

THE HEALING HAND/

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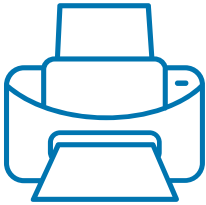
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Join us online

Online Prayers

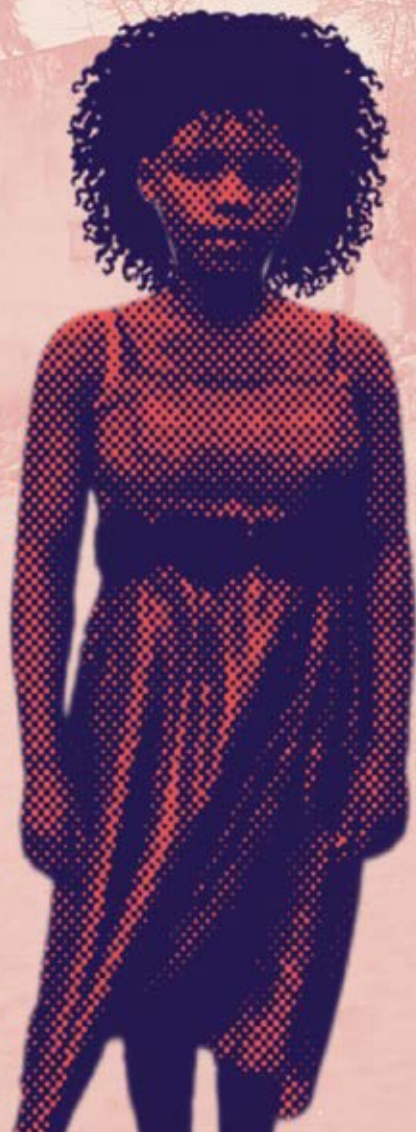
Following the success of the Advent Online Prayers, we have introduced a new online quarterly prayer gathering. Spend time hearing from EMMS' partners and staff, and praying for health and hope. More on page 20.



22 Community Update

Dare to hope **Share the hope**

Special Appeal
Report



Cathy Ratcliff, CEO & Director of
International Programmes

As the roll-out of vaccinations lets us dare to hope for brighter days ahead, now is the time for us to share the hope with others.

After the strains of lockdown, it's right that we celebrate progress in tackling this pandemic. There is much to be thankful for as we return to the people and places that we love.

In the earliest days of the COVID-19 pandemic, the virus was being declared the 'great leveller'. While it's true that coronavirus makes no distinction for wealth, power or culture, that doesn't mean we are sharing an identical global experience as we weather this storm.

School children have been among those hit hardest by the pandemic around the world. The missed education can have a long-term impact, particularly for those who already had to overcome barriers to education.

As classrooms are reopening across the UK, we can be confident that, although challenging, our children will have the support they need.

However, even though schools are open in Malawi once again, not every child is free to return to the classroom. School closures, economic pressures and unemployment due to COVID-19 have led to a sharp rise in teenage pregnancies.

In Malawi

11% rise
in teenage
pregnancies
during the
pandemic

Before COVID-19

4 in 10 girls
'marry', and
3 in 10 have
children before
the age of 18

6% of girls
graduate high
school

Sources: UNICEF, Government of
Malawi

Asale's Story

Asale is 15 years old. When her school closed she had nothing to do and so she spent more time with her 17-year-old boyfriend.

"We started chatting, as usual. Suddenly he started asking for sex. I tried to refuse but he convinced me that we were young and nothing can happen. After a month I missed my period." Asale explained.

At first, Asale couldn't face telling her mother. Her oldest sister had already been forced out of school when she became pregnant. Her mother was a widow and Asale knew how much her education meant to her whole family.

Asale considered an illegal abortion. Thankfully, instead of putting her own life on the line, she reached out to her sister for support.

Asale arrived at Mulanje Mission Hospital three months pregnant. After weeks of worry, she had found the words to tell her mother and they came to the hospital together.

"I was so afraid but I thank my sister who was very supportive. Otherwise, I could have committed suicide."

Nurses at Mulanje Mission Hospital counselled Asale and her mother. Her mother confided that life wasn't easy raising five children alone since Asale's father had died. "Asale was my hope

since her elder sister got pregnant two years ago. I thought Asale would do better with school."

In Malawi, unplanned pregnancies usually mean an end to education and to the opportunity for girls to pursue their own hopes for the future. But that doesn't have to be the case.

Mulanje Mission Hospital is supporting Asale through her pregnancy. They are also supporting the family so that, once the baby has been delivered and it is safe to do so, Asale can return to school. Completing her education will give Asale and her baby the best chance in life.

Unplanned pregnancies were a threat to the health and hope of girls in Malawi before the pandemic. However, the pandemic has turned this problem into a crisis for a whole generation.

Dare to hope. Share the hope.

As we dare to hope for a 'new normal' let's make sure that we share that hope with others.

As our children and young people return to school our hopes for their future are restored. Let's ensure the hopes of children like Asale are rebuilt too.

To learn more or support the appeal, visit www.emms.org/hope.



A BEACON OF HOPE in Nepal



Mary Robertson,
Director of Fundraising

The new Palliative Care Centre of Excellence at Pokhara brings to life the hope that all people needing palliative care in Western Nepal - wherever they live - will receive it, and that communities will be supported to care for them and ensure young carers can complete their education.

The Government of Nepal's National Palliative Care Strategy is committed to delivering palliative care to all who need it, wherever they live, within the next ten years. In line with this commitment, the Palliative Care Centre of Excellence, funded by the McClay Foundation and dedicated at the launch of our Every Girl Matters appeal last November, will drive the expansion of effective palliative care delivery across Western Nepal.

The Centre will provide clinical services with outpatient and day therapy services, and with ten adult and four paediatric beds, it will take referrals from the other five centres involved in the Sunita Project. The team at the Centre will oversee educational and research services, together with telemedicine services supporting families in hard-to-reach districts.

An extensive training programme led by the team at Pokhara will work with Lamjung District Hospital and the four pilot sites located in different rural areas, to train and mentor healthcare workers and groups. Community groups will be educated through schools, working with teachers and pupils to ensure young carers, mainly girls, are able to stay in school knowing their loved ones are cared for. The training programme will also nurture and support Self-Help Groups, Disabled People's Organisations and family members of people needing palliative care.

This new building really will be a powerhouse that brings and spreads hope among people living with chronic illness and long-term disabilities in Pokhara and further afield, as well as among their carers.

Thank you for showing that **every girl matters**

We are incredibly grateful for every member of the EMMS International community who got behind the Every Girl Matters appeal and made it such a success.

Your gifts were being doubled by the UK Government until 19 February, 2021. We're excited to share the total amount raised and will do so as soon as the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office has confirmed the total amount of your donations that they will match.

We look forward to sharing this with you in due course. Rest assured, every gift, prayer and special fundraising effort will contribute to improved rural healthcare in Nepal and show that every girl matters.

"Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered."

- Proverbs 11:25

PROJECT & PARTNER MILESTONES



India

A busy partnership with Duncan Hospital

Your generosity is supporting a number of new and ongoing initiatives at Duncan Hospital.

Preparations to build a new College of Nursing are developing after a new design was needed to ensure buildings can withstand earthquakes.

Community outreach became ever more essential as rural economic life became even harder than usual during lockdown, and your donations funded emergency packages for the poorest families.

Many hospital staff fell ill with COVID-19, and the hospital became a government treatment centre for COVID-19, such that your gifts of PPE, ventilator, BIPAP, syringe pumps and subsidised treatment for the poorest were all needed.

We continue to increase the hospital's solar power and to fund 14 young women through healthcare training.



Malawi

Return to training for healthcare students

Malawian healthcare colleges have opened again after being closed due to COVID-19, and so 17 young women funded by EMMS are continuing their studies at Ekwendeni and Malamulo Colleges of Health Sciences to become Clinical Officers, Nurse-Midwives, Medical Assistants and Pharmacy Workers. Meantime, a Clinical Officer from David Gordon Memorial Hospital, also funded by EMMS, is continuing his medical training in Zambia. All these studies should be completed by the end of 2021.



Scotland

Hawthorn Brae: Next chapter in providing respite care

We are very excited to announce a significant grant to Edinburgh-based charity VOCAL (Voice of Carers Across Lothian), following permission from OSCR to donate our Hawthorn Brae fund to this charity. VOCAL can help twice the number of needy Edinburgh families each year that EMMS can, giving people with life-limiting conditions and their carers respite holidays. VOCAL already runs a holiday scheme for Edinburgh carers, and will use this gift to buy and renovate holiday property.



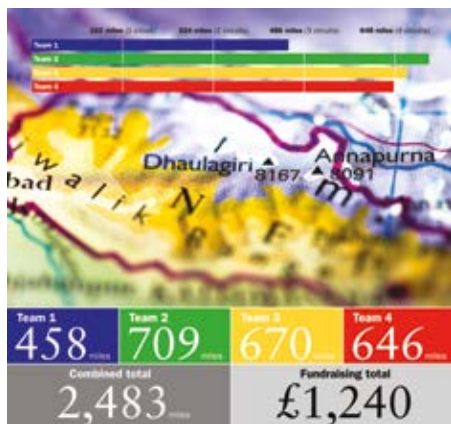
GOING THE DISTANCE IN LOCKDOWN

We've been blown away by the commitment and creativity of your lockdown fundraising efforts. Whether joining the Go the Distance challenge or through your own COVID-safe fundraisers, you've continued to bring health and hope.

Go the Distance

38 participants (one a dog!) from across the UK braved the winter weather to support the Every Girl Matters appeal by tackling a virtual Everest climb or Annapurna circuit. Among our challengers, Jacqui and Dave Hewitson gained

Picture: Trustee Helen Morrison's Annapurna Challenge with family support



supporters by sharing entertaining photos of their progress on social media.

Professor Angela Thomas, the Acting President of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, and 21 colleagues walked, ran and cycled the Annapurna Circuit 15 times. They raised £1240, with four teams completing the distance while taking in the beautiful scenery of Edinburgh, Falkirk and Perthshire during wind, rain, sleet, snow and the occasional sunshine!

Professor Thomas said: "I am delighted at the distance that we have covered in February despite the challenging conditions! Even more importantly, I am thrilled that we have been able to raise money to support the Every Girl Matters campaign to help those needing palliative care in Nepal and to support their carers, often young girls, to return to their education and help them fulfil their potential."

Virtual Afternoon Tea

St Andrew's and St George's West Church in Edinburgh was delighted to hold a virtual Afternoon Tea for the Every Girl Matters Appeal and raised over £700. This event was enlivened by videos about the project and a Q&A with EMMS' CEO, Cathy Ratcliff. One attendee wrote afterwards: "I was very impressed to hear about...the expert planning and high standards of training and patient care...What a blessing!"

Doorstep Jam Shops

Gordon Clibborn has persevered with his marmalade sales in locked down Stewarton. Mary Robertson, EMMS' Director of Fundraising, sold her produce through her Edinburgh front window.

Thanks to all for your enthusiasm and generous support for our frontline healthcare workers.

PARTNERS IN HOPE

We asked our partners what they were hoping for in the year ahead as they care for their communities. These are some of their responses.



**Dr Prabhu, Duncan Hospital,
Bihar, India**

Hope in Prayer

The whole year has been a time when we grew close to God, depending on Him. As the Covid crisis began, we started to meet in a small group at around six in the evening after work. We worshipped God and spent time praying for various needs.

I used that time to vent my feelings to God. I cried, I pleaded, and by the end of the month, my prayers were one of complete hopelessness. All I could pray was that I had no more wisdom or strength left in me but to depend on my Lord.

Every time I surrendered, I felt strength and peace fill me. I believe all of us returned home each evening with a lot of peace and comfort in our hearts. I could see that the calmness and strength we found in prayer spread to the rest of the team. In time, we could testify that prayer did work as we saw over 60 staff turn Covid positive but recover almost miraculously with none needing oxygen or ventilation.





Dr Ruth Russell, Green Pastures Hospital, Pokhara, Nepal

Fresh Opportunities for Hope

Amid the challenges, the big positive things of 2020 are the construction of the new Centre of Excellence in Palliative Care (PC), as well as the bonus annexe, despite lockdown and all the restrictions; the committed and expanding PC team; seeing PC making a difference in individual lives.

Despite continuing uncertainty, we can look forward to wonderful opportunities for future expansion opened up through the kindness of EMMS International's supporters.



Nurse Ellen Chizimba, Nkhoma Mission Hospital, Malawi

Resilient Hope

COVID-19 has put a great strain on the healthcare system, but it has also showed our strength and resilience.


Our staff were strained to cover all the needs of our community. Our facilities were strained to care for the increased number of patients. Our budgets were strained to buy the additional essential supplies. Yet we came through.

We are hopeful because we take this strength and resilience with us into the year ahead.



VACCINE INEQUALITY

Are we squandering the world's best shot?



Mwandida Nhoma
Nurse Lead and Research
Manager, Palliative Care
Support Trust, Malawi

“The world is on the brink of a catastrophic moral failure – and the price of this failure will be paid with lives and livelihoods in the world’s poorest countries.”

This was the stark analysis of Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, earlier this year. Some progress is being made to overcome vaccine inequality but much more needs to be done if this pandemic is to end globally.

EMMS International’s mission follows the example of Jesus Christ to bring health and hope through compassionate healthcare. Our Christian identity compels us to call for a more equitable distribution of the global vaccine resource.

At present, on a global scale, vaccine strategies do not prioritise the most vulnerable and do not adequately protect the world’s frontline healthcare workers.

We need an approach that sees beyond borders and shows that we truly love our neighbours.

“But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled the lame, the blind and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you...” Luke 14:13-14. If ever there was a ‘banquet’ that we should share more fairly, this is it.

The present challenge

The race to produce a viable COVID-19 vaccination has been an example of global cooperation. Funding, knowledge and manufacturing advances have been shared across borders. The world has found a global solution to a global problem. But if that cooperation does not continue in the vaccine distribution then we have surely still fallen short.

Reaching the current rate of vaccine production hasn’t been without its challenges. We have seen the knock-on effects of production delays. But the impact for most of us is inconsequential; our vaccinations are delayed by days or weeks, no more.

However, estimates suggest that 85 countries (including Malawi and Nepal) won’t have wide vaccination availability until 2023. This is a result of limited vaccine supplies, but also local healthcare infrastructure and population sizes.

Global cooperation is already making an impact on distribution. India has shared some of its own home-produced vaccines with Nepal and Malawi, among others.

The UK and other governments have contributed to the COVAX programme, to ensure all countries



have access to vaccines.

However, while the UK aims to vaccinate its adult population by July, countries which have signed up for assistance from COVAX, including Malawi, anticipate reaching only 3% of populations in the same time frame. So far, COVAX can only guarantee vaccines for 20% of enrolled countries' populations by the end of the year, with countries relying on ad hoc donations and meeting high purchase costs if they are to attain widespread coverage.

Beyond the moral argument

The moral case for vaccine equity should be strong enough. However, even if it weren't, there are growing warnings from the scientific community that vaccine hoarding could prolong the pandemic and deepen its financial impact on wealthy and resource-poor countries alike.

While the virus continues to spread

unchecked in under-vaccinated populations, new variants are a continued risk. New variants which might be resistant to existing vaccinations could stall the global response to the virus - not just in under-vaccinated populations.

There is also an economic cost to vaccine inequality. Even if wealthy countries are fully vaccinated this year, the supply chains that fuel their economies extend into countries which are being shut out of the vaccine roll-out.

Economists estimate a hit to the global economy of between \$1.8 and \$3.8 billion even if half the populations of resource-poor countries are vaccinated. The majority of this bill would be footed by wealthy countries, while at the same time the burden of poverty mounts upon resource-poor countries.



The way forward

So what do we do now? It might seem that these decisions and their impact are outside our influence but they are not. Together, we can:

- Engage our political leaders and encourage them to take an equitable approach to sharing vaccinations.
- Continue to support frontline healthcare workers responding to the pandemic by prioritising them for vaccination.
- Support vital work to address other ongoing healthcare challenges in resource-poor countries.
- Pray for those responding to the pandemic around the world, from frontline healthcare workers to political decision-makers.

In numbers:

400 million
vaccine doses
given so far

64% of vaccine
doses given
in just five
countries

85 countries
won't reach
widespread
vaccination
until 2023

Sources: Our World in Data (19 March 2021), The Economist

ONLINE PRAYERS

Amy Westendarp, our Trusts and Digital Supporter Care Manager, shares her thoughts on why our online prayers make a difference.

Building on the success of EMMS International's online advent prayers, our next online prayers for health and hope in 2021 will be on Zoom on Wednesday 30th June at 9:30am.

If I'd invited you to an online prayer event on Zoom in 2019, I wonder what your reply would have been? The coronavirus pandemic has, in so many ways, re-shaped how we live out our everyday faith as Christians. Recent research found that since 2020, churches across the UK have added more than 17,000 online services to the church-finding website AChurchNearYou.com. Apps for personal prayer are also on the rise, like the Church of England prayer apps which have been used a record five million times in the past year.

Reflecting on the challenges and importance of praying in the last year, this quote from Timothy Keller seems particularly apt: "there is nothing more important, or harder, or richer... than prayer". Your prayers make a huge difference to our work, and are never more needed than during coronavirus, which has put health inequalities around the world into such stark relief. We deeply value supporters like you who share our vision of good quality and dignified healthcare for all; our conviction that every life matters; and our desire to bring hope to people facing poverty and sickness.

And so, at a time when it's been difficult to be together in person, EMMS' online prayers are an opportunity for us to gather together online, hear



directly from our international partners and EMMS team members about the charity's work, and pray with them for health and hope.

I hope that these online gatherings will be a chance to take 30 minutes to enjoy fellowship together, help us focus our minds on the promise and hope in the bible, and remember that God cares deeply about the injustice, poverty and sickness He sees. Justin Welby once said that, "as God changes us in prayer, He drives us out to be justice-seekers, peacemakers, healers and bringers of good news". May it be so, even in a small way, as a result of you taking part in our online prayers. I look forward to seeing you online on Wednesday 30th June at 9.30am. Find out more and sign up at www.emms.org/online-prayers.

COMMUNITY UPDATE



FAREWELL, DR PETER GREEN

It is with sadness that we learned of the passing of Dr Peter Green, a lifelong friend of the EMMS International community since he undertook his medical training with the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society.

In 1943, Peter started at both the University of Edinburgh and EMMS with others preparing to be medical missionaries. Alongside his studies, he worked in the Cowgate dispensary, serving a poor community with medical care before the NHS had started. He recalled that the first baby he delivered was by candlelight in a Cowgate tenement block. Good preparation, he

said, for delivering a baby, years later, on the floor of a mud hut in Kenya.

His 25 years of overseas medical missionary service took him to the Nazareth Hospital and various postings in Kenya. He returned to the UK in 1974, where he continued to encourage the next generation of medical missionaries. He continued to practise medicine, retiring in 1989 and finally hanging up his stethoscope in 2008.

Peter Green died of a COVID-19 infection on 2nd January 2021. Thanks be to God for Peter's life and service.

Picture: Dr Peter Green and his late wife, Hope.

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☐ Please charge my credit/debit card

☐

VISA

☐

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☐

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☐

Delta

☐

Amex

Name of card holder

Card number

last three digits of security number (on reverse of card)

Expiry Date

Start Date

Issue No (maestro only)

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select) to the work of EMMS International

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Account Number:

Sort Code:

Bank Name:

Date within month

1st

15th

Month to start

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will be topped up by 50%*



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Do a Kiltwalk fundraiser
this April and share the
hope with people in
Malawi, India and Nepal.



Find out more and sign-up via
www.emms.org/kiltwalk

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