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CHAINLINK

The Magazine of the Christian Motorcyclists' Association UK

WINTER 2021-22

winter 2021-22

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From the Editor's Garage

Here in the United Kingdom there is something that most people do very well – wait in queues. We have become quite accustomed to it. Whether waiting for fuel at a busy petrol station in summer or waiting many hours in the Accident & Emergency Department at the local hospital (if you're unfortunate enough to need their services). Waiting has become part of everyday life.

There are other areas of our lives where waiting around is totally unacceptable – do you remember the *hourglass* symbol that appeared in the centre of your old Windows PC? Do you remember some of the awful things you said to that same computer? How about the small rotating circle on your smartphone or tablet screen while you're trying to download something from the internet! How annoying it is! We live in a culture where the general rule has become, 'I want it and I want it now!'

I suppose a tad more relevant for us during this season is the hankering after some good weather so we can get back riding and fulfil the mission we have to reach other bikers for the sake of the Gospel. It's just as important that we make good use of the time available now to '*wait on the Lord*' so that we may renew our spiritual strength and be ready for those occasions during the biking season that will demand our total reliance on Him! 'Preparation is everything', as someone once said.

So, rather than waiting impatiently for brighter weather and drier roads, spend some time preparing your bike for spring and summer; spend time cleaning your leathers and textiles; but most importantly, spend time in God's Word, prayer and fellowship. Perhaps the, '*mount up with wings like eagles*' is more relevant than we think – next time you crank your leg over the saddle remember, you're *mounting up*!

As always, especially during the winter, ride safe, look for the dry tarmac and keep your eyes on the road ahead!

John

'Those who
wait on the
LORD shall
renew their
strength;
they shall
mount up
with wings
like eagles,
they shall run
and not be
weary, they
shall walk
and not
faint.'

Isaiah 40:31 NKJ

Articles for Chainlink are most welcome, and should preferably be submitted by e-mail to chainlink@bike.org.uk

All images should be high resolution (originals from your camera/smartphone) and **NOT** embedded in a text document. Vector graphics are also welcome. Text documents should be unformatted text or rich text format (RTF) files. MS Word, OpenOffice and WordPerfect documents are acceptable, **PDFs are not**.

The sender must have permission for the inclusion of ALL names, addresses and pictures, especially of children, prior to submission and be able to provide accreditation for all material that is not original. The sender takes all responsibility for all content and rights relating to all items that are submitted. If in doubt, please obtain verification from the National Chairman or the Executive Committee. The editor retains the right to correct spelling and grammar as appropriate.

A Man called Mervyn in Morrisons

Mike Fitton, National Chairman



On New Year's Eve I went for a breakfast ride to Denbigh (North Wales) with some of North Cheshire Branch; usually riding in late December is unheard of where we live on the North Yorkshire Moors, due to ice and snow. On the way there, the temperature soared to 15°C and rain poured down with strong winds – on the way home it was blue sky and sunshine.

John Hodge led us to Denbigh but the local Bike Café was closed (contrary to its website) so we opted for Morrisons' café nearby; not quite the biker environment we had hoped for BUT God had a plan! God always has a plan, we just need to accept the road He leads us down, even if we don't understand at the time.

As we waited to give our order an elderly local man called Mervyn approached us and asked if the cross on our backs meant anything to us. I've had many people try and make fun of my cross (I understand why) but I knew this was a genuine question. He said it spoke to him of his Saviour Jesus. We had a wonderful conversation and left him in no doubt that we were united with him in the same believing faith.

Then Mervyn said, "I have a Biker Bible at home!" What an opportunity to introduce Colin Pownall, who's story is in the Biker Bible! Colin sat at Mervyn's table and shared some of his testimony.

I'm not sure if Mervyn had a biking background, but I know he was encouraged to meet us – we were brothers in Christ, brought together at that moment by the courage of this man, who in effect asked Christian bikers if they had a reason for their cross.

It was a powerful moment, one that I felt God had planned, one that had great significance for the last day of 2021.

I thanked Mervyn for his question because we need to be challenged to maintain our purpose together, I hope it happens often in 2022.

Why do we wear a cross and are we ready to give an answer?

1 Peter 3:15 [Amplified Bible] reads:

In your hearts set Christ apart [as holy—acknowledging Him, giving Him first place in your lives] as Lord. Always be ready to give a [logical] defence to anyone who asks you to account for the hope and confident assurance [elicited by faith] that is within you, yet [do it] with gentleness and respect.

I remember a few years ago pulling up at traffic lights next to a biker who had a large red cross on his back. I asked him what it stood for and he said, "I just like crosses." It was incredibly sad – the Cross represents the most significant expression of God's love to a world that couldn't care less and this young biker didn't know. Sadly, I didn't get a chance to say anything further to him as the lights changed, but I prayed for him that one day he, like Mervyn, could say, "The Cross represents my Saviour Jesus". Who knows one day he might wear a white cross and ride with purpose in CMA?

No one but God knows what this New Year will hold for us and He is more than able to lead us through any obstacles and enable us to be courageous as we share the Gospel.

Remember, in CMA you are not alone – as we rode together to Denbigh we were united in many ways:

- *We are one in Christ Jesus through His sacrifice at Calvary's Cross.*
- *We have a common passion for motorcycling*
- *We have a common purpose to shine the Light of Christ as we share the Gospel, specifically but not exclusively to bikers, 'reaching the world one heart at a time.'*

In 2022, let your light shine brighter than ever.

John 1:1-5 reads:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

God Bless you, Mike 🙏



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For a complete and up-to-date list of all UK branches please check out the CMA UK website – see the link in the footer of this page.

The views expressed in *Chainlink* cannot be taken as official CMA policy on any subject. The magazine is published up to four times a year, to provide information for CMA members and to encourage them in their personal walk with God. We pray that this magazine will also stimulate non-Christian readers into thinking more about Jesus Christ, and also seeking Him for themselves.

The Bible says: 'Seek and you will find'
St Matthew chapter 7, verse 7



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Jackie & Tom at Jax Snax van

The Wetlands – Washington, August 11th 2021

George, Debbie and Lee, Tyne & Wear

Reconnecting with the wider biking community after the lockdown got a boost with the re-opening of the bike meet at the Wetlands Wildlife Centre, Washington, Tyne and Wear. In the pre-pandemic world, the Wetlands could see hundreds of bikes gathering each Wednesday and Sunday night, depending on the weather. We are so fortunate to have a well-established bike meet courtesy of the Wetlands Wildfowl Park in Washington, Tyne and Wear. Normally meeting every Wednesday and Sunday evening, from March until the October time change, it attracts hundreds of bikes and biking groups.

The organisers, Jax Snax burger van, adds to the attraction. Who could pass by the van with the smell of tea, coffee and their famous curry and chips, without their mouth watering and stomach rumbling? Even waiting in line, conversations are had and friendships made. Getting back to the Wetlands this summer after the trauma of lockdown was needed. One of the reasons people like me ride is to feel that sense of freedom and to be one with the surroundings. Locked inside and starting the bike engine every week just didn't fill the void.



Waiting for a free burger

Post lockdown the Wetlands officially started again on the 11 August 2021. To mark the occasion, we decided to set up a gazebo so we could serve cakes, give out prayer cards and bibles. We also handed out vouchers to the first 100 bikes for a free burger, to be



Tim handing out free burger vouchers

consumed at Jax Snax, the local food van.

In a fair division of labour (we were assured it was fair by the female members of CMA), the ladies decided they wanted to man/woman the gazebo and hand out the cakes, and the men, who had second choice, had the long walk to the entrance of the Wetlands to hand out the free burger vouchers, before the Wetlands opened.

Every biker that approached the entrance was offered a voucher and only one refused, on the grounds he had 'just had some scran'. Prayer cards and even bibles were given out as conversations began in earnest. If they didn't know who CMA were



Tim & Lee talking to a rider

before the Wetlands reopened, they did now. Lee, our treasurer, met a chap called John, who was riding a Dragstar 400 painted in army, navy and RAF colours. He was a member of the Legion Riders and thanked Lee for the food voucher. As they talked,

John told Lee that he would like to come on a ride out with us and knew one of our members, John 'Digger' Buxton. He took a prayer card and told Lee he already had a Biker Bible.

Jax Snax has been operating a mobile burger van there for the bike meet for many years and their announcement that they were returning on August 11th was met with some excitement, especially on Facebook. Other smaller bike meets, in various places, had sprung up and been running for a while.

Because of this we didn't

know how many people would turn up to the Wetlands, especially with a forecast of rain to contend with.

The T&W branch of CMA liaised with Sarah, at Jax Snax, and we paid for the first 100 burgers given out, while Sarah got cakes from Costco which would then be given out at the gazebo.

Bikers were already gathering waiting to be let in when we arrived early to set up the gazebo, and soon the bikes were roaring into the car park, headed for the burger van. Once that had been consumed, they then came over for their cake. Cake, always popular with Tom, a member of Tyne & Wear branch, as well



Lee giving out vouchers

as most other bikers, to no one's surprise had been snapped up almost immediately.

It was noticeable that the number of female bikers seems to have increased quite a bit, which was interesting. There were at least five children present, some in full bike gear. Was this hardened biker meet becoming a family event? Some of the usual groups and clubs parked in their normal spots and it was almost like the last 18 months had not happened. I couldn't count how many there were as people were moving about so much, but I think there must have been 70 or 80 people in the first hour.

Rachel and Debbie (the introverts) sat behind the cake table waiting for customers. Rachel cut and served cake until Amanda (the extrovert) arrived. Their quiet demeanor gladly gave way to Amanda's enthusiasm as she called out like a market seller attracting people to come and eat cake. All that was missing was the three-wheeler Supervan and the suitcase. She even talked a diabetic and a few dieters into having a slice as well as leading us all in singing 'Happy Birthday' to biker Tony as he took his cake. The icing on the cake, apart from sugar, water and

butter, was the marriage proposal she received when she, in true Del Boy style, pretended that she had spent the whole day baking the cakes herself. The way to a man's heart...

One of the bikers sat down at the table and engaged Rachel and Debbie in a conversation about how he didn't believe that Jesus was God, and having the same values was surely more important than having the same beliefs. He wanted to know if non-Christians with Christian values could join CMA. I'm not sure their answers satisfied him. Where was Mike Fitton when they needed him?

At the end of the event there was only one cake left which Debbie, Tom's long-suffering wife, gave back to Sarah to take home. Probably the reason behind it was so Tom wouldn't get his hands on it. Sarah said she was devastated that there was cake left. Then grinned. Nothing better than a cake from Costco.

It was a really good night with friends connecting again after so long and I think the Wetlands will once again be able to establish itself as one of the main 'biker' meets in the North East. †

Amanda giving out cake



Memorial Service to Fallen Riders 2021 – Wetlands Wildfowl Park

George, Debbie and Lee, Tyne & Wear

In 2016 we arranged, with the organisers of the bike meet, to hold a memorial service for fallen bikers and their families. We wanted to engage at a deeper level with other bikers about tragedy and death, and the love of God in all situations. We helped them with questions such as, 'What does it all mean?' and 'What happens after we die?'

This proved very popular with the bikers, so we have held one every year since, apart from 2020 when things were in lockdown. Jax Snax burger van owners were so committed they had the names of the first fallen bikers written on the side of the van.

Our agenda on the night is to welcome bikers who have lost someone then give a short talk about why we are here. Finally, the honour roll is read out followed by one minute of silence. The whole service takes less than half an hour. Even those with a short attention span wait for the name that means something to them. In the silence of their own memories they remember their friend or loved one. Many a hardened biker stands in quiet, tears running down their face, quickly disguised by the wipe of a hand. I thought I was hardened to it until the name of a lady was read out closely followed by the name of her unborn child. I removed my glasses and joined in the collective grief.

We gather names from the bikers at various bike meets which started out as a list of 59 names. This year it has expanded to 125. One of our goals is also to get other bikers and clubs involved in holding the memorial service. This is to strengthen our relationships and ties with those that attend. We always ask someone from outside CMA to help read the list of names on the honour roll. This year we had someone from a patch club read alternate names, along with our Chairman Tim Cannon.

We've had various people giving short talks to the group, including CMA members, a Biker Bishop, a Church Minister, and CMA's very own Mike Fitton, who spoke this year.

Feedback has always been very good and the sense of stillness during the service is a tribute to the bikers who want to remember their friends. This year Mike was privileged to share afterwards

as two bikers spoke to him about what he had said and the impact his words had on them. Mike said, 'Two bikers poured out their hearts at their loss. One has asked to meet with me. He has carried the pain of bereavement for three years and never shed a tear until tonight. God clearly prepared their hearts.' Others spoke to our regular CMA attenders in the weeks afterwards and were very positive about the event.

Although many of the Wetlands bikers would not consider themselves Christians, or even religious, they appreciate the memorial service as a way of remembering our shared history and the people who mean so much to them. We always pray that it will lead them to understand how much God loves them.



Biker reading a CMA testimony

We would really like to encourage other CMA branches to hold an annual memorial service in their area. Depending on the venue and situation, it is helpful to have a small gazebo and something for people to stand on to give them height when they address the gathering. Loudspeakers and microphones also come in handy so everyone can hear. It is a minimal investment in money, time and energy for a very great return.

We don't expect the crowd to start crying and hugging each other but when someone comes up to you and thanks you for what you have done, it means a lot. Some ask for Bibles and their loved one's names written inside. Prayer cards are given out so during times when the biker is feeling the weight of loss, they can look at the card and remember happier times. ✝

The Bike of my Dreams

Ian Brailey, Bristol

I am now the proud owner of the bike of my dreams. I took possession at the end of October. It's a Honda DN-01. Yes, yes, you are forgiven for saying 'What the heck is that?' Or words to that effect anyway.

Let me start explaining about me and motorbikes. I am not of the 'double overhead cam, high lift valve' type at all. My knowledge of motorbikes is more of the 'black ones, red ones' variety. I am just here for the ride.

A few years ago I was drooling around my local dealers when I spotted it, the DN-01. It was black, it was sleek, it was almost futuristic and it was beautiful. I love the 'scowl' of the headlights. The eye-watering five-figure price tag was only just short of what I had paid for our house a few years earlier, so I could only dream.

I have owned a Triumph Bonneville for about five years, and I have loved riding it... alone. The problem came when carrying a pillion. The flat seat meant Sue had no forward vision, my position was moved, so I was less comfortable and gear changes became jerky. I decided to see if I could find something with a larger seating space.

After going on Len's Run (by car as I was taking along a lot of equipment for others) I watched the members who rode cruisers and thought how comfortable they looked and decided to look for a cruiser.



A very happy Ian!

I wandered around the dealers and saw nothing of interest in the Honda section. I looked at the Triumphs but the 'America' was out of my price range. Harleys were out of the question as the bike has to live outdoors. I wandered around to the Yamaha section and there in the corner, very much out of place was the DN-01! For all I knew, this could have been the same one I saw all those years ago. Even 11 years old the price tag was more than I wanted to pay. I thought that perhaps I could pay part by finance so Sue and I went to talk things over with them. I got a better deal on the Bonny than I expected and, realising that the interest on our savings was rubbish, we decided to go for it and pay cash.

So how is it? Well, getting used to the easy rider position was strange. The automatic gearbox felt a bit weird at first but is great now. There is no dropping down through the gears if you had to stop quickly, as it automatically selects first gear to pull away. Still not comfortable taking the hairpin bend at the end of our road, every trip an adventure! The shaft drive means no more oiling

of the chain. Sue enjoys the smoother ride. I love having a unique bike, although I was stopped at traffic lights in Bristol just before Christmas when a motorcyclist pulled alongside and said 'Snap!'. There are around 700 in the UK and at least 2 in Bristol, who would have thought it!

Best moment? Being asked to put my bike on the stage as part of the nativity scene with the baby Jesus on the riders seat at the Biker's Carol Service. And obviously, being asked by Mike Fitton to write an article about my bike for Chainlink. ✝



Sometimes nothing seems to happen – then sometimes...

Brian Jenner, Gloucester

Covid has curtailed a lot of our activities but a couple of weeks ago I was able to visit two rallies held by the Royal Enfield Owners' Club. The Fossil Rally (not Jurassic coast – just old bikers) was that very wet weekend, even so I was able to meet with a few down in Somerset and renew friendships from pre-Covid.

That weekend felt much like how it used to be, making friendships, being there, but not too much conversation about Jesus. Our ministry is often the long haul and maybe others reap the harvest for us.

The following week the October Fest Rally was up near Alcester. The weather was great and Saturday saw 30-odd of us off on our bikes together at a gentle Enfield pace giving villagers a fine show of old and not so old bikes. That evening I

accompanied a friend to the local club. Inside he took the last seat in a group of us, so I started another table and took some 'me time' reading a Biker Bible. I was then joined by a chap who asked what I was reading. I told him it was a Bikers Bible like the ones we give away. He noticed that it was a German copy and as his mother was German could he have a copy to keep his eye in with his German. I offered him mine, to which he declined but gave me his address. As we talked I found out he had



escaped from the Jehovahs Witnesses as his mother had been a Roman Catholic but had failed to find faith there and had been persuaded to become a Jehovah's Witness. He was brought up as a JW until he started having doubts at 18 and left at 21. We were then joined by another disillusioned JW and our conversations continued and I was able to tell them about the similar but so different story which is the truth about our Jesus who is God. Also the freedom we have from the law now can be written on our hearts. They were both keen to hear the good news.

I left fairly early as is my custom and made my way back to camp where I met the couple I had spent some time with the week before. They shared that they were Christians but had had a difficult time. They clearly had a faith but needed encouraging and had enjoyed talking to me the week before (they knew I was a Christian because of my jacket).

I was able to give them some more direct words of encouragement and they expressed their thanks.

The next day I felt led to offer my Bible again to the ex-JW. This time he accepted it willingly. We had just a few words while he was packing up. Then back at my tent the other ex-JW who had been more provocative the night before came to thank me and say he was on a journey of faith and enjoyed talking to CMA folk as he learned so much. He wanted to say this before he left.

As we continued getting ready to go, I stopped to talk to a Christian biker I had met at that rally many times. It was great to just chat about Jesus together on the road in the camp site. I wonder what those passing thought?

It is not always as exciting and encouraging as this so please do pray for our times meeting bikers and others, for safety on the roads and all our leaders. 🙏

Photo by Ayyappan Mk on Unsplash

CMA Annual General Meeting

Tim Shelley, Witham URC

It was over 18 months ago that Sally Tracey, Essex member, began trying to organise a visit of the Christian Motorcyclists Association to Witham United Reformed Church. However, due to the pandemic the planned weekend in 2020 of course didn't materialise, and we were wondering if this event would ever happen. Thankfully it did.

Sally asked us musicians (although only a drummer, I am including myself in this collective for the sake of convenience!) to keep the weekend of 29th–31st October free. We were involved in the song selection for both the Saturday and Sunday and we met on the Friday to rehearse. I could not believe the number of CMA attendees on the Friday. The weather was poor and I reckoned on



WURC musicians Bob, Pete & Tim

maybe 30 max. I don't have the final figure but I know it was massively more than that. For the Saturday service pre-AGM we played 3 songs, and the singing from the assembled motorcyclists was amazing. We have not had singing like that for far too long. Mike gave a

short talk, and we were then dismissed for the business meeting to proceed.

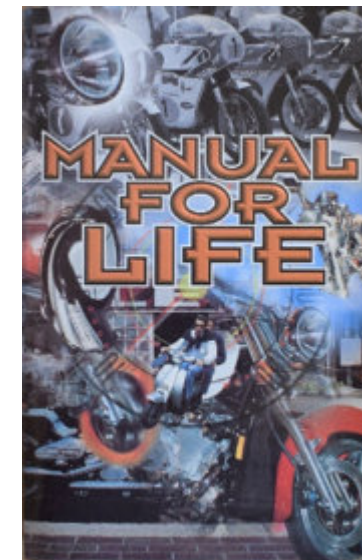
On Sunday, again the weather was poor—in fact, worse than the previous day—but again the CMA turned up in force. This time we were privileged to have 2 bikes parked inside the sanctuary. Mike told us these both belonged to ladies, generating a round of applause.

With our Youth Pastor Viv, Mike demonstrated the Armour of God, though we were hoping he would actually put all the gear on! Anyway, some more great singing followed by a time of fellowship over coffee in the back hall. You CMA guys and girls are so friendly and so enthusiastic.

There has been so much good feedback from among our congregation. Unfortunately, our online live stream (search WURC on YouTube) does not do justice to the music, but we are working to up the quality of broadcast.



I managed to read at least some of the latest Chainlink overnight and had a brief chat with Brian on Sunday over his article on biker clothing – he really is a 'leather is best' guy, and why not after having survived that accident with leathers merely scuffed. Although my last bike was nearly 30 years ago, I have remained a biker at heart and still have my 1970's light blue Lewis Leathers jacket to prove it! I also have a copy of the 'Manual For Life' which seems to be a predecessor of the Biker Bible, although I cannot remember which event that came from. Don't be surprised if the weekend has enthused me enough to get back riding. Sally keeps on at me too... †



Pride of place



Are we there yet?



Lifeline in Lockdown

Naomi Hogan, North East

‘Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.’ (Malachi 3:10)



As I cast my mind back to March 2020, I could not for one second imagine that the world and my life would go through what it has since then. I write this with tears streaming down my face with the words of the song echoing in my Spirit:

*All my life, You have been faithful.
All my life, You have been good.
With every breath that I am able,
I will sing of the goodness of God!*

For those that knew me well prior to March 2020, an early morning Bible study or prayer meeting is not where you would find me. I am not a morning person! I would never be at the morning prayers at the National Rally – not that I didn’t want to. The mind was willing but the body was ever so weak.

Then when my boss announced that we were shutting the office (I had hoped just for a couple of weeks only), things started to change. I went from a full work, social, ministry, church calendar to strict shielding. I am sure many will equate with some of the emotions and feelings that I went through at that time. Clapping for the NHS from my upstairs window as members of my household were key/ frontline workers. Oh, how my mind and body wanted to shut down and to roll from bed to the other side of the bed where the laptop was to start work but, as I knew deep down, this would not and could not last for very long. I needed a motivation and it came in the most unlikely of ways.

A huge ‘Thank you’ to the Thames Valley Branch – you were my lifeline! They invited people to join them in morning prayers at 8.15 every weekday and 9am every Saturday via Zoom (and the occasional Zoom branch meeting and social too! – I am also very grateful to the warm welcome to many other branches that have opened up their Zoom socials and branch meetings to me). These prayer meetings have become and still are my lifeline. I have developed such strong bonds and friendships with these precious prayer warriors and people of God (to the point where some have even been to visit me from other parts of the world – in between lockdowns).

There are no words to express what this group of faithful ‘pray-ers’ and friends have done to me and for me during the pandemic. They have lifted me up when I have been down, they have raised my arms when I have not been strong enough to raise them myself. They have walked with me through the valley, cried tears with me and rejoiced with my successes. I can’t thank God enough for you!

I don’t think I can even begin to start naming the things that God has done for us as a praying group as I am bound to forget something or someone but I really want to encourage each and every one of you to join us. It is usually from 8.15am to 8.55am every weekday. As a collective, CMA says that it wants to see souls saved and revival. Did you know that most revivals started with a small group of people praying and this has now become my heart’s cry:

*If My people who are called by My name
will humble themselves, and pray and seek
My face, and turn from their wicked
ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will
forgive their sin and heal their land. 2
Chronicles 7:14*

Oh Lord God, please forgive us and heal our broken and desperate land!

I am not here to boast—far from it!—I am here to boast of the goodness of God! My dear friends see me at my worst (pyjamas, dressing gown – the lot!) and also see me sat at my desk now that I am back in the office

some days a week, or like recently in a marquee getting ready to open our stand at a County Show. I was eating a Danish for breakfast, joined in the prayers and then had to leave to sweep the carpeted floor of the stand ready for opening. Soon after, a colleague (a very anti-Christian antagonist – doesn’t God just love these?!) asked who I was ‘Zooming’ with and with Holy Spirit boldness—I can assure you it was not my own—I said it was my daily prayer meeting and I was praying with friends. Oops – now I’d done it! My colleagues know I’m a Christian and know about church and CMA, etc., but this is a whole new level – even for me! The next week, I asked God for boldness, for opportunities and to be able to share words in season. The very same day, this same colleague opened up about so many personal issues they were going through. The next day, I was able to ask about their situation and how things were. I was given an update and without hesitation, the words slipped out of me ‘you are in my thoughts and prayers’ to which I got a huge ‘Thank you!’ Isn’t God good!? This is not me but all glory to Him and Him alone! (The tears are streaming down my face again!)

I am blown away by God’s grace and mercy to me that while I was in such a low place during many of these days, He has used a prayer meeting of all things to encourage me, build me up and bring me closer to Him. We have seen so many answers to prayer – too many to name or to count. Please do join us and just see that He will open for you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it as that is exactly what it has done for me. As hard as it is to say this -- I am not grateful for everything that has come with the pandemic but I am grateful for the pandemic in that I have grown closer to the Father, have grown closer to my CMA family and friends and had this amazing lifeline.

Don’t be surprised if you see me at a morning prayer meeting at a National Rally from now on – but just to warn you – I may be in my dressing gown! †

Background image by Kajetan Sumila on Unsplash

Isle of Wight Tour

Jeremy Knight, Hants & Dorset



Extraordinary things are happening in East Hampshire which includes towns such as Petersfield and Liphook.

This large area to the south of the Hampshire and Surrey borders region and to the east of Hampshire and Dorset region has been largely devoid of CMA representation for many years – but that may all be about to change.

It all started in 2019 in Jerusalem of all places – at the Garden Tomb, the possible place of the crucifixion, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jerry Dargan, president of the Irish CMA was working there as a volunteer guide when he met Mark Aldridge, one of the Trustees of the charity and a fellow biker. Since Mark lives near Petersfield he hadn't come across the CMA before but when Jerry started to describe its mission, he was immediately enthused with the idea of evangelising bikers in the East Hampshire area.

That introduction quickly led to a meeting with Jeremy Knight, Chairman of the Hampshire and Dorset branch and some of the CMA members there, and a request to find premises near Petersfield where a group from Hampshire and Dorset could start meeting and praying over the possible extension of the region to the east.

Mark's home church, Hope Church – an independent evangelical church with congregations in Petersfield and the village of Greatham had unexpectedly just been offered the use of an old chapel building in West Liss, midway between the two locations. The leaders felt led to take it on not having any idea how it would be used, but knowing that God, having provided the building would make his plans known.

And so it came about that Jeremy Knight and some of his CMA members have started to meet there every month together with Mark Aldridge and Ralph Buckingham, an elder of Hope Church, a keen biker and facilitator of agreement by the elders for use by the CMA.

These events are looking like the start of a journey where the hand of the Divine is in control – where this journey will go we will have to wait and see, but in the meantime this unexpected leading strengthens faith and the desire to see 'Your Kingdom come'.

Last weekend, Jeremy Knight, Mark Aldridge and Ralph Buckingham met up with CMA members Kerry Withers and Martyn Highmore for an end-of-season tour of the Isle of Wight based at a campsite near Bembridge. The aim was to get to know each other better, to ride some great roads including the course of the proposed Diamond Races, to visit various points of interest, and to spend some time talking and praying about the things that really matter.

The weather for three out of the four days was superb. There were several culinary highlights including a barbeque every evening, brunch at *The Hut* near Yarmouth and Sunday lunch at the Lifeboat Restaurant in East Cowes, and a particularly interesting private tour around the Britten-Norman manufacturing facility where parts for the Islander aeroplane are made. The most precious moments were the devotional times around the dying embers of the barbeque where the presence of God was felt as we studied the Word and prayed.

These times away do strengthen and encourage relationships between like-minded people, and as Christians, we wait to see how God will open up the doors to the next phase of the journey. The group plans to meet again in a few weeks time and hopefully others will be enthused to hear what is happening and pledge their support too. 🙏

In the photo, left to right:

Kerry Withers (CMA Hampshire and Dorset), Mark Aldridge (Hope Church), Ralph Buckingham (Hope Church), Martyn Highmore (CMA Hampshire and Dorset), Jeremy Knight (Chairman CMA Hampshire and Dorset)

Bikers in a Covid World

We are bikers. It's a life of greater risks than many would choose. A cautious concern drives most of us to wear protection. In some communities we'd generate a little anxiety when we ride in our packs... They might wonder if we are a gang up to no good. Thankfully (and hopefully) they are set at ease when they see our white crosses.

There seems to be a shrunken middle generation in the biker world, perhaps caused by a combination of financial worries and heightened awareness of risk. The younger bikers marry and have children and might feel pressured to give up riding to be more



responsible (and alive) parents. I've approached it a little backwards though. I bought my first motorcycle in 1985, the same year my firstborn arrived (I used to joke that I developed a death wish when entering fatherhood). The decade before that I learned respect for the road as I pedaled my bicycle over 10,000 miles, including several long tours covering the western USA from Canada to Mexico.

My first motorcycle was initially a commuter vehicle carrying me across the south of

the San Francisco Bay Area. The little lady's mother didn't like the idea but was still willing to watch the little-uns when we did our first overnight tour from San José to Napa, California. I strapped a hardshell suitcase on the backrack, and we enjoyed touring that famous vineyard region. I'm not into wine, so I relished the road time while the little lady delighted in all the tasting stops. She sang her heart out behind me, occasionally banging her helmet on mine when she got a little drowsy. Here's a photo of that first bike, a Honda CB450 (she was just posing... normally she wears more protection than me. Also, when she got nervous about what I was doing, she used to poke both sides of my ribs... distractingly ticklish. Now, she prefers to close her eyes especially when I filter in traffic... a mixture of trust and fear).

That Honda stayed with me many miles and years. In a 1991 move from California to Colorado I rode alone on many backroads, including highway 50 across Nevada. It was then called the 'Loneliest Highway in America' because there were so few towns (I carried an extra petrol can just in case). In 1997, we packed the CB450 with our household goods in a container to Germany. It worked hard to keep up with the average flow of Autobahn traffic, so eventually I upgraded to a Honda Deauville 650. That took us on our first major tour from the south of Germany up to Inverness, Scotland. Since 2007 we've enjoyed our Yamaha FJR 1300 and it's seen quite a bit of Germany, Switzerland, France, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, UK and Ireland. But I've digressed from the topic at hand...

I'm sensing more apprehension and anxiety in the air this Covid season. We are faced with our own mortality to a higher degree. Even in 'normal' times when I'm on the bike, I occasionally look down at the blur of the road next to me and am reminded of that thin line between my confidence and my frailty. Just the idea of sitting above a hunk of metal containing millions of explosions is sobering.

The Pandemic has brought broader troubling thoughts to the minds of many... conspiracies, excessive governmental control, suppression of truth, etc. These stir up anger, worry and frustration. I have a few relatives who have been led down online rabbit holes that keep feeding more and more of what they click on. I challenged my own brother about all the extreme bad news he was spreading around. I reminded him that Scripture makes it clear that the devil and his gang are desperately working to degrade humanity (the ultimate 'conspiracy') and he's getting sneakier and sneakier, but he'll lose the battle in the end. With the discernment and power of the Holy Spirit we need to combat those internal lies that mess with our own peace, contentment and sense of value. We must spread more news of hope and ultimate victory over evil. I'll leave you with an obscure verse I read in Isaiah about directing our fear toward the Lord (for me, that fear is a sense of awe at His magnitude):

'Do not call conspiracy all that this people calls conspiracy, and do not fear what they fear, nor be in dread. But the Lord of hosts, him you shall honour as holy. Let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.' Isaiah 8:12-13 (ESV) ✠

A Negative Prayer?

Steve Wilds, West Yorks

It's a difficult time for motorcycling – well I think so anyway. No, don't call me a fair weather biker – I am happy to be out as long as there is no ice about, especially with heated clothes, heated seat and handlebars – biking in the lap of luxury.



I recently had to go to Spain to sort out some family business, sadly no motorbike with me. The roads in Spain, especially around where I live, are just fabulous for biking. While I was there, a friend who has recently bought a new NC750 Honda phoned me and said we should go for a ride out and I could ride his old Triumph Street Triple! Now those of you that know me

know that my waistline is larger than it used to be, so imagine me on a Street Triple! Anyway, I accepted the invitation knowing that 300 kilometres on an uncomfortable bike is better than no ride at all.

I duly arrived and a small group set off around Mazarrón, in south east Spain. Within 10 miles I



wondered if I had made the wrong decision, what an uncomfortable ride for me, even if it is a great little bike. I don't know why, but my mate stopped and decided that he wanted to ride his old bike and I could have the Honda. Praise the Lord! The NC750 had hardly come out of the showroom and here I was riding a mid-sized and very comfortable bike, plenty of power and a joy to ride. A fabulous day out.

Two days later I started to cough – was this just a cold or had I caught Covid? A quick lateral flow test proved positive, yes, I had the dreaded virus and had to isolate. Two weeks later, having had only four days feeling really poorly, I felt I was on the road to recovery. Then the hammer blow fell – our friend Boris Johnson decided to require a pre-flight negative test for anyone flying into the UK! I took a test and was still positive, even though I felt OK. How long would I have to wait to be clear, was I looking at Spanish turkey for Christmas? Was I going to be preparing a dinner for one on the special day, or would my system clear? I have to say I felt pretty low, even a tad vulnerable, being on my own and not likely to be able to get home to my children and grandchildren for Christmas. On the NHS website it says the virus can remain in the body for up to 90 days, so it looked as though I could be stranded until February!

I shared my predicament with my Church family back here in the UK and they made my difficulty a

matter of prayer, as did I. Thank you to my friends for praying because on the Friday of week three I felt led to take a test – this time it was negative, praise God. So I hightailed it to the test centre where I took a pre-flight test and booked a flight home. Of course I hadn't got the formal test result but I knew I was in God's hands, He directs my path and although I wanted to come home, I and my friends had put this situation in His hands. The formal test came back negative, nothing is impossible with God.

So I returned home just making it back a few days before Christmas. Of course then I had to take a PCR test, which I did straight away. I still am awaiting that result, I guess it has got lost in the ether, although my lateral flow tests are negative.

It doesn't matter what we bring to the Lord in prayer, large or small issues, He has the answer, praise His name. Do you remember singing, 'Oh what things we often forfeit, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.' Well, although in the scheme of things this was not a world shattering set of circumstances, none the less I am thankful to my Lord for answered prayer and I did not have to forfeit my Christmas turkey!

1 Thessalonians Chapter 5 verses 16,17 & 18 says – 'Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.' 🙏

Devon & Cornwall Branch

Philip Head, D&C

Greetings, dear Chainlink readers,
in the mighty Name of Jesus.

It's been challenging, with all the restrictions in place; nonetheless, we have been active. Our historical monthly meetings have given place to ride outs, planned to be monthly, although the ride outs have in fact been as often as weather has permitted. Destinations have included:

- Plymouth to Digory Isbell's Cottage at Altarnun; Draynes Valley; King Doniert's Stone; Trethevy Quoit; Hurler's Stone Circle at Minions and lunch at the Post Office Café.
- Carn Brea Castle; Bassett Monument; Red River Café; Poole NT Engine House.
- Tamar Bridge; Okehampton; Lynmouth; Lanson for lunch or a coffee.
- Tamar Bridge; Kingsbridge; Slapton Sands; Dartmouth; Lower Ferry to Kingswear; Hill Head; Brixham and the Golden Hind; Paignton; Totnes;

Dartington; Moretonhampstead;
Tavistock; Gunnislake; Callington.

- Dartmoor; Dartington; Dartmouth for lunch.
- Over Dartmoor to Buckfast Abbey and back using Derry's favourite Cornish motorways – the roads with grass growing up the middle!
(a man after my own heart – Ed.)
- A birthday breakfast feast and The Lord's Supper at Derry's church in Ernesettle.

We enjoyed Christmas Lunch on 18th December at Louis' Café on Kit Hill; this event was shared with fellow brethren from the Devon & Cornwall Christian Bikers.

Our Chairman, Beccy, stepped down from the role to free herself up to deal with more pressing personal matters but she is, as always, much loved. Derry answered the call to step up and act as Chairman until our next AGM in April. This is what Derry has to say about himself:



Hi everyone,

I am Derry Bowman and I have suddenly found myself as stand-in Chairman of the Devon and Cornwall Branch, so I will be in the driving seat until our AGM in April.

Devon and Cornwall is a huge area to cover; members are spread far and wide. This has always caused logistical difficulties. In the long term I think that this has to be addressed but in the short term I want to turn the Branch inside out, as it were. Up to this time we have met for committee meetings in a closed private room but I want these to happen in local hostleries, with the permission of the landlord of course! Committee meetings will be limited to four a year including the AGM. This frees up the other months to devote to activities that will make us more evident in the biker community and the community at large. Other activities will

be organised to enhance the profile of the Branch. We need to increase our membership to achieve these objectives.

Looking more inwardly, we need to build relationships with each other. There are no short cuts for this to happen. Commitment is needed from every Member and Supporter, but I do believe that what CMA does is good and worthwhile and it is my wish to replicate CMA's values through our Branch. For the mutual benefit of the Christian mission we must also increase our relationship with the other Christian Biker groups in our area.

Our first 'formal' meeting of 2022 will be on Monday 17th January at Betty Cottles Inn, Okehampton.

A new year. A new opportunity. A fresh approach to mission. Come on, Lord; bring it on! 🙏

Left: Christmas Dinner at Louis' Café



God of Miracles – let me tell you about mine!

Stephanie Thomas, Hants & Dorset

Well, I have something utterly amazing to share and it's very big! Extremely big, very exciting and precious and it all happened in the Summer of last year. I want to share this amazing miracle with you all...

I found out that I have a full-blood sister. She is 63 years old and I didn't know about this for 58 years! All my life until

How overwhelming! We did Facetime before we met in person and both cried. She has four daughters and a wonderful husband called John



At my house, 2021

and so I'm an aunty for the first time as well. I'm so totally overwhelmed by this amazing miracle. How awesome is that! Thank you Lord Jesus for this miracle. But that's not all! I've saved the very



best part of this story till last! Sylvia is a Christian! The only one in my entire family apart from myself. She was put into a Christian Society Adoption Centre and adopted by a lovely Christian couple. Isn't that truly amazing! God is so kind, so merciful a loving Father God. WOW! Praise the Lord, praise His holy name!

This is the message I received back in August 2021 from my sister:

'Hi, I hope this doesn't come as a shock to you but I believe you are my full blood sister – it's a long story and I've already contacted some of our family – Penelope and David our parents had a child at a very young age – and it was decided that I would be given away to a Christian adoption society – I was born 7th January 1959. Our parents went on to marry and have you and our brother Chris. Peter our uncle contacted David who said he didn't want to know as it was water under the bridge and I'm fine with that but

when Peter said I had two full blood siblings I felt you ought to know – I'm not out to make trouble, I'm happily married with four girls and really wanted to see if I looked like my parents after my adopted parents died. I wanted to tell our mum that she shouldn't regret giving me away as times were different then but I realise she had died quite a while ago. I also see you are a Christian and so am I – hoping you are fine with this and will respond. My name was Marion but changed to Sylvia by my lovely adopted parents.'

Psalm 66:16 reads:

Come and hear, all you who fear God; let me tell you what he has done for me.

God gave me a miracle—a gift—a priceless treasure. You are now In my heart, sister, forever and ever! 🙏



Women's Refuge Christmas Visit

CMA Tyne & Wear

Christmas gifts to Wearside Women in Need (WWIN)

A few months ago, Tom and Debbie were driving past the WWIN refuge, not far from their home, when they noticed a woman with small children in tow outside the front door. She was being escorted in by two burly policemen, carrying a few bags with their scant possessions in. It was a sad scene but also one that showed something of courage and hope. Debbie wondered how the woman and children were doing every time she went past. She was glad when Caz brought it up and the CMA branch decided to give gifts to the refuge at Christmas.

Not wanting to buy generic gifts that might not suit everyone Caz headed to the refuge to explain and ask what they needed. The lady in charge (M) invited Caz into the refuge, asking her to follow her to the main office. As they chatted about what best to buy their conversation was interrupted when the phone rang. As she waited, Caz overheard the one-sided call which was from another Women's Refuge. The person on the other end of the line must have asked M if there were any vacant rooms at the refuge.

'No, I'm sorry there aren't any rooms here. Who needs a room?' After listening to the other person M stated, 'I'll make enquiries to see if any other places have a vacant room for a woman and child.'

The words 'no room at the refuge' echoed through Caz's mind, sending a shiver through her.

'This was like Joseph and Mary's situation on the first Christmas. No room at the Inn. No place for Jesus,' she thought. This really spoke to her and made what she was doing feel real.

Luke 2:7 [NIV] reads:

'and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.'

The words of Luke 2:7 followed Caz around for the next two weeks.

Caz remembered being in a similar situation many years ago knowing that she needed a place for her and her children to stay. She thanked God that He had a plan for her life and thanked Him for where she

was today, able to pay back the help she had received when she was in a desperate situation.

Caz was told by M that the refuge was full, housing 10 mothers and their 19 children all needing somewhere to stay over Christmas.

With a good idea of numbers and what they needed Caz returned to the CMA Tyne & Wear leadership and asked for money to buy presents for the women and children. The total raised by CMA members from the branch was £200. This bought the following:

Children:

19 pairs of pyjamas
19 selection boxes
16 colouring/activity/coloured pencils packs
3 bottles of Johnsons Baby bath.

Mams:

10 pairs of socks
10 Christmas Star Lights
20 batteries
10 cans of deodorant
10 packs of Cadbury's Cookies
10 nice bath sponges
10 'Jesus Loves You' keyrings
10 mini pots Vaseline lip salve
10 gift bags

Debbie also wrote a poem to put in with the Star lights. The total bill came to £202. It took Caz a few hours a day, over a week, to buy them all, the words of Luke 2:7 following her from shop to shop. The house was eventually filled with wrapping paper, gift bags and gifts ready to be delivered.



Finally, on Thursday 23rd of December they were wrapped by Debbie and Caz and loaded into the back of Caz's car. Caz had arranged for them both to go at 10.30 so they needed to be prompt.

Just before setting off Caz asked Debbie, "Can we just pray before we go?"

Debbie said, 'Of course.' They both prayed one after the other that the gifts they were taking would be received with love. They also asked if God would bless each child and mother who received them.

They both wore their CMA waistcoats and reindeer antlers as headbands to help them get into the festive spirit.

On arriving at WWIN they carried the first box of gifts to their door. Some of the windows of the building were open and as they walked, they could hear children's voices and laughter. Debbie knocked and the door was answered by S, a staff member who Caz had spoken to on the phone. Caz explained again who they were and about the gifts. S said there was a Christmas party going on, hence the laughter. Their timing was perfect.

While Caz and Debbie were in the reception room talking to the manager, two young girls walked past in the hallway and snuck back to have a look at the boxes of wrapped up presents they had brought. Debbie waved to them and said 'Hello.' The youngest ran off giggling, but the second girl stood her ground and gave Debbie the most beautiful smile she had ever seen.

They felt privileged to be able to bring even a small gift to those lives in need and thought of the shepherds and Magi; bringing what they had, not knowing really who these people were or what God had planned for them.

Matthew 2:11 [NIV] reads:

'On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.'

Once outside they heard children laughing and saw a couple running about. Caz said to Debbie, 'It's nice seeing children being children amidst the chaos they're going through.' She knew children could be resilient having been through a similar situation herself.

As they both sat in the car ready to go, they both prayed, giving thanks to God for giving them the opportunity to be there and that the women and children had a safe place to stay.

When they drove away they hoped that at least one of the women would see the CMA card which was in each of the gift bags or the keyring saying, 'Jesus Loves You', and that God would speak to their hearts. Or perhaps when they put up their string of star lights and switched them on and read the poem about 'The Star' which Debbie had written, God would also speak to them.

Matthew 2:9 [NIV] reads:

'After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.'

Prayer

Father God, thank You that in the midst of sadness and trauma there is also laughter, kindness, help and hope in Jesus. Fill us afresh this coming year with the confidence we need to share the Good News of Jesus clearly and graciously in this confused, troubled and often hostile world. Amen. ✝



Rally & Events Diary for 2022

Rally/Event	When	Where	CMA Contact
Into the Valley Rally	Friday 29 th April to Sunday 1 st May	Venue TBC but is normally in East Yorkshire	Mike Fitton chairman@bike.org.uk
You've been NABDed	Friday 6 th to Sunday 8 th May	The Royal Cheshire Showground Knutsford, Cheshire	Sid O'Neill sid.oneill@ntlworld.com
Farmyard Party Rally	Friday 17 th to Sunday 19 th June	Duncombe Park Estate, Helmsley, North Yorkshire, YO62 5EB	Mike Fitton chairman@bike.org.uk
Yorkshire Pudding Rally	Friday 5 th to Sunday 7 th August	Escrick Park Estate, Escrick, North Yorkshire, YO19 6EA	Oliver Hamilton chair.westyorks@bike.org.uk
Hoggin' the Bridge	August, dates TBC	Caldicot, Monmouthshire, Wales	Tony Williams cma.bristol.treasurer@gmail.com
Thunder in the Glens	Friday 26 th to Sunday 28 th August	Aviemore, Scotland	Amy Stalker secretary.forthandtay@bike.org.uk
Stormin' the Castle Rally	Friday 2 nd to Sunday 4 th September	Witton Castle, Co Durham, DL14 0DE	Mike Fitton chairman@bike.org.uk
Dolau Afon Camping Weekend	Thursday 8 th to Sunday 11 th September	Dolau Afon, Pont, Llanafan, Aberystwyth, SY23 4BQ	Penny Cavill cma.bristol.chair@gmail.com
North West 200 Road Races	Thursday 12 th to Saturday 14 th May	Coleraine/Portstewart/Portrush N.I	Roy McGarvey roy_ementrude@msn.com
Isle of Man TT Races	Wednesday 1 st to Monday 13 th June	Isle of Man TT circuit	Mike Fitton chairman@bike.org.uk
Brighton Burn-Up	Sunday 4 th September	Ace Cafe, London and Madeira Drive, Brighton	Stephan Powell chair.sussex@bike.org.uk

Please send any revisions and/or additions to the Editor at chainlink@bike.org.uk in time for the next issue.

Jesus Born

By Stephanie

Mary worn out riding on a donkey
Joseph looking for a place to stay
No one had any room to rest in
They had travelled such a long, long way

No place to stop, no inn to rest
They were offered just a cattle shed
Mary and Joseph, tired and seeking
Found a stable to lay their weary head

The tiny baby was born in a manger
A shining star leading the way
Beneath the mess and lowly cattle
The Saviour, King Jesus was born today

Angels from on high are singing
Telling of the new born one
God gave to all mankind a present
The gift of life though his only Son

Jesus called us to come and follow
To listen to every word he said
The healing Jesus did was amazing
His living words now our daily bread

Sight restored, lame men walking
Just some of the miracles Jesus did
Teaching us about his Father
Eternal life only God can give

Jesus didn't ask for gold or silver
No grand house or fancy clothes
He came to save us from destruction
A new life in Christ as the kingdom grows

A King was born in filth and squalor
God's only Son this world has known
A bridge for us to win God's favour
The Saviour Jesus who would die alone

This Christmas let us all remember
The true meaning of life our God gave
Victory over our sinful nature
His love triumphed over the grave

Let us rejoice with praises and singing
Telling of the hope that Jesus brings
With hearts of joy let us be thankful
Peace on earth and glory to our King



Photo by Nick Fewings on Unsplash

Partners with CMA UK

We are supported by, and support, the following organisations:



Open Doors is an international ministry serving persecuted Christians and churches worldwide. We supply Bibles, leadership training, literacy programmes, livelihood support and advocacy services. We also seek to mobilise the church in the UK & Ireland to serve Christians living under religious persecution.



We make Scriptures available where there are none. We work to help the church engage with the Bible more effectively. And we endeavour - through the arts, education, media and politics - to make the Bible available, accessible and credible in our culture.



Our mission is to make the life-changing wisdom of the Bible understandable and accessible to all.



World Horizons exists on behalf of places and people not yet prayed for, churches not yet planted and cross-cultural workers not yet sent. We are a prayer based, pioneering, prophetic, pastoral mission movement.



For 150 years The Evangelization Society (TES) has served the UK as a major evangelistic organisation – seeking to see men, women and children brought into the Kingdom of God.

