

# St Bartholomew's Church Otford

## Mission Links Update February 2020

**“I tell you the truth, whatever you did for the least of one of these brothers of mine, you did for me.” St. Matthew 25:40**

*In this update on our Mission partners we focus on the many aspects of their work and their mission. Natural disaster, civil war, injustice and poverty and persecution will all feature in this. Just as God was with his people suffering such issues in Biblical times so he is with those affected now through the work of our partners. Whether a Christian in Syria is facing persecution or a teenager in Sevenoaks is suffering from mental anguish or lacking direction or a child refugee is suffering injustice our partners use God's word and inspiration to lead, give tangible assistance, advice, scripture and prayer and through this provide hope, to those most in need. Please include our mission partners in your prayers. Many work in high risk areas.*

*Andrew Hill, Mission Links*



The Society continues in their work to disrupt multiple disadvantages for young people.

### Sexual Exploitation:

- Spotting the warning signs
- Assisting young people who are at risk or victims
- Helping them through the justice system

### Help children access mental health support:

- Mental health provision is at crisis point and demand is increasing
- Teenagers are increasingly self-harming or resorting to suicide
- Provide stepping stone frontline services for those most at risk

Trafficking and refugees and criminal exploitation:

- Youngsters are used by drug gangs to travel outside of major cities to sell drugs often under threat of violence to them or their families.
- Society works with youngsters to empower them to say no and divert them from risk
- Assisting young refugees who are often alone and at risk.

Other areas of work include supporting young carers, missing children and substance misuse. Current lobbying campaigns to highlight awareness and obtain extra funding for young people's services, child and family poverty.

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



For 200 years the Bible Society has been working to bring the Bible to life; to help people around the world engage with it, relate to it, and make sense of it. This drives a huge range of activities including translation, printing, distribution, literacy classes, leadership training, community support projects and emergency aid and trauma support.

The Society believes that by communities and individuals



engaging with scripture it can change their lives – for good.

At home in the UK the key barrier is simply many people don't think the Bible is relevant to them. The Society

is determined to change that. Online resources for churches and individuals are available. The Open The Book project involves thousands of volunteers visiting primary schools to share Bible stories with a generation almost entirely unfamiliar with them.

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



**We stand together.  
For dignity. For  
equality. For justice.**  
Together with

supporters and partners Christian Aid aims:

- To expose poverty throughout the world
- To help in practical ways to end it
- To highlight, challenge and change the
- Structure and systems that favour the rich and are powerful over the poor and marginalised.

Current emergencies being resourced with both emergency and long term resourcing plans:

- South Asia, floods, cyclones and Tsunamis in the Philippines, Indonesia and Kerala India.



- Ebola outbreak in DRC, drought in South west areas and a cyclone which affected Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe, Sierra Leone mudslide disaster.
- Refugee crisis in Syria and surrounding

states, helping those still in camps in Greece and Serbia. The forgotten children of the Rohingya crisis

Current lobbying campaigns: Climate change, corporate tax dodging, rights for displaced people, many refugees are unprotected, have no legal status and are stranded.

Pray with us to support those whose lives have been torn apart by emergencies and disasters.

[www.christian.aid.org.uk](http://www.christian.aid.org.uk)



Earlier in the year tithed funds from the St Bartholomew's Reordering Appeal helped to fund the construction

of two toilet blocks with flushing toilets at Magnet School Rongata Ongai in Kenya. Prior to this the pupils only had unhygienic pit latrines available. This is such a great step forwards for the school. Jeremiah Kibobi (the school founder and principle) stated "A great change has been experienced in Magnet School. Glory to God".

Kenya suffered from drought this year and staple food prices were rising at an alarming rate. WWSL provided funding for the purchase of 3 months worth of food for the schools 300 pupils to alleviate the problem. Jeremiah has made some lasting contacts with two churches in the USA who have assisted with the construction of a new hen house and a canteen for the pupils who had been eating outside or in classrooms.

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





SCS operate from the buildings known as The Bridge to the rear of the United Reform Church , Little Court Road, Sevenoaks. They

provide a vital link service of professional, tailored and affordable counselling by Christian counsellors in many fields including , bereavement, faith issues, family issues, substance abuse and other addictions and children and young people in need of support. Clients can self refer or be referred. The charity receives some local government funding but funding is mainly provided by local churches .

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



**hospicesofhope**  
making every day count

Saint Bartholomew's Church continues to support Hospices of Hope, the leading Hospice development charity working across South East Europe.

In their December prayer letter the charity gives thanks for the many individuals who volunteer across the organisation in the UK, Romania, Serbia, Moldova and Albania.

Volunteers offer their time in a huge variety of ways from helping in the shops and tearooms, researching grant applications, providing administrative advice and support to organising events and shipments of medical supplies to country partners.

In Serbia BELhospice has developed a volunteer programme with a thriving team of trained volunteers who visit patients and assist with events. In Romania the help and enthusiasm of volunteers meant that in 2019 Hospices of Hope were able to run five summer trips for children and their carers. For more information on supporting Hospices of Hope visit [www.hospicesofhope.co.uk](http://www.hospicesofhope.co.uk)



### Andrew and Lisa Peart in Bolivia

Having had 3 months back in the UK over the summer, doing some further training with other mission families, the Peart family returned to Bolivia in September. They work as part of a team to increase engagement with the local community. Building upon their church's existing outreach programmes of "Messy Church in the park" and parenting classes in local schools, they aim to strengthen relationships between church and community as well as intentionally seek community input on pioneering initiatives. Drawing on their background in business and hospitality, they continue to develop a micro-enterprise programme as a means for economic empowerment, seeking to build a sustainable future for the local community. They focus on building relationships through friendship, discipling and mentoring. Pray for Andrew and Lisa that they will be intentional on forming relationships with their neighbours. Pray also for the girls as they settle back into school and life in Bolivia.



We are delighted to let you know that Holly Brazier is joining the SAYT

team in January 2020. Holly lives in Sevenoaks and will be working alongside Julie as a part-time youth worker. This is how Holly introduces herself: I'm Holly, and I am delighted to have joined Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust. My husband, Daniel, and I have three sons of pre-school and primary ages. We live in the Greatness area of Sevenoaks and I love being part of its community. I am passionate about and enjoy working with young people and have lots of experience through my church and family. I would love to expand my knowledge and gain qualifications

that will help me grow in my youth work journey so that I can benefit the young people and the whole community of Sevenoaks. I believe the importance of seeing each young person's potential regardless of their background and to be able to offer non-judgemental support through the challenges they may facing. My faith is the most important part of my life and I hope to share my experiences of growing up and coming to know Jesus and Gods faithfulness along the way, it is such a blessing to walk alongside the young people of Sevenoaks and I look forward to every moment.



## Scripture Union

### Scripture Union – South East News

Felpham mission  
was set up in 1918

and each year a team have gathered to bring an impact to the local community by sharing the love of Jesus in different ways. There has been a huge legacy of serving and sharing the good news of Jesus. But as you can imagine Felpham has changed over the 100+ years since the first mission began. Felpham now neighbours a Butlins site in Bognor, a popular holiday destination for many, and in recent years, housing redevelopment projects have seen a number of neighbouring communities grow. Building on the faithful service of many in the past, a new team leader is stepping up to take the lead. The Rev. Dan Balsdon is a local Methodist minister serving three of the local Methodist churches in the area. Dan has brought together a team of people to help co-ordinate the mission week for 2020 – seeking to grow and build on all the foundations that have been laid in the past century. Impact 2020 will run from 27th –31st July. Currently the team are busy working on a programme that will include a morning holiday club, family events, youth events and of course the classic tide battle at the beach.



**Far Eastern  
Broadcasting**

**Association – FEBA**

Broadcasting from the port town of Pemba in north Mozambique, Radio Wimbe is playing an important role as a Christian FM community radio station in an area marked by sharp contrasts. Over 60% of the people in this region are Muslim, which is markedly different to the rest of Mozambique that is predominantly Christian. Sadly, there are tensions and conflicts between different ethnic and faith groups. Before Radio Wimbe started broadcasting, people in the local community felt they had very little say in the issues which have an impact on their lives and wellbeing. With illiteracy very high and most people in Pemba unable to speak the national language, Portuguese, many have been excluded from listening or engaging with the country's national media. Please pray for the team at Radio Wimbe, who face many challenges when interacting with listeners (150,000) each day, in the local language.



### Loaves and Fishes

We have recently changed our referral process in order to help people out of debt, maximise their income and reduce dependency. We now only accept referrals from partner agencies who have some knowledge of the financial circumstances of families so that families are directed towards other sources of help as well, such as debt counselling and benefit maximising. This is working well, especially with CAB and West Kent Housing. Other agencies such as schools, churches, health centres, are now asked to signpost families to any one of the partner agencies. We still provide emergency food so that no-one is refused help but we do ask the recipient to seek a referral in order to receive on going help, if that is required.