



BRIGHTER FUTURE

Registered Charity 1186475

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

Hello from India, where I am spending time in leprosy colonies with Victor. It's been absolutely wonderful to see the transformation as the Brighter Future team installs clean water, provides food parcels to the elderly and disabled, helps communities to establish small farms, and secures match funding from local government to



build small houses where dilapidated shacks once stood! The most important thing is that people who were rejected, isolated and forgotten are no longer alone. They know they are loved and valued. Thank you so very much for your kindness. You can read about one of the ladies I met on page 3.

Next month, Liz, Brighter Future Chair will be travelling to Vizianagaram to spend time with all the children you so kindly support. Liz is a retired head teacher and has a special heart for children. There's lots of fun when she visits, and this year everyone will be making Christmas cards – so watch out for these in the post in December!

I'm not relishing the return to cold, dark England. But I'm reminded that though the seasons change, God never does. He's there in the heaviness of the dark, and in the joy of the light. I hope that you find joy as you read our latest newsletter and see the light you are shining into the lives of so many.

Thank you so much for caring.

Louise

UK Country Head (Volunteer)

CARRYING THE LOVE OF GOD TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD

Have you ever thought of yourself as someone who carries God's love to people all the way across the continents to India? When you give, and of course when you pray, you enable the love of Jesus to be carried to children and adults across Andhra Pradesh and Odisha. This love shines from your hearts into the lives of hundreds of people in these vast rural States, many of whom have only known isolation, rejection and extreme poverty. Your compassion brings hope and healing; it provides futures and brings beauty from ashes.

Every prayer and every penny make a difference as together we seek to bring God's kingdom here on earth. For the children and the elderly, for the disabled and the sick. For those who need to know they are valued and not forgotten. God multiplies the love that you send and blesses the people who need it most. It also really encourages the Brighter Future team! We always feel so humbled by how God provides through His people.

YOUR KIND WORDS MEAN SO MUCH

Victor sends a special thank you to everyone who emailed and sent cards following the passing of his wife, dear Mary. It has and of course continues to be a sad and difficult time for the family. But Victor takes comfort that we will see Mary again in Heaven.

Thank you too, to everyone who donated to Mary's fund, to provide for the children at Rainbow and Shanti Nivas who were so close to her heart. You can continue to make donations to this. Bank details at the bottom of the



newsletter. So far you have given £2,000 and this will be used for a visit to the beach and picnic – one of Mary's and the children's favourite times together.

LIVING WITH HIV STILL MEANS LIVING LIFE TO THE FULL!

Older boys with new cricket gear



Your generosity supports 34 children living with HIV at the Shanti Nivas Children's Village. Thanks to amazing care the support of the State Medical Department, they are healthy and like any other child.

The team have come a long way over the last ten years. We look back with sadness to a time when sadly we lost children affected by HIV to opportunistic infection like TB,

skin infections, and diarrhoea. It was heartbreaking to see little ones suffering and not have any way of saving them. We thank God that over the past five years, there have been no infections at all!

This is because of a regular supply of antiretroviral therapy, the treatment for HIV. Each child takes their tablets daily under supervision, to ensure that no dose is every

DID YOU KNOW?



HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) is a virus that attacks the immune system.



AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) is a late stage of HIV infection.



HIV can pass from mother to child during pregnancy, childbirth, or breastfeeding. Brighter Future provides baby formula to nursing mums who are living with HIV as a preventative measure.



What happens in HIV infection? HIV attacks cells in the immune system called CD4 cells (or T cells). CD4 cells help the body fight off infections and some kinds of cancers.



How Is HIV Treated? Most people with HIV can stay healthy by taking medicines called antiretrovirals. Antiretrovirals help lower the viral load (how much HIV is in the body) so that the CD4 count can go up.

missed. Every child has regular check-ups, and any medical needs are met immediately.

Good nutritious food and a clean and green environment also play their part in building stronger immune systems. It really is wonderful to see the transformation your compassion has made. Children have gone from battling for survival to building resilience and health.

MEET KUNI

Kuni's story

Kuni sits in the doorway, her sari barely covering her chest and her hair matted. Disabled hands and feet bear the wrath of leprosy. With fingers and toes eaten away by ulcers, you can imagine how hard it is to look after herself. She grasps a stick with both palms as she shows me how she walks.

As Kuni describes where she grew up, it sounds like a scene out of *The Jungle Book*. But this is not a happy story, and hers is a life marred by poverty and rejection. She thinks she's about 75, but has no idea when she was born, there are no records.

Kuni grew up in a rural village 100kms from where she now lives. Her family home was a mud hut covered by palm leaves. Her parents worked as daily labourers in the fields, leaving Kuni at home all day. It was a hard life and there was little food. There was no money for school or even medicine when they needed it.

When she was around ten, Kuni noticed strange patches on her arm. When she pressed them, there was no feeling. She had no idea what was wrong with her, but her parents knew all too well what was happening to their daughter. She heard raised voices and her mum crying in the night. As she finally fell asleep, she couldn't have imagined what the morning would bring.

Kuni was woken by her parents and told to get dressed. "You have leprosy, you cannot stay." Her father said. Kuni was confused – what did he mean? She was taken many miles away and abandoned at a leprosy colony. Her eyes fill with tears as she relives the memory. "I cried for weeks, I just wanted to die." She never saw her parents again.

A kind woman with leprosy took her in, but it took a whole week before she could be coaxed to eat. Sadly, the cure for leprosy wasn't discovered until the 1980's, so the disease was left to ravage the nerves in her hands and feet. It stole all feeling, and Kuni often injured herself doing everyday things like cooking and walking. Cuts became infected and ulcerated, and disability followed.

A woman with leprosy can only marry a man with leprosy because no one else will accept her. So a marriage was arranged, and Kuni moved to another colony to live with her late husband. Kuni was unable to have children. "I wondered



how I would survive when my husband died. All I can do is live day by day and find something to eat and then die."

Kuni relies on begging to survive, struggling to walk three kilometres to sit by the roadside in the local town. This is particularly difficult in the summer months when temperatures rocket to 50 degrees. Sometimes Kuni can't manage the walk, and on those days, there is no food.

When the Brighter Future team found Kuni, she was so thin and malnourished. But thanks to wonderful people like you, she now gets regular food parcels. There is now dignity for Kuni, and she no longer has to beg every day. She beams as she says "I am so happy that I don't have to walk so far, I have never seen such a variety of food for many years. Now I know I am secure and that someone remembers me."

We all deserve that don't we? If you'd like to provide a food parcel for someone just like Kuni, it costs just £7.50. The same as two cups of coffee!

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

We're so thankful for the church congregations around the UK who partner with us at Brighter Future. This year we've loved hearing about what you have been doing to provide funds for food, education, medical treatment and so much more. Here's just a few of the things that have been going on...



▲ Lorraine and Jan at Bourne Baptist Church have been busy in their allotment again this year. Growing and selling fresh veg and plants to sell. The children might not have been quite so interested in the vegetables, but they were quickly snapped up by parents, who devised ways of chopping, blending and hiding in family meals! We know how that feels!



◀ Sheila, Gina and the team at Bourne Methodist Church held a delicious strawberry tea in June. People ate their way through tiers of cake, scones and cream to raise vital funds. It was a lovely time of fellowship and we're happy there were no fights reported about which goes first – the cream or the jam!

St Mary's Church in Heacham held a harvest festival, with all proceeds going to food parcels for people affected by leprosy who are elderly and disabled. Thanks, Veronica, for sharing about this need during your church service.

We'd also like to thank St Anne's PCC and Faith Life Church in Grantham, Morton New Day Baptist Church, St Marks Church, Peterborough and Zion Christian Church for your wonderful support this year.

We'd love to hear about what you have been doing in your church to fundraise for Brighter Future. Do email us at info@brighterfuture.org If you attend a church and would like Louise to come and share about what God is doing at Brighter Future, or would like some fundraising ideas, please get in touch!

No waste here!

We want to be the best stewards of the funds you so generously send, and print/postage is expensive. If you would rather receive updates by email, please let us know. We don't have many email addresses.

To reduce banking costs, we'd love to close the Lloyds bank account. So, if you still use that account for regular giving and donations, get in touch and we'll move you to the new Metro account.

BRIGHTER FUTURE INTERNATIONAL, METRO BANK

One Southampton Row, London, WC1B 5HA

Account Number: 3908 9378, Sort Code: 23-05-80

CHRISTMAS IS COMING

No groans please, only two months to go! If you sponsor one of the lovely children at Rainbow or Shanti Nivas, please send your Christmas cards to the address at the bottom of the newsletter by November 10th to guarantee arrival. You can of course send an e-card or message directly to your child instead by emailing info@brighterfuture.org.uk

We have a Christmas Appeal coming soon, and I'm so excited to say that a kind supporter like you has agreed to match all donations. This means every gift you give will be doubled! Keep an eye out in late November.

We love keeping you updated about the difference you are making! However if for any reason you would prefer not to hear from **BRIGHTER FUTURE**, please do let us know.

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