

He hung a lantern in the sky  
The way to show;  
Then slipped below  
Into a stable shed, that so  
The simple and the wise  
Might see, and know  
That God hath not His dwelling  
in the skies!  
R.E. Cleeve



Keeping  
in  
Touch  
Issue 1, 2022

UNCONDITIONAL  
**Love**  
LIKE  
**Jesus**  
WORLD LEPROSY DAY  
SUNDAY 30 JANUARY

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## A Christmas Season Message



By Dr Grace Warren

Yes, God does not have His dwelling in the skies but here with us – guiding and helping us.

He became a Man and showed us He cares for us and understands our needs. It is fascinating to reread the details of how God organised the birth of Jesus so that shepherds and Wise Men would be the first to see Him. Then it was necessary for Him to be taken to Egypt to avoid the slaughter by Herod. Egypt would certainly have been thought a dangerous place by many at that time.

We hear little of his boyhood – but know he was brought up in a Godly family and went to the temple for the festivals. Jesus as a boy would have been well taught the basis of faith in God and so even as a boy He is an example to us to love and serve God, even as a boy he learnt to work as a carpenter.

It has been a funny year with the lockdowns and the problems of the COVID virus. Life has not been easy here for us; we have not seen much of family and friends, but we can believe that God cares for them. But we fortunately have been able to worship together, often by computer or radio.

The patients we seek to help overseas have often got it much worse, as some countries we cannot get into easily. Many of our patients need care and it is difficult to get to them the supplies they need.

We need to pray that the essentials at least will get to them and that they can continue to earn a suitable living to support themselves and their families. God has been good in giving us the ability to help them, to reconstruct deformed limbs and teach them crafts suitable to their disabilities — and of course to provide the medications needed to eliminate leprosy infections.

Pray for those still working in this field and that new patients should come to our clinics before they are really deformed. There certainly are countries where there are patients who need the full care, but it is not available at present.

May God continue to lead us on to meet the needs of many who also need His love and care. Your prayers and gifts can do much when given in His name, and bring His blessings to you.

This comes with best wishes for a happy, holy Christmas season!

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## Your powerful prayers continue to sustain us into a new year. Thank you.



By Steven Meredith  
Board Chair  
The Leprosy Mission Australia

**Thank you for being a vital part of The Leprosy Mission's strong prayer support network.**

Although it has been a challenging and difficult year for the Mission internationally, you continue to sustain us and provide a tangible sense of God's leading and love in our combined efforts.  
**Thank you.**

**Dedicated and passionate people like you are key to the past, present and future of the Mission.** I praise God for your lives and give thanks for your exceptional commitment and Christian service to the work of The Leprosy Mission.

We have been blessed in Australia with ongoing funding during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, we cannot reflect on the past year without also acknowledging the pain and tragedy impacting so many lives both within the International Fellowship and those suffering from leprosy across the many countries we serve. **Our hearts break and our prayers go out to all affected by the pandemic as it continues to wreak havoc with repeated waves of infection.**

Our response is an important part of our commitment to provide encouragement, hope and practical support to our international partners in their time of crisis. We have been analysing innovative opportunities for us to increase our involvement in partnering in the South East Asian region in countries experiencing high levels of leprosy transmission. In all these initiatives we continue to seek God's leading and discernment to ensure we optimise our impact and direct our efforts wisely.

**As we see the year come to a close, we thank God for continuing to guide our decision making and preparing us for the journey ahead.** In His presence (Psalm 119: 28) we can continue to drive towards our key strategic goals, serving and loving those impacted by leprosy for as long as it takes.

**May God bless you with health, wealth, wisdom and joy in 2022.**

**"Therefore I live for today - certain of finding at sunrise, guidance and strength for the way. Power for each moment of weakness, hope for each moment of pain, comfort for every sorrow, sunshine and joy after rain!" —Billy Graham**





## "If I didn't take the opportunity it wouldn't be right for the kingdom of God"

As a supporter of The Leprosy Mission Australia, you are joined with the wider Leprosy Mission family — a network of people around the world driven to show love and compassion to people with leprosy.

We'd love to introduce you to another member of our Leprosy Mission family. Dan Izzett is a pastor, speaker and long-term supporter of The Leprosy Mission England and Wales. But his story is quite unique — both he and his wife Babs have been treated for leprosy.

"Babs and I are originally from Zimbabwe and retired to Taunton a year ago to be near our two sons, Bruce and Christopher, and six grandchildren," Dan shares with us. "Our story is unusual in the fact that leprosy is a disease that thrives where there is poverty. But this wasn't the case for us. It wasn't even a disease that was hugely prevalent in Zimbabwe."

"When I first displayed symptoms in 1960, I ignored them. Then in 1970 I had a rash all over my body and the doctors told me I had syphilis. The doctors simply did not believe me when I told them that, as a newly married man, this was impossible. It took a leap of faith for Babs to believe me when

I said she had been my only partner, but she did, despite the doctors' insistence.

"When I was eventually diagnosed with leprosy I thought it was the honourable thing to tell Babs that I would understand if she wanted to have the marriage annulled. There was such prejudice surrounding leprosy. But she replied that, firstly, she loved me and secondly, we had made a vow before God at our wedding to stay together 'through sickness and in health'."

"I was working as a civil engineering technician at the time and was incredibly fortunate to be able to pay for treatment. Babs was diagnosed with leprosy in 1977. Thankfully it was treated at an earlier stage than my leprosy and she has no disability."

Sadly Dan's treatment came too late to prevent damage to his body.

"My fingers are clawed and I have no feeling in them. Last year I had a finger amputated soon after we moved to the UK. This was after an accident in a butcher's shop in Harare, Zimbabwe.

"I was chatting to my friend the butcher with my hand resting on the wrapping machine. I could not



feel it burning. As soon as we realised my friend packed it in ice. The burns did eventually heal, except for the middle finger of my right hand which got infected and had to be amputated.

I have had to learn to write three times. The first time as a child, the second after my hands clawed as a result of leprosy and a third time last year after my finger amputation.

"My right leg was amputated from below the knee many years ago. I mistakenly bathed my numb foot in a basin of scolding water. It got infected and needed to be amputated. Since then I have had 25 new prosthetic legs!

"Once you have leprosy you do struggle for the rest of your life. Only the other day I went for a cup of tea with a friend and still have a blister on my finger where it was resting on the side of the teacup. These little things happen the whole time."

Despite the challenges it brought to their life, Dan and Babs have been able to see God's light through their journey with leprosy.

"We are from Christian families but our faith was really enriched as a result of our leprosy journey. When I was first treated for leprosy I had a terrible reaction to the dead leprosy bacteria in my body. I had awful joint pain and lesions on my face and legs.

"I clearly remember feeling terrible in my hospital bed when suddenly the room lit up with an awesome light.

"Both my minister and Babs visited me later and asked me what was different. I told them what had happened and my minister said "I guess Jesus still visits those with leprosy". Babs said she could see me positively glowing. After that my body really began to heal.

"Years later I was a pastor at a church when I felt prompted to do some awareness raising work for The Leprosy Mission. It felt the right thing to tell the church congregation our testimony. The church was full and people had driven two hours from Harare to hear it.

"We stood at the door of the church afterwards and every single person shook our hands and asked us over and over again "why did you not tell us before?". It was very emotional. Since then I have used my testimony to raise awareness and funds for fellow leprosy patients in far less fortunate circumstances than me. Jesus said the truth will set you free. Ever since the day we started sharing our story we have had such freedom in our lives."

There's more of this story on the blog! Read about the amazing work they've done with The Leprosy Mission around the world at [www.leprosymission.org.au/blog](http://www.leprosymission.org.au/blog)

UNCONDITIONAL  
**Love**  
LIKE  
**Jesus**

Sunday 30 January is World Leprosy Day — a day where we can all come together and show unconditional love like Jesus to people with leprosy and disability. This year we are calling on you to Pray, Speak Out, and Keep Healing people with leprosy through your support! To find out more go to [leprosymission.org.au](http://leprosymission.org.au) or call **1800 LEPROSY (1800 537 767)**.