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Listening *World*

Inside this issue

Bringing Light to Mongolia

Nepal's Tamang finding Freedom in Christ

Reaching Karakalpaks in Uzbekistan

Men of Courage bringing hope from despair



From the Chief Executive Officer,
Dr Russell Farnworth.



"Come to me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." – Matthew 11 v 28-30.

Rich or poor, urban or remote, wherever we might live in the world, our spiritual need remains the same. From Nepal to Mongolia and across Central Asia men and women alike are discovering divine hope through hearing the message of the cross as TWR continues to minister via a range of media.

In this edition of *Listening World* we look at several examples of social isolation and marginalisation affecting a range of rural communities. And yet in spite of familiar social pressures, cultural problems or persecution, many are being blessed with Jesus' love to experience *"the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding."* (Philippians 4 v 7).

On behalf of **TWR-UK** I want to thank you for praying and supporting this unique ministry. As the unreached become reached with the Gospel it is our privilege to know that ever more people are experiencing spiritual peace *"not as the world gives"* but with sins forgiven, a restored relationship with God, and an eternal destiny with the Lord.

Yours in Christ,

Russell Farnworth.

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Nepal's Tamang: From Slavery to Freedom in Christ

The Tamang people are one of the major ethnic groups of Nepal, with a population of approximately 1.9 million. Most of them live in the central hilly region and Himalayan region of the country. They have a strong oral tradition by which they pass on their customs and identity.

In 1854, a social hierarchy of ethnic groups was codified into Nepalese law. In it, the Tamang were grouped under a category of peoples that could legally be enslaved. They had to fulfil compulsory labour obligations for the government, and failing to meet these could result in physical violence as well as confiscation of their land.

While the government legally abolished any caste-based discrimination in 1963, over 100 years of marginalisation and discrimination left a lasting impact. Many Tamang today are illiterate and extremely poor, which limits their access to opportunities for improving their lives. Social ills such as alcoholism are also common.

Today, most Tamang engage in agriculture, growing barley, corn, millet, potatoes and wheat – crops that can withstand the lack of irrigation at the higher altitudes where they live. Many also work as manual labourers to gain additional income.

According to **Joshua Project**, about 82% of Tamang in Nepal follow religious beliefs of

Tibetan Buddhism combined with animism and, to a lesser extent, Hinduism. They are considered a minimally reached people group, with only 6.6% of Nepali Tamang professing Christianity as their religion. Bibles and other study resources are not easily accessible. Most believers and church leaders are not trained and lack biblical knowledge.

Shanti's story

Shanti* and her husband are native Tamang speakers. Like most of their fellow Tamang, they placed great trust in the teachings of their lamas, priests who lead the people in religious rituals and ceremonies.

One day while listening to the radio, they stumbled upon TWR's *Evangelical* programme in their language.

"This programme said that 'God loves us, heals us, and redeems us in all situations of our life.' These teachings are different from our religious beliefs, so we rejected them at the time," Shanti recounted.

But that was not the end of the story for Shanti and her husband.

"The programme would come on twice a week, repeatedly telling us about who God is, our purpose here on this earth, and about creation and eternity."

Shanti's husband couldn't sleep at all with these words resounding in his ear, so the couple eventually decided to go to church to learn more. There, they met a pastor who not only addressed their questions about the programme but also helped them understand more about God.

Hearing the Gospel

At the time, the programmes were broadcast from local FM stations. The audio programmes not only overcome the literacy barrier but also are delivered in a way familiar to the Tamang because of their oral tradition.

A pastor shared, *"I found that there are more listeners tuning in lately. This is because not only are the teachings easy to understand, but the programme is also presented in their mother tongue. People are listening closely, and many nonbelievers have left their alcoholic habits. As a result, some people are even beginning to say good things about Christianity."*

As for Shanti and her husband, they took a little time to decide but eventually gave their lives to the Lord:

"Five months later we both decided to be Christians and accepted Jesus," Shanti said. "Today I listen to the programme regularly and learn more about God. I have more faith in him."

An adapting ministry

Unfortunately, the Tamang language programmes are no longer on the airwaves due to lack of funding needed to sustain the broadcasts over FM radio. Still, TWR continues to minister to the Tamang people in person.

TWR partners with various Tamang pastors, providing them with audio players and SD cards preloaded with biblical resources and programmes in their mother tongue. The pastors then run media home groups – gatherings of neighbours who listen to and conduct Bible study sessions using these resources.

A listener shared, *"I have learned by listening to the programme that we need to forgive others and receive forgiveness, just as Jesus died and hung on the cross for our sins to cleanse us. This has taught me the importance of practicing forgiveness toward those who have hurt me."*

Of the nearly two million Tamang people found across Nepal, India and Bhutan, only 6.5% know Jesus. Ministry can be difficult in this area of the world but the need for Christ among those who live there is the same as for anyone else.

Pray for the Tamang people

Here are three ways you can pray for the Tamang people of Nepal and TWR's outreach to this minimally reached people group:

Transformation. Pray that God will open doors for social and economic opportunities as well as the hearts of the community, that they may recognise and accept the good news.

God's provision. Pray for provision of funding to resume broadcasts of the Tamang *Evangelical* radio programme.

Spiritual maturity. Pray for a growth in understanding and maturing faith as TWR continues to partner with Tamang pastors to run media home groups.

* Not her real name





Bringing Light to Mongolia: A Gospel Mission Through Media

When Mongolia stepped out from behind the Iron Curtain in 1989, it was a land virtually untouched by Christianity – just four believers were known across the entire country. In the years since, that number has grown, but faith in Jesus still stands in sharp contrast to deeply rooted traditions and a Buddhist religion that shapes daily life and cultural identity.

The majority of Mongolia clings to this worldview, with many of its practices infused into major holidays and celebrations. The concept of grace is tough to grasp, and the idea of salvation freely given is met with scepticism. For those who are willing to believe in Jesus, many think he is ‘just another god’ to add to their list.

Across Mongolia’s sweeping steppes and mountains, where half the population lives outside of cities in isolated rural areas, life moves with the rhythm of ancient customs. Herding, home-keeping, and survival take priority. Boys and girls grow up helping their families – boys with livestock, girls in the home. Education is valued, but tradition often calls them back before they can chase long-term dreams.

With Mongolia’s vast land and scattered population, radio remains one of the most

effective ways to connect people to the Gospel. In places where building and maintaining churches isn’t feasible, the airwaves become a lifeline. When people hear the message of Jesus – truly hear it – lives begin to change. Families are transformed. Faith grows.

Women of Hope

Men and women alike face spiritual and economic hardships, but women especially bear invisible burdens. Many juggle full-time domestic responsibilities with economic challenges, often without recognition or support. Those who manage to access higher education or professional roles are frequently undervalued, underpaid and overlooked.

Most Mongolians do not realise their immense value in the eyes of God. Our mission is to share the truth with women that God loves them unconditionally, leading them to discover the freedom solely found in Christ.

The women of Mongolia don’t need ‘just another god.’ Idols cannot set captives free. There is no substitute for the hope and freedom found in the one, true living God, represented in Jesus Christ.

That is why the work of *Women of Hope* is so

vital. In 2023, God answered years of prayer by planting this ministry in Mongolia. And though resources are still limited, and the team is small, the impact is already visible. A prayer ministry is taking root. Monthly calendars are being shared – physically and digitally offering practical prayer prompts that unite women around the world in shared hope and struggle.

Progress and Challenges

So far, the translation and editing of all 53 *Women of Hope* radio scripts is complete. Episodes 1-30 are finalised, and recordings for episodes 31-40 have been finished. This programme is designed to speak directly to real-life challenges – covering spiritual truths, mental health, relationships and practical living – all through the lens of the Gospel.

Rural women in particular, many of whom have

little opportunity for formal education, gain not just spiritual truth but vital life skills from these broadcasts. The potential to improve their lives – and the lives of their families – is enormous.

However, the work is not without obstacles. Local branches of the Far East Broadcasting Company ceased operating rural stations in Mongolia last year. This means that since May, our programmes have aired only in Ulaanbaatar, the capital city. Much of the rural population has lost access when these are the very people who most urgently need accessible, uplifting content.

Our goal is clear: to broadcast the *Women of Hope* programme in Mongolian nationwide, pointing listeners to Jesus as the source of true transformation. Through prayer, partnership and perseverance, we believe God will continue to open doors.

FAST FACTS

- 28 people groups including Mongols, Kazakh, Kalmyk, Khalkha
- Population: 3,395,000
- Unreached population: 98%
- Primary religion: Buddhism
- Less than 1% evangelical
- Office languages: Mongolian, Khalka, Russian (others include Chinese, Kazakh, Korean, Ukrainian, Uzbek)
- Of the 330 county-like districts in Mongolia, almost half of them don't have a church

Sources: Joshua Project, Christianity Today



Blessed listeners

The truth that Jesus offers peace and healing is for every Mongolian heart – man or woman, herder or homemaker, student or elder. In a country where grace is a foreign concept and Jesus is often viewed as another deity to add to a spiritual checklist, the Gospel presents a radically different reality: God is near. His love is personal. His freedom is real.

One listener, a woman living with total blindness, shared this with our team:

“I’ve never seen the light of this world in my entire life. One night, I couldn’t sleep and was turning the radio dial, just listening. It was past midnight when I came across the Women of Hope programme. As I listened, I realised I needed to return to church. I had felt like God was far from me – but through this, I was reminded that he is actually so near. Thank you.”

Another listener, a young mother overwhelmed by postpartum depression after having three children in five years, found hope through our YouTube broadcasts:

“I hadn’t gone to church in a long time. I felt stuck and invisible. But your programme helped me realise that I wasn’t alone. I want to keep listening, connect with your team, and share my thoughts.”

These voices are not isolated. They represent many across Mongolia – those who feel forgotten, those who long for purpose, those who crave connection and truth.

The Path Ahead

As our team gathers regularly to pray – and as new regional groups begin to form – we are reminded that unity is powerful. The Gospel is not a foreign import. It is a message for Mongolia. It is hope for the isolated, peace for the weary and purpose for every life.



Men and women across this land do not need another god. They need the living Saviour who brings freedom. And that's exactly what we aim to proclaim – until every ear has heard.

Just as the Lord utilised media to spread the Gospel in Mongolia in the early 1990s, we recognise the crucial role of media today in sharing this transformative hope. Since Mongolia is one of the world's most sparsely populated countries, radio remains a highly effective tool for reaching people.

The goal is to bless those across Mongolia with *Women of Hope*, addressing practical life challenges and pointing toward Jesus Christ as the ultimate spiritual solution. As women receive sound biblical teaching and practical training, they in turn become sources of encouragement for their families, local churches and communities.

Vital Prayer

TWR reaches the people of Mongolia through shortwave and FM radio by broadcasting our *SON-Lift* project along with *Women of Hope*. With nearly 99% of the population being unreached with the Gospel, we invite you to partner with us in prayer for the people of this vast country.

Pray for access to rural communities.

Ask God to open doors for our broadcasts to return to Mongolia's rural regions, where people have been cut off from the message of Jesus since May. Pray for new partnerships, technology and resources to reach isolated listeners.

Pray for women and families in crisis.

Lift up women battling depression, loneliness and hopelessness – especially young mothers and those with limited support. Pray that through *Women of Hope*, they would encounter Christ's peace, value and freedom.

Pray for the Mongolian team.

Pray for strength, wisdom and unity for our growing team in Mongolia as they write, translate, record and pray. Ask God to raise up more local leaders and expand prayer groups across the country.

Pray for open hearts and lasting fruit.

Ask the Holy Spirit to move in each broadcast – softening hearts, breaking strongholds and leading many to salvation. Pray that men and women alike would realise that Jesus is not 'another god' but the one true Saviour of the world.



Reaching Spiritually Blocked Karakalpaks in Uzbekistan



For Karakalpaks who claim faith in Christ, persecution is often a daily reality. When a young Karakalpak woman accepted Christ, her parents scolded and beat her, before placing her under house arrest. They had wanted to arrange her marriage, but she didn't want to become yoked to an unbeliever. She was tempted to run away but felt a divine prompting to stay and shine God's light.

The Karakalpaks, whose name stems from "Kara" meaning black and "Kalpak" meaning hat, are a Turkic people first mentioned in the 16th century. There are 996,000 globally, including in Turkey, Iran and Kazakhstan - though most live in the self-governing region of Karakalpakstan, northwestern Uzbekistan.

Organised religion in Uzbekistan was suppressed under the Soviets. Today it is officially a secular nation that technically guarantees religious freedom, though most Uzbeks follow Sunni Islam. However, the state's strict oversight of religion places Christian efforts to share the Gospel at a severe disadvantage.

The **Joshua Project** estimates that only 0.32% of Karakalpaks are Christians. For many years there was only one state-registered church in Karakalpakstan, forcing believers underground. Christians brave enough to meet face infiltration of their churches and confiscation of Bibles.

However, despite this unceasing pressure, the **TWR Central Asia** team continues to work with ministry partners to produce life-enriching broadcasts to reach Karakalpaks in their own language – thanks to AM radio transmissions,

an audio-centric website, Telegram, MP3 players, USB sticks and SD cards. This critical programming includes:

The Way of Righteousness – designed for a Muslim audience, chronologically presenting the message of the prophets throughout the Bible. The interconnected format demonstrates God's providential way of salvation.

The Christian Home – expanding on the importance of family, addressing the heartbreaking implications of divorce, and encouraging Christian homes to be filled with goodness.

Springs of Living Water – discussing the character of Christ, encouraging words of Jesus, showing how the Holy Spirit empowers us to overcome difficulties, and God's presence in our daily lives.

One supporting family graciously moved from Karakalpakstan to Kazakhstan, home to a suitable production studio, so they can now help prepare these vital broadcasts.

A thankful Karakalpak church leader described hearing the Bible on the radio as 'balm for the heart':

"The Word of God and audio programmes help us come back to life; it's as if we've had a conversation with the Lord... I have given out radio receivers to several individuals who, after listening, have expressed their gratitude."

Let us pray that God's name will be exalted among the Karakalpak peoples as TWR and other ministries continue faithfully sharing the Gospel.

Men of Courage



Men of Courage (MOC) is a global series created to engage Muslim men by addressing their deepest struggles. Through culturally relevant storytelling and dialogue, *MOC* offers a fresh perspective on life, identity, and eternity, guiding men, by God's grace, one step closer to Christ. By involving local ministry partners the content is tailored to resonate deeply with local audiences.

Men in many parts of the Muslim world experience significant social pressure that shapes nearly every aspect of life. They are expected to shoulder the responsibility of leading families and communities, provide financially, and adhere to cultural and religious norms – particularly the paramount duty of preserving honour and avoiding shame. These weighty expectations can see men trapped in a spiral of loneliness and frustration.

In this challenging context, *MOC* gently introduces biblical values through compelling storytelling and thoughtful dialogue – pointing men toward Christ while offering a path to healing, renewed strength, and a greater sense of purpose.

Impact and Outlook

MOC uses a dynamic three-part content structure: short teasers to spark curiosity; dramas lasting a few minutes; and longer talk shows or podcasts to dive deeper into themes and solutions. This is delivered via video platforms, audio and radio channels, and even messaging platforms like WhatsApp.

A Turkish listener told us of his love for the programme, while a Muslim in West Africa said it made him pause and think a bit more about Jesus. A listener in Indonesia even told us that *MOC* had helped him process the loss of his wife.

Sadly many men today feel lost. As TWR looks at expanding *MOC* to more countries, including Kyrgyzstan, we desire to see men across our society rediscover what real masculinity means according to God's design. Please pray for this vital project.

New UK programmes airing from January

The Same Commission

Jim Armstrong and Matt Pitts from **Echoes International** meet a new guest each week from the world of mission. Find out how God is moving across the world and be inspired to follow His leading.

Tune in 4.30pm Saturday or Sundays

Leading the Way

Dr Michael Youssef teaches the Bible from a Middle Eastern perspective. The Egyptian-American theologian leads the **Awake UK** prayer initiative and uses media to preach the Gospel to a global audience, including 22 Arabic speaking countries.

Tune in 6pm Saturdays or 6am Sundays

Prayer Matters

Speaking Hope

From January to March we invite you to join us in praying for **TWR**'s ministry in different languages around the world and (at the weekends) in the UK.

PRAYER DIARY

MONDAYS

Pray for the Tamang people of Nepal – for opportunities to hear the Gospel, for funding to broadcast the *Evangelical* radio programme, and maturity of faith among new Christians meeting in media home groups.

TUESDAYS

Pray for broadcasts in Mongolia to return to the country's remotes areas; for the *Women of Hope* programme to bless those who are marginalised; strength for the local team; and true understanding among listeners about the deity of Christ.

WEDNESDAYS

Pray for the Karakalpak people of Central Asia – especially those facing persecution for their Christian faith. Pray for continued blessing of programmes including *The Way of Righteousness*, *The Christian Home*, and *Springs of Living Water*.

THURSDAYS

Pray for the *Men of Courage* programme as it continues to be heard around the world, and as TWR looks to expand broadcasts into Kyrgyzstan. Pray for men who feel isolated and under pressure, that they would encounter Christ in a new way through each episode.

FRIDAYS

Continue to pray for all those who connect with us through **TWR360**, as they listen to Bible teaching in their own heart languages. Pray for the sermon podcasts, the *JESUS* film, the audio Bible, and other content streamed in 140 languages via this vital online source.

WEEKENDS

Please pray for TWR's ongoing work in the UK.

Pray for new UK programmes *Leading the Way* and *The Same Commission* as they are broadcast from this month.

Join us in praying for our listeners and those seeking the station via new platforms. We think especially of new Christians being blessed by God's Word for the first time.

Prayer is the backbone of TWR – and we are so grateful that **you** stand alongside us in intercession! God delights to change people's lives and we are amazed and humbled that He allows TWR to be a part of it all.

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Use the **YouTube** App on your TV, search for TWR-UK and select "Live"

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