

# window

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issue 2022/2





Over the last two months, we've all been shocked by the images we've seen of events unfolding in Ukraine.

It has been a privilege for WorldShare to stand alongside our ministry partner in Moldova, Beginning of Life, and humbling to see how the team, along with a group of local churches, has been reaching out to refugees fleeing Ukraine and giving them support. Sometimes with food and shelter, sometimes with a hug for a child who has left behind everything they know. What could be more apt at this time than Beginning of Life's strapline:

"We are there, where the differences are needed."

We see this picture of God's people reaching out, practically and lovingly, repeated in many of the countries that border Ukraine. We have been humbled by the response of supporters and donors - thank you so much for your generosity to the Ukrainian people.

Here in the UK - isn't it great to see the plants beginning to pop up as the warmth of the sun encourages new growth? New plants appearing help us to remember God's creation all around us. Creation care is something that we at WorldShare are committed to embracing. Unless as a society, a planet even(!), we make changes and reduce the build-up of CO<sub>2</sub>, then we are heading for disaster. The exact timescale is unclear, but the direction of travel isn't. Find out what our ministry partners are doing in Guatemala (pages 4-5) and Brazil (page 11) to care for the planet and their communities. Or why not be inspired by creation as you pray, and try out our brand new spring prayer resource: A prayer journey from seed to fruit (page 10).

Finally, there are some changes ahead for WorldShare as I will retire and step down from being Chief Executive at the end of July. Please pray for the new CEO and that the transition would be smooth and straightforward for all those it will impact; the staff team, our ministry partners, and you our supporters and donors. Read some reflections on page 12.

Alan Butler, Chief Executive

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## Reaching out to the Deaf



Finding new ways to reach out to the local community and ensuring church is accessible to all is an essential part of the Evangelical Church in North Macedonia's ministry. Something which is being lived out by pastors Tefik and Anita from the Bitola Roma Evangelical Church in the south of the country.



They decided to begin ministering to the Deaf community after seeing the struggles that their two daughters face each day being excluded from so many areas of life due to being deaf. This led them to set up a Gideon programme, designed not to be like church, but a safe space for those from the Deaf community to explore their faith. Those attending are able to take part in educational activities and hear the good news of Jesus.

Behind this ministry is the wider Gideon organisation which was founded three years ago. It aims to encourage and mobilise churches to not only serve the Deaf community, but also the Roma Muslim population in North Macedonia. This is achieved through helping to train and equip churches, like Tefik and Anita's, with the resources and skills they need, as well as translating the Bible and evangelistic literature to make them accessible for those they are serving.

Praise God that Tefik and Anita are seeing this area of ministry bear fruit - several of those taking part have become believers and been baptised. The programme continues to grow - 15 people are currently attending and the team is now seeking a bigger space to run activities.

By Harriet Robson



Meet Refide, she is fluent in Macedonian sign language and is part of the small team of faithful volunteers running the Gideon programme. Every Saturday Refide leads the literacy classes, alongside helping to run the children's ministry at the church.

Please pray for God to open hearts as Bible stories are shared among those meeting together on the Gideon programme. May the Lord bless Tefik and Anita's church as they seek to grow this area of ministry.

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## Potter's House Agricultural School







140
aubergines



These are just a few examples of what has been produced in family gardens in Chiquimula so far this year, thanks to support from Potter's House Agricultural and Livestock School.

In Guatemala, almost 50% of children under five suffer from stunted growth as a result of poor nutrition during pregnancy and their early years of life. One of the states with the highest rates of child malnutrition is Chiquimula. It is located in the Central American 'Dry Corridor', characterised by long droughts and the late arrival of the rainy season, which has a negative impact on crops. Unfortunately, acute malnutrition in the Dry Corridor has skyrocketed since March 2020 due to Covid-related causes, combined with the ongoing effects of climate change.

Fortunately, our ministry partner Potter's House is perfectly placed to care for and empower the local people. After expanding from Guatemala City to Chiquimula in 2017, the team has been constantly developing new programmes to support people, from setting up a Business School to starting an Education Programme.

To combat the ever-growing rates of food insecurity, the Chiquimula Agriculture and Livestock School launched in 2020.

The Potter's House team identified that families in the region have access to at least a small piece of land, but they only have very basic knowledge of agriculture. The area is known for producing a variety of crops, but due to the weather conditions, specific agricultural practices are required that most families do not know.

Through its Agriculture and Livestock School, Potter's House has been teaching families essential farming techniques helping to transform their lives. Families like the Lima Soto family.

### **Lima Soto family**

David is 32 and was born and raised in Chiquimula. He is married to Celeste and has an eight-year-old daughter called Samantha. Sadly, three years ago he had an accident at work which left him injured and caused complete paralysis in his left leg.

He has not been able to find steady work since. Celeste turned to selling clothes and food to cover the family's basic needs.

In August 2020, David and Celeste joined Potter's House Agriculture and Livestock School. They have been faithful in replicating everything they have learnt at the school in their own family garden. David shares:

"It has been a blessing for us that Potter's House has been working in an area close to our home. They have taught us to make our own raised beds and fertilizer. Also, we have learnt to grow our own food and how to raise our chickens."

David and Celeste also joined the Potter's House Business School in 2021 and have been learning about starting and running a micro business. Their daughter Samantha joined the Education Programme as well. Thanks to the Lima Soto family's involvement throughout the past years in these programmes, they have been encouraged to join a community of faith and for several months have been attending church.



The Potter's House team shared these wonderful words about the family:

"We are excited to see that everything that has been shared with this family through our programmes, services and primarily, God's Word, has impacted their lives. They have changed parenting patterns and nutrition habits, they have accessed opportunities to start a business but, most importantly, they have come closer to God. Our vision is that every beneficiary can be transformed and that God's good plans for them can become a reality. Although the Lima Soto family still face some challenges, we know God is working in their lives."

The programme helps people to develop new skills and establish self-sustainable systems, allowing them to generate extra income for their families. Those enrolled study three modules - Nutrition, Organic Agriculture and Livestock - lasting a total of six months.

Since it began in 2020, three cohorts of families have gone through all the modules of the programme, totalling an incredible 45 families.

By Emily Hobbs



Please praise God with us for the amazing work of our ministry partner Potter's House. And pray for the 15 families who are currently enrolled in this year's programme at the Agriculture and Livestock School in Chiquimula.

## Fancy a summer challenge?



### Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge June 2022

We invite you to join us in taking on the famous Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge and fundraise for WorldShare in the process.

### **When:** Friday 24th June (16:30) till Sunday 26th June (11:00)

The challenge will cover 25 miles in under 12 hours, summiting Pen-y-ghent, Whernside and Ingleborough. It is being run by Up Mountains which was founded by John and Lizzie Bunce in 2015 and delivers unique and bespoke adventure packages. John is also a WorldShare trustee and will be leading the event. He is a qualified mountain leader, outdoor first aid trained and has led hundreds of people to successfully complete this challenge – so we're in safe hands!

The cost of registration is £75 per person which includes two nights' accommodation at Gearstone Lodge, a comprehensive route card, manned checkpoints and support vehicles with experienced *Up Mountains* volunteer staff. Gearstones provides basic but comfortable accommodation in small dormitory style rooms (separate male/female or family rooms). Food provided includes breakfasts, a packed lunch



and an evening meal on the Saturday. If you would like to join us but don't want to stay overnight the cost is £40 per person, which includes the team support from *Up Mountains* plus a packed lunch and evening meal on the Saturday.

There will be WorldShare staff and trustees taking part. It would be great to have you join us, as we explore God's amazing creation and take on the challenge together!

When you register, we will email you with information about fundraising for WorldShare. There is no minimum fundraising target, just raise whatever sponsorship you can. We will also send you kit lists and specific event details such as timings and meeting points.



There are a limited number of places so register today to avoid disappointment!

To register (full package with accommodation @ £75) visit: worldshare.org.uk/YTP22

To register (without accommodation @ £40) please email: upmountains@icloud.com directly.

## ChildAid supporter story

It is amazing to see God working through the generosity of our ChildAid supporters. Today we share with you the wonderful story of Paola and her daughter Elisabetta. Together with their church in Italy, they have been sponsoring children for over 25 years.

Paola says: "I first heard about WorldShare through one of your ministry partners who came and spoke about ChildAid in 1994 in a nearby church in the city of Mantova, Italy. The Lord had already put a burden on my heart whilst watching a documentary about abandoned children in Brazil, I was deeply touched in my heart and decided to sponsor a child through ChildAid. Not long after, other sisters in our church also wanted to join in. John Rose (former WorldShare CEO) came to visit our church and shared with us the needs of children from around the world. Since then, as a church, we have been faithfully sponsoring children through ChildAid.

I believe this has continued because the hand of the Lord is behind it, giving us a burden for the poor.

As for myself, child sponsorship is very important. It gives us the opportunity to support ministry partners as they save children from the streets, from drugs or child prostitution, giving them a hope and a future through free education and, most of all, teach them about the Christian faith. In Italy, fewer and fewer

young people are getting married and having children. So it is a privilege to be able to help families who have many children but are too poor to send them to school. My prayer is that not only the child comes to know Christ, but their family too."

#### Elisabetta, Paola's daughter:

"I remember my family sponsoring children since I was a child myself. I was always thrilled to receive their letters and news. When I got married, my husband and I decided to sponsor a child in Guatemala... I've been translating Window magazine and children's letters into Italian for several years. I'm delighted to play a small part in WorldShare's ministry. I share the same love and passion for vulnerable people and unbelievers all over the world."



Find out how you too can help transform lives and sponsor a child by visiting: worldshare.org.uk/childaid

# Ukraine refugee update



Over 5 million Ukrainians have now fled for their lives to neighbouring countries as the devastating conflict continues in Ukraine. Nearly 100,000 have taken refuge in Moldova, the poorest country in Europe, and have been welcomed in with loving arms by local ministry partner Beginning of Life. Through the immense generosity of WorldShare supporters, and in partnership with local churches, Beginning of Life has been able to support these refugees holistically by providing physical, psychological and spiritual care.



#### **Emergency response**

As refugees began to pour over the Moldova-Ukraine border, Beginning of Life was able to quickly respond to the unfolding needs on the ground. The team set up a 24/7 helpline, gathered together food, water and basic supplies, and as refugee centres filled up, opened up the doors of its own buildings to provide shelter and help with documentation.

Alongside this, Beginning of Life has been able to call on its years of expertise and experience to provide counselling and art therapy sessions through its Psychological Art Studio, helping people deal with the deep psychological trauma they have experienced.



Many of the refugees are young children who have been torn from their everyday lives of playing with their friends, going to school and feeling safe. Providing care, God's love, a safe space and fun activities for these young children is another key part of Beginning of Life's response.

Children like Nastea, a little girl aged around 12 years old, who after her long painful journey to the refugee centre in Moldova simply asked the Beginning of Life team for a hug. A journey Nastea took with her mum and little brother Misha.

#### Nastea's story

"We were living in a small room in a dormitory in the Ukrainian city of Kharkov. I was attending school and my brother was preparing to go to school later this year. When we heard a loud sound outside in the early morning, mum told me that something had probably happened at the factory. But, a little after, we heard many more explosions, and women in the corridor were saying that the war had started and we all needed to run away. Mum took us to the basement of the house because there were explosions happening very close to our district. It was scary when something blew up very close by, and people around started to scream and cry. A soldier helped us to get out of the basement and we got on a bus and left home. We were sleeping for several days in different places. Soon, we got to the big crowd of people who were walking slowly somewhere. Mum said to me we needed to walk with them too. It was so cold outside, I was very tired and Misha was crying.

At the border, a woman gave us bananas and juice which I liked very much. And a bus drove us to this place. We live here in a small room. I was so happy when I saw through the window a castle being inflated with air. It reminded me of last summer when we were in a park for children in our hometown. I would love to take my mum there because she is often crying. I don't know where we will go... and when I will see my father and grandma again... and my cat."



#### Looking to the future

The Beginning of Life team is working incredibly hard, pouring everything it has into supporting refugees but knows there is a long road ahead. Working in partnership with local churches and organisations they have launched a long-term programme to support Ukrainian refugees over the next few years. To lead this a programme director has been appointed, alongside a social worker and social educator. Current staff have also been given additional training.

Together they will be providing emergency assistance, help with long-term accommodation and job searches, children's activities and trauma-healing. They are also providing support to the south west area of Ukraine, sending in weekly humanitarian aid, mentoring church leaders and providing online counselling.

Thank you
to everyone who has
stood with Beginning
of Life, offering up your
prayers and financial
support. Together you
have helped to raise more
than £120,000 - we praise
God for your amazing
generosity!

Please pray for peace in Ukraine, and for all those who have fled or are internally displaced. Please also pray for the team at Beginning of Life, for strength and financial provision.

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## **Pray in May**



"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful." (Colossians 4:2)

Prayer is foundational to all that we do at WorldShare. Each day, as a staff team, we set aside time to pray for our ministry partners around the world, and praise God for the ways he is working through them to bring hope and transform lives. But we're not alone. Behind us is an amazing team of prayer warriors, found in you, our faithful supporters. Thank you for all your prayers.

This May we invite you to join us as we intentionally set aside more time to pray. To help you do this we want to introduce you to an exciting new prayer resource we have just launched:

### A PRAYER JOURNEY FROM SEED TO FRUIT



A set of six devotionals designed to encourage you in your prayer life as we reflect on the wonders of nature that God has gifted us with. Each devotional focuses on a different stage of a plant's life from seed to fruit, exploring what it can teach us about our relationship with God, alongside some wonderful examples from our ministry partners.

You can sign up to receive this exciting new resource any time by visiting: worldshare.org.uk/seedtofruit

Once you have signed up you will receive a prayer email each week for six weeks, which includes a short devotional and a prayer challenge.

We would also love you to spread the joy by sharing the journey with a friend, neighbour, someone at your church or a family member.

### Other ways to pray

On our social media channels, we will be praying for a different ministry partner each week across the month of May.



Follow us on Facebook
(@worldshare) or Instagram
(@worldshareuk) to join with us
and discover the latest prayers
and stories.

and o

Continue praying with us beyond the month of May by signing up to our monthly prayer calendar which features daily prayers. Visit: worldshare.org.uk/pray to



sign up and receive this directly to your inbox each month, or email: info@worldshare.org.uk if you would like to receive it by post.

## Protecting precious water sources

Water is a way of life for the remote fishing communities that the Evangelical Mission for Assistance to Fishermen (EMAF) serves in Brazil. Each day revolves around the ebbs and flows of the Amazon River and coastal waters of the Atlantic Ocean.

Often this life is a difficult one, with families struggling to bring in enough income to support themselves, cut off from essential services due to their remoteness, and without the hope of the Gospel. It is these kinds of communities that feel the full weight of climate change, relying so heavily on the rhythms of the water which can be thrown off as ecosystems are damaged.

An essential part of EMAF's ministry, alongside sharing the good news of Jesus, is to educate communities on the importance of protecting the water sources they rely on and the life-giving habitat around them. They share:

"All our community projects aim to care for the environment, either directly or indirectly, by raising awareness and education."

#### **Environmental education**

EMAF is helping to increase productivity in the regions where it works through teaching local fishermen new techniques for better management of natural resources. This enables fishermen to have a more abundant harvest whilst protecting a precious resource.

This goes against the negative commercial exploitation cycle which has been predominant for decades.

The team also limits the exploitation of the ecosystem by promoting community gardens, teaching people how to raise poultry and providing environmental education. For example, in the Delta do Parnaíba area, where litter was once freely spread about, there are now bins, collected regularly, and notices to promote the benefits of picking up litter.



In other communities, local women are being taught how to extract and sell coconut oil. Before this project, dry coconuts were simply being discarded, meaning the oil went to waste and many women were relying on government assistance.

By Harriet Robson

Praise God that through this work, communities are coming to know Jesus and celebrating God's creation in all that they do. Pray for the team as they continue to support local communities in this wonderful part of the world.

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## Reflections and thanks



the WorldShare trustees about retiring in the middle of 2022, some 6½ years after I was first appointed, and a while after reaching State Pension age. I'm pleased to report that, following interviews last month, Andrew Yelland has been appointed to take over from me at the end of July. More about Andrew in the next issue of Window. Just to say, the trustees and I are

"Last year, I started a dialogue with



I have mixed feelings about retiring and leaving WorldShare, but there is an exciting new chapter under God to come. It has been a privilege to work with each of our inspirational and committed ministry partners and I will miss my regular contact with them. Also, I will miss the office team, we've been through a lot together, especially over the last two years. And let's not forget you, our wonderful and dedicated supporters and donors, some

of whom I've got to know personally during my time as CEO. Thank you to all of you.

WorldShare is not just Alan Butler and, over its 79-year history, people have moved on. But the mission of empowering local Christian partners to share God's love in practical ways in some of the world's most vulnerable communities, transforming lives and bringing hope, will continue.

So, as I retire, I shall continue to take an interest in all that goes on and continue to pray for WorldShare's ministry partners and for those who support its work. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to serve as WorldShare's Chief Executive."

Alan Butler, Chief Executive

### A thought from Dr Kevin McKemey, WorldShare Chair of Trustees

"I wish to express both my personal, and the trustees' appreciation, for all that Alan has done for WorldShare. It has been a privilege to know and work with him. He leaves the organisation in a more secure position than when he took over. He has helped restructure WorldShare, strengthening the team, which in turn has led to increased support. God has protected and blessed WorldShare and its ministry partners during Alan's time as CEO. We wish him, and his family, every blessing in the next stage of their ministry."

### **Latest News**

Over the last year we have said a **fond farewell to two WorldShare trustees. Sarah Kelsall** had served on the board for eight years, and **Matthew Forsyth** for two and a half years. Both will be dearly missed, as will their insight, wisdom and contribution to the governance of the organisation.



In December 2021 we welcomed Neil Brighton to WorldShare's Board of Trustees. Neil is a Baptist minister with an interest in global mission. Following pastorates in Keyworth and Poynton, he spent time in the Peruvian Amazon training church and community leaders. Returning to the UK, he was the UK team leader for an evangelical mission agency. Prior to Baptist ministry, Neil worked in business administration, learning skills which have

proved useful as a trustee for several charities, where he often focuses on issues of strategy and finance. He is currently completing an MA in Theology and Global Mission. We are so grateful to Neil for giving us his time and expertise, and we give him a hearty welcome to WorldShare!

## WorldShare Week & Why WorldShare?

We kicked off WorldShare Week 2022 on 14th March with an exciting new online event called 'Why WorldShare?'. Thank you to everyone who passed on the invitations or shared the link via email. We were delighted to welcome new people and show them the diverse impact of our ministry partners through footage of their work and the people they support. We also heard from a few current supporters as they shared how they got involved and why they've remained with us! If you missed it, you can watch the video by visiting our YouTube channel: youtube.com/ WorldShareUK

## **NEW Legacy Booklet**

Available now! Visit: worldshare.org.uk/legacy to download a copy of our NEW Legacy Booklet which explains the difference you can make by leaving a gift in your Will to WorldShare. This resource has been created with input from several WorldShare supporters. If you don't have access to a computer, please contact us on 01302 775209 and we'll send you a copy in the post.



## Introducing... Bhim Lal



Here at WorldShare, we have the privilege of connecting with ministry leaders all over the world. Each wonderful person has heeded God's call to direct the transformative work of a ministry partner. Today, we'd love to introduce you to Bhim Lal, ministry leader of Good Friends of Nepal (GFN):

#### Tell us about your role and the GFN team:

"I serve the Lord as the Director of Good Friends of Nepal, as well as the pastor of a local church, here in Kathmandu. GFN is committed to the work of evangelism and church planting, through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to reach the unreached in Nepal. We are 45 team members working together - 34 church planting evangelists, 5 training leaders, 2 staff focused on our work with children and 4 head office staff, including myself and my wife Kalpana. Through my role, I am able to travel to different ministry locations for leadership seminars, meetings, baptism programmes, pastors' ordination programmes, evangelism and so on."



### What have been some recent challenges you have faced?

"During the challenging period of the pandemic, even meeting with two people outside was very difficult and gatherings were completely prohibited. Even then, God enabled us to reach the unreached in many different ways. We had weekly services and meetings on Zoom, a number of baptism programmes, and two groups of men and women graduated from our church planting training programme. We are so thankful to God for keeping us under his mighty care and, despite the challenges, God remained so faithful in using us for his glory."

### How can we be praying for you?

"Kindly pray for all our GFN workers and their families. Please pray for my wife, both of our kids and for myself, that we continue to have good health and our commitments in serving the Lord are strong. Pray too for the next cohort of people who began our church planting training programme in January."

Enjoyed hearing from Bhim Lal and keen to be introduced to more ministry leaders? We have just launched a brand-new blog series called 'Introducing...', where you can get to know a ministry leader each month. Head to: worldshare.org.uk/blog to give the first installment a read.

# W

### WorldShare

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