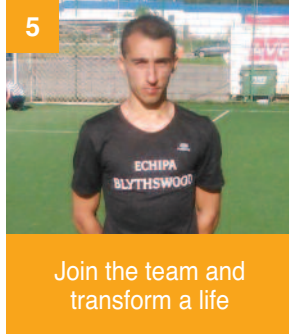




Protecting poor families
against malaria



Join the team and
transform a life



Leave a legacy that will
transform lives for
generations to come



BLYTHSWOODNEWS

Number 66 – May 2018

**MAKING UP
FOR MISSING
YEARS AT
SCHOOL**

See page 2

Cover story

Give a child an education – Gift code R2

With your support, a 12-year-old girl is working hard to make up for years of missed primary education. When she was six, Andreea's family moved to Italy. They travelled from place to place, and none of their children was enrolled in school.

By the time the family returned to their home village of Jimbolia, western Romania, Andreea was severely disadvantaged. She didn't know how to read or write and her lack of school experience left her very shy and withdrawn in the company of other children.

Talita Kum – Blythswood's after-school programme for children from low income homes – is now helping Andreea to make up for lost time.

At Talita Kum, Andreea receives a cooked meal and has access to hot showers and clean clothes.

Teachers give her the one-to-one attention she needs to help her get to grips with the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic.

And social workers visit her parents who are illiterate and unemployed, to help them see the importance of sending their children to school.



The fast-growing girl is taking full advantage of the opportunity given to her by your generous support. Since joining Talita Kum last summer, she has not missed a single day at school.

"Andreea has proved to be hard-working and dedicated to learning," says Carmen Popa who teaches her. "She's a lot more mature than her classmates and prefers to be given responsible tasks like setting the table or hanging out the towels when the other kids are playing with toys."

"Andreea has already been on a ski trip to Semenik with us this year and we hope to take her to camp this summer to help her see what lies beyond her poverty."

Thank you for providing a place to learn for children like Andreea. Your gifts are helping her to make up for lost opportunities at school

With your support Talita Kum continues to provide a place for young disadvantaged people like Andreea to learn

Protecting poor families against malaria



House proud: Durga makes the best of her circumstances but was powerless to protect her family against mosquitos until Blythswood provided a net

Mosquito net – Gift code OH5

A low-income family in Mumbai, India, is able to enjoy the night breezes and sleep in peace thanks to the provision of a mosquito net by a kind-hearted Blythswood supporter like you.

Durga's home is a makeshift tent which offers some protection from the sun and from the rain but none at all from the mosquitos which infest neighbouring wasteland.

Her husband works as a sweeper on the city's public transport system, earning 200 rupees – a little over £2 – per day. That's barely enough to feed a family of four and would not allow them to buy the protection they needed against the painful insect bites that spread malaria. Since being given a mosquito net in October, their lives have improved. The children fall sick less frequently and are fit to go to school every day.

Every morning Durga carefully folds up the mosquito net and tucks it away in a safe place. She understands how important it is to the health of her family.



Blythswood trustee Murray McCheyne presented the family with a mosquito net in October



HELP FOR HOUSE-BOUND WOMAN GETS HER OUT AND ABOUT

Provide financial support for a socially deprived family in Romania – Gift code DA12

Your gifts to Blythswood's Basis Project in Cluj, Romania, have helped a woman with disability remain in her tiny flat which she otherwise would have had to give up.

a lifetime of social isolation and appreciates all the more the support and friendship she receives from Basis care worker Agnes Csiszer and from friends at church.

The monthly food parcel received from Blythswood by Agnes (64) enables her to balance her budget and get by on her total income of £43 per week. This allowance from the Romanian welfare system is also supposed to enable a disabled person to pay for assistance at home.

In reality, Agnes has experienced

mother's shame at having a disabled child, and her refusal to take her out.

"Given such a difficult start in life, Agnes is an amazingly warm, caring and kind person," says Agnes Csiszer who has got to know her well over the past three months. "She is popular with her neighbours and used to look after a neighbour's child after school. And when she heard I had a sore back, she phoned me up to ask me how I was."

For someone like Agnes, social contact is as important as the rice, oil and flour provided by Basis. Agnes Csiszer has arranged to get her a walking frame with wheels. "When she was a child, disability was accompanied by feelings of shame and so even now she refuses to sit in a wheelchair," the Basis care worker explains. "Her friends promised to take her to the Botanical Garden and with the walking frame she will be able to go."

*Your gifts to
Blythswood's
Basis Project
brighten the
lives of
disadvantaged
people like
Agnes*

JOIN THE TEAM AND TRANSFORM A LIFE

Being a Life Transformer is a unique relationship that brings hope to the life of a vulnerable person – someone like Adrian.

Following the death of his father, Adrian wanted to be able to take care of his mother and brother who has special needs. Poverty forced Adrian to give up education. But with little education, getting or keeping a job is a real challenge.

Thanks to people like you, Adrian is taking a different path. He is learning life-skills at the Daniel Centre in Romania. He has discovered a talent for cooking. As his confidence has grown, he has found a job at a bakery. Adrian's dream – to be a football coach – is looking more achievable.

Here in the UK and around the world there are many people who need help. It can seem overwhelming. How can you possibly make a difference?

Give a monthly donation to Blythswood Care and you will



give someone hope. You will let them know that you want to help them and that their life matters.

Giving every month can be a big commitment – we understand that. That's why we invite you to become a Life Transformer for one year. At the end of the year you can continue being a Life Transformer or you can stop – the choice is yours.

You will journey with someone like Adrian, seeing their joys and difficulties along the way. You will get updates, letters and photos throughout your shared journey.

Join the Life Transformer team today and transform some of the most vulnerable lives around the world. Go to www.blythswood.org/life-transformer or call 01349 830777.

www.blythswood.org/life-transformer



Summer camps run by Christian organisations in Europe help to broaden the horizons of disadvantaged children and encourage them to fulfil their potential

SUMMER CAMP MOTIVATES CHILD TO LEARN TO READ

Give a child a week at camp — Gift code SC2

A week at camp, paid for by your donations through Blythswood's gift catalogue, has motivated a 12-year-old girl in Romania to learn to read.

Let's call her Elena. To describe her as disadvantaged would be an understatement. When the family of 12 children first came to the attention of the Department of Child Protection two years ago, she had never been to school. She could neither read nor write nor count. She could not name the colours nor say in which country she lived.

Now in the care of a state-run children's home in Arad, Elena was given the opportunity last summer to attend a children's camp run by Children for Christ, one of Blythswood's partner organisations in Romania.

There she enjoyed the games and activities, and especially the Bible stories and group discussions and singing. She enjoyed the regular meals and having the attention of the camp leaders.

"One day Elena stayed behind to talk to us about God," says camp leader Vio Jorza. "She trusted the Lord as her Saviour

and when we gave her a Bible she was so happy. She said that she wants to learn to read as quickly as possible because she wants to be able to read the Bible for herself."

90,000 children and young people given a much-needed break away from home at camps (since 1992) valued at £1,800,000



Breakfast especially important to children in care

Give an orphan breakfast for a month — Gift code DA5

Maria* is an eight-year-old with a healthy appetite. Eggs, salami, cheese, sausages — you name it, she likes it. And especially the breakfast of cereal and milk, funded by the gifts of Blythswood supporters like you.

Ms Dobrican is head nurse at the state-run care home in Ilisua, Romania, where Maria and her twin sister and three older brothers have been living for the past five years.

She is keenly aware of the importance of nutrition to children like these who have been taken into care because of extreme poverty at home and exposure to tuberculosis.

"We are grateful for the constant support you provide," she says, explaining that the institution struggles to manage on an official allowance that



Nutrition is especially important to children like Maria who may have been exposed to tuberculosis

equates to £2.29 per child per day.

"That is why we appreciate all the support we receive, so that we can offer the children healthy meals, rich in vitamins and calories."

*not her real name

"My heartfelt thanks to the generous sponsors who are thinking about the children here."

www.blythswood.org/gift-catalogue

Foodbank feeds Ex-Forces personnel in crisis

Provide food for a family in crisis – UK2

When Kenneth (not his real name) visited a Highland Foodbank Centre, it was the friend who accompanied him who did most of the talking.

“Kenneth looked really down but his friend knew exactly what he was going through as he had found himself in the same situation two years ago,” says foodbank coordinator Lorna Dempster.

“Both men had served in the military, and had witnessed some horrific incidents. They retired from the forces only to experience marriage breakdown, homes being repossessed and depression.

“Kenneth’s friend has had time to deal with some of the issues and is a stronger person as a result. Over a cup of tea he encouraged

Your support for Blythswood’s foodbanks eases the plight of individuals and families in crisis

Kenneth to open up about the difficulties he is facing both financially and emotionally.

“Poppy Scotland have been fantastic in supporting both men, and it was they who referred Kenneth to Foodbank. He was grateful for the food we gave him, saying it was one thing less for him to worry about.”

**50,000 people
fed through
our Foodbanks
since starting in 2005**



iStock image
©AleksandarGeorgiev



The new well saves Saramma from having to walk one kilometre to the government supply and then to carry back her full water pot

YOUR GIFTS SAVE FRAIL LADY FROM CARRYING WATER ONE KILOMETRE

Help provide clean water – Gift code OH6

Saramma lives in a village near the Godavari River in the state of Andhra Pradesh, India. Frail and thin, the widowed woman continues to provide for herself by scrubbing cooking vessels in exchange for leftover food.

But in one significant way her life has been made a little bit easier by your kind gifts. Last year, Blythswood Care

sponsored the installation of a bore well and holding tank which means that she no longer has to walk a kilometre each way to collect her drinking water.

The new supply is benefiting 25 families drawn mainly from the poorest section of the community. For those who must labour in the fields to earn a living, the restricted hours of the official

government water supply were a problem. Available only between 8am and 9am and then again from 4pm to 5pm, it meant that every two days an able-bodied member of the household must take time off work to collect drinking water.

Now these families too can get their water from the new supply, funded in 2017 by your donations to Blythswood’s Gift Catalogue.

EYE OPS TRANSFORM THE LIVES OF FAMILIES TOO

Help for someone to see clearly – **Gift code OH9**



Daw Win Kyi after successful cataract surgery: your gifts for eye operations transform the lives of patients and their families

Like many older people, Daw Win Kyi doesn't want to be a burden to her family. But with her eyesight rapidly failing, the 68-year-old widow found herself depending more and more on her daughter, with whom she stays.

By March of this year, cataracts on both eyes had advanced to the stage where she could only make out hand movements in front of her face. Even if she had the money there was no eye clinic in her region of Burma capable of giving her the treatment she required.

But thanks to the gifts of people like you – and thanks to the skills of British eye surgeons who volunteer their

time – her eyesight has been restored in a successful operation in Mae Tao Clinic, just over the border in neighbouring Thailand. On the day of her surgery, the doctor who treated her said: "Daw Win Kyi is really looking forward to being able to read and to look after herself again. She wants her daughter to be free from this burden."

Your gifts for eye operations transform the lives of patients and their families

YOUR SUPPORT HELPS WIDOW TO CHOOSE LIFE

Care for a widow – **Gift code OH7**

Mrs Chandra isn't sure what year she was born. But three years ago she decided that her time had come to die. Her two sons – both illiterate labourers as their parents had been before them – were either unable or unwilling to support her.

Her daughter's husband would let her stay with them for only a few days. Unwanted, homeless and in poor health, the elderly widow thought that suicide was the only way out.



Thanks to your support, Mrs Chandra now lives as a valued member of the community

A village pastor took her to Alpha Educational & Welfare Society, a Christian charity in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh that shelters unwanted children and elderly women with support from Blythswood Care.

"Mrs Chandra was hurt deeply by the attitude of her family but she is happy in our home," says Alpha president Mary Kumari. "We have been able to get treatment for her diabetes and blood pressure. She mixes well with the other women and with the children and helps with house work when she is able.

"Because of your loving support she is still alive and happy."

YOUR GIFTS FEED GROWING CHILDREN IN INDIA



Regular healthy meals give Prasad the energy he needs to grow, study and play

Provide nourishing meals for Indian children – **Gift code OH4**

Your gifts to feed children in India ensure that Prasad never goes hungry. Each day he and the other children at Dayspring House enjoy three meals, with a healthy local diet based on fresh vegetables, rice and eggs. The children's home near Hyderabad, which is supported by Blythswood Care, also makes sure that the children receive high protein food such as meat or chicken once a week.

The result has been a transformation in the health and vitality of the growing nine-year-old boy. "When Prasad joined our home four years ago, he was weak and malnourished," remembers Pastor Samuel Babu who makes sure that the 35 children at Dayspring House receive the care, nutrition and education that they require.

"He had been badly affected by the death of his father and his mother was unable to provide for him. But his health has improved with regular meals and now he has the energy to enjoy playing with the other children in his age group."

Your gifts ensure that Blythswood can continue to fund nourishing meals for well over 100 vulnerable children at three locations in India.

www.blythswood.org/gift-catalogue

Leave a legacy that will transform lives for generations to come

“She has done what she could ... assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.”

(Mark 14:8-9)

How will we be remembered?

What kind of legacy are you building?

A hundred years from now, will it even matter we were born? Are the things I am living for worthy of someone for whom Christ died?

Often we think legacy is just what we will leave materially. But can we not be like the woman who anointed the feet of Jesus and leave a spiritual legacy too?

Blythswood Care is thankful for legacy gifts to those who remember us in their Wills. Our LEGACY BOOKLET shows how gifts left in Wills have had

a great impact on our work, transforming lives through Education, Community and Gospel projects.

To receive this booklet, and more information on leaving a gift in your Will to Blythswood Care, contact me on 01349 830777 or email legacy@blythswood.org



Rona Matheson
Legacy Officer



Roz surrounded by children at a camp in Romania

Supporter and volunteer ROZ SOUTER explains why she decided to leave a legacy to Blythswood Care

“I first got involved with Blythswood Care through the annual Shoe Box Appeal, while working as a teacher. A few years later I led a group of school pupils to help at a camp run by the Elpis Foundation in Romania, a long-term education project supported by Blythswood. The children who attended these camps came from various difficult backgrounds. It was wonderful to give these children a break from their everyday lives in a Christian environment.

“On my trip I had the opportunity to visit an orphanage. The conditions I saw were so basic and clinical. It has been great to see how support through the Elpis Foundation has improved conditions. I was so happy to give my support in various ways, leading to return trips both with school teams and personally, building good relationships with children and teachers. I have seen conditions improve but still a lot of help is needed going forward.

“It gives me great joy to leave a legacy gift to Blythswood Care. I know it will help many less fortunate than myself, both here in the UK and overseas.”

GIVING A VOICE TO THE VOICELESS

Volunteers' Week is an annual celebration of volunteers. It takes place on 1-7 June. We asked Helen, who volunteers for Blythwood Care in North East England, to tell you why she volunteers.

"As a child my parents always received the Blythwood magazines, and I used to read them.

"As an adult I started encouraging people at church to fill shoeboxes to send to



Blythwood. I now coordinate the collection in our area, making contact with schools and businesses, collecting filled shoeboxes and bringing them to a central location.

"It started as drumming up support from our church, getting 30 boxes the first year.

Fast forward seven years and in 2017 we collected 312 shoeboxes from churches, schools and local businesses around North East England.

"I have worked in schools for many years so am happy to stand up and talk to children and staff. I talked to Adam, my local Blythwood Fundraiser, to find out if I had any relevant experience he could use. Adam is supporting me and when an opportunity comes up to talk about Blythwood's work I will be happy to do it.

"Blythwood helps children and adults who are often

ignored or unloved. I feel strongly about giving a voice to the voiceless."

Why not join us to become part of a network of supporters committing their time and talents to transform lives?

Visit our website www.blythwood.org/get-involved or email info@blythwood.org to find out more. We really need volunteer speakers to represent us in churches, schools and community groups. We'd love to hear from you.

LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH

One of the biggest changes to UK data privacy law is on its way. You might have read about it or seen it on the news. General Data Protection Regulation, known as GDPR, is a positive step giving you more control over how your information is used and how you're contacted.

You are really important to Blythwood Care and we believe that your experience of supporting us should be a great one. That's why we want you to know how we keep in touch.

We are committed to protecting your personal information and will never sell or share your details with a third party unless required to do so by law. We will sometimes use external companies to help us with things like sending Blythwood News.

We will sometimes analyse the data we hold to tailor how we keep in touch with you and make sure our communications with you are

appropriate and cost-effective. We may use external sources to help us keep your data up to date.


You can request a copy of the information we hold about you at any time.

If you have any concerns about the way that we use your information please get in touch so we can answer your questions and reassure you.

You can find out more in our Privacy Policy at blythwood.org/privacy-policy or we can send you a copy.

Thank you for supporting Blythwood Care. Working together we are transforming lives.

We love to hear from you, so please get in touch

 Blythwood Care, Deephaven Industrial Estate, Evanton, IV16 9XJ

 info@blythwood.org

 01349 830777

 www.blythwood.org



Jamie McIntosh
Fundraising Manager



A RIGHT ROYAL VISIT

HRH Princess Anne visited Blythwood's stand at Heart & Soul 2017 and spoke with Alan Swanson, head of projects support. "We had a good conversation," Alan says. "She already knew a lot about our work."

This summer Blythwood Care will be at several events and festivals

 20 May Heart & Soul – Edinburgh heartandsoul.org.uk	 26 - 27 May Big Church Day Out South – West Sussex bigchurchdayout.com/south
 1 - 2 June Big Church Day Out North – Cheshire bigchurchdayout.com/north	 14 - 21 July Keswick Convention – Keswick keswickministries.org/convention

Are you happy to chat to strangers? We need Event & Festival volunteers to join our team and tell the public about Blythwood Care. We'd love to hear from you.

Visit our website at www.blythwood.org/get-involved or email info@blythwood.org to find out more.



TRANSFORMING THE LIVES OF A NEW GENERATION

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

(Jeremiah 29:11-13)



Children at Dayspring House near Hyderabad (see page 11).

Your gifts continue to fund nourishing meals for vulnerable children at three locations in India

Yes, it's a new format but the purpose of Blythswood News remains the same – to thank you for your gifts which are transforming the lives of so many vulnerable children and adults.

And a good education really is transformational. Your support has made a profound difference to Andreea (see page 2), helping to make up for the years she missed school.

Many more people have been

helped in practical ways by your gifts through Blythswood's Gift Catalogue. The provision of a simple mosquito net has prevented malaria, potentially saving lives (see page 3). An eye operation has enabled an elderly person to regain her independence (page 10).

As I get older I'm more aware that leaving a legacy is an opportunity to achieve good long after I'm gone. Many of our projects have benefitted from the legacies of lifelong

supporters which will touch the lives of succeeding generations (page 12).

Our mission is *to transform lives through Christian care for body and soul*. By becoming a Life Transformer, your monthly support helps to educate young people like Adrian (page 5), encouraging them to find hope and a future and a real purpose in life.

Whichever way you give, be assured your gifts are changing lives for good. Thank you very much indeed!

James Campbell
Chief Executive



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