy Roberts as the new CMS director of international mission. Andy was awarded an MBE earlier this year in official recognition of the importance of his and Rose Roberts's work of providing safe houses for young, at-risk girls through ReVive International, a charity supporting children who are victims of sexual abuse, exploitation and neglect. Pray for Andy and Rose and the ReVive staff as they prepare for this time of transition.

## 19 MAY (W) ECUADOR

Sharon Wilcox, who teaches life skills to people with learning disabilities, writes that her church has reopened and made the church building available to Venezuelan people living on the streets. Every Wednesday they offer showering and laundry facilities as well as a meal and a short service in the evening, which now draws 30–40 people each week. “Please pray that this ministry will lead to people coming to know the Lord,” writes Sharon.

## 20 MAY (TH) BRAZIL

Local partner Flavio Adair, rector of Agua

Viva Anglican church in Olinda, asks for prayer for discernment in a phase of spiritual revitalisation and physical refurbishment of Agua Viva. Pray for Flavio and the church to be prepared to receive people who are new to faith and others who have returned to the church after a long absence.

## 21 MAY (F) CHILE

Please pray for mission partners Alf and Hilary Cooper in Santiago, where Alf is auxiliary bishop and rector of Trinity Parish Church. Please pray for Alf in his new role as representative of the evangelical churches in Chile, as he helps include Christians in the constitutional convention, who will write a new constitution for Chile over the next two years.

# WEEKEND FOCUS

Saturday–Sunday 22–23 May

## BITTERSWEET MISSION

BY AZARIA SPENCER, WHO WORKS WITH STREET CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK THROUGH STREET KIDS

**One of the bittersweet parts of life as a missionary is the reality of having two places that you love and call home.**

I was ridiculously excited to be going back to the UK for Christmas to see my family and friends again after almost two years away. I was looking forward

to long walks in the countryside with our family dog, sitting under blankets watching TV and films with my little brother, chatting with my mum as we cook together or have an afternoon cup of tea, greeting my dad when he walks in the front door after a long day at work.

Yet it was bittersweet as I had to say farewell, for a while at least, to so many people and things I love in Guatemala. Guatemala is also my home now, people there have become my family. So it's just as hard leaving Guatemala to go to the UK as the other way around.

I feel incredibly blessed to be able to call two places home and to feel like leaving and returning to both is always equally exciting and sad. I love my life and feel blessed to have been called to such an extraordinary way of living.

My hope is that God can show me how best to bring Guatemala to life for others in new ways and in turn to grow more links between my life in the UK and my life here. I hope that God will show me how to live more fully and present in both my homes no matter which I am in.

My dream is to see God use me and others to better share the experiences of life here in Guatemala and to also better communicate with the children and young people in Guatemala that there are people in places like the UK and all over the world that love and care for them, as God loves them.

**Pray for** Azaria to be even more intentional and active in being part of bringing further communion in God's worldwide Church.

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## 24 MAY (M) UKRAINE

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Mission partner Alison Giblett is involved in church planting and leads the Genesis ministry, which helps people grappling with addictions to receive God's healing, shed destructive habits and learn to rely on God instead. Alison asks for prayer for God to bring more helpers who are able to train as disciplers and support those struggling with addictions.

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## 25 MAY (T) SPAIN/NORTH AFRICA

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Please pray for M and T, who live in Spain and work to train and support those living missional lifestyles throughout the North Africa region. Due to structural problems with the old villa that has been a hub for their ministry, the family is looking for a new location which will allow them to host and minister to teams, couples and families. Pray for the family as they look for suitable properties, and for the hard-pressed believers who will be served by the caring input that will be available from this peaceful location.

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## 26 MAY (W) MIDDLE EAST

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Mission partners working on a Bible translation for a minority language in the Middle East ask for prayer as some books have been drafted and are now ready for testing in the community: "Please pray that the feedback from the testing will enable us to make this translation really clear and natural-sounding." Pray also that

COVID-19 numbers stay down and allow them to continue testing as needed.

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## 27 MAY (TH) NETHERLANDS

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Having spent most of last year teaching theology to students in Asia from her study in Groningen, Berdine van den Toren-Lekkerkerker is looking forward to opportunities for travel and teaching face-to-face again in Africa and Asia. Pray for protection in travel, wisdom and courage in decision-making, and creativity in the development of new modules and modes of delivery. Pray for Berdine's teaching to be truly formational for the students and contribute to the mission of the Church.

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## 28 MAY (F) THE HOLY LAND

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Mission partner Anne Plested is an English teacher and fundraiser at Bethlehem Bible College, serving the local people by teaching and sharing the love of Jesus. She asks for prayer for peace with justice, dignity and equal rights for all people of the Holy Land. Pray for God to bless and encourage the peacemakers in that land and to multiply their efforts.

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# WEEKEND FOCUS

Saturday–Sunday 29–30 May

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## SEND US A PRAYER

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**We invite you to write to us** with a prayer request and we will count it our privilege to pray for you: [info@churchmissionsociety.org](mailto:info@churchmissionsociety.org)

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## 31 MAY (M) WORCESTER

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Pioneer ordinand Rhianne O'Rourke is currently working in one of the poorer areas of Worcester and training with CMS. Rhianne and husband Steve (an ordinand at St Mellitus Nottingham) along with their three sons are moving to Leicester this summer for their curacy. Pray for a smooth transition for the whole family, especially the boys as they navigate new schools and relationships.