



## Mission Partners Update

November 2023

For many years St Jude's has raised disciples who have heard a call from God to move to foreign lands to help spread His Kingdom. As a church, we also support the work of local ministries and other mission organisations. Within this update, you will find prayer requests and information from each of these mission organisations.

## Street Pastors



[www.streetpastors.org](http://www.streetpastors.org)

*A few words that typify our involvement with the city's nighttime economy:*

We noticed a young man sat on a wall by himself, we approached him and asked if he was ok. He replied that he was but just wanted to be left alone. Something was “off” with him so one of our ladies and I asked if it would be ok to sit with him for a while; it was, and we sat either side of him and asked what was really wrong.

Surprisingly, he opened up and told his life story of abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and violence, at home, in school, foster care and eventually the armed forces. The whole story was shocking and it came as no surprise when he told us that he had taken at least forty antipsychotic drugs before he came out to finish the night by doing harm to himself and the people around him (but not us - as he could see we were nice people). We asked what had triggered this, he explained that he had no one left who cared for him as his husband had left him two weeks ago because of his OCD and need for neatness and order. We let him know that God loved him and that we cared for him.

He is the only carer for his father and considered taking his chronic pain medication but that would have caused problems with his father's pain. We asked if we could get an ambulance for him as obviously he was in need of medical and psychiatric help which to our surprise, he agreed to. In the background our team mates were asking for prayer support, phoning ambulance control and attempting to keep away various drunk, “helpful”, nosey individuals who will always try to help at these times.

Eventually the ambulance arrived, and they took the young man into the ambulance. As we walked away, I noticed we had spent over two hours talking to him, showing God's love and offering support and someone to listen to him in his hours of need. If you are in any doubt if Street Pastors are needed in the night-time economy, think what could have happened if we hadn't been led to speak to him!

Our involvement with the Pop Up church centered in the Millbay area continues to grow and bear fruit in that we uniformed Street Pastors are considered trustworthy, good listeners and good prayers (that's what our “clients” tell us!). It still amazes us how these folk just come up to you and demand prayer from someone wearing our uniform.

## Sharing of Ministries Abroad



[www.somauk.org](http://www.somauk.org)

It has been a very busy year for SOMA UK not just with the missions taking place but with the constant and numerous changes taking place within the team. Thank you for your continued support in prayer and finance.

### **Prayer requests for SOMA.**

For National Director Richard and his family for good health and quality time together.

For Grace, Intercessor coordinator will return to work in January after having to extend her maternity leave from February,

For Henry, now in post as Missions Coordinator following Monique leaving to begin her training for the ministry at Wycliffe College, Henry also has a self-supporting role as National Director for SOMA Ireland.

Please pray for more key volunteer leaders to emerge who will help with missions and team logistics.

Please pray for December 3-5 when Phil, Richard and Henry can get together and work on how to structure and organise work flow going forward.

Please especially pray for God to raise up intercessors and those who can help coordinate intercession for missions.

Lastly, please pray for successful recruitment to a couple of trustee roles and treasurer roles as people come up to retirement next year.

The next SHARING magazine is due out anytime for you to catch up with recent missions.

### **Shekinah Mission**

[www.shekinah.co.uk](http://www.shekinah.co.uk)



Construction work has now begun on the refurbishment of Stonehouse Creek Community Centre with the opening scheduled for January 2024. We would continue to ask you to keep the whole process and the building work in your prayers – in particular Obedair Construction who are the principal contractors.

On 30<sup>th</sup> August we hosted our last “hard hat” event to show the building in its “before” state. At this momentous time in the life of our charity we are so grateful to all the local businesses that are supporting us. We have just launched our first ever Crowdfunder to help raise £20,000 to enable us to invest in high quality furniture and equipment to provide a better structured environment where people can access a range of services to make positive change in their lives. Plymouth’s Lord mayor, Cllr Mark Shayer announced the campaign and urged the local business community to donate fundraise and help make a huge difference to those facing all forms of homelessness.

*Thank you Lord for your faithfulness to us each day.*

*That you go before us and make a way.*

*Thank you that you perfect your strength in our weaknesses.*

*Lavishing love, grace and peace upon us as we walk with you.*

### **Transform Europe Now (TEN)**

<https://www.ten-uk.org/>



Church partnerships are a brilliant way to support and encourage a partner in Europe and inspire your church for mission by seeing how God is working in another country. We currently have 13 church partnerships linked with partners in Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and North Macedonia. Four further churches are considering partnerships

These relationships are highly valued—it is a two-way blessing. Many of our partnerships began over ten years ago and enrich the ministries of the partner and home church. Most start with an initial visit to a partner and grow from there.

Vasile Grigorita, Pastor of Brinza Baptist Church, Moldova writes: 'For me and the believers at our church, the partnership with Christians from other countries is very important. For many years, we've partnered with a church in the UK and received blessings over blessings through the spiritual involvement of the believers there. They've sent mission teams who've helped us enormously in different activities we organised together. Through this partnership, we've also been blessed practically through regular financial support for our family. It has enabled us to focus more on the church ministry and has lightened the great financial pressure from my shoulders as the head of the family.

'We are also so thankful to God for your support through TEN. You are God's people with a great heart and you do a great ministry. We've been so blessed to benefit from projects such as WinterHelp and Harvest for the Hungry. We really value the partner conferences too. We pray that God would bless you in everything you do for His glory and for our good and many other people.'

## **OMF in Japan**

[www.omf.org/asia/japan](http://www.omf.org/asia/japan)



The Hope Church in Yamada were very encouraged in August by the baptism of 87 year old Mrs S, their very first baptism after many years of ministry ever since the 2011 tsunami caused such devastation in this very traditional part of Japan where there are very few Christians . May she be the first of many more. The Nanae Church are now planning their special Christmas evangelistic events, including Christmas parties for children and teenagers. In Manchester Tim and Miho Walker are beginning to prepare special Christmas events for the Japanese Mothers and Toddlers' group and the Japanese students and others who come to their home. They have just heard from the vicar of a church in Cheshire (who Tim knows through Friends International) that 2 Japanese people would like to join the Christianity Explored course he will start on 10th Oct. We have been able to send bilingual Bibles for them to use for the course and are ready to assist in any way we can.

Tim has met with Ken recently and suggested starting bilingual Bible study together using a Japanese Manga Bible that Ken had been loaned. They met for the first time to study at the end of October and plan to continue to meet once a week. Please pray that by the Spirit's work, Ken would understand the gospel for himself and believe.

Meanwhile Judith Spear would very much appreciate prayer for God's help as she prepares Christmas cards and tracts, writing letters to go with them to around 70 of her Japanese friends in Nanae and elsewhere, most of whom are not yet Christians.

## **Devon and Cornwall Refugee Support**

[www.dcrsc1.cfsites.org](http://www.dcrsc1.cfsites.org)



The drop in centre continues to provide help and advice to asylum seekers located to Plymouth and some housed in hotels. As well as the advice services there are a number of activities organised to help service

users feel more settled as they wait for a Home Office decision, English language classes at different levels, art and music. In view of the national attitude to immigration it's often very stressful for staff and service users.

### **Mission Aviation Fellowship:**

The Rileys [www.ashfordvineyard.org/our-activities](http://www.ashfordvineyard.org/our-activities)



Mike Riley writes:

For this update, I thought it would be good to highlight our newest programme in Guinea, West Africa. It was my privilege recently to visit the programme to spend time with the new country director, her husband who is a MAF pilot and their children. It was truly humbling for me to listen to the story of their calling to serve in Guinea and the passion and determination they have to help people with the MAF aeroplane. I was fortunate enough to join a flight which allowed me to see just how remotely some people are living, the terrain which makes ground transport so difficult and the difference an aeroplane can make to a journey. I know I've said it before but taking a MAF plane can literally convert journey times from days to minutes. In some cases that can mean the difference between life and death. I will never get tired of seeing the looks on the faces of people who very rarely get to see a plane for real if at all. Some of the village children were completely beside themselves with excitement and little bit of apprehension (sorry for not sending any photos of that but, on this occasion, I sensed it wasn't the right thing to do). I was also able to chat to a missionary couple who joined the flight and they shared that they'd been working with local people in remote parts of Guinea for 15 years and that the arrival of the MAF plane has literally changed their lives and their work. They'd been praying for years for MAF to start operations in Guinea. It took us a while to get the infrastructure, people, plane and permissions in place but we got there eventually through the determination and tenacity of a lot of people and who knows what the impact of that will be in the future.

The highlight of the trip was spending quality time with our newly established team of locally employed staff in Guinea. Most of them have little work experience but they do have a love for God, the people of their country and a gritty determination to serve in whatever way they can. They made me laugh and cry in equal measure with stories of their childhoods and the hope they have for a bright future. After some team building exercises and helping them understand the mission and purpose of MAF, one of them asked me, 'What will it take for me to become a country director in MAF one day?' I shared the story of our current country director in our Kenya programme, a Kenyan lady who joined MAF as a trainee engineer many years ago. My new Guinean friend simply gave me the biggest smile and said 'I understand' so watch this space!

This is just one of many, many stories about the work of MAF. We never take it for granted when we are given the honour and privilege to start and continue flight operations in all the countries we serve in around the world. Please pray for all of our MAF operations for safety and longevity of the permissions from the local authorities to do what we do. Give thanks for all the people who are willing to dedicate their lives to this work with so much passion and enthusiasm and, on this occasion, please pray particularly for the MAF team in

Guinea. We have a few vacant positions in Guinea which our amazing team of recruiters are working hard to fill. Let's pray that the right people will be found very soon.

Lastly, thanks for all your on-going support for the work of MAF. Our team in Guinea and all our programmes know that their work is underpinned by prayer and support from dedicated people like you and we are all so grateful.

With much appreciation,

Mike

## **Church Mission Society**

**[www.churchmissionsociety.org](http://www.churchmissionsociety.org)**



Our link Mission Partner Aaron Stanbury is about to leave for Kenya. He will be working with a programme run by an Anglican parish in Westlands (a suburb of Nairobi) which aims to help children aged 7 to 10 from the slums, teaching basic literacy and life skills and getting them into full time education. Aaron said he was really happy to have his commissioning service at St Jude's . He asks for prayer as he adjusts to a new situation , culture and language. Although English is widely spoken in Kenya he will need to learn Swahili. Pray that he quickly feels part of the team at Kids to Kids and makes new friends there, and also for his family here in Plymouth as they send him off.

## **Christmas card project**

This year's Christmas Card project is to provide funding for Angel Tree - a very simple and rewarding way to help prisoners stay in contact with their families during imprisonment, which can contribute to reducing re-offending rates. Angel Tree is a national, Christian organisation that gives parents in prison the opportunity to send a Christmas present to their children. As a church we can elect to send any monies raised towards Christmas gifts from prisoners held in Dartmoor prison. Prison Fellowship volunteers work with prison chaplains and local churches to buy, wrap and deliver the presents. Each gift is dispatched as though it is from the parent in prison and is accompanied by a personal message written by the parent for their child to make the gift extra special. The parent is also given the option of including an age-appropriate Christian story book in their child's gift.

**Letters received from our mission partners are available to read in the file at the back of church. If you would like further information, please speak to a member of the Mission Partners Group.**

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[www.judes.org.uk](http://www.judes.org.uk)