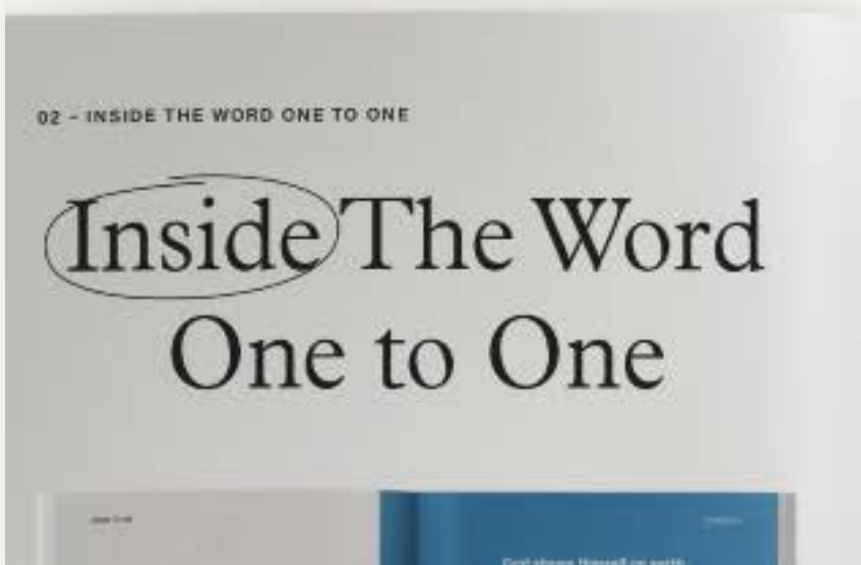


# Ministry Update 2023





# Executive summary



**Luke 19:41 says, "And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it..."!**

What a year of totally contrary emotions. On one hand, we have seen an Anglican church leadership rejecting the relevance of the Word of God – and yet for us at The Word One to One, a greater factual calling is that the power is within the Word, and that God is building His Church through that Word going out!

I cannot stress enough how utterly humbling – yet so magnificently encouraging it is – to see such daily and global evidence of the Lord being so incredibly active through individual believers being Bible sharers and loving page turners, because now they have the means to introduce Jesus in an accessible way.

Thank you for being interested in, praying for and/or financially backing this calling that has so captured our hearts. We serve a great God as we weep at so many lost and empty lives for whom the only hope is coming to know the Saviour, Jesus Christ. Someone has to introduce Him to them, and it is a massive privilege for us all to be part of that process by sharing His gospel!

Richard Borgonon, Chairman



**We are delighted to report back on what has been a break-through year on a number of fronts. In my report, I've included detail not just on delivery but development of approach which I know some of our supporters enjoy reading and feeding into. Our partners' perspective and wisdom continue to be vital as we build a foundation to grow into our global vision.**

If you don't have time to read all of it – here are the (severely) edited highlights!

- Mobile app launched in March this year – the audience is now more than 2,000 users a month and growing.
- Through relationships and digital reach, we are now connected to Bible sharing churches in more than 90 different countries and growing.
- Richard Borgonon was a plenary speaker at Gafcon 2023 in Kigali, partnering with Rico Tice to exhort the conference towards a greater confidence in God's Word in evangelism. Direct follow up from that includes trips to Canada (Nov 2023) and Northern Ireland (Jan 2024).
- Good initial traction with John MacKinnon's 'field strategy' with visits to Sheffield,

Manchester, Liverpool, Belfast and on-going work with church leaders in Greater Glasgow.

- Resources launched include our recent 'Taster booklet' covering John 1:1-18, which is already proving popular with 4,500 ordered within the first month of launching.
- Foundations are put in place for an enhanced translation and review process which will allow us to distribute high-quality translated content across all our mediums including app and online. Latin-American Spanish will be the first translation to follow the new approach.
- We're giving thanks for two new trustees in David Jackman and Akeel Sachak.

I hope you know how much your partnership means to us – what a privilege to serve the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ together!

*'The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever.'* – Isaiah 40:8

In our Lord,

Le Fras Strydom, CEO

# Thought leadership

In this area, we broadcast a message exhorting the evangelical church towards a greater confidence in God's Word in evangelism.

**We have prayerfully identified four multi-year objectives we believe will give us a platform from which to continue to develop globally. All our work aligns towards these objectives:**

## IMPACT 2026 OBJECTIVE 1

To see Word-based relational evangelism embraced as mainstream across evangelical groupings of the United Kingdom, and The Word One to One established as a 'go-to' resourcing ministry that powerfully enables that.



**Our founder Richard Borgonon** continues to be used by the Lord in speaking into Evangelicalism across the globe. His message – rooted in the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture and soaked in powerful testimony from his own experience and from that of Bible sharers across the globe – is straightforward and powerful: 'the Word works!'

We have many friends who care about that message and partner with us in broadcasting it, and give thanks as we look back on the year for:

- The life of our dear friend Jeremy Marshall, who was finally called to glory this year. He continued to be a powerful force for good until the end, and an inspiration to all of us. In his final months, he managed to write two books: Meeting Jesus (a giveaway for the non-Christian answering big questions using stories from Jesus's life) and Scattering

Seeds of Hope: Evangelism for the Discouraged and Ineffective. Both mention The Word One to One as a go-to resource since Jeremy was such a passionate user of it. If we haven't yet sent you a copy of each, please let us know as we'd love to give you these as gifts.

- Archbishop Ben Kwashi inviting Richard to speak at the Gafcon 2023 in Kigali, Rwanda in April, which was attended by 1,100 Anglican ministers from across the globe. Richard shared a plenary session with Rico Tice, and they were a powerful double act.
- As a direct follow up to Gafcon, Richard being invited as the main speaker at the Anglican Network in Canada (AniC) Synod in Vancouver in November, attended by 250 Anglican ministers and lay leaders. Other follow up events include the Diocese of Down and Dromore in

Northern Ireland in Jan next year, and serving our Anglican friends in Australia in February.

- Continued partnership with Rico and our friends at Christianity Explored Ministries, A Passion for Life being resourced with a Director in Nick McQuaker, and our ongoing friendship with John Lennox at OCCA who kindly gave [this endorsement of The Word One to One](#).

- Richard and other members of the team featuring on various podcasts, radio interviews, and discussion panels at conferences.
- Doors opening to explore how to collaborate with other UK and global ministries, including Bible Study Fellowship, Leading the Way, GNFE (formerly Gideons), Evangelical Alliance, Premier Radio, Jesus.net and many more.

## LOOKING AHEAD →

*We plan to invest more intentionally in this area by employing the services of Jersey Road PR, trusting their experience and networks will help us elevate this call to confidence in God's Word particularly speaking into Evangelicalism in the United Kingdom. We trust God that He will also continue to connect us to the right partners so that we can speak into this vital issue together.*

*Where the Lord opens doors to sow that message across the globe, we'll continue to serve where it makes sense.*



# Community development

Working relationally at depth to help church leaders strategically build momentum in Bible sharing in the churches they lead. Supporting the breadth of Bible sharers and Bible sharing churches with regular encouragement and equipping content and resources.

## Community Development

**John MacKinnon leads our** relational field work with church leaders:

- This year saw the formation of a 'field strategy' aiming to serve church leaders from across denominations on a region-by-region basis.
- John visited the geographical areas in and around Sheffield, Manchester, Liverpool and Belfast as well as working on his home patch in and around Glasgow. He is systematically mapping out the evangelical networks in these areas and reaching out to see 'Disengaged' churches become 'Interested', and then 'Engaged', and then 'Equipping' churches.
- John's ministry as an experienced pastor/evangelist is proving a tremendous encouragement to many. His ability to come alongside leaders and to help them see how Bible sharing can complement what they are already doing in church life is proving effective and deep, if slow. Many in leadership need help to face issues like fear, Biblical illiteracy in our churches, time poverty, lack of non-Christian connection, disconnect between leader and church and the absence of good role models. John's approach often involves meetings with the lead minister and then the ministry/leadership team, as

well as preaching and equipping events for the wider church.

- We trust the multiplication will come in time as ministers from across denominational groupings attest to the fruit of Bible sharing in their churches and encourage others in their networks to get involved.
- John has also spoken at a number of conferences and other network events, including preaching Sunday services in 23 different churches often with training following, 2 Gospel Partnership conferences, 3 denominational conferences, 2 training colleges and the European Leadership Forum in Poland.

**Christine Armstrong leads our** work supporting Bible sharers and Bible sharing churches, both digitally and relationally:

- We are already connected to Bible sharers and church leaders from 2,000+ churches across more than 90 different countries with an average 100 signing up each month. Our aim is to 'Know, Grow and Empower' these Bible sharers and Bible sharing churches to be more effective and to multiply those sharing God's Word.
- Christine is supported by creative agency Something More Creative (SMC), who are helping us expand our use of digital media. We use email and social media channels to encourage the community with

a steady diet of stories, gospel encouragements, tips and ideas, featured resources and online events. Please do follow our social media channels to see some of what we do and to share it with others.

- We also offer online events, including "Get started" sessions hosted by Christine, online "Encourage" sessions hosted by John, prayer sessions where we pray with and for the Bible sharers, and the ministry and online consultations which has seen John sow into ministries as far afield as Singapore, Australia, US and Namibia.
- This closer connection leads to a steady stream of stories which can be played out to encourage others.
- Christine is also increasingly used as an equipper and has served a number of local churches and also conferences like Sussex Gospel Partnership, Sorted (where 152 teenagers attended the seminar!) and Co-Mission staff day. A delightful development on that front is having other Bible sharers join us to share their experiences as we equip at conferences – a real expression of that community!





# Community development

We loved having John, and we used the Training Resources in our Small Groups throughout September, while I preached on John 1:1-18.

It has been a joy to see the church feel equipped and grow in courage...we have four people reading with others (three starting in October) which is a real joy!

DANNY ELLIOT, CHURCH LEADER IN SHEFFIELD

I wanted to share with you a video of a recent convert Karlis with whom I was tremendously encouraged to read through the John's Gospel.

Karlis is a business leader in Riga, and Lord has added him to our church. He is enthusiastically meeting to read with others.

ARTIS, LATVIA

I love your books! I wrote 2 years ago when I started studying John with my friend, over the phone because of distance, and she received Christ. We have continued our study. The update is that a few weeks ago, I started studying John with her sister, and she received Christ also!

JILL, USA

Some years ago, my sister and I took turns reading with our skeptical dad. It was tough at the start, but he gradually started looking forward to reading God's Word. After more than a year, my dad prayed to receive Christ and got baptised—a significant step for his generation. Eight months later, he went home to the Lord.

PRISCILLA, SINGAPORE

At the rehabilitation centre, we completed Book 6 of The Word One to One (John 9-10). After a session, a client named Vincent approached me and said, "Pastor, thank you so much for sharing the Bible with us. God's Word has changed my life, and I don't want to go back to drinking alcohol when I go home soon. Please pray that I find a church at home where I will keep hearing the Word."

ERIC, KENYA

Our minister Stuart Withers from Grace Presbyterian Church, Wodonga, recommended The Word One to One to us. We have several seekers and new Christians at church, and Stuart has connected them with other Christians to do The Word One to One, which has been very encouraging. We're only a small church of 50 people, but want to spread the Word to the community.

HEATHER, AUSTRALIA

## LOOKING AHEAD →

*Giving John and Christine real focus and support in their areas as we continue by God's grace to build breadth and depth across the growing Bible sharing community. SMC is helping us expand our use of video and audio (podcasts) as we serve the growing community with increasing clarity and oomph! We also want to experiment with digital advertising to bring relevant people into the community and will selectively experiment with conference exhibitions.*

*In the background we are exploring how to connect with digital evangelism ministries, some with huge numbers associated with them – could online Bible sharing be a means of bringing folks into relationship with mature believers and in time into loving and Biblical local churches?*



# Resource development

Developing and optimising Bible sharing resources delivered through pleasing user experiences for Christians to confidently share with non-Christians, as well as mobilising resources that enable church leaders to equip and support Bible sharers in the congregations they lead.

## IMPACT 2026 OBJECTIVE 2

A complete suite of mobilising and Bible sharing resources, delivered via pleasing user experiences engaging our three main audiences (Church leader, Christian, non-Christian), the content for which is optimised for international contextualisation and translation.

- A major highlight was the launch of the mobile app on 30th March this year! The app has been incredibly well received with mainly 5 star ratings and 9,000 users to date. 6 months in, there doesn't seem to be any cannibalisation effect on the online notes or the books – in fact, the monthly book sales and audience figures are all up on last year's numbers.
- In addition to launching the app, our digital partner Scout & Redeem (previously OneSheep) are also helping us think through areas like internationalisation and effective resourcing of Bible sharing churches by digital means.
- Another big break-through resource was the 'Taster booklet' launched in November.

This A6 booklet, covering John 1:1-18 in The Word One to One style as an evangelistic give-away, invites readers to read with a friend, and is already proving popular with the churches with 4,500 sold within a month of launch.

- SMC's creative work brings a quality and consistency to all of our Bible sharing and mobilising resources which delights our users and helps them have confidence to share with their friends.
- Lizzie Jelfs develops and manages our Bible sharing content, and reviewed 18 months' worth of constructive comments from Bible sharers to update all our John and Acts content and version control it ready for translation.



## LOOKING AHEAD →

*We're planning to launch the Acts series as printed books in batches during 2024, and to release it on the mobile app early Feb.*

*We'll continue optimising the online and app experiences for Bible sharers and Bible sharing churches. We're also exploring ways of distributing our content on third party channels like YouVersion and RightNow Media as a means of growing awareness and drawing people into Bible sharing.*





# International development

Developing language communities to facilitate high-quality translation and localisation of resources. Developing country partnerships for effective equipping and supporting of Bible sharers and Bible sharing churches.

## IMPACT 2026 OBJECTIVE 3

A community-based approach to translation & localisation that enables on-going development and pro-active distribution of resources, while safeguarding our fundamentals (faithfulness to Scripture, non-Christian centric reading experience, local church centric mobilising approach).

- **The experience is used in more than 90 countries, and to date we've had serious interest in translations into more than 30 languages.** In fact, the demand is nearly endless when one starts probing doors – for example, we have had one very encouraging experiment with the help of Wycliffe Translators and SIL, who would now love to have it for all Ugandan languages!
- We do have version 1 (the denim look) of the John material translated into Simplified and Traditional Chinese, Ukrainian, Russian, French and Czech, but translation quality and distribution to date have been a mixed bag for various reasons. Some have been theologically sound but a bit wooden in their readability, some translations have been queried for quality by those in other regions of the world (“did you do this in

Google translate?!”), some have become siloed with a publisher (printed books in France) or the country partner (printed books in Ukraine). Because these translations are in version 1, they would also need to be repurposed for the mobile app experience.

- These challenges and conversations with international ministries like Christianity Explored and Biblica have moved us steadily towards trialling a more strategic approach to translation:

1. We've restructured our agreement with 10 of those from publisher/author to a ministry partnership agreement, whereby they continue to act as exclusive distributor in the English-speaking world, but we own the translation rights and can use 10 of those or other distributors in the majority world where more cost-effective solutions present themselves. We continue to be grateful for their ministry mindset – there is wonderful mutual benefit in this relationship.
2. The content management system (CMS) developed by Scout & Redeem for the mobile app is being built out to facilitate translation work, in preparation for a Spanish translation of John 1–4 and some light mobilising content for the website, God-willing, by Easter.

3. We are also developing a light review process that will allow ministry friends to use the translated experience across a variety of contexts and for us to gather feedback in a consistent way. For example, Spanish will be trialled by:

- the wife of a theological college principal in Chile
- our translator's friends in Mexico
- a retired missionary couple who ministered in Argentina and Chile, and are now in the US
- a church in the US where 12–18 people are regularly using the resource after someone brought it home from Keswick
- a church planter in Valencia
- And even a few UK-based friends as well!
- We've learnt from the English version that such a feedback loop is essential for identifying context specific improvements and so providing a highly impactful resource.

## LOOKING AHEAD →

*Our priority next year is to get the Spanish translation out and usage growing. In time, as the Lord provides the finances and the right person, we'd love to appoint an International Development Manager to more proactively develop relational connections and the processes to develop high-quality translations in a multitude of languages. Imagine the reforming effect across the globe if thousands could be led through the quality of teaching contained in John and Acts in their heart language!*

*It is difficult to know what pace to set, but other strategic priorities that can follow include the further development of the CMS to include the review process, allowing us to onboard many translations simultaneously so that trusted language leads to lead the process rather than be dependent on the central team. We can and should also experiment with AI as a way of fast-tracking and bringing consistency across languages.*



# Team

Developing a core team and a Trustee Board that will enable the organisation to, Lord-willing, continue to grow into our global vision beyond 2026. Developing best practice in stewarding our resources in a responsible and Christ-honouring way. Developing heart-level partnership with a growing base of financial supporters and like-minded ministries.

## IMACT 2026 OBJECTIVE 4

Spiritually healthy and high-performing team who are well supported by engaged and widely skilled trustees, generous supporters and other partners.

## Trustees

We are so thankful to the Lord for our diversely gifted, committed and godly Board of Trustees – we praise God for another year of Richard Borgonon, Nancy Benham, Charles Kasenene and Simon Lennox.

We are also deeply grateful to the Lord for recently sending us [David Jackman](#) – so respected and experienced in Christian ministry and someone who has been a

friend to The Word One to One since the early days.

Thank God for also giving us [Akeel Sachak](#) – experienced in business, gifted as a gospel patron and in serving as a trustee of various Christian organisations. There is a very real sense in which Akeel picks up the baton from our great friend Jeremy Marshall who was such a support to us in so many ways.



## Staff

I continue to give thanks to God for such a spiritually switched on, skilful and devoted team.

Christine will come full-time with us from 1st Jan. Lizzie Jelfs has returned from maternity and will work two days a week next year as Content Manager (also supporting me in charity governance work).

Our relationship with Tom Olyott and his team at Something More Creative and Sam Peckham and his team at Scout & Redeem goes far beyond a supplier contract. We pray together, we develop strategy together, we sharpen each other as Christian brothers and sisters and challenge each other towards godliness and excellence. We see them as an integral part of the team.

We also give thanks for a growing number of informal “team members” who work hard to introduce the experience within their networks, join us for online and in-person equipping sessions and pray with us regularly.



# Financial summary

## Financial partners

We thank God for providing us committed financial partners who support us not just in finance but in strategic thinking and connection. Thank you to each and every one who gives sacrificially, spends time to meet and consider and provide input, and to pray.

We are thankful for a growing supporter base (the number of givers grew from 48 to 72) and have also worked hard this year to develop appropriate plans for building that out even more.

## Partner ministries

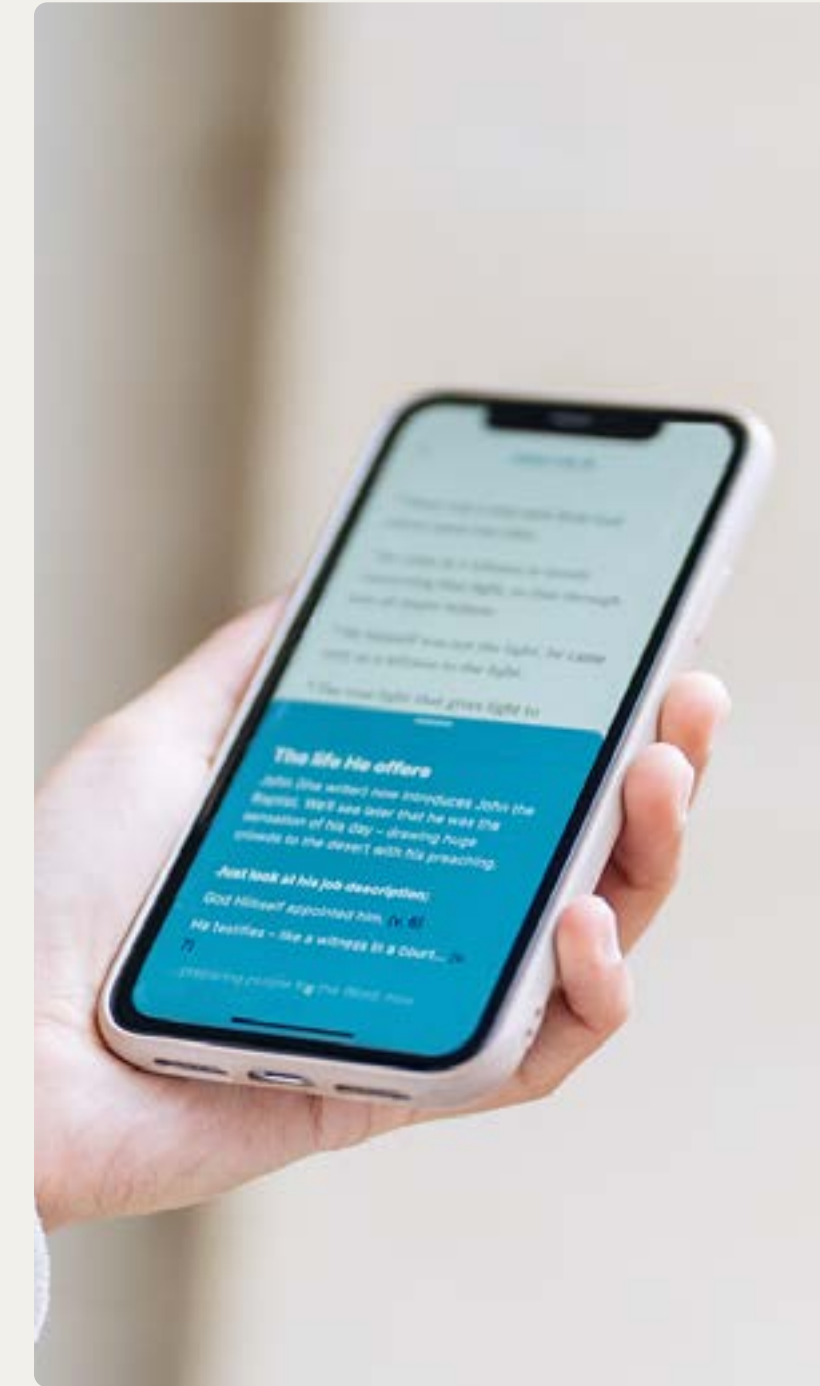
Our informal and some cases formal partnerships with organisations like 10ofthose, Christianity Explored Ministries, A Passion for Life, Biblica, Bible Study Fellowship and others have been such a source of inspiration, wisdom and encouragement and we are grateful to the Lord for each of these partners in ministry.

## 2023 expenditure

Total expenditure  
£450,697

£155,272

Resource development



£129,565

Community development



£23,884

Thought leadership



£71,111

International development



£70,865

Leadership, Administration & Operations



## LOOKING AHEAD →

*Should we continue to see the growth we pray for and already sense, we have vital work to do building strength at all levels of this wider team. We'd love to build out the Board of Trustees to have even more international ministry and business experience. We need to grow our base of financial partners and in time we will need to build out the team. Prayers and wisdom in all of this are very much appreciated.*



theword121.com  
info@theword121.com

