

inTouch

Official Magazine of The Leprosy Mission New Zealand

Issue 439 / Spring 2016

*Really
Good
Gifts*
in action

*Anjali begins her
Cure One journey*

**With your help:
Sanku carves out a new future**



The Leprosy
Mission
New Zealand

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Welcome

Welcome to the Spring 2016 edition of *inTouch* Magazine. Inside you will find wonderfully uplifting stories of lives that have been changed forever thanks to your support.

I feel very humbled as I start my new role as Executive Director at The Leprosy Mission New Zealand, and we will go forward with the commitment and passion needed to bring hope and light to those suffering. Having worked at this wonderful organisation now for nine years, I feel truly blessed to be able to continue working with our supporters and partners as we strive to end leprosy within a generation.

I would like to thank my close colleague Brent Morgan for his stewardship of The Leprosy Mission New Zealand over the past seven years. Our prayers are with him and his family as he takes over the role of International Director for the Leprosy Mission's Global Fellowship based in London.

As I write this, I find myself in the middle of some big changes too! In my first week as Executive Director, my husband Glenn and I welcomed a new grandchild into the world for the very first time. I am so over-joyed and grateful to God for this new little life, and I'm very much looking forward to the many special moments we will share together.

Please enjoy your Spring *inTouch* and thank you for your support.

With blessings,



Gillian Whitley
Executive Director



Gillian Whitley with her youngest children, twin daughters Ruth and Eve, at Auckland Marathon.



Cover photo: Courtesy of Eloise Johnstone visiting our project in Bangladesh

The Leprosy Mission New Zealand Incorporated is a Registered Charity Number CC37638

The Leprosy Mission New Zealand, relying on the grace of God and motivated by Jesus Christ, exists to join in mutual partnership with individuals, families, communities and organisations to share resources, experiences and learning in order to eradicate the causes and consequences of leprosy, and actively supports the right to a life of dignity for all people. inTouch is published twice a year by The Leprosy Mission New Zealand.

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Brent's next Mission

A note to say farewell

There are many people who support the work of the Leprosy Mission – some financially, some by praying for our work, and others by volunteering their time. I have met some of our supporters and volunteers in person. But there are many supporters who I have not been able to meet – some of you have called me, emailed me and written letters and cards of encouragement. As I reflect on all these interactions, I am filled with an overwhelming sense of gratitude – thank you so much for making the work that we do possible.

There have been some wonderful experiences visiting the work you support. Two young people in particular stand out. The first is Kamless, a teenage boy in India who had reconstructive surgery for a severely deformed hand. I met him several years later - with a fully restored hand and planning to go to university. And then there is Nutan, who was a Cure One ambassador – a teenage girl with a hand clawed by leprosy who was out of school and not able to do simple tasks like brush her hair and do up buttons. But after reconstructive surgery, I couldn't tell her hand was ever deformed and now she is back in school, flourishing, and a confident young woman.

I am thrilled that one of our managers, Gillian Whitley, will be succeeding me as Executive Director. Gillian has worked with the Mission for nine years and during this time we have worked closely together. Gillian belongs to All Saints Anglican Church, Birkenhead, Auckland and the Christ the King Anglican Church in Mangawhai. I cannot think of a better person to succeed me and I know that she will work tirelessly to see leprosy defeated and lives transformed.

I will be leaving for London in August to become the International Director of The Leprosy Mission. Thanks to the support of people like you, we are now a global fellowship running 16 hospitals and 200 community projects worldwide. Tracy and I are leaving behind our three adult children; Hayley and Courtney, both working, and Curtis who is currently studying. Please pray for us as we transition to the UK and our new life.

In 1874, Wellesley Bailey, who founded the Leprosy Mission, on first seeing leprosy affected people in India said, "If ever there was a Christ-like work in the world, it is to go amongst these poor sufferers and bring them the consolation of the gospel". 142 years on, I believe this is still very much the case. Thank you for your support in helping see leprosy defeated and lives transformed.



Brent and Gillian with patients at Anandaban Hospital, Nepal.



Brent with Nutan, a teenager whose life was transformed thanks to Cure One supporters.



Anjali begins her Cure One journey



Anjali, 15, is from Bihar, north east India. In 2014 she felt tingling and pain in her left hand and a numb patch appeared on her left elbow. One day in school she touched a finger, and did not feel anything. She kept this a secret.

"School was hard because I couldn't hold a pen. It became more and more difficult," she reflects. Then disaster struck. In Bihar the winters are very severe, with temperatures dropping to freezing and the only source of heat is often just a small fire. One morning Anjali got out of bed, washed herself, and went to dry her hands and feet by the fire. After she had been sitting there for some time she was horrified to see that both her feet were covered in blisters. They were very badly burned and she hadn't felt a thing! **Her family rushed her to the local hospital but the staff there realised she had leprosy, so they would not treat her.**

They sent her away and told her family that only the Leprosy Mission's Muzaffarpur hospital would help her. Poor Anjali had terrible open sores on her feet at this point and her family had to make the two hour journey on public transport to reach Muzaffarpur. Her feet were becoming infected, however they had no choice but to get her there.



Anjali will have her wounds dressed everyday to prevent infection.

When they arrived at the hospital the doctors immediately cleaned and dressed her wounds. She needed to stay in hospital for several months while her feet healed. This is because she won't feel if they become injured again which could lead to infection and possibly amputation.

Anjali recounts the day she arrived at Muzaffarpur. "My mother and father started crying. And then I started crying. I felt very bad about this sickness. I didn't know what leprosy was, just that it was a terrible disease."

While she is in hospital she will be given multi-drug therapy, the cure for leprosy, and she will be taught physiotherapy as her hand has become clawed.



Together we can take the sadness out of Anjali's life.



Anjali's story is full of sadness, however because of our incredible Cure One supporters her life can be completely transformed. She will be cured, cared for and restored because of people like you. We will keep you updated with her progress in our inTouch magazines.

If you would like to become a Cure One supporter please visit cureone.org.nz or contact kiri.debeer@leprosymission.org.nz

Youth Advocates 2016

Connecting young people to our mission is something we do with great joy. We are moved and humbled by the incredible young people that come with us every year to witness our work and experience the wonder of Nepal.

The dedication that follows the visit is inspirational, as they give their time and heart to fundraise. This year's group are fundraising for a 4WD for Anandaban hospital as the damage from the earthquake has made it extremely difficult to reach those most in need.

We asked them a few questions about the trip and how their fundraising is going.

Katy Edwards

What is your favourite photo, and why?

This photo is so funny. The nurse was so reluctant to play volleyball with us but we convinced her. It was amazing, when we started playing and the surgeons and nurses stripped off their hospital scrubs from surgery, and came to play with us! It really sunk in then that we were part of a big, enthusiastic, international team working to support leprosy affected people and eradicate leprosy.



What have you enjoyed most about fundraising, and why?

I feel so blessed to have been given this opportunity to be able to share my experiences. It is so exciting to be able to change the ideas that people, especially young people my own age, have about leprosy, and how they can so easily be a part of supporting leprosy affected people.



Hanneke Meyer

What is your favourite memory, and why?

My favourite memory was hearing the hospital director's testimony. He was so humble and honest about things that had been difficult in his life, but he still chose to stay and serve at the Leprosy Mission hospital because he loves God.

What have you enjoyed most about fundraising, and why?

I have enjoyed seeing how well people respond to our message. I have enjoyed and been so inspired to see how driven and passionate some of the other advocates are. I have enjoyed the challenge, and getting running for the Auckland Marathon.

Alexander Kuch

What have you enjoyed most about fundraising, and why?

I have enjoyed being able to share my unique experience with people, I can share what I have learned and dispel myths about leprosy.

You can donate to the Youth Advocates' fundraising efforts at givealittle.co.nz/cause/youthadvocates2016



2017 applications are open now! For more information, and to apply, go to leprosymission.org.nz/youth-advocates or contact Gillian Whitley on gillian.whitley@leprosymission.org.nz or phone 021 537 356 or 09 631 1806.

Really Good Gifts

You gave gifts of great joy that transformed so many people affected by leprosy. We really hope you enjoy reading these stories about the lives they changed.

Back to School Kit

A year ago 10 year old Yasin and his small family were struggling. They didn't have the basics in life, and because Yasin's parents couldn't afford exercise books, pencils and school fees, his education was threatened.

His mother Kulsuma joined her local self-help group and took a course on leadership and business skills. She took a small loan and bought a cow. She now makes a small living selling the milk and this is enough to pay for food, clothing and school fees for her family.

Yasin was also gifted a **Back to School Kit** including a school bag, exercise books and pens to last the whole year. He is now very happy he can go to school every day. In fact he is doing so well in mathematics he scored the best in his class!

Last year he thought he was so poor that he had no prospect of continuing with his schooling, so he thought he had no future. Now he dreams about becoming an engineer.

Hand Surgery

One of the saddest things we see is leprosy in young children, and little Sume was only nine years old when she found patches on her face. As she was so young she had no way of knowing what they were so she ignored them. A few months later her hand began to tighten and claw.

"I told my parents and we went to the clinic," Sume recalls. "They said I had leprosy. I was afraid and my parents were disappointed and sad. I was only 9 and didn't understand what was going on."

She was put on multi-drug therapy and was cured. She also had **Hand Surgery** on her clawed hand which was only possible because of the donations from New Zealand. She has recovered well from this and diligently does her physiotherapy exercises every day.

"I did not feel fear because my hope is my hand will become normal," she says bravely.



A second chance for this family in Bangladesh.



Yasin proudly wears his backpack gifted through the Back to School Kit.

Her quiet determination augurs well for her future, "If I can get a job somewhere one day, I would be very happy. But first I need to do physio. I want to get this hand well."

With your help we can reach more people like Sume and give them their future back.



Little Sume smiles about the future.

Education for a Girl

Rani is 13 years old and is from an impoverished family in Northern India. In the 2011 summer there was a local festival called Holi, the festival of colour, and all the children and families were celebrating. They were throwing coloured powder at each other and soon after Rani started to develop red patches. Her mother thought she was having a skin reaction and told her to stay away from the colour. The next morning she woke up with many raised red and white patches and a fever. She was given homeopathy medicine by a local clinic.

This didn't help the patches so they went to the local hospital. For many months they went back and forth. Nothing they gave her helped, and then she began to develop ulcers on her feet and her left hand started to claw. She had to drop out of school and became very depressed.

"I felt very sad," she said. "I was not able to walk and I wanted to go to school."

Finally in 2015 a relative told them about the Leprosy Mission Hospital in Muzaffarpur, but her father had had enough of the expense by this point and declared, "Let her die."

Her mother would not accept this and argued, "This is my daughter, and if she is to die she will die in the hospital."

Rani and her mother then travelled six hours in a rickshaw to get her to the hospital where she was diagnosed and given multi-drug therapy, the cure for leprosy. She has also had hand surgery twice and been taught vital physiotherapy.

Thanks to our amazing supporters, like you, she was given the gift of *Education for a Girl* through the 'Catch Them Young' programme.

This programme provides everything Rani needs for school including tuition fees, uniform, books and pens. Her attendance at the school is monitored, and over 85% of children in the programme achieved a Distinction grade last year.

"I like to study," she says with a shy smile. "I like to play cannon ball, there are many girls I can play with and I like to see my best friend Chinta."

For girls in this community, education really does mean everything and with your continued support we can reach even more people. If you would like to receive a Really Good Gifts Catalogue please give us a call on **0800 862 873** or visit www.reallygoodgifts.org.nz



Rani is so grateful to be at school.



Volunteers transforming lives in PNG and Bougainville

In some of the most remote places on Earth your help is reaching people affected by leprosy. The team in Papua New Guinea and Bougainville travel through difficult terrain to make sure no one is missing out on the cure for leprosy. The going is tough, but the work to reach and diagnose people is vital, as many have no access to clinics or hospitals.

One such village is Parami, referred to locally as “the one on the mountain”, and the basic conditions are shocking. The Leprosy Mission team made the difficult journey here to meet with the village chief, and talked about training the community to identify leprosy, before the devastating disabilities take hold.

The village chief, John Kuvatonim, was excited about this opportunity and jumped at the chance to be trained in health care and to help his community.

He travelled down from his village and attended the two-week training course organised by the Leprosy Mission team. He stayed in the accommodation provided by the Leprosy Mission and attended classes

given by health care professionals every day. John was taught about basic hygiene and care, and taught how to spot the signs of leprosy, TB and other illnesses. He learnt all about the treatment options available, why they are so vital and how to access them.

He is now a village health volunteer and does incredible work identifying those affected by leprosy and making sure they receive the full course of multi-drug therapy, the cure for leprosy. He now has the training to change lives and he will receive ongoing support and training from the Leprosy Mission staff.

John says “I am proud that I have been trained and I can help people in my village.”

He has already diagnosed leprosy in young people and children meaning they can be cured. Many children in the community with leprosy suffered from self-imposed withdrawal from other children, and fatigue meaning they miss out on school. If they are cured they can return to school, get an education and a much better start in life.

One of the young people John helped was Eurisder who was featured in our January Appeal. She is now on the road to recovery. Thank you to everyone who supports the work in PNG and Bougainville.



Eurisder and her family are grateful to John for helping them.

Sanku's Story - darkness in to light

In 2016 Sanku started to notice nodules and patches, and his life began to fall apart. He was a carpenter and made a good living to support his wife and their new baby, but when customers noticed his condition they avoided him and very soon his income began to decline.

His family started to shun them and he began to worry about the future of his little girl.

Thankfully, because of your donations, the Leprosy Mission staff visited their community and diagnosed him with leprosy. They gave him all the medication he needed but the impact of your incredible support didn't stop there.

A self-help group was set up in the community meaning Sanku's wife, Apurna, could learn tailoring and set up her own small business.

They still led a very simple life but they have enough food to eat every day and they can afford to send their daughter to school.

Sanku and Apurna are so grateful for your help through the Leprosy Mission. Apurna talked about the light that had come into their lives compared to the darkness they were living in when Sanku was sick. **Thank you.**



With your help Sanku can carve out a new future for his family.

Journey to India with the Leprosy Mission

You have an amazing opportunity to join the 2017 Supporter tour.

This once-in-a-lifetime experience will be truly memorable, as you journey through north east India, witnessing how people are cured of leprosy and their lives are transformed.

Join the Leprosy Mission Supporter tour next year, and discover the incredible colour and culture of India. You will visit Leprosy Mission hospitals, training centres and community development programmes. You will spend time with local people and immerse yourself in the community.

For a genuine, authentic project visit do not miss our 2017 Supporter tour to India.

For more information, contact Gillian Whitley on 0800 862 873 or gillian.whitley@leprosymission.org.nz

"The whole two weeks away was so interesting and full. I was impressed with how basic the equipment in the hospital was, and yet the dedication and attitude of those working there was outstanding. I saw in a tangible way that God is bringing healing and hope to some of the world's poorest people through people like me and you...working together."

It was amazing to go for a rickshaw ride through the crammed and lively streets of old Delhi with sights that overloaded my senses."

Kathy Dillner, Supporter tour, 2015



Supporters Corner...

Supporter Feedback Survey

Thank you to everyone who took the time to fill out the Supporter Feedback form we sent out with our Autumn *InTouch* magazine. There were many heart-warming comments from wonderful supporters, so we just had to share a few –

"It is so good to read the positive stories that come out. It makes us realise how lucky we are."

Maureen, Tauranga.

"I like the fact that you address the social and economic impact, not just treatment. Particularly the self-starter business options and empowerment. I intend to support the Leprosy Mission for the foreseeable future."

Robert and Jasmin, Hamilton.

"I have supported the Leprosy Mission since I was 12 years old. I am now 81 years of age and if the pension allows me, I will continue to donate. I first got interested because of the Bible stories about leprosy sufferers being outcasts (until Jesus healed some of them). My heart cried for them and still does."

Margaret, Richmond.

Thank you to our volunteers

In January this year, a group of New Zealand-Bangladeshi volunteers visited our project in Chittagong, Bangladesh. The project gives people affected by leprosy and disability the skills and training they need to start small businesses, which will give them the opportunity to earn an income, and pay for food and shelter for their family.

These wonderful volunteers provided technical advice, new ideas and mentoring to inspire project participants. Thank you to everyone involved!



The New Zealand-Bangladeshi volunteers:
Purabi Ataur, Benard Gomes, Ataur Rahman and Dr Bashir Ahmed.



Purabi discusses how to improve crop yield with project participant Lucky Akter.

Use your Will to do God's work

During your lifetime the number of people affected by leprosy has fallen tremendously. Yet many remain. God cares for them deeply and we know you do too.

Use your Will to make sure there will be hope, light and life for those still affected by leprosy after your lifetime.

We promise that a gift in your Will, however large or small, will be spent wisely and will make a genuine difference to people affected by leprosy.

Gillian Whitley would love to answer your bequest questions, either on the phone or even better, over a friendly cup of tea.

Call Gillian now on **0800 862 873** or

Email: Gillian.whitley@leprosymission.org.nz

Thank you for remembering people affected by leprosy.



Gillian would love to share her first-hand experience of lives that have been transformed, because of people like you.

Bequests / In Memory

Thank you for generous donations received in memory of:

Frieda Allardice	Wellington
Ashton Crawford	Whangarei
Norman Honey	Lower Hutt
Florence Percival	Auckland
Bina Taggart	Ashburton

The lasting legacy of bequests

We are extremely grateful to the following supporters who remembered the work of The Leprosy Mission New Zealand in their Will.

Margaret Helen Lamb	Auckland
Kevin John O'Sullivan	Palmerston North
Barbara Mawson	Thames
Joan Johnston	Ashburton
Helen Joyce Nicholls	Waikanae
Linda Victoria Bloomfield	Hokitika
Heather Belle Smart	Ashhurst
Joy Constance Crombie	Kaitia
Leslie Elizabeth Horrell	Tauranga
Alice Claire Irvine	Lower Hutt
Honore Wright	Tauranga
Nancy Beryl Banks	Waikanae
Rex George Byers	Auckland
Joyce Edna Evetts	Auckland

Books



Hope for Each Day

Daily words of wisdom and faith by Billy Graham that speak into the heart and encourage the soul. Flip over the page each day to be reminded that no matter what kind of day you are facing, with Jesus there is always hope. Just right for a desk or bookshelf. **\$34 includes P&H**



Seeking The Lighthouse

In life, there are times when fog descends and God seems far away, this might be the result of depression, redundancy, the loss of a loved one, a broken relationship or similar. This book will encourage and reassure anyone who is finding it hard to discern God's presence in their life and will guide them towards the discovery that God has been there all the time. **\$22 includes P&H**

Buy a book and help eradicate leprosy

Buy an inspirational book today for yourself or as a gift, and help transform the lives of individuals and families affected by leprosy. The funds raised through our book sales go directly to supporting the poorest of the poor in the countries where the Leprosy Mission works. **To order your books today, please visit www.leprosymission.org.nz and order your copies at our online bookstore.**

Alternatively, contact Carolyn Currie on 0800 862 873 or at carolyn.currie@leprosymission.org.nz.

Free postage throughout New Zealand

Cure One today

A world without leprosy tomorrow

"Loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted is the most terrible poverty." Mother Teresa

When someone has leprosy the stigma and rejection is often worse than the physical wounds.

With a monthly gift of \$36 a year, you will cure, care for and restore one person affected by leprosy each year.

Call 0800 862 873

Or join Cure One at cureone.org.nz

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