

Through the Fire



LIFEWORDS  
Annual Review 2020



**"DO NOT FEAR,  
FOR I HAVE REDEEMED YOU;  
I HAVE SUMMONED YOU BY NAME;  
YOU ARE MINE.**

**WHEN YOU PASS THROUGH THE WATERS,  
I WILL BE WITH YOU;**

**AND WHEN YOU PASS THROUGH THE RIVERS,  
THEY WILL NOT SWEEP OVER YOU.**

**WHEN YOU WALK THROUGH THE FIRE,  
YOU WILL NOT BE BURNED;  
THE FLAMES WILL NOT SET YOU ABLAZE.**

**FOR I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD,  
THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL, YOUR SAVIOUR."**

Isaiah 43:1b-3a NIV

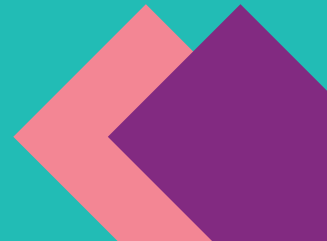
# THROUGH THE FIRE

## Welcome to the 2020 Lifewords Annual Review

At the time of writing (Spring 2021), the world is slowly emerging from the coronavirus storm. But as 2020 dawned, none of us could have imagined the grief, loss, and isolation that would unfold. Tragically, you will all have felt the impact personally, as families, and as church communities. Our prayers go out to all who have lost loved ones, lost livelihoods, endured long lockdowns. In all humility, we are grateful to God for each of you who have supported the ministry even through these turbulent times.

In addition to the pandemic, the cry for Racial Justice, the urgency of Climate Change, and a slew of natural disasters (wildfires, floods), converged to make 2020 unforgettable. New challenges emerged almost daily and in the face of such upheaval, the Bible's gentle urging was to walk through the fire, remembering to whom we belong.

We are so thankful for what your support and prayers have helped to accomplish in this testing time. Our prayer is that despite everything you will find encouragement in our story of 2020. As people looked to other ways of sharing the Gospel and having fellowship, our resources offered hope, comfort and life from the Bible's own words. Even in the midst of our shared pain and fears, God's presence enabled us to keep serving the Church and reaching the world. Next time, there will be a different story to tell...



## RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION IN A TIME OF COVID: **Literature**

Covid-19 propelled us to adapt so that Christians in churches and communities could access our resources in their time of need. As the pandemic worsened, distribution became a major challenge. Many global postal systems shut down, face-to-face counselling and evangelism became more difficult, churches stopped gathering together. Yet, people still came looking for Scripture resources. Infused by prayer and the steadfastness of you, our supporters, partners and friends, we never stopped processing orders. We made innovative partnerships, we switched to other services, and we found solutions!

### **Literature resources**

In 2020, Lifewords freely provided 553,000 printed resources to individuals, churches, and organisations around the world [2019: 1,073,000]. These reached 52 countries in 44 languages [2019: 70 countries in 44 languages]. Included in this, our Global Bible Resources programme still freely serviced 3,242 orders (3,928 in 2019) generating 216,008 physical resources for 49 countries in 41 languages – compared to 2019's 493,064 resources for 67 countries in 40 languages. Our annual distribution dropped by about a half compared to 2019. The decrease in orders was expected, but not perhaps as big as first feared – about 20% fewer parcels were sent in 2020 – and we are grateful to God for what we were able to achieve.

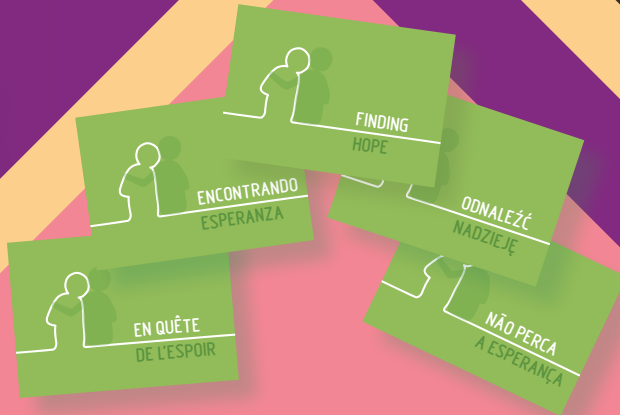
While 2020 distribution was lower, that doesn't tell the whole story. Globally, 38 new titles and revisions were printed, including 5 high-demand reprints, 6 new titles, and 12 reworked and reformatted titles – amongst which were 5 Choose Life booklets for partnership distribution in Brazil. We accelerated the release of a new *Finding Hope* booklet in 5 languages ahead of original scheduling, and produced a brand-new Christmas resource, *The True Light*.

“Since it is the Thanksgiving and Christmas season, we will be using these resources to share with friends and colleagues for the Glory of God.”

India

“The parcels are almost complete, each one, apart from sweets, various items, disinfectants, etc., also includes your *One of Us* leaflet. Good things are happening now thanks to Lifewords. Praise God for all changes in people’s lives.”

Homeless outreach project, Torun, Poland



## RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION IN A TIME OF COVID:

### Snapshots

#### Australia

At the start of 2020, devastating bushfires ravaged towns, communities and habitats in one of the worst droughts on record. Lifeworlds team was inundated with urgent requests for pastoral resources. Through online and traditional appeals, we were able to provide over 15,000 free resources to chaplains and others supporting victims of the bushfires and the subsequent relief effort on the South Coast of New South Wales.

“I work with emergency services and Ambulance Officers all around Sydney ... The gentle approach of the Lifeworlds resources is appealing to me and the receiver ... They see the resources as supportive and kind. That’s what we’re looking for.”

Bruce – Ambulance Chaplain, NSW

“...with lockdown our Seniors are really missing ... meeting together. We have done three mailouts [of your booklets] during this lockdown period ... Your resources are really impacting the lives of our group. We are grateful for your ministry and know in this time things are no doubt quite challenging for you.”

Pam and John Hodge – Sydney



## Kenya 🇰🇪

Despite prison visiting restrictions, our digital resources found their way to officers and inmates – among them *Daily Strength*, *Finding Hope*, and *Inspiring Prayer*. 4,000 booklets were distributed to Kenyatta National Hospital for Covid-19 patients in isolation rooms and in quarantine centres. Downloadable resources reached thousands daily with the Gospel.

Other innovative partnerships included:

- Kenya Defence Force (KDF): resources for outreach to their camps and communities, including a bespoke version of the *Little Book of Character* – the cover of which bears their uniform.
- Samaritans Purse: a sanitation programme in the coastal area of Kilifi – using Swahili translations to integrate the message with the mission. A parallel online programme offered spiritual nourishment to prepare the young generation for the future.

“The *Finding Hope* booklet has helped me so much ... I find the booklet sensitive to my reality of sufferings, as well as pointing me to hope and healing in my God.”

Marion – Nairobi

“Every aspect of my life has changed, and God has become my first priority ... My family and friends have also noticed the transformation that has taken place in my life.”

Elizabeth – RISE Bible Club, Nairobi



## Indonesia

Throughout the pandemic, Lifewords continued sharing good news in the world's largest Muslim nation. Working within Covid-19 protocols, 420 pastors, church leaders, Sunday School teachers and students joined our training sessions; about 300 children used our material (many professing faith in Jesus); 5 new clusters for children's ministry were started; our "mobile mission" visited 5 new areas; we made 4 new partnerships; and distributed 2,500 packages of groceries to help people affected by the pandemic, plus 500 food parcels for street children. Lifewords volunteer team also celebrated birthdays with children – for many this was their first experience of a birthday celebration. This small touch makes ministry personal, loving, and life-changing.

Even in very poor communities many have easy access to smartphones and screens and Covid-19 has brought a renewed sense of innovation for Lifewords in this region. 400+ children joined a day-long online national Children's Rally. A webinar, "Children Today, Leaders Tomorrow" was joined by 250 pastors and church leaders – introducing them to Lifewords resources for children, and training them in using The Visible Story, and other materials. A weekly webinar, "New Normal, New Inspiration" trained pastors, Sunday School teachers and church leaders from different denominations across the country in Lifewords materials.



“Every Sunday School teacher and all volunteers commit to tell Bible stories and through that story they can invite children to make a decision to receive – and follow – Christ!”

Gunar Sahari – Lifewords Indonesia



## India

As this report is penned, India is in the grip of a dreadful second wave – we continue to pray for the nation and for the Church. Back in 2020, church and mission organisations acted to address pressing socio-economic needs caused by the pandemic. Lifeworlds assisted in setting up helplines – one in Bangalore, the other nationwide – reaching teenagers, youth, women and men with healing for emotional trauma.

With lost livelihoods came a huge exodus of migrant workers from cities back to their rural homes – thousands of families walking hundreds of kilometres. Lifeworlds joined #HelpMigrantWorkers to raise funds, logistics and provisions for vulnerable communities in North India. Lifeworlds was given Certificates of Appreciation by the state government and the Ministry of Health.

Impact India / Evangelical Fellowship conducted a Medical Camp in Sonagachi, Asia's largest red-light district in Kolkata, West Bengal. It comprises c. 7,000 sex workers along with more than 10,000 children. 3,000 Lifeworlds resources in Bengali, Hindi, Tamil, and Telugu were used to share the good news during the camp.

These are just some snapshots of the innovations and partnerships around the world in 2020. We are grateful that we were able to create ways into the Bible, even in extremis.



## DIGITAL TAKES CENTRE STAGE:

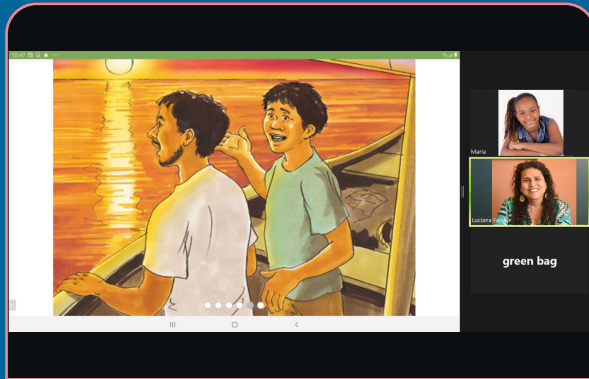
### Crisis, creativity, and communication

During the pandemic many looked online for new ways to share the Bible. Suddenly, digital ministry was no longer an “add-on”, it was a vital aspect of sharing God’s Word. We had to be agile and adaptive to support chaplains, pastors, and ministries through digital connection – and like so many, “zoom” became our go-to verb!

“God is our refuge, our fortress, He can provide us with real security, because He is superior to anything that might threaten us. You just need to trust Him.”

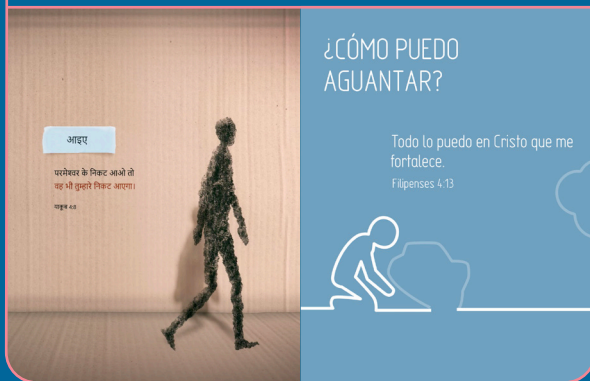
Alicja – location unknown

With the emergence of VerseFirst and Life Changing Words, Lifewords has already launched different platforms from traditional printed resources. But in 2020, it was digital communication that empowered Pavement Project to counsel children-at-risk online, via mobile or tablet. It opened new ways of outreach across Indonesia; it launched NINE BEATS into webinars and online training. And crucially, many of our current resources were made digitally accessible for people to share with others.



“We wanted to find new ways to let the Bible speak into the moment,” recalls Jarek Jankowski, Lifewords Bible Resources Director. “So, we created animated versions of our booklets, *Finding Hope*, and *An Invitation*. In a difficult year of reduced physical distribution, these animations – in 9 languages – registered almost 900,000 views on YouTube and Facebook, and over 15,000 shares.”

The sheer reach of digital, alongside the physical resources that we were able to distribute, made the interaction with God’s Word as straightforward – and meaningful – as possible in the situation.



“Beautiful message, ravishing words ... See it for yourself!”

Krystyna – Poland

“Yes, when everything collapses in life, don’t panic, God is there to lift everything up and put everything in place.”

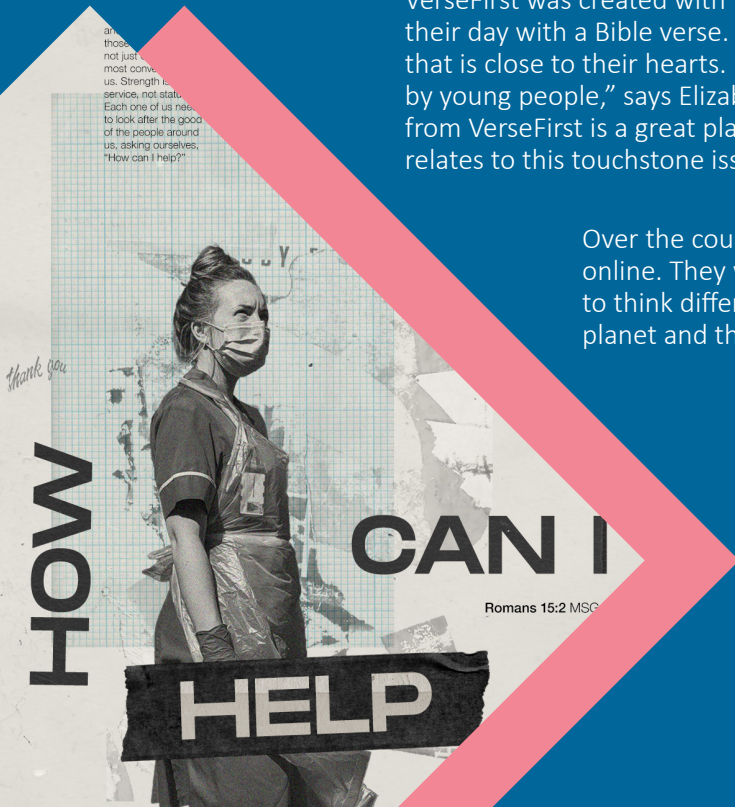
Josette – Madagascar

## EarthFirst

Between 16 October and 27 November – via social media and shaped by Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount – VerseFirst’s EarthFirst campaign looked at what the Bible says about the climate emergency and our stewardship of the planet.

VerseFirst was created with the aim to reach young people and encourage them to start their day with a Bible verse. The EarthFirst campaign built on this, tapping into an issue that is close to their hearts. “Activism against climate breakdown is being strongly led by young people,” says Elizabeth King, from the Lifewords UK team. “This campaign from VerseFirst is a great platform to encourage them to be introduced to Scripture that relates to this touchstone issue of our times.”

Over the course of the campaign EarthFirst reached just over 60k people online. They were challenged to put the Bible’s words into practice and to think differently about what we consume, and how we respond to our planet and the people we share it with.



## Lifewords UK digital

In the UK, we increased visibility and reach on Instagram and Facebook. Our most engaged-with post (an animation of *The True Light* on Instagram) notched up 1,182 likes and 5,432 views. Our reach went from just 150 people to 46,000+ via paid-for promotion. Our Facebook following rose 44% to 1,800. All of which is encouraging progression, albeit with much more to do. Across Lifewords world, social media, online connection and website interactions kept the mission “open” for resources and engagement, as many searched for solace and hope connected with God’s Word.

## Easter

To complement our popular range of Easter resources, a new online project framed the Easter narrative as if events were happening in real time. This was experimental but showed promise with nearly 1,500 shares, likes, comments, and totalled just under 20k impressions on Facebook and Instagram.

“I never really thought about this before, thank you so much for sharing. I can’t express the amount of love that I have for the Saviour, and this Palm Sunday will definitely grow my love for Him only, exponentially! Thank you!”

Anon., UK





## WAYS INTO THE BIBLE: Unique mission opportunities

### **Pavement Project – reaching traumatised children and young people in a global health crisis**

Already operating in some of the most vulnerable places in the world, the added Covid-19 restrictions made it too risky for Pavement Project workers to visit children. Perhaps the biggest accelerated impact of the pandemic on the project was to develop and implement counselling via Zoom, reaching children in their own homes. Online counselling with the Pavement Project “app” started in Brazil and in Spanish speaking countries, where 34 workers from 9 countries were trained and cleared to help children from 9 years upwards, young people, and their adult relatives. This innovation made a huge difference to children, and the results were equally as effective as face-to-face sessions.

### **Other highlights included:**

- Paraguay: 6 new educators trained to use the app in the only “live” session in 2020 (all Covid protocols applied).
- A Facebook and Instagram family abuse prevention campaign that received 6,000+ views and 500+ reactions.
- Virtual ministry on “Children at Risk” to a Discipleship Training School (ETED) group of young YWAM missionaries working in Roraima, North Brazil, with Venezuelan refugees.
- Clenir dos Santos (Pavement Project Director) contributed a chapter to a new multi-author book, “Understanding God’s Heart for Children: With the Child in the Midst”.

2020 also happened to be the 20th anniversary of Pavement Project! Perhaps fittingly, the celebration continued online – through a “party” featuring testimony and stories from 9 countries and praising God for what has been achieved so far.

“I am immensely grateful to the creators of the green bag for this extraordinary tool. Jonathan’s first encounter with the God of the Bible, in one of the most difficult moments of his childhood, gave him the assurance, in his small and receptive heart, that he would never be lost in the hands of God.”

Margarita – Acapulco, Mexico



LAMENTING, AND  
LONGING FOR CHANGE  
**NINE BEATS and the pandemic**

“The beatitudes retreat was one of the best I’ve been to in all my years of ministry – and boy, have I been to a few! It opened my eyes and heart to a way of Jesus that was so centring and peace-producing.”

Michael – Adelaide, Australia

With Covid-19 massively affecting “live” gatherings, by consolidating online we continued our vision to see young people and young adults from diverse walks of life be inspired and transformed by the life changing words of Jesus in the beatitudes.

3 webinars were released, featuring the voices of Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic speakers. 6 Ninefold Path online “learning labs” were run with 100 leaders from the USA, Australia, UK and across Europe (including partnerships with Order of the Mustard Seed, and Fresh Expressions in the UK). An online “masterclass” trained 19 leaders looking to facilitate a practice-based formation group. A revision of the Ninefold Path Notebook was published.

In Australia, 124 people spent 8 weeks in online Ninefold Path leadership training, with many later facilitating their own groups – including a dozen churches in Adelaide. A 30-event tour with Mark Scandrette connected Lifewords with networks and pastors who are wrestling with better ways to lead churches into being practicing communities of faith.

On the arts / music side, 3 online events garnered around 3,000 Facebook views (excluding late watchers), while a 4-track EP by Collective member, Heatherlyn, was released digitally. Media coverage included Christian Resources Exhibition, Keep the Faith magazine, Premier Christianity magazine, Woman Alive, CCC/CARE Outreach, LouderThanMusic, NeverForNothing (CCM newsletter), and a campaign to 250 radio stations.



“Ninefold Path is an interactive and deeply thought-provoking exploration of how to live the way of Jesus, not just learn more about it.”

Belinda Norrington – UK

“A phenomenal discipleship resource and transformational experience of the radical Way of Jesus.”

Erik Jespersen – Order of the Mustard Seed

We have found a genuine connection and growing opportunities to network with key leaders and influencers across the Church in the UK. Such opportunities will be a focus for UK development post-Covid-19.





## A COVID CHRISTMAS: Where will the True Light find you?

As the year came to an end, many faced a Christmas of loss and sadness. So, we made a special resource creating space for reflection and lament by engaging with God's Word.

*The True Light* offered hope and an encouragement to “fear not” through difficult times. 28,000 booklets were distributed and across the entire Christmas range, 68,000. Scripture episodes from the Nativity narrative, bookended by John 1, and framed with contemporary collages, gave people an opportunity to journal and contemplate how Jesus, the True Light, found them at Christmas. Online animations also engaged viewers.


Media coverage included: Cross Rhythms radio, Premier Christian Radio, Revival FM radio, Keep the Faith magazine, and Premier Christianity magazine.

“...these publications ... speak into the troubles of today, yet convey sensitively, yet sincerely, the love of God which is available to all ... we trust that God will do the rest.”

Jenny Bourne – The Ark Bus, UK

“...a beautifully designed telling of the Nativity ‘where hope meets real lives’ – it’s hugely enriching.”

Corin Pilling – Sanctuary, UK



“I think the tone of *The True Light* was just right.”

Anne Louden – The Mission,  
Aberdeen, UK

It is in the space between Scripture, faith, and the culture around us that the Bible’s life words connect deeply with people’s everyday experience and deepest longing. This ministry of creating new ways into the Bible for all is challenging, but even in the hardest of times, the Word is living and active.

“MY ANGUISHED TEARS  
FALL LIKE ENDLESS RAIN  
IN THE SHAFTS OF  
THE TRUE LIGHT.”

Black Lives Matter May Be the  
Largest Movement in U.S. History

By Larry Green, Contributing Editor  
Black Lives Matter photo by John J. ...

## RACISM AND THE NEED FOR CHANGE

Justice is one of the life words that jumps from the Bible's pages. Lifewords is for Justice. For Mercy, Grace, and Peace. For Hope, Faith, and Love. And Racism has no part in any of those things. It's been too shamefully long for justice to be seen and embraced. Through 2020, the attitudes, systems, and complicities that provide the fuel for Racism in society, in culture; in our organisations, churches, communities, and yes – in our personal lives were challenged and called out. At Lifewords, all around the world, we want to do the outer and inner work to bring lasting change in Jesus' name!



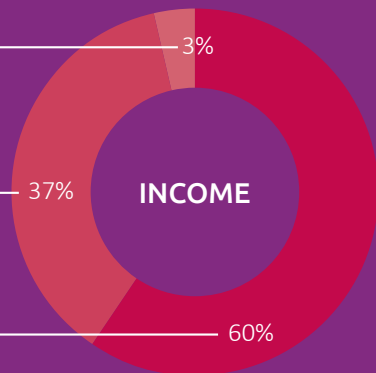


## THROUGH THE FIRE

As the year turned, we had all walked through the fire and we had all been touched. It will take long months of reflection to fully comprehend what we all went through. Perhaps we never will – but God knows, and felt the sorrow, and was faithful, steadfast and True. There were still many fires to pass through, and new stories to be written. But the Lifewords 2020 story is told with grateful hearts for the friends, fellowship and faithfulness that have shared the journey. And with thanks for the witness and lives of those we lost.

As we take the first steps into a new era, may these words walk with us all: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.

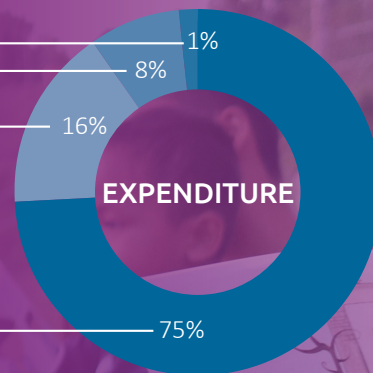
## 2020: In numbers



	2020	2019
Donations and Grants	£ 919,323	926,165
Legacies	£ 568,617	1,010,452
Investment and Other	£ 53,128	45,632
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£ 1,541,068</b>	<b>1,982,249</b>

Please feel free to share this review with others and contact us if you would like more copies – or to view and share online, go to [lifeworlds.global/annualreview](https://lifeworlds.global/annualreview).

Visit our website to explore more ways that Lifeworlds resources can “make a change for life” where you are.



	2020	2019
Providing Bible Resources	£ 1,108,298	1,387,000
Programmes	£ 241,707	235,049
Raising Funds	£ 122,623	166,424
Support for Global Offices	£ 21,206	22,508
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£ 1,493,834</b>	<b>1,810,981</b>

These figures are taken from the full audited UK Annual Report and Accounts for 2020. Please contact us if you would like a copy.



Lifeworlds creates ways into the Bible all around the world – offering them free, and supported by donations, just as we have for 133 years. Join us and “make a change for life” as we share the life-changing good news of Jesus.

**MAKE A**  
*change*  
**FOR LIFE**  
Give and live life words.

To find out more, visit  
[lifeworlds.global/makeachange](http://lifeworlds.global/makeachange)

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Isaiah 43:1b NIV

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