

Knightrider Street News



JULY 2026

MAIDSTONE
BAPTIST CHURCH

The logo for Maidstone Baptist Church, featuring a green cross above a stylized wave or mountain shape, all enclosed within a semi-circular arch.

Taking the Good News of Jesus into our lives and into God's World
www.maidstonebaptist.net

Maidstone Baptist Church

Knightrider Street, Maidstone, Kent. ME15 6LU

Registered in England as a charity, no. 1128948

Verse for the year 2026:-

"This is the confidence that we have in approaching God, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us." 1 John 5: 14

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Church publications:

Monthly notice sheet:

Information for the notice sheet should be sent to the
General Administrator, c/o the church office.

Monthly magazine: Knightrider Street News

Editorial Deadline: *Second Sunday of previous month:20.00hrs by e-mail only*

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Knightrider Street News Postal Distributor:

Mrs Sally Walters

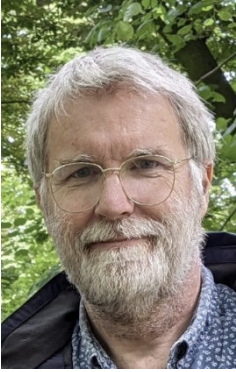
Tel: 07944 639851

Views and opinions expressed in KSN articles are those of individual contributors, and are not necessarily those of the Church leadership or editor.

Pastoral Visits:

At Maidstone Baptist Church we are happy to offer pastoral visits - for prayer, communion, or simply a chat. We can meet at church, in your home, or elsewhere, such as in a park or coffee shop.

If you feel this would be helpful, please speak to Nigel or Al, or to your Pastoral Leader.



***“I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength” -
Philippians 4:13***

I wonder how many of us have this as one of our favourite Bible verses, perhaps sharing it with others as an encouragement. It is indeed a powerful verse but we too often forget the context in which it was written, and it is always wise to remind ourselves that we should always read around a text or verse rather than picking it out of context.

In Acts 16 Paul helped set up a church in the city of Philippi, and in response the Philippians became great friends and supporters of Paul in his ministry. We read later in that chapter about Paul and Silas being thrown into prison because of their ministry. When the Philippians heard of this they sent money to assist Paul and the letter to the Philippians is written in response to this. So reading Philippians 4:13 in context changes how we should read and understand this verse.

We seem - all too often - to turn this verse into a 'you can do anything you want' kind of meaning. The “all things” of v16 turns into our own goals, seeking God's stamp of approval on our ambitions, asking God to sign up for things that we have already set out to do. There is a real danger of approaching any task or situation with this attitude.

But, in context, we see that Paul wrote this letter from prison, from a place of hardship, pain and hunger. Rather than being a verse about achievement, it's a verse about survival. Yet even in these circumstances Paul and Silas were able to pray and sing praises to God, witnessing to fellow prisoners and the guards. In Philippians 4:13 Paul is saying that even in the dark places, even in the hard times we can “do all things” - or in more modern terms we might say “we can get through/endure/cope with this”. And why? Because Christ gives us strength. Through our suffering, and in God's strength, we too can share the Gospel with others.

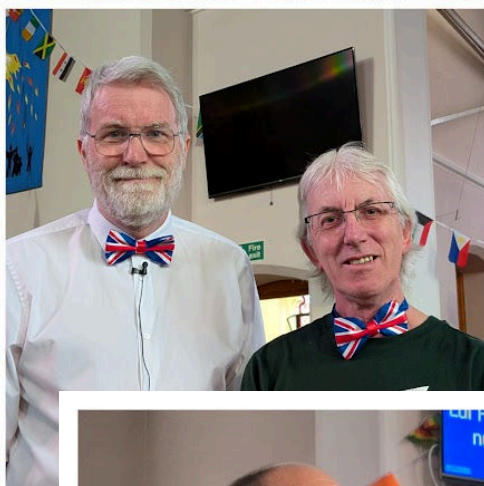
When we read this verse, or indeed any verse, in the wrong way and out of context, we devalue the Gospel. We are not just misunderstanding but we are reshaping scripture to fit our own narrative. And the more we reshape God's Word the less it's able to reshape us.

Nigel

International Sunday

We had a great time of worship, praise and celebration on Sunday 7th June for International Sunday. The service was based around John 3:11-21

and we heard John 3:16 in Shona (Zimbabwe), Polish, Italian, Persian (Iran), Romanian, Cantonese (Hong Kong) and in British Sign Language. We sang songs in Shona, Igbo, Cantonese, Nepali and English, we had Irish dancing and we danced and worshipped around the church. We



shared communion together and shared international food for lunch.

As one person said after the service "This is a small taste of heaven on earth".

What an awesome God we have 🙌🙌🙌🙌







Deadline for August Knightrider Street News:

Sunday July 12th

Please e-mail contributions to the address on inside front cover

No later than 20.00hrs on this date

In April, a small group from MBC attended the SEBA *Partners in Mission* day in Crawley, where we worshipped and praised God, and explored ways to become more missional in our various church settings. There will be further conversations about this over coming months, but let me share with you something of one seminar I attended...

This session had the theme of becoming more ***missionally entrepreneurial***. A grand title, designed to attract and intrigue, which - more simply put - is really a challenge to explore what is going on around us, and then find ways of turning those activities or hard realities into opportunities to talk about God and start God-based conversation with our local communities.

Examples included:

- *Instead of moaning about Halloween, design route-map cards of church members' homes: by visiting these, children will receive the best sweets - and a Christian message - at each house, plus a bonus prize for visiting all of the homes listed.*
- *Instead of complaining about traffic, hand out free drinks to drivers stuck in traffic - and create cups and bottles which have Bible verses stuck to them.*
- *Rather than getting upset about litter and graffiti, form church action squads which can tidy and repaint particular trouble spots (check whether local permissions are necessary) - and enjoy the conversations with locals that will probably result. You may need the paint and rubber gloves regularly, but that means more conversations!!*

You will be able to think of loads more: the best plans are PERSONAL and LOCAL rather than simply copied, but notice that each of these examples above began with a perceived problem which was then turned into a Gospel opportunity. Please pray about what might be possible for MBC members - what is God calling you to do to make a difference?

And if you think that sounds scary, read this Bible verse:

Matthew 1:22-23: ‘All this took place to fulfil what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “See, the virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son; they will name him Immanuel”, which is translated “God with us.”’

God is with us - and God will be with us, everywhere we go.

Nigel

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Ladies Picnic



All the ladies of the Maidstone Baptist Church family are invited to come and share a picnic together on **Saturday 8th August** at Teston Country Park, Teston Lane, ME18 5BX.

We will gather at 12:00 and start to head home again about 15:00. Please bring your own picnic; also a rug or chair if needed.

Parking is £3:50 for the day and can be paid by app or card. There is a kiosk serving drinks and snacks but please note this is card only. Plenty of toilet facilities are available.

If getting there is a problem, or you are able to offer lifts, please speak to Sheila or Nic.

Advance notice: please keep 17th October free as this will be our next ladies fellowship day. 😊

5&2 NEWS

After 18 years of operating, we are closing our doors from August.

Every Saturday now, there is a group affiliated to Hungry Hearts, who run in the car park opposite us.

They are a funded organisation who cook and provide food from 9-11am, together with groceries for the clients to take away.



Due to this, our numbers have noticeably declined. After much prayer and discussion the 5&2 team feel we have served our purpose and have come to our natural end.

We thank God that this provision has been established and that our friends in need are being regularly provided for.

Many thanks to the wonderful volunteers for their service and support. The fellowship for continued encouragement and faithful prayer over the years. And the many friends of 5&2 who have generously donated over the 18 years we have been running.

God is good and we all feel He is now freeing us from this project but definitely has other works for us to do!!

It has truly been a blessing to all of us coming together and being given the opportunity to serve in this way.

God bless

Elaine. 🙏



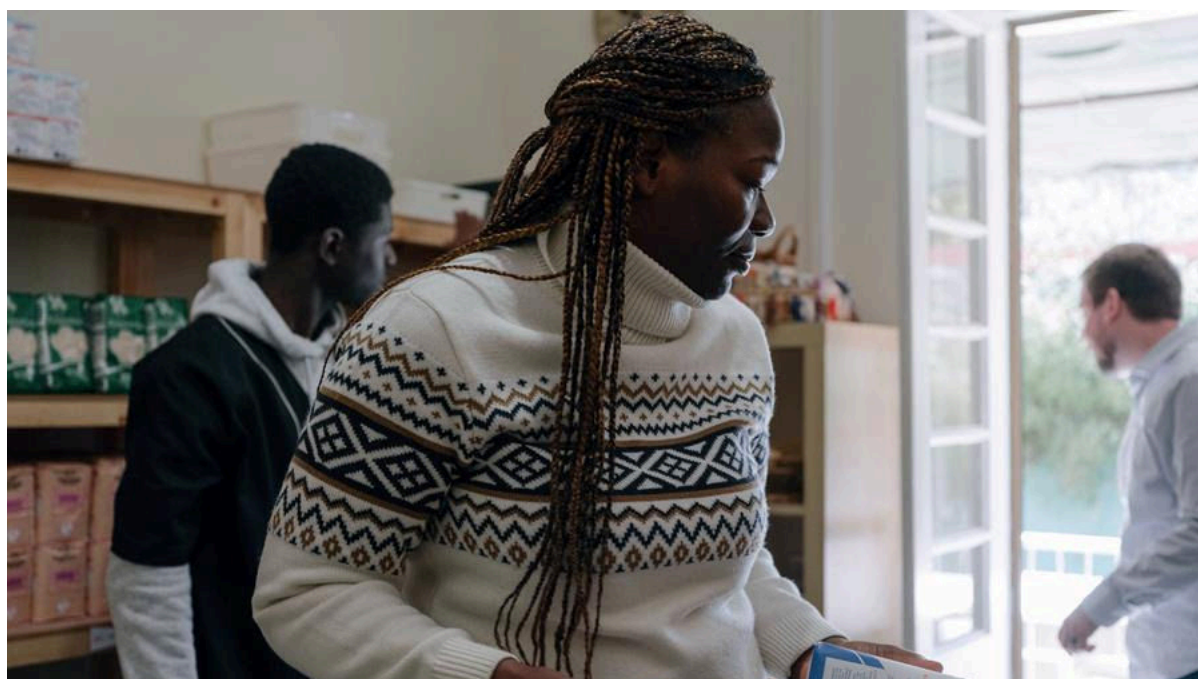
Faith in Christ, abundant life

Treasurer's Report

Tuesday, 26 May 2026

Dear Barbara,

I am writing to you in your capacity as Church Treasurer for Maidstone Baptist Church. I want to thank you so much for your generosity in supporting BMS World Mission over the last year. In 2025 Maidstone Baptist Church gave £2,000.00. We appreciate that for many churches, your giving to BMS is sacrificial at a time of limited resources and multiple competing demands. Your faithful giving is greatly appreciated, and we are working hard to maximise the Kingdom impact of your gift.



Volunteers at a welcome centre for refugees in Cyprus

Last year, 736,000 people were impacted by BMS work around the world, and your church is a significant part of that. Our CEO Kang-San Tan has made a short thank you video message for churches. If you would like to view the video as feedback on the impact of your church's giving, it can be

found at the following web address: <https://bmsworldmission.org/our-impact> . Click the play button on the screen and it will play in another window. It is only 3 ½ minutes long and gives a quick overview of BMS work in various parts of the world. The full impact report can be downloaded from here too by clicking on a link or scanning a QR code.

We are partnered with [Ardi Wiriadinata](#), who has a director role with Asia Pacific Baptist Federation to help pioneer an exciting new Asian-centred mission movement. This has seen Asian Baptist conventions send mission workers overseas for the first time. **In 2025 we saw four conventions send eight new mission workers to some of the least reached parts of Asia.** This is part of their vision to see healthy churches being planted in every country in Asia.

These mission workers, thanks in part to your giving, are part of a cohort of **37,897 evangelists and church planters** that we helped train last year. This has led to the planting of **24,705 small group fellowships** across the world. Your giving has also helped enable **63,546 people to receive support through regular, planned BMS programmes**, and for **516 churches to be equipped to live out their faith** in their communities, building self-sufficiency and addressing the causes of poverty.



Outreach event in Thailand

The generosity of UK churches and individuals has also enabled **6,396 forcibly displaced people to receive help** while in transit and equipped **491 workers to support and welcome new arrivals** across Europe. The consistent compassionate giving of UK churches has made it possible for us to **assist 603,556 people affected by disasters** in multiple locations around the world.

If you want to see how else Maidstone Baptist Church has helped across the world, read our incredible Impact Report which breaks down even more ways your support has changed the world through BMS.

Once again, we are so grateful for your consistent and generous support. So much of what we do would not be possible without the support of churches like Maidstone Baptist Church.

Every blessing,

John Settatree

Church Engagement Manager,
BMS World Mission



*Thank you for your ongoing prayer and support
for God's mission in the world.*

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BMS Birthday Scheme.

July 5 th	Alan Fishwick
July 14 th	Pam Tucker
July 25 th	Jane Haslam
July 25 th	Ian Brazier
July 26 th	Dr. Austin Woodbridge



Happy Birthday to you all!



July 2026

- Wed 1st Let us pray for the current situation with world leaders and the worsening tensions in the Middle East, the war in Ukraine and the changes within our own Government, which is unsettling.
- Thur 2nd May we pray for the political parties in Wales and Scotland under the leadership there, that the plans will meet the needs of the people.
- Fri 3rd As we are approaching the middle of the year may we find lasting peace with the never failing love of Jesus in the mid-Summer sunshine as we enjoy times with family and friends.
- Sat 4th Pray for those in our church who have lost loved ones - husbands, wives, mothers, fathers, sons or daughters. Pray for the comforting arms of Jesus to be around them in these times of grief.
- Sun 5th Remember those who are persecuted in the Middle East for their commitment to the Christian faith, and those fleeing cruel treatment from their country of origin. Let us remember those who are victims of crime and still trying to escape even in times like these.
- Mon 6th Remember our youth in Maidstone who are embarking on new careers and leaving full time education, that they will be guided and strengthened to meet the challenges ahead. Pray that they do

not lose heart.

Tue 7th May we pray today for wisdom and responsibility in the words we speak and the things we do while we are in the workplace and the classroom.

Wed 8th Pray today for a closer walk with the Lord Jesus and ask Him to answer those deep questions and yearnings which only he knows about. Hang on to the strong arms of the Lord during times we are unable to pray due to the sheer weight of anxiety and stress.

Thur 9th Let us pray for the outreach in the local 5 and 2 lunch service that it will be a blessing to those using it in the final month of service. Thank God for it's 18 years of faithful provision to the homeless in Maidstone.

Fri 10th Pray for local schools and colleges as they prepare for the Summer break and a well earned rest. Pray for all the young people leaving this year.



Sat 11th Pray today for all those who are still sleeping rough in Maidstone and who have no fixed abode. Pray that the local authority will be able to meet their needs especially at this time of hardship and high cost of living.

Sun 12th Pray for our Boys' and Girls' brigade and their work and projects in Kent and districts far and beyond. Pray for Alastair in his work in Maidstone as youth pastor and also for Nigel our senior minister and his wife Margaret.

Mon 13th Pray for the continuing work of the Street Pastors and their work in sometimes dangerous situations.

Tue 14th Pray today for elderly folks around us; those who are in residential care and those who are contemplating such a move, that the right place may be found.

Wed 15th Let us pray for our music team as they meet to practice for the services each week.

Thur 16th Pray for our local council and community departments as they try to deal with all aspects of care and problems in the local area such as housing and environmental issues.

Fri 17th As we are approaching the end of the week, pray that we will be contagious as we live the gospel message in word, deed and thought, asking Jesus to help us practice what we are taught.

Sat 18th Remember young people of Sunday school age, praying for their perseverance as we go through this time and the way our Sunday school numbers are rising.

Sun 19th Pray for our church leadership team and deacons as they make decisions in these times of great challenge for church unity.



Mon 20th Pray today for anyone who is experiencing harassment and bullying of any kind. Pray for deliverance and the peace that only Jesus can give.

Tue 21st Pray that Maidstone and surrounding districts will be infused with the light of Gods people and the sweet aroma of his grace. When the going gets tough and times get hard, may Gods people set the standard required to see it through in total reliance on his provision.

Wed 22nd May we pray for our church youth club and the leaders, Alastair and his team, for help in giving guidance and direction for the young people.

Thur 23rd Let us pray for all those who are seriously sick in our midst and those who are in hospital at this very moment in time, that the great physician will pass their way. Remember in prayer some in our church with anxiety and chronic pain.

Fri 24th Pray again for our government ministers and leaders who are making decisions each day that the ruler of the universe and the great I AM will guide them and lead them to make the right choices.



Sat 25th Pray that all the churches in Kent will sing from the same hymn sheet when it comes to proclaiming the gospel message.

Sun 26th Remember young parents in prayer as they try and steer their children in the right pathway.

Mon 27th Remember those who suffer addiction of any kind, that they will be released from them, because Jesus wishes to see his children happy and comforted.

Tue 28th Let's pray for all those who are finding the path of life challenging and difficult and sometimes feel that it is impossible to go on. Pray for Jesus to be near those people, so when desperate times come, He will come close to them.

Wed 29th Pray today for any one who feels suicidal because they feel there is no other way out of the turmoil they are in. Ask God to be near them.

Thur 30th Pray for our emergency services here in Kent that they will be equipped to deal with the tasks set before them. Pray for our NHS doctors and nurses as they deal with people who have been struck down with sudden illnesses.

Fri 31st Let us pray for our members who sometimes feel lonely, afraid and anxious, that they will be comforted when they know Jesus is nearby and feel his comforting arms around them.



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GOD IS IN CONTROL – News from India:

The Disciple Making Movement

This is part of a prayer letter from Benjamin Francis in India.

Benjamin is BMS World Mission's Team Leader in India. He oversees BMS work in his home city, Kolkata, and beyond. Benjamin's team is reaching thousands of people even as Christians are increasingly persecuted in many Indian states. His team offer practical support, such as free medical camps. They distribute Bibles and tell people the good news using personal testimonies and Jesus films.

“We are excited to share updates on how God is moving in our community and beyond from impactful outreach events to heartfelt stories of transformation, we're blessed to see His love at work. Despite the persecution and challenges, the Lord has opened new villages to hear the Gospel as a result of which the response has been amazing. God is at work transforming lives through our outreaches and discipleship trainings.

We thank God for BMS who has stood with us prayerfully and empowering us to surge forward to see the extension of God's Kingdom.

Our 2026 Assembly election has shifted our nation's political landscape, and Christians in the states are now having to face severe persecution. The Hindu nationalist groups are running campaigns against "illegal conversions" and arresting people on sight. In spite of all that is taking place in our nation, we praise the Lord for the many thousands that have responded to the Gospel and taken decisions to follow Jesus.

In a small town in North India, a family's life began to change after watching the Jesus Film. A local believer had been visiting homes in the area, offering prayer and showing a film about the life of Jesus on a small tablet. One evening, a young man named Rakesh invited him into his home. Curious but unsure, the family gathered to watch.

As the story of Jesus unfolded, they were deeply moved by His kindness toward the poor, His compassion for the sick, and the way He forgave those who rejected Him. Rakesh's mother wiped tears from her eyes during the scene where Jesus healed the suffering. She whispered, "He really cares for people like us."

But it was the crucifixion that touched them the most. Seeing Jesus suffer and still pray for those who hurt Him made a deep impact. Rakesh later said, "I had never seen love like that before."

After the film, they asked many questions. They shared about fear, family problems, and lack of peace in their home. Prayer was offered, and they said they felt a strange but comforting peace that night. In the days that followed, the family began praying together regularly. Anger and tension in the home slowly decreased. Rakesh stopped some harmful habits and began helping his parents more. The family says their home feels different now — calmer, hopeful, and filled with faith.

Today, they often tell others, "We first understood who Jesus is by watching that film in our own house. That night changed our lives."

Their story is one of many across North India where the simple act of watching the Jesus Film has opened hearts, restored families, and brought new hope.

The Disciple Making Movement (DMM) is gaining momentum with our leaders focusing on spreading the Gospel and building strong Christian communities. Our trainings emphasize leading people to Christ and then starting disciple making groups with them. This approach focuses on equipping believers to share their faith and make disciples and planting simple indigenous churches that can reproduce themselves.

Prayer and fasting: Cultivating a culture of radical prayer and fasting to empower the movement and unlock God's power.

- To pray for healing and reconciliation in communities affected by the post-election violence.
- Pray for our leaders to have courageous and bold faith to share the Gospel in the face of rising persecution.
- Pray for spiritual fruit and multiplication To pray for the DMM in South Asia for empowerment and guidance upon those making disciples and upon the movements.
- Pray for rapid multiplication of disciples who are making disciples. We ask for deep transformation in lives through obedience to the word. Pray that we can achieve our faith goal of 73,000 groups by the end of this year.

We are very thankful to the BMS for their continued support and prayers which has been vital in seeing our people go forward despite all the challenges. We rejoice with them in what God is doing and we celebrate their partnership with us.”

Part of Benjamin Francis Prayer Letter APRIL 2026

BMS World Mission Team Leader in India

REFUGEES, A WORLD CUP, AND LEARNING TO LISTEN



Right now, 41.6 million people around the world are refugees – each one individually created, known and loved by God.

Refugee: seven letters to sum up a whole gigantic group of humans who have in common the devastating experience of being somewhere other than where they might otherwise have chosen to be, because at some point they had to run to save their lives. One small word that encompasses the loss of homes, of countries, of identities, of peace – the loss of all that people have known and owned and lived.

It's easy to accidentally create a monolith in our minds – a one-size-fits-all picture to fit the word describing a state none of us would ever want to be in.

But, around the world, 41.6 million of us are living that reality right now. And, behind the word and the numbers, are 41.6 million individual stories: personal hopes and dreams, shattered or delayed. Personality traits and character quirks. Likes and dislikes. Loves and losses. Friends. Families. Fears and futures full of uncertainty where there should be possibility.

Amongst the 41.6 million, there are football supporters and those who have no interest in the game. There are people who will, where possible, follow the current World Cup with fervent hope for their country's team – or perhaps even for the team of their host country – and there are even those who may have had, but have now lost, a chance to take part themselves.

At this World Cup, at least one player is representing a country that gave him refuge.

And some may have actively avoided watching it anyway, but that would have been their choice based on their likes and dislikes – an expression of preference rather than where they might find themselves now, with little option of anything they might choose.

But, whether it's a love (or hate) for the beautiful game, or whether it's a longing to sing, to study, to change the world. Or to raise a family quietly

while working the farmland handed down through generations without the threat of violence or destruction, each of the people carrying the unenviable descriptor of refugee, is created, seen and loved by God.

And we are called to follow where that love leads.

Where love leads... in Lebanon

In Lebanon, one of the ways Tearfund is working to do this is through supporting the Manara Youth Centre. Lebanon is host to 1.5 million refugees from several different countries, including many people who have fled Syria. But, after living through trauma and loss, facing a context of poverty and lack, and with little hope of going home in sight, many refugees – including teenagers – struggle emotionally and psychologically.

Emotions like fear and anger can become exhausting and overwhelming. And mental health struggles are often a reality for young people who have endured such uprooted and precarious periods of life. The Manara centre provides a space for young people and their caregivers to receive help to process trauma, manage emotions, and strengthen family bonds. It creates opportunities to bring together Lebanese, Syrian and other communities to bridge social divides through sports, arts and friendly dialogue.

One particular programme the centre runs is called Ambassadors of Peace. It's designed to help young people learn to communicate across differences, solve complex problems, and start to truly value new perspectives.

One young woman who has found value in a new perspective on her own situation is Rojine*.

Here, she tells some of her story:-

Rojine's story of finding peace

'I am a Syrian Kurdish girl who should've been in tenth grade, but I am currently in eighth grade. 'I love to draw, crochet, design clothes, and do anything artistic. I would like to be an interior designer someday.

'I've been coming to Manara Youth Centre for a while now.

'In the past, I was known as the girl who got angry quickly. If someone disagreed with me, I wouldn't even let them finish their sentence. I always

felt like I had to defend myself, and the only way I knew how was by raising my voice.

‘A few people at the centre, especially the youth workers, noticed this about me. They cared enough to encourage me to join the Ambassadors of Peace programme. They said it might help me change. ‘Honestly, I wasn’t very convinced. But some of my friends were joining too, so I thought, why not? At least it’ll be fun.

‘The first session was hard. I remember sitting there wishing I were outside in the hall hanging out with my friends. Even though I’m a talkative person, I didn’t feel like sharing in the beginning. My friends and my sister kept making side conversations, joking around, and I went along with them. I left that day thinking, this isn’t for me.

‘But then the sessions started to get interesting. We began talking about listening, expression and communication, and something about those topics drew me in. I started paying attention, writing notes, and actually trying to understand.

‘At first, I didn’t even notice that I was changing. But people around me did. My friends at the centre told me I was calmer. Miss Jessy, one of the youth workers who’s known me since I first came to Manara, said she could see the difference. Even my teachers at school noticed. They told me, “You’ve really changed since last year.” That meant a lot because I used to cause problems and hurt people with my words. ‘The change didn’t happen overnight; it took time. But now, when I get into an argument, I don’t rush to defend myself or fight back. Instead, I try to listen first. I remind myself that I don’t always have to be right, and that every story has two sides. If a disagreement happens at the centre, I go and talk to a youth worker instead of letting it grow into something worse. We sit together, discuss what happened, and try to understand each other respectfully.

‘Even at home, I’ve started doing the same thing. I talk to my mom or to an older person I trust. I’ve realised that it’s better to seek guidance than to act out of anger.

‘Through the Ambassadors of Peace programme, I learned how to handle conflict without letting it control me. I learned to express myself in ways

that bring peace, not more problems. And I discovered that listening can sometimes be more powerful than talking.

**Name has been changed for protection.*

More about Manara

The psychosocial support programme provides a safe space for young people and caregivers to heal and grow. Participants learn vital tools to manage stress, build empathy, and break the stigma surrounding mental health – especially during difficult times. Through group sessions and one-on-one support, participants develop healthy coping skills.

The recreational programme transforms the Manara Centre into a vibrant hub where young people can relax, stay active, and just be themselves. Whether through team sports like football or creative classes like cooking, music, and drama, young people have a safe space to discover new talents and build lasting friendships.

With year-round drop-in sessions and an energetic seven-week summer programme, the centre helps young people bridge social divides and grow in confidence together.

Environmental Sustainability initiatives enable young people to become active stewards of their local environment. Participants lead hands-on projects to green their streets and improve their neighbourhoods. These activities help them work together and build strong leadership skills.

A few statistics about refugees in 2025

- In the past year, 5.4 million people became refugees, while 4.4 million refugees returned to their countries of origin – in fact, that's the second highest number of returning refugees since records began 60 years ago! However, it bears pointing out that many of these return journeys occurred under pressure and to uncertain and unsafe conditions.
- In 2025, more than 70 per cent of the world's refugees originated from Afghanistan, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine and Venezuela.
- The countries hosting the largest number of refugees were Colombia, Germany and Türkiye.

Pray for refugees

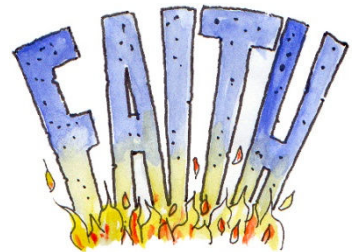
- ❖ Lift up each person who is a refugee around the world right now. Pray for peace, for freedom from fear, for provision, for healing from trauma, and for the chance for them to go home and rebuild their lives in peace.
- ❖ Pray for refugees to be treated with kindness and compassion by host communities, by governments, by faith leaders and especially by the church.
- ❖ Ask God to bring peace to situations of conflict so that people will be safe to live in their own homes and no more people will have to endure the pain and destruction of running from everything they know just to save their lives.

Tarryn Pegna | June 2026

Tearfund, 100 Church Road, Teddington, TW11 8QE 020 3906 3906
info@tearfund.org

[illegible]

NIGERIA:



UN EXPERTS WARN OF RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS FROM CHRISTIAN AND OTHER RELIGIOUS MINORITY COMMUNITIES

GENEVA - Credible reports of killings, abductions, sexual violence, forced conversion, forced marriage, abductions and acts tantamount to enforced disappearances targeting Christian and other religious minority communities in Nigeria, particularly women and girls, are alarming, UN experts have said.

“These reports are deeply troubling,” the experts said. “The deteriorating security situation in northern Nigeria and the Middle Belt has created an environment in which armed extremist groups, including Boko Haram,

Islamic State West Africa Province, and radicalised individual herdsmen involved in the ‘farmer-herder’ conflict continue to operate with devastating consequences for civilians, amid persistent reports of impunity, institutional failures, and inadequate protection by authorities.”

“The testimonies we have received paint a horrifying picture of fear, trauma, coercion and abandonment,” the experts said. “Victims and survivors must not be left without protection, justice, reparations, including rehabilitation and meaningful support.”

“Violence targeting Christians and other religious minorities continues to be rampant,” the experts said, pointing to the application of local interpretations of Sharia law in the 12 States of Northern Nigeria, the enforcement of blasphemy codes and the long-standing absence of effective access to justice.

“We are particularly alarmed at the very specific and heightened risks of discrimination, violence and exploitation that Christian women and girls are exposed to, as we continue to document grave cases of sexual violence, abductions, acts tantamount to enforced disappearances, forced conversion and child marriage amongst them,” the experts said. “In many cases, those who resist are reportedly threatened, punished, disappeared or killed,” they added.

In a communication to the Nigerian Government, the experts highlighted multiple incidents, including the abduction and sexual assault of Christian women; the disappearance of girls abducted from a church in Borno State; the forced conversion and child marriage of a 13-year-old girl in Bauchi State; and a brutal attack against a 16-year-old Christian girl whose hand was reportedly cut off after her family rejected a forced marriage proposal by militants.

“These crimes took place within a broader pattern of violence and persecution disproportionately affecting Christian communities in some northern states, including killings, attacks on churches and villages, mass displacement, mob violence linked to accusations of blasphemy, and severe insecurity affecting women and children in internally displaced persons camps,” the experts said.

Displaced Christian and other minority women and girls are particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse, including coercion into sexual acts in exchange for food or basic necessities. Some reportedly conceal their religious identity or wear hijabs as a survival strategy to avoid violence or gain acceptance in areas under the control of armed or religious groups, the experts noted.

“If confirmed, these allegations may amount to serious violations of international human rights law, including violations of the rights to life, safety, liberty, security, freedom of religion or belief, freedom from torture, enforced disappearance, slavery and trafficking, and the rights of women and children,” they said.

The experts urged Nigerian authorities to take immediate measures to protect those at risk, secure the release and recovery of abducted girls and women, ensure independent impartial and thorough investigations, prosecute perpetrators, and guarantee effective remedies and support for victims and survivors.

“Impunity for these crimes only fuels further violence,” they said.

“Nigerian authorities must act urgently to prevent further irreparable harm and ensure accountability for all violations.”

Please pray

- In thanks for this encouraging development, asking God that the letter carries weight, favour and authority with the Nigerian government, compelling them to action.
- That every woman and girl affected by violence in the region will heal and recover from their ordeals, and for the immediate release of those held captive.
- That the Holy Spirit will be preparing the hearts of those in power who will receive the Arise Africa petition, and that it would lead to real change for our persecuted family.

Simon, Open Doors, Email June 2026



2nd Maidstone Girls' Brigade & 1st Maidstone Boys' Brigade



It was so good to share with our members, their families and some church friends at our Awards and Celebration evening at the end of May. Thank you to those who came along or prayed for us, we do very much appreciate your support and interest.

After a short time of worship we heard from some of the children and young people about some of the activities that they had done over the course of the year. The younger groups shared a drama and a song and the older groups showed off a collage they had created using much of the badge work material they had looked across the year and showed a photo presentation they put together about Camp Amazing 2026.

Many of the youngsters received badges they have earned over the session, some of the youngsters moved to new sections, and we welcomed those who had joined us since last Awards evening with a small Brigade gift and a copy of a Brigade Testament, kindly donated to us by Good News for Everyone (formerly Gideons UK). We were pleased to be joined for the evening by Val Burnage, Team Leader at Larkfield Girl's Brigade and a friend of the company, to present the awards and say a few words of encouragement to the young people and the leaders.

We are now well into our Summer Programme activities which are an opportunity for a more relaxed time together. We have walks, games in the park and at the Church, archery, challenges and swimming amongst our planned activities and a family picnic to round off the Brigade year in mid July.

Please continue to keep the children, young people and their leaders in your prayers.

Jane Haslam

mbc-415@highg.net

Regular Sunday Meetings.

Every Sunday: 10.30hrs In-person Worship at Knightrider Street

Services are also streamed on YouTube when possible.

Please Note: For safeguarding reasons photography and/or moving image recording, using any type of device, is **NOT** permitted in the church without **prior** permission.



Would you like to join
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for volunteers to join us.

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