

Now is the Time



LIFEWORDS

Annual Review 2019



**“IN THE TIME OF MY
FAVOUR I HEARD
YOU, AND IN THE DAY
OF SALVATION
I HELPED YOU.”**

**I TELL YOU, NOW IS THE
TIME OF GOD’S FAVOUR,
NOW IS THE DAY OF
SALVATION.**

2 Corinthians 6:2 (NIV)

NOW IS THE TIME

At Lifewords, we love to tell the story of how we've been creating ways into what the mission's founder, William Walters, called, "...this Book of books – this priceless treasure, to which we owe so much, and which carries light and peace wherever it finds its way." As you go through this report of 2019's highlights, we hope that you will be encouraged by the impact that has been made sharing God's Word the world over. It is a compelling task, and an urgent one. Now! Today! It's time! The Bible exhorts us with this life-changing refrain, and we respond with purpose and passion.

Little did we know that as our story of 2019 unfolded, a different, global story was about to emerge. We are writing this in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic that has changed all our lives: sadly, too many have lost loved ones to Covid-19. Our deepest condolences if that is your experience – we wish you God's peace and comfort. So, next year's annual review will tell a very different story – one who's ending is still unknown. But we know that God's Word will be as constant and sustaining in 2020 as it was throughout 2019 – now is the time, now is the day. So, let us not weary in doing good – let's give thanks for God's faithfulness throughout last year, even as we walk the path of this present one.

MAKING A CHANGE FOR LIFE

Resources in the UK

Everything we do is about making a change for life with the Bible. Many thousands of Christians use our resources in churches and communities throughout the UK – helping many people to encounter the Bible for the first time, or afresh. All of this made possible by the kindness and generosity of our supporters and partners. Your prayer and gifts open up possibilities!

Meet the Cast

We encourage churches to share the Bible with their local communities at key ‘mission moments’ in the year, where interest is higher – Christmas and Easter especially.

For Christmas 2019, we launched a revision of our popular *Meet the Cast* booklet. With revitalised visuals and improved readability, it engaged families and children with the Nativity Story. Along with existing resources (including *Expect the Unexpected* and *OUTSIDE/IN*), our Christmas range reached both young and old. We were delighted that 2019 yielded our highest Christmas order numbers on recent record – 163,000 being used in churches and events across the UK.

“Meet the Cast is brilliantly put together ... perfect to give out to the families that will be coming into our building over the Christmas period.”

SD, Children’s and Youth worker

As well as all our pastoral, outreach, and contextualised resources, we also provide creative ways into the Bible (and specifically to the way of Jesus) for young people and young adults in the UK. Interest in material touching on real life issues was encouraging – such as our resource aimed at young people with mental health issues:

“...thank you for the Little Book of Chaos. It brightened up my day! I keep sharing it with all of my friends and family and all of them love it. You are doing an amazing job by trying to help this world full of broken people and God sees it!!! I’ll be praying for you.”



All our resources are freely available – see more at

www.lifewords.global/shop



Believe the Women

Last Easter, we released this contemporary presentation of the Easter Story, with 31,000 distributed. Media coverage on the Christian daytime programming (Premier, UCB1, etc.) and attributable spikes in website traffic showed the impact of the resource.

At the Big Church Day Out exhibition, a dedicated stand and invitation for people to write the names of women who they wished to pray for/champion/highlight formed a spectacular display. Over 1,000 names of women were added. *Day Three: Believe the Women* is not solely an Easter booklet, but has wider potential use and impact due to the cultural resonance of the resource.



"Lifeworlds is breaking the status quo."

16-year-old girl at Big Church Day Out

We're always reviewing our literature, so in 2019 we continued upgrading our traditional booklet work. Taking soundings from our audience and professionals, we decided to further develop the much-loved *Daily Strength* – rebooting the visual content and improving readability, especially for an older reader and with a view to hospital patient's needs (one of the many ways the booklet is used). We also produced a large print version.

"Wow! What a super job you have made of the new Daily Strength! I think it is wonderful! – because: it is uplifting and full of God's promise; the Gospel is clear; it has an uplifting message; it is easy to read – distinct, contrasty print; pleasant pictures. I am sure it will be very much used!"

HR, Lifewords supporter



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MAKING A CHANGE FOR LIFE

Global

Providing Lifewords Bible materials free can make a world of difference, especially where resources are limited. We are grateful to all our supporters for helping us to continue to do this – it really does empower so many Christian pastors, workers and lay people. We work with hundreds of partners, and with the church at large, to give as many people as possible the opportunity to experience the change life words can bring – wherever and however they are in the world.

In 2019, Lifewords freely provided **1,073,000** printed resources to individuals, churches, and organisations around the world in **44 languages**, reaching **70 countries**.

These statistics include those from our Global Bible Resources programme which sent out resources in a core of 22 key global languages – as well as in other languages where there is a specific need. In 2019, we despatched the highest numbers in recent years: 493,064 resources for 67 countries in 40 languages (15% higher than 2018). 67% of the Bible resources distributed in 2019 went to non-EU countries (73% in 2018).



Seven new titles were added in six languages – Chinese, French, Romanian, Spanish, Urdu, and Polish.

Notably, through bookshops, hospitals, prisons, churches, schools and exhibitions, our office in Kenya distributed 90,500 resources to partners from Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Nigeria, and Ethiopia – an increase of over 50% compared to 2018.

“The materials help us bring the Word of Life to these young people who live in the world of crime and also to people who are still lost and captive. I am part of a group of young people who ... do evangelistic movements, visits, street services, social actions, and we will do much more, and thanks to Lifewords materials, we achieve goals, people accept Jesus, and people reconcile.”

Brazil

Pastors all over the world – including Jerzy here in Poland – are using Lifewords resources every day in their ministry.





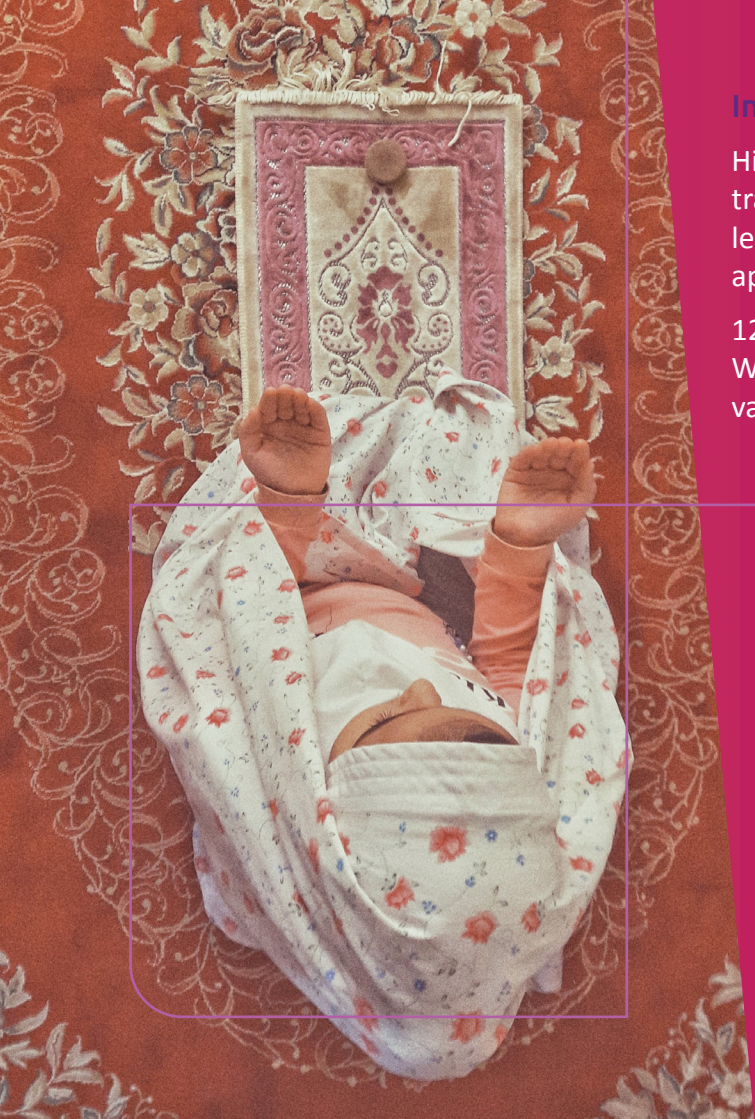
Australia: potential

17,200 booklets were distributed, the largest recipients and users of which were chaplains. Pastoral resources are the most popular, followed by seasonal resources. Significant partnerships, such as with Anglicare and Presbyterian Care Chaplaincy, form a solid base for our work.

With 3,700 resources going out in New Zealand; with many dozens of small but unique missions using our tailored resources; with Tamil resources provided for an Indian outreach; with our WW1 Gospels prominent at the Australian War Memorial on ANZAC Day; and with testimonies and orders coming from those working in prisons, hospitals and aged care facilities, there is much potential for growth. A series of Ninefold Path events connected us with hundreds of new people interested in knowing more about Lifeworlds work.

"Just wanted to let you know that we really love your [resources]. They are visually very appealing, with not too many words. However, the message is well conveyed. We have found them to be the best we have come across, and we feel really confident about giving them out."

MH, Children's and Family Coordinator



Indonesia: world's largest Muslim population

Highlights included 1,100 pastors and church leaders joining training for The Visible Story, with 1,750 pastors, church leaders and Sunday school teachers undergoing training in applying the 'flip cards' part of the project.

12,570 booklets were distributed, mostly to rural areas. We are ministering in 15 different locations throughout this vast nation, together with 14 partners.

India: partnership

We initiated partnerships with two bigger organisations working among children and families. Navajeevan Seva Mandal along with FMPB has more than 12,000 children under their care. We conducted the first pilot training for their Tamil Nadu workers. Discussions are ongoing to plan trainings for their workers in Gujarat and Jharkhand in 2020.

EFIC@R has more than 7,000 children under their care in four North Indian states. They are interested in training their staff to counsel the women and children in their projects. We will be training six trainers in 2020.

MAKING A CHANGE FOR LIFE

Digitally

Life Changing Words

Developments were implemented on our **Life Changing Words (LCW) app**. This included editing and translation work in 11 languages, new content, and technical improvements. There were **4,009 new installs** – **bringing the total to 40,984**.

We recorded 15,203 Bible verses shares, 10,757 text messages, and 58,498 verse/category responses. Active LCW email subscribers grew by 9%. **By the end of 2019, 26,973 people, from over 200 countries, were receiving the LCW email daily.**

Our apps are highly rated by the App Store (4.6-4.9), and Google Play (4.6). We also recorded 30,514 downloads of our e-books.

"A GREAT way to start reading the Bible: this very simple and BEAUTIFUL app makes me start reading the Bible more often than I usually would."

"Something to chew on: bite-size pieces from God daily, or I can have extra servings with a touch of my fingertip! Great app! Thanks!"

(Source: App Store and Google Play – various language sections)

VerseFirst

Our online Scripture engagement project matches powerful graphics with a daily Bible verse. In 2019, we saw a growth among youth and young adult users – 40% of followers were aged 25-34 and 26% were aged 18-24. How encouraging to see this increase continuing as younger audiences explore and connect with the Bible, and how it speaks to our everyday experience.



MAKING A CHANGE FOR LIFE

At-risk Children & Young People

Pavement Project

Pavement Project reached **19 countries**, with **31 new trainers** certified and we set about ‘training the trainers’ to train others.

Our Polish and Brazilian teams collaborated to enable the launch of the ‘green bag’ app in 13 countries, ahead of the main roll-out in 2020.

We started up in troubled Venezuela in response to the people’s suffering. Local leaders reported the project arrived at the right time to help suffering children. In partnership with the Venezuelan National Baptist Convention, we trained 12 workers from six different states. This was the subject of our UK Christmas appeal.

In Africa, 321 workers were trained across Kenya, DRC, Uganda, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe. Late in 2019, a story gathering visit to a Pavement Project training in Zimbabwe was undertaken to capture for 2020 outputs – including the 20th ‘official’ anniversary of the start of Pavement Project.



In Brazil:

- 41 workers were trained in 5 states, over 7 training sessions
- The 2nd Online Pavement Project Congress was held in October, with 86 participants – promoting protection of children, preventing trauma and abuse.
- The “One Year. One Life, because each child is unique” campaign was launched, inviting donors to support a child and family through their counselling. Donors understood that transformation happens in the life of the counselled child and in the life of the donor themselves!

“I am grateful to Lifewords for producing something so effective that it not only heals children, but also strengthens us workers with conviction and determination to reach the heart of the child and respect them as they are.”

PP worker, Rio de Janeiro

Choose Life

There are 93 active Choose Life Partners in Kenya alone (33 schools and 60 churches), impacting lives of teenagers and young people. The contexts continue to be varied – and over 3,000 teenagers and young people were reached in western Kenya. In West Pokot: a women’s group used the programme to reach 100 girls who fled from FGM and were rescued. In Rusinga School, the chaplain used Choose Life as a rite of passage resource for transition from junior to senior school – helping children open up to their teachers and parents, while in Industrial Area and Langata Prison Chapel, children of prison wardens and police officers were empowered in their choice making.



MAKING A CHANGE FOR LIFE

Engaging New Generations

NINE BEATS

Our outreach to contemporary cultures, sparked by Matthew 5, saw initiatives in the UK, Australia, and the USA (and Ninefold Path teaching events in Kenya, Uganda, Bangladesh, and Norway) reflecting our vision to see people from diverse walks of life inspired and transformed by the life changing words of Jesus found in the beatitudes.

UK: we are making more connections with key leaders and influencers across churches and networks – e.g. Fresh Expressions, St Ethelburga's, Livability, All Nations College, and more. Working closely with author/ teacher Mark Scandrette, we are making the Ninefold Path 'curriculum' ever more accessible for churches. Media coverage included a feature interview on TBN UK TV; 10 'thought for the day' slots on Premier Radio; a series of blog posts on 'Christianity' website – the first being the highest rated for that week; and other interviews.

"I really recommend the Ninefold Path as a way to refresh our understanding of how to live the life that Christians are called to – being the hands and feet of Jesus."

Rev. Alexandra Lilley, Tufnell Park



Internationally, a highlight was a 6-week Ninefold Path teaching tour with Mark Scandrette in Australia. There were 30 events, including church services, a week-long retreat with Bible college students, a pastors retreat to outreach, and a partnership with Scripture Union Victoria, where we led a training with 30 of their key team.

"I attended the Ninefold Path retreat back in February, and it gave me a new way to understand the beatitudes. Not just the beatitudes, but actually understand the invitation of Jesus into a new, redeemed, free life ... I can honestly say that it has changed us as a community. We have a different focus on what matters. We changed our habits and what we actually DO. We are seeing people liberated as they adopt a new approach. Brilliant."

Daryl, Pendle Hill

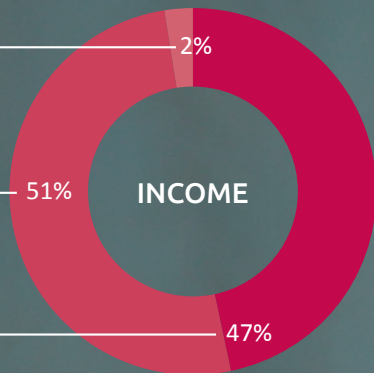
USA: main stage concert, teaching slot and liturgical session at Wild Goose Festival to many hundreds of Christians and seekers. A short (five-event) tour followed.

Europe: music track released to open up profile, and radio/promotion undertaken for 2020.

East Africa: Kosi a collaboration with Collective member, Ambassada, was launched to raise awareness of the plight of children in Nairobi/Kampala.

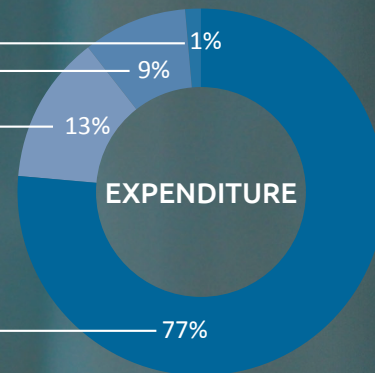


2019 in numbers



	2019	2018	2017
Donations and Grants	£ 926,165	984,114	896,487
Legacies	£ 1,010,452	995,374	432,614
Investment and Other	£ 45,632	30,489	36,240

TOTAL £ 1,982,249 2,009,977 1,365,341



	2019	2018	2017
Providing Bible Resources	£ 1,387,000	1,401,272	1,139,536
Programmes	£ 235,049	285,323	311,935
Raising Funds	£ 166,424	142,039	131,146
Support for Global Offices	£ 22,508	45,351	47,626

TOTAL £ 1,810,981 1,873,985 1,630,243

These figures are taken from the full audited UK Annual Report and Accounts for 2019. Please contact us if you would like a copy.



Lifewords creates ways into the Bible all around the world – offering them free, and supported by donations, just as we have for 132 years. Join us and “make a change for life” as we share the life-changing good news of Jesus.



To find out more, visit
www.lifewords.global/makeachange

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NOW IS THE DAY OF SALVATION.**

2 Corinthians 6:2b (NIV)

LIFEWORDS

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Lifeworlds is the operating name of *Scripture Gift Mission (Incorporated)*.

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Cover photo: Lucy Maina

Taken during a story gathering trip to Zimbabwe, to report on the impact of Lifeworlds Pavement Project work.