



## MISSIONARY COMMITTEE REPORT 2019/2020

On behalf of the Missionary Committee, I would like to thank all who contributed to the Missionary Fund during 2019. Your support is greatly appreciated by our Missionary Families who regularly send letters and emails, thanking the congregation for their financial support.

Giving via the missionary envelopes and direct debits decreased by just over £2,500 in 2019 compared to 2018. There were 187 different contributors giving to the missionary fund in 2019 (200 in 2018) with the average number of missionary envelopes returned per month in 2019 being 102 compared to 108 in 2018. We had the privilege of transferring almost £73,257 to Missionary Families during 2019 (£76,505 in 2018). With Roy and Ruth Harrison retiring in December 2018, the unallocated income was allocated between six families in 2019.

We would also like to thank the family of the late Mrs Patterson, who donated money received in lieu of flowers to the missionary fund.

Support to the Missionary Fund depends largely on monthly missionary envelopes and direct debits. We would be delighted to have more members supporting our missionaries as it is through our congregation's support that our missionaries can continue serving. Monthly missionary envelopes are included in the pack of F.W.O. envelopes and may be returned on any Sunday. If you require a pack of envelopes please contact William Davidson (Tel: 3833 6351) or if you would like to set up a direct debit please contact me. I would encourage all eligible UK tax payers who have not completed a gift aid declaration to consider doing so. One gift aid declaration form applies to all donations to the church with an additional 25% being claimed from HMRC at no cost to the tax-payer.

The Missionary Discretionary Fund is separate from donations received through the missionary envelopes and is funded by annual ground rents (including the occasional redemption of ground rent) bequeathed to the church. This fund is used to make Grants of Encouragement and gifts to other Missionary Societies. We were able to give grants of encouragement of £1,500 and gifts to other Missionary Societies of £3,438.

Alan Dowey  
Treasurer's Report



## MISSIONARY REPORT 2020/21

The onset of a worldwide coronavirus pandemic in March 2020 and the subsequent restrictions, created many challenges both for the missionaries we support and ourselves as a committee. Firstly, the work undertaken by each of our missionaries was curtailed to some degree. However, technology has proved to be a helpful aid, ensuring that their Christian ministry has been able to continue. “Zoom” has enabled Henry to continue with leadership training and Jonathan and Nicola to hold online worship services in Claremorris. It has also been used by Jude and Avisai to participate in conferences and training both here and abroad and for John and Sarah as they continue their work in Hope School in Cambodia. However, some face-to-face contact has still been possible in the work of Ambassadors and London City Mission undertaken by Rob and Kyla and Luke and Karis. The extended lockdown has also provided unexpected opportunities. Henry and Avisai have been able to undertake practical work locally while Jonathan, Nicola, Jude and Avisai have been able to do further online study or ministry. On the other hand, the pandemic has frustrated the work of our missionaries in many ways. There are projects which have had to be postponed or other activities which will continue only when lockdown restrictions are eased. Restrictions on travel have meant that John and Sarah have now been unable to visit Northern Ireland for 4 years or the USA for 3 years and therefore have not seen friends or family in all that time. Our missionaries overseas have also had to endure problems other than those resulting from the coronavirus pandemic. In the case of Rob and Kyla, political unrest and rioting created an atmosphere of tension in their community while their home was damaged by flooding and the subsequent electrical problems this caused meant that they had to move out for a period. As a church we are immensely thankful for the faithful service of all our missionaries throughout what has been a very trying and difficult time, both physically and mentally.

We can also be grateful for the way in which our missionaries have continued to be supported financially by our church. Although we have been unable to meet for long periods of time, it is a wonderful testament to our congregation that the financial support to our missionaries has not only been sustained but in some cases increased over the last twelve months. As a Missionary Committee, we wish to thank the congregation for their sacrificial and faithful giving especially during a period of financial difficulty for many.

It was with great sadness that during the period of lockdown we also learned of the death of our esteemed former treasurer, Arnold Sleator. Throughout his many years of service on the Missionary Committee, Arnold was known for his diligent and careful stewardship of the finances given by the congregation. However, this stemmed from a passion for mission itself and a great desire that all those undertaking missionary service should be well supported. When the committee had the means to do so, Arnold also quietly sought out other missionary organisations who were in need of help and ensured that they received it. We are eternally grateful to God for the faithful work he did and the example he set to us all.

Jim McCavery  
Convener