

CHURCH MISSION SOCIETY (CMS)

Our charity for June

CMS's story began more than 200 years ago with a group of Christians whose hearts were stirred to go to the edge.

The Society was founded in Aldersgate Street in the city of London on 21 April 1799.

The group included people like William Wilberforce, John Venn and John Newton, they worked to abolish the slave trade, they fought for the rights of oppressed people at home, and they launched out into dangerous seas to share Jesus with the world.

CMS Patron is Justin Welby Archbishop of Canterbury. He worked for CMS teaching in Kenya for 6 months when he was 18yrs old.

The overseas mission work of CMS began in Sierra Leone in 1804 it spread rapidly in India, Canada, New Zealand the area around the Mediterranean. In Africa its work is extensive.

In Asia it has been involved in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, China, and Japan as well as in the middle east in Palestine, Jordan, Iran, and Egypt.

CMS is made up of ordinary people who are disciples of Jesus, they are from various countries, cultural backgrounds and walks of life.

A vibrant mix of people from the UK, Africa, Latin America, Europe, the Middle East and Asia all following Jesus to the edges together.

When we look at the life of Jesus, we see that he spent his life with people at the edges, often to the astonishment of the establishment.

Sick people, poor people, tax collectors, those who were often avoided due to their 'sinner' status – Jesus welcomes them. He offers grace, healing, restoration, love – and invites them to be part of his story.

CMS is likewise called to connect with people at the edges, the edges of church, society the edges of our comfort zones.

What or where are the edges that are so important to CMS: at the edge of existing church, at the edge of society, at the edge of our comfort zones.

Within the UK and overseas, CMS are specifically called to mission at the margins and cultural fringes, where Jesus is not often

followed and which are often overlooked or written off. CMS believes that God is already at work in these spaces and their task is to join in.

Some examples of CMS in the edges include:

- ▶ Catalysing faith-based peace movements in conflict-prone areas of Africa.
- ▶ Supporting new Jesus-followers in Muslim-majority contexts in the Middle East
- ▶ Creatively sharing the way of Jesus among spiritual but not religious seekers in the UK.

[A brief look at life on 'the edge'](#)

Alison has spent 18 years working in Kyiv, Ukraine, working in church planting and growth leading the Genesis addiction recovery ministry. When Russia invaded, she had the option to leave her church and return to the UK, but Alison stood firm. She says:

"I felt very strongly that if God's called me to serve and to be a help to Ukraine, that I shouldn't leave when people really need help"

After moving several times to escape the Russians soldiers the church finally moved back to Kyiv where they have set up a ministry group called 'Repairer of the broken walls', they clear up the rubble and rubbish from broken buildings. They started by clearing the rubble and just talking to people and listening to their stories. They want people to know that they were not forgotten. Beyond clearing broken glass and rubbish the Alison's church team also provide food parcels and medicine and have organised camps for children allowing them space to have fun and to talk about their experience of the war.

This is a very brief look at the work of CMS, I encourage you to look at their website where you will find a lot more information:

<https://churchmissionsociety.org>

Diana Taylor, CMS Champion

