

reflect

Resources to help you reflect and pray for
communities around the world

October 2023 – February 2024



**An invitation
to pray for
Cord**

Cord

Welcome...



The nights are drawing in, the temperature is dropping and another year will soon be over. Do you sometimes feel as though time is flying by? Does it feel as though the days are rushing by more quickly than ever?

This summer my youngest child started secondary school. He's had to learn to tie his tie and arrive before the very strict 8:27am cut-off – it's an automatic detention if you arrive after 8:27am! It doesn't seem long since he was learning to tie his shoelaces and I was carrying him to his Foundation class at Primary School.

Time flies, things change, and it can often feel rather disconcerting. In an ever-changing world, we draw strength, reassurance and comfort through our loved ones. Having friends and family who can share in our ups and downs, who we know will always be there for us, is an incredible blessing.

This is true for us, here at Cord, as we think about your love, kindness and commitment. So many of you have shared in our journey from the beginning. In Connect, you'll read about Judith and her decision to leave a gift in her Will. Many of you will relate to her as she reflects on meeting Rev. Pat Ashe and how this organization changed the course of her life. Many others of you have supported Cord since you worked or volunteered for

us overseas. Some of you have come to Cord more recently. However long you've been part of this journey, we want to say a huge thank you for travelling with us.

And, of course, as well as the blessing of our relationships with one another, we have the incredible privilege of knowing that Jesus is with us. Right at the end of Matthew's gospel, as He commissions his followers, the final thing that Jesus says is: *"And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

Let us celebrate that we have one another - that we are not alone. And may we know Jesus' presence and power in our lives more deeply and keenly than ever.

With huge gratitude for your prayers,



**Nick Thorley,
Fundraising Manager**



22 – 28 October

The latest 'Connect' is a special 'Introduction to Cord' edition. We would be so grateful if you could pass it on to a friend or family member, so they can learn about the vital peace-building work that you make possible! We want more people to find out about Cord and join us on this journey towards peace and freedom. Let's pray for everyone who will receive Connect for the first time, that they will be inspired and decide to get involved. If you would like us to post one or more copies of Connect to you, so that you can share it with others, simply email info@cord.org.uk.

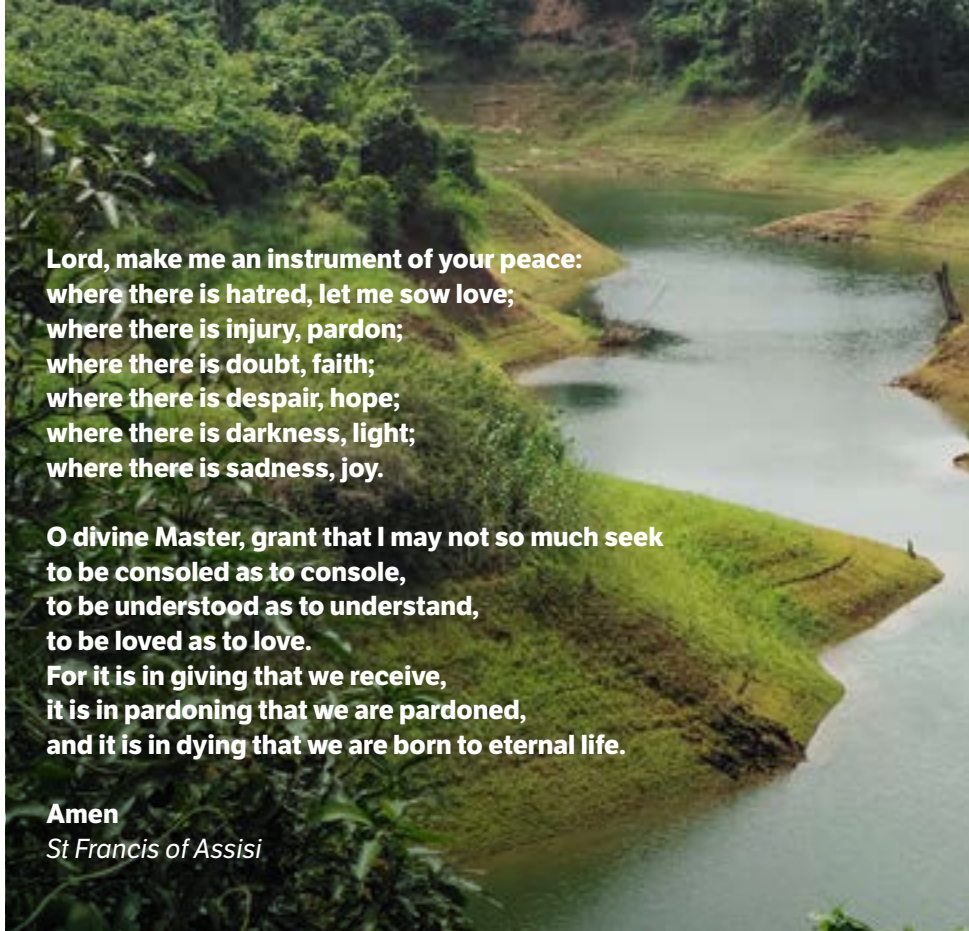
29 October – 4 November

During 2023 we invited you to pray for various funding bids we've submitted to major institutions. The success of such bids is crucial for the future development of our work. We're delighted to announce that the European Union has agreed, in principle, to fund a new project in Cambodia. Please join us in celebrating

this news and thanking God for this provision. Please pray that everything will be confirmed and completed swiftly.

5 – 11 November

Let us pray that the community in Teso, Uganda, would continue to experience peace and security following our project last year. Terrible land disputes had resulted in violence. People burned houses and destroyed crops. However, with your support, we were able to work with them to find a peaceful solution. Neighbours walked together, planting saplings that would grow into hedges, forming a natural fence around their property, clearly marking boundaries. GPS coordinates were marked on a map with each neighbour signing their agreement. We trained local residents to become mediators, empowering the community to resolve land disputes and handle any future conflicts. Please pray that it happens safely and is a great time of encouragement and learning for all those involved.



**Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.**

**O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.**

**For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.**

Amen
St Francis of Assisi

12 – 18 November

Please lift up to God our work with women and young people in Rumonge, Makamba and Rutana provinces in Burundi. Our project addresses the poverty and mental health challenges that they face. Pray that the small savings groups that are being established, enabling them to take out loans to set up businesses or buy tools, would help them achieve financial security. Pray that the counselling and psychological support, which is also being provided, would bring healing.

19 – 25 November

Let's thank God for His wonderful provision! In particular, for the funding we've received to continue our work with grassroots organisations in Laos. We're helping these brilliant, small, local organisations, become stronger and more effective in their work. We're also helping them build relationships with those in authority. This really helps to make the society more stable and peaceful. It's great news for them, and all the vulnerable people they support.

26 November – 2 December

We'd be so grateful if you could pray for our Big Give Christmas Challenge which launches at 12 noon this Tuesday, 28 November. As usual, for 7 days, until 12 noon on Tuesday 5 December, every donation to Cord, made online, will be matched pound for pound. So, whatever you give, it will have twice the impact. Thanks to the generosity of Shoe Zone and The Reed Foundation, this year we have an amazing £30,000 of match-funding available. £30,000 is the highest target we've ever had so please pray that we reach it! If you're able, please do give generously!

3 – 9 December

Praise God for the wonderful results we're seeing of our work with Women Environmental Defenders throughout Southeast Asia. For example, in Kratie Province, Cambodia, the number of women members of Community Forest Protection Groups has risen from 5 to 25 in the last 3 years. Let's pray that more women are supported to take on these roles by their communities. Their involvement is vital for long-term peace, as they bring different perspectives, challenge prejudice and promote equality.

10 – 16 December

This week think about the things that inspire you most about Cord's work. Spend time with God, in gratitude, rejoicing in the part you play in making the world a more peaceful place. And then, share this with at least one other person. You could tell your family, church small group or neighbour, why

you support Cord. Remember to pass on your copy of Connect if you've not already done so. We'd love to hear your reflections and who you shared with, so do please email info@cord.org.uk.

17 – 23 December

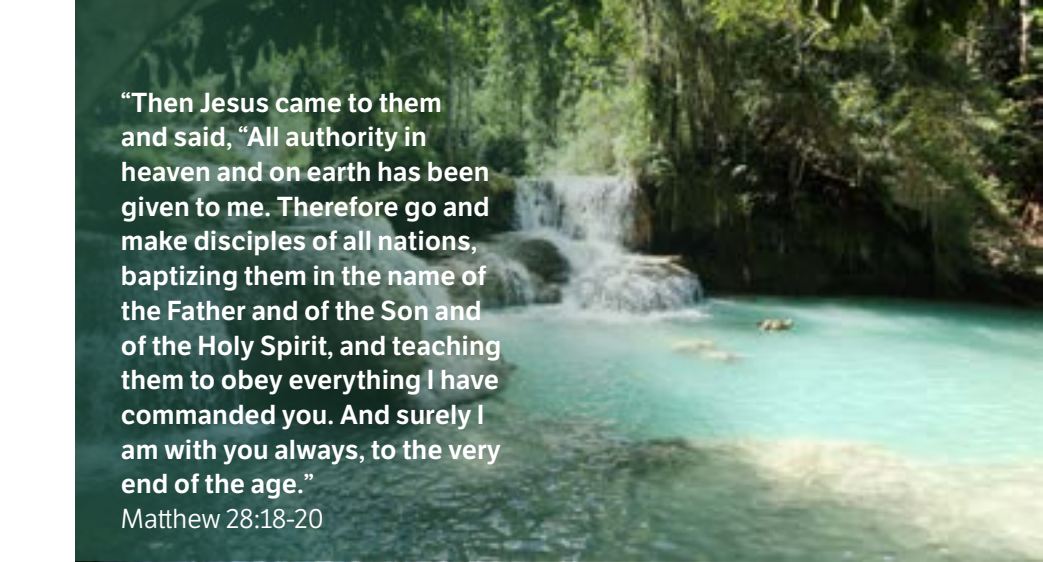
Please ask God to help us with our funding challenges. Inflation means that we have to raise more money, just to do the same work! Things are particularly difficult in some countries. For example, at the time of writing, inflation in Burundi is 20%. We're also finding it challenging to secure additional funding for some of our Burundi projects at present. Please pray for a break-through so that the vital peacebuilding work in this country can continue long into the future.

24 – 30 December

During this Christmas week, let us pray for a renewed sense of purpose amongst all those who work for Cord. May they be refreshed as they spend time on leave, with friends and family. May the Holy Spirit birth in them a new passion for peace as they encounter Jesus once more, through the birth narratives and the wonder of the incarnation. May the words of the angels – the declaration of "peace on earth", resonate in their hearts and minds with wonderful power.

31 December – 6 January

Let us lay before God the year ahead. We'll have all kinds of hopes, fears, dreams and anxieties. Here at Cord it's no different. There are things that we're really excited about and other things that we're concerned about. Let's join in prayer and



“Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20

commit it all to the Lord’s rule and reign. Let’s trust Him for goodness, provision and peace in the coming 12 months.

7 – 13 January

In the latest edition of Connect, you’ll have read all about Claudine and her fantastic potato growing business in Burundi. How wonderful it is that she, and her colleagues, want to inspire other young people in their region. Thank God for their passion, vision and commitment to resolving conflict. Please pray that their work would grow and develop and ask God to strengthen the 15 young entrepreneurs that Claudine mentors.

14 – 20 January

Please ask our Father to empower the grassroots organisations we work with in Laos, as they continue their vital work for peace and justice. One such organization is the ‘Family Health Promotion Association’, in Bokeo Province. They are doing amazing work to reduce the risk of people becoming victims of human

trafficking. Ask God to bless them and their work in this very poor region, and to protect the most vulnerable from exploitation.

21 – 27 January

We are so encouraged by the results of our recent work in Bangladesh and Uganda. Both projects were building peace by protecting the homes and land of vulnerable communities. We are now exploring further opportunities to build on these short-term projects. Please pray for our Programme Development Team, for wisdom and discernment throughout the decision-making process.

28 January – 3 February

We praise God for all the churches who partner with Cord for peace. Some make a regular donation; others support us during a particular festival or season. Ask the Holy Spirit to inspire those churches who pray and give with such love and generosity. May all those churches feel an increasing connection with the people

and communities that benefit from their kindness. Please pray that more churches would catch a vision for our peace-building work.

4 – 10 February

This week let us pray for our work to equip and increase the numbers of Women Environmental Defenders throughout Southeast Asia. Thank God that perceptions are changing as more women are represented on Forest Protection Committees and taking part in patrols to safeguard their land. Praise Him for Committee Leaders who are starting to raise awareness in other villages about the critical role of women in forest protection. As numbers increase at a local level, please ask God to enable more women to participate at the regional, political decision-making level.

11 – 17 February

Let’s celebrate Cord’s faithful, committed and compassionate supporters. Hundreds of people, just like you, around the UK, pray and give in order that God’s peace – His Shalom – can be experienced by more people in the world’s toughest countries. We particularly pray for all those, like Judith (featured in the latest edition of Connect) who have taken the very special decision to leave a gift in their Will. We praise Jesus that long into the future, their love and kindness will live on, helping to change lives and bring more peace and freedom.

18 – 24 February

Thousands of Indigenous People in Cambodia face poverty and insecurity as their land is taken and the forest where they live is destroyed. This is due to the activities of multi-national companies. Over the next 3 years, our SABRE project will work with human rights defenders, local officials and the companies themselves, to protect the environment and safeguard the homes of Indigenous People. In this first year of the project, please pray for the 150 human rights defenders we’ll be working with. May they become skilled, confident, and equipped with the tools they need, to hold authorities and companies to account.



Cord is a member of The Community of the Cross of Nails. This worldwide network of over 200 churches, charities, peacebuilding centres, and educational and training organisations, is inspired by the Coventry story of destruction, rebuilding and renewal and all members are active in reconciliation in their own ways.

As a result, each Monday, as part of our staff prayers, we share in The Coventry Litany of Reconciliation and we'd love you to join with us whenever you can:

All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class,

FATHER FORGIVE

The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own,

FATHER FORGIVE

The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth,

FATHER FORGIVE

Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others,

FATHER FORGIVE

Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee,

FATHER FORGIVE

The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children,

FATHER FORGIVE

The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God,

FATHER FORGIVE

Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.



The Knife Angel standing outside Coventry Cathedral. The monument is made of over 100,000 seized blades. It highlights the negative effects of violent behaviour and enforces the need for social change.

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Cord, Enterprise House, Courtaulds Way, Coventry, CV6 5NX
Tel: 024 7708 7777. Email: info@cord.org.uk
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