

MISSION FOCUS

Pullout Edition | May 2025



Our Mission Partners:

We support the following organisations and ministries:

- ◆ AWM-Pioneers
- ◆ Covenant Homes Trust
- ◆ Nehemiah Project
- ◆ Open Doors
- ◆ Tearfund

Giving to mission

Every year St Mildred's give a tithe of our income from the general fund to mission.

Find out more about the work they do in this Update edition of the newsletter.



Welcome to our special Mission Focus edition!

Over the past year, we've seen changes within our Mission Committee, bidding farewell to Larissa King and warmly welcoming Lee-Ann De Villiers.

In these pages, you'll find updates on all five of our mission partners to keep you informed about their ongoing work and ministry. Each update highlights the challenges they've faced and the victories they've celebrated throughout the year.

We encourage you to take time with these stories, learn more about these vital ministries, and most importantly, continue supporting them through your faithful prayers. Your spiritual partnership and generous gift to the church makes a tremendous difference in their ability to serve effectively in their respective fields.

Edna Petzen



We are so very grateful for your partnership in ministry to the Arab world.

AWM-Pioneers - the Arab World Ministry of Pioneers mobilises teams to glorify God among unreached peoples by initiating church-planting movements in partnership with local churches. They have been sending workers into cross-cultural ministry among Arab peoples for more than 140 years.

Last year marked a significant milestone for the ministry as AWM-Pioneers officially and legally united with Pioneers UK for the sake of the gospel. In the summer of 2020, the global Pioneers family participated in '40 Days of Prayer' to seek the Lord's guidance for the future. During those weeks of focused prayer, Phil, the National Director of AWM-Pioneers, and Stephen, the Director of Pioneers UK, along with both boards of trustees, felt a leading from the Lord that the two offices – AWM-Pioneers and Pioneers UK - should strive to increase their levels of collaboration to better fulfil God's mission to the unreached, both in the UK and around the world.

Four years later, on 1 July 2024, AWM-Pioneers and Pioneers UK officially and legally joined together as one mission and will now be known as Pioneers UK & Ireland.

This year, they are looking to run several roadshows around the country for supporters. At the roadshow, the National Director, Stephen Carling, will share updates on the ministry, and people will have the opportunity to hear from some workers. It will certainly be an exciting time to learn how the Lord is at work among the nations.

Prayer Evenings

Every second Monday evening of the month (7:30 – 9:00pm) we meet online with workers to pray for the ministry. This is one of the highlights of the month.

Chris Binstead

Covenant Home Trust

Pat Botwright's journey of faith and service began at age 50 following significant personal losses, including the death of her mother, husband, and a daughter. After joining a church in Diss, Norfolk, she travelled to Uganda in the 1990s to work with street children during the AIDS crisis that had orphaned approximately 40% of Uganda's children.

Feeling called to deeper service, Pat attended Victory Bible College in Kisumu, Kenya in 1992, where she established a children's nursery with fellow church member Tessa Kerridge. When they took in two orphaned children to keep them off the streets, Pat recognised her calling to prevent children from becoming homeless.

Despite her church's concerns about her age, Pat demonstrated remarkable determination by selling her house to fund her vision and returning to Kisumu. She rented additional housing, separating boys (supervised by Eddie Kasibante) and girls (whom she cared for personally).

With assistance from Bo and Jeff Ace, church leaders from North London, Pat connected with ministries that helped her register as a charity and raise funds. She secured land in Dunga, near Lake Victoria, where she built Covenant Home and school. By 2000, the facility was housing over 200 children.

The ministry gained support through personal connections, including Rebecca Rainer, a midwife trainee who completed a

placement at Covenant. Through Rebecca, myself and David began supporting Pat's work and introduced it to St. Mildred's Church.

In 2014, facing health and financial challenges, Pat transferred Covenant to Victory Church, a Canadian charity, with the understanding they would maintain the orphanage and school. Pat continued supporting the older children's education from a rented house in Kisumu, where many former residents visited her, affectionately calling her "Momma Pat."

Sadly, Pat passed away on June 20, 2020, during the COVID lockdown, unable to return to the UK due to flight disruptions. Her legacy continues through longtime staff members Pauline and Hellen, who now care for vulnerable children and young adults.

Pat's daughter Sharon Thorndyke oversees operations from Norwich, UK, working with trustees Eddie Kasibante and Daniel Woods. Charles Anderson, a former Covenant resident, leads the Kenyan trustee team from Nairobi.

Today, Covenant supports 32 children and young people, primarily focusing on completing their college education.

Kay Nicholls



Left: Brigel Omondi. Getting kitted out for his training as a mortuary assistant. He is at Machakos KMTC College.



Right: Joash. Kenyatta University. Helping at a clinic as part of his final year training as a doctor.

Dianh Ayuma. She got good grades in her exams and would like to be a Teacher, if the funds are available.



Sheila Adema. Getting ready for her final school exams.



L-R: Evans Makori. At Kenyatta University 4th year student training to be a teacher; Benjamine Hannington. Lives with Pauline. Grade 9; Favour. 1st year student at Ergeton University. Studying Statistics and Actuarial Science; Deborah with Angela, Leshan and Edith all attend school, assisted by Covenant.

The ehemiah Project

The Nehemiah Project provides a home and support for men with a history of addiction. Their residential programme is abstinence-based, where men can address the root causes of their addiction within a supportive environment.

Nehemiah has six houses in South London. Their first stage houses are in Streatham and Croydon with second stage move-on accommodation in Croydon, Clapham and Wandsworth. At Nehemiah they believe that anyone can change their life, with support.

Some of the amazing statistics from the project:

- In 2024, The Nehemiah project worked with 48 men.
- Just 5% of the men supported in the last 5 years have reoffended. Compared with the national figure of 50% of released prisoners reoffending within 12 months after their release.
- No second stage residents absconded, abandoned their place or were recalled to prison.
- 70% of men completed their recovery programme.
- 29 Residents benefited from family support, with 12 men rebuilding family relationships.
- 20 men engaged with the 1st stage 13-week programme. 14 men then completed 'A new future' programme, with the majority moving into move-on housing and independent living.
- 32 residents were integrated back into the community through employment, training or regular volunteering.

In September 2025, Colin Matthews will be stepping down as the CEO of the Nehemiah project. A new CEO has already been selected, but yet to be announced. Watch this space!

Please continue to pray for the residents at the Nehemiah project, and the many staff and volunteers, all part of this incredible ministry.



Pete's Story:

For many years, I was a 'functioning' addict. In early 2024, I was homeless, out of work and unable to see my young daughter.

I completed the recovery program and now receive counselling. I volunteer as a football coach and want to pursue this as a career.



Olly's Story:

My addict Mum introduced me to a life of crime and drugs from an early age.

The first time I went to Nehemiah, I wasn't ready, and fell into the same bad cycle. I wrote to Nehemiah asking for a second chance.

I still have a long way to go, but for the 1st time, I believe I have a future.

All information gathered from The Nehemiah Project- Annual report 2024

Lee-Ann De Villiers



Here's an update about Open Doors, one of our valued Mission Partners that we support both financially and through prayer.

Despite increasing persecution against Christians in many parts of the world, Open Doors continues their vital work supporting believers who face opposition for their faith. What's remarkable is that even as challenges grow, the global church keeps expanding - strengthened by prayers and donations from supporters like us across the UK and Ireland.

In her annual letter, Open Doors CEO Henrietta Blyth expressed heartfelt gratitude to all supporters, referencing 2 Corinthians 9:11: "When we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God." This scripture beautifully captures the dual impact of our generosity - providing practical help while also serving as a powerful testimony that glorifies God.

Making a difference in 2023

Throughout the past year, Open Doors delivered tangible aid and encouragement to vulnerable believers across numerous countries. Each contribution, whether financial or through prayer, has equipped Christians to maintain their witness in hostile environments.

The charity emphasises that this support creates a beautiful cycle of blessing. Recipients pray "with deep affection because of the

overflowing grace God has given" to those who support them (2 Corinthians 9:14).

Faithful support in challenging times

Blyth specifically acknowledged the faithfulness of donors during these economically challenging times. Despite financial pressures affecting many households, supporters have continued to prioritise the needs of the persecuted church - a powerful testament to Christian solidarity that transcends borders.

Beyond material assistance

The impact of Open Doors extends far beyond practical help. They facilitate a spiritual connection between believers worldwide, creating a unified body of Christ that overcomes geographical boundaries and persecution barriers. This mutual relationship enriches both those receiving help and those providing it.



A church in Myanmar damaged by last month's devastating earthquake

Looking forward

Open Doors remains dedicated to strengthening the church in the most dangerous places to follow Jesus.

They continue providing emergency relief, discipleship training, community development, advocacy, and trauma care to Christians facing discrimination, violence, and isolation.

Blyth concluded her letter with a blessing from 2 Corinthians 9:8, praying that "God will generously

provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others."

I encourage us all to keep Open Doors and the persecuted church in our prayers. If you'd like to learn more about how you can support their work, please don't hesitate to visit their website at

www.opendoorsuk.org



tearfund

Tearfund (www.tearfund.org) is one of our Mission partners, supported by St Mildred's financially and prayerfully. Tearfund is a Christian relief and development agency committed to eradicating poverty. Tearfund's call over the past 56 years has remained constant:

To follow their biblical mandate to see people lifted out of material and spiritual poverty.

Their vision is to see people freed from poverty, living transformed lives and reaching their God-given potential.

Their mission is to follow Jesus where the need is greatest, responding to crises and partnering with local churches to bring restoration to people living in poverty.

Their values mean that they seek to be Christ-centred, compassionate, courageous, truthful and servant-hearted.

Their approach is to invest in mobilising the church for integral mission, bringing transformation to every area of life and eradicating extreme poverty. They inspire and equip churches and individuals to transform their communities, respond to disasters and influence people in power to lead fairly.

Their ambition is to see 250,000 churches becoming centres of transformation by 2030.

Their partners are local churches, denominations and Christian national and international non-government organisations who agree with their Statement of Faith and meet their partnership criteria. The partners undertake Tearfund's operational programmes, which are directly implemented and overseen by Tearfund staff, in countries affected by protracted and/or recurrent crises, where the availability and capacity of partners are limited.



Tearfund work in more than 40 countries, to bring an end to extreme poverty: in Asia, East and Central Africa, Eurasia and North Africa, Southern and East Africa, West Africa.

In Latin America and the Caribbean Tearfund operates with a regional team focused on influencing churches, church networks and allied organisations for integral mission.

In the UK Tearfund raise awareness and mobilise the church to act and speak out on justice and poverty.

- Pray for the safety and security of the communities in which Tearfund serve.
- Pray for people affected by conflict. Ask God to bring peace, restoration and

reconciliation in these nations.

- Lift up the local churches as they are equipped to lift themselves and their communities out of poverty.

As well as fundraising and appeals, Tearfund also provide resources such as a prayer diary with daily prayers, and a quarterly magazine. For a donation of £60, you can even twin your toilet with a toilet overseas, and receive a certificate. This helps families overseas build their own basic toilet, access clean water, and learn about hygiene.

www.toilettwinning.org

Last year...

1.6 million people reached through Tearfund's emergency response

1.3 million people reached through community development work

23,300 local churches mobilised



Maggie Brooks

Sunday@six

We have had three of our mission partners visit Sunday@six and all three have been very different but equally excellent evenings. It has been great for us, as a group, to think about what Jesus is doing, outside of St Mildred's, and to see where some of our financial giving goes.

Mark from The Nehemiah Project spoke to us about his history, how he came to know Jesus and his life now. He was encouraging, relevant and challenging.

Open Doors destroyed the church interior and police taped the doors closed, to help us (slightly) experience how life in a persecuted church might be.

Tear Fund showed us their work around the world, their motivation behind this work and how we can get involved from Lee.

All these evenings were interactive and very informative. Our mission partners all went to considerable lengths to make their sessions youth-friendly; we were very pleased to have them visit us!

Helen Lake



The Prayer of Peace

Our Father up in heaven, hear this fervent prayer
May the people of all nations be united in Thy care...
For earth's peace and man's salvation can come only by Thy grace
And not through bombs and missiles and our quest for outer space...
For until all men recognise that the battle is the Lord's
And peace on earth cannot be won with strategy and swords,
We will go on vainly fighting as we have in ages past,
Finding only empty victories and a peace that cannot last...
But we've grown so rich and mighty and so arrogantly strong
We no longer ask in humbleness - God, show us where we're wrong.
We have come to trust completely in the power of man-made things,
Unmindful of God's mighty power and that He is King of kings.
We have turned our eyes away from Him to go our selfish way,
And money, power, and pleasure are the gods we serve today...
And the good green earth God gave us to peacefully enjoy,
Through greed and fear and hatred we are seeking to destroy.
Oh Father up in heaven, stir and wake our sleeping souls,
Renew our faith and lift us up and give us higher goals,
And grant us heavenly guidance as war threatens us again -
For, more than guided missiles, all the world needs guided men.

The Poems and Prayers of Helen Steiner Rice