

Summer 2026

# *Listening* World

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From Communications and Fundraising Officer, Richard Nottingham



*“God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.” – Psalm 46:1*

The world is increasingly tumultuous and suffering all too familiar. And yet, as Christians we rejoice that our inner peace is not based on outward circumstances.

In this edition of *Listening World* we take a detailed look at the Middle East and how so many war-torn countries are hearing the good news. While in Ukraine we look at the impact of TWR output speaking specifically into conflict and loss.

We also update on a special TWR initiative for human trafficking victims, rejoicing that through media even those trapped in modern slavery can be blessed by the message of the cross.

That same good news has been the focus of Trans World Radio since its inception, and of Dr Russell Farnworth who retired as CEO of TWR-UK in May while citing a ‘renewed gratitude’ for the Gospel 23 years after taking the helm.

As Russell said upon announcing his departure: *“Being in the disciple-making business through media has been exhilarating and constantly inspiring!”* Amen. Do join us in thanking God for Russell’s leadership, and please pray as we now look to our future ministry.

Yours in Christ,

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# Bringing Healing in the 'Hidden Pandemic' of Human Trafficking

Around the world, millions of women and girls live in captivity. Some were lured by false promises of work, others trapped by poverty or family betrayal. Human trafficking thrives in secrecy as a 'hidden pandemic' – one of the darkest crimes of our time.

Victims are often unseen, unheard and silenced by fear. For many, escape feels impossible.

According to global estimates, tens of millions are enslaved through trafficking – many in the sex trade. It's a crime that devalues human life, tears apart families and leaves deep scars of trauma.

Trafficking strips victims of their dignity, crushes dreams, and tells women that their worth is nothing more than a price tag. Most victims are controlled by fear, threats and lies, making it nearly impossible for them to openly seek help or attend a church.

Traditional outreach methods often cannot reach these women, who live under constant surveillance and threats.

And yet in spite of this darkness, the Gospel is prevailing. Even in locked rooms and guarded streets, women can still hear a voice of hope. The

walls of their existence may confine them physically, but praise the Lord that media cannot be contained while spiritual peace is brought near to desperate souls

## Hidden Treasures

TWR's *Hidden Treasures* programme of audio dramas is bringing profound encouragement into the bleakest of situations. It tells relatable stories – from the Bible and current day – of people who face exploitation, brokenness and shame. The series goes on to reveal how Christ's love brings longed-for restoration and lasting freedom.

*Hidden Treasures* was created to bring the message of Christ into places where conventional mission cannot. Through programmes delivered by discreet devices, women who are vulnerable and exploited are reassured that they are loved, valued and never beyond God's reach.

Inspired by real-life events, each episode shares the transformative message of God's love and purpose, offering a path toward inner freedom – harnessing the power of storytelling to bring healing and hope.

## Hidden Treasures

**Season 1** introduces listeners to a loving God through the eyes of women who are still searching – those who have not yet encountered Jesus. With gentleness and compassion, the stories invite them to consider a new beginning.

**Season 2** shifts perspective, featuring women who have found hope in Christ. They reflect on their past, briefly share their testimonies, and point to the new life they now embrace. Custom-written songs enrich the narrative, adding emotional depth and spiritual resonance.

## Trafficking in the Bible

Listeners are encouraged by relatable stories in the Bible, like that of Joseph in the book of Genesis – a very real example of human trafficking from the ancient world.

Thrown into a waterless pit by his own brothers, Joseph was sold as a slave to nomads who in turn traded him to an official in a foreign country. Then, after false accusations he ended up in an Egyptian prison. Like so many *Hidden Treasures* listeners, Joseph was concealed from view, seemingly without hope...

Stories like this can really break through into a fellow victim's circumstances. When a woman hears a character wrestling with familiar fears, she realises that she is not alone.

One of our coordinators shared the following after visiting a safe house for trafficked victims: *"All the ladies were crying after listening to the story... We asked them if they would like to hear more stories like that, and all of them except one raised their hands. So, we were able to bring MP3 players the next day with Hidden Treasures materials."*

## Hope Within Reach

*Hidden Treasures* is playing a vital role in TWR's *Hope Within Reach* campaign for 2026 because we believe that every searching soul deserves the chance to encounter Jesus.

The programme is continuing to remind the unseen that they are seen, to whisper truth amid lies, and to put hope within reach of women the world has forgotten. Each episode is more than just drama; it is an invitation to believe in a God who redeems even the deepest wounds.

Media makes that possible. It can slip behind borders, beyond guards, and into hidden rooms and ultimately needy hearts – carrying the unchanging truth of God's Word to whoever will listen.

So please join us in prayer that those trapped in the grip of human trafficking will be reached with practical help and the wonderful message of the Gospel; that more and more people will come to recognise that true salvation can only be found in the saving work of Jesus Christ.





# Gospel Hope Reaching Tumultuous Middle East

At the crossroads of Africa, Asia and Europe is a land that is culturally rich, historically significant, and shaped by geographical and religious contrasts. A place where Arab, Jewish, Kurdish, Persian, Turkish and other people groups live side by side.

From its towering snow-capped mountains to fertile river valleys, the region is a meeting place of faith, culture and geography. The land now known as the Middle East is a vibrant mosaic, home to multiple ancient civilisations.

We know that nearly all biblical events took place in the Middle East, including the entire life and ministry of Jesus. Long before Jesus walked its roads, Israel stood at the centre of God's unfolding plan for humanity.

But with all its captivating variety and history, the Middle East has also suffered immense adversity and left behind a number of unresolved rivalries.

In the past year alone thousands of lives have been lost throughout the region due to conflict, terrorism and radicalisation. Problems like malnutrition and deep emotional and economic scars persist across the region. We know that God will ultimately restore peace, but what about this side of eternity?

By God's grace, TWR has been uniquely positioned to put *Hope Within Reach* – a drive that underpins our work throughout 2026. Through our teams, ministry contacts and partners who serve in the Middle East, we are working to bring the hope of Jesus to every lost soul.

Media, whether through traditional means or digital radio, podcasts or social platforms, has the ability to break through barriers of geography, culture and access, allowing people in restricted areas damaged by war to encounter the Gospel safely and in privacy – meeting souls right where they are with the good news of Jesus.

## TWR's impact

Here are some of the ways TWR is bringing hope to the Middle East:

- **Unprecedented Reach:** TWR's output – blessing listeners in 190 countries around the world – is truly international and breaks through international barriers. Nowhere is this more important than in the Middle East.
- **Personal support:** Using radio, podcasts and social media, TWR's ministry provides spiritual support and discipleship to those with no access to church. Many listeners are not only saved but go on to tell the Gospel to others.
- **Navigating Cultural Barriers:** In regions where evangelism is restricted, TWR uses creative approaches to introduce biblical truth. Sensitively-delivered programmes for youth and women weave Christian values into day-to-day conversations.
- **Meeting Practical Needs:** Programmes like *A Different World* help listeners tackle life's challenges through biblical teachings. **TWR Farsi** has even started discussing marriage and child-rearing, aiding the embattled Persian community.
- **Ongoing Discipleship:** TWR loves to equip new believers. Programmes like *Talmatha* provide guidance to Christians in isolated or hostile environments, while youth-focused shows help integrate biblical principles into daily life.

It's easy to become discouraged when we read the news coming out of the Middle East as wars continue between nations, paramilitaries and people groups. But TWR's response remains undeterred: to reach the world for Christ through media.

## Iran

In a year in which war has dominated, medium-wave radio (AM) remains the most reliable way to reach audiences, with internet access often unstable or restricted. TWR regularly receives feedback from listeners – mainly from the diaspora but also from within Iran, creating real moments of unity among families separated by conflict.

This feedback also shows that the mood among many Iranians has shifted. One listener noted that his sister, previously very loyal to the government, now speaks with hope about the future and even dreams of a country allowing freedom of belief.

As always, TWR's message is not about religious ritual but inviting people into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, emphasising direct access to God, spiritual freedom and transformative faith.

Plans are even underway to establish a dedicated radio station in Iran when conditions allow, so do please pray for the project's strategic planning, infrastructure development and financial preparation.

Amid so much instability, radio remains a crucial and reliable tool to proclaim the Gospel, encourage believers, respond with compassion and prepare strategically for future opportunities.

## Israel

In spite of renewed turmoil the **TWR Israel** team has been thrilled to broadcast content and share testimonies of many believers, some of which have drawn thousands of views online.

Of course, life in Israel has been tumultuous for decades, but even more so since the attacks of 7 October 2023, and renewed military exchanges following the outbreak of war in Iran.

The cost for TWR's team on the ground starts with sleeplessness. Since the latest conflict began, normal activities have been frequently interrupted as people are forced to take refuge in underground shelters at short notice.

However, in spite of all these challenges, innovative broadcasts are now providing vital content to Israel. One example is the Nehemiah Project – a 24-hour digital media stream designed to reach the 1.2 million Russian-speaking Jews in Israel with Bible-based teaching.

A mainly non-religious Jewish audience has been accessing this precious teaching via WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram.

The initiative is inspired by the book of Nehemiah to build a solid foundation for ministry. TWR already has a wealth of programmes in the Russian language and it is a real blessing to see these transformed for a new audience. Listeners typically hear output on news, music, culture and relevant topics from a Christian perspective.

**TWR Israel** has also started ministering on the streets every other Friday, offering copies of the New Testament to people who stop and listen. So praise God that the team remains so energised for the Gospel in spite of such enormous upheaval.

However, **TWR Israel** needs your ongoing prayer as it continues to minister so faithfully amid unprecedented adversity:

- Pray for the Messianic church in Israel, having grown 10-fold in the past 40 years to roughly 30,000 congregants. As the church grows, pray for unity around the Gospel, that more and more people would turn to Christ.
- Pray for the Reconciliation movement involving Arabic-speaking and Jewish pastors. These cross-community church leaders have

started taking communion together as one body of Christ, and also held discussions about future ministry.

- Pray for a godly outcome to recent conflict and for nations across the region to turn to Christ – not just the Jewish people but Palestinians and other Arabic groups...

## Syria

Millions of people in Syria have been displaced by the civil war that began in 2011, as ordinary people continue to grapple with poverty, economic collapse and the lasting physical impact of such a long-running conflict.

Despite this, TWR's output continues to bless listeners by weaving together biblical teaching with practical advice, and by showing through the prophets that Jesus was more than just a good man but the Saviour of the world foretold in the Old Testament.

TWR's *Hope for Syria* programme uses a multiplatform approach to deliver sustaining messages about the true hope offered by Christ. Beyond traditional radio it uses reels, videos and other digital-content formats to connect with a diverse audience.

Popular topics include 'Finding Joy', 'Loving One Another', 'Forgiveness Is a Choice', 'Anger', 'Economic Crisis and the Rising Need', 'Work Pressure' and 'The Ten Commandments'.



Many of Syria's young people grapple with mass unemployment and disillusionment. Thankfully TWR's *Youth in Mind* programme combines faith-based wisdom with much-needed practical life skills to address these very pressing spiritual and psychological challenges, and helps youths find lasting purpose and hope.

This suite of programmes has had the wonderful effect of consoling those from families broken apart by war and seemingly endless military campaigns. None more so than in the case of Salam, who was left alone in motherhood after her husband was recruited to the army. One day, feeling particularly lonely, she came across TWR's *Hope for Syria* Facebook page and a post about a programme on loneliness and sorrow. "I cried as I listened," Salam explained, realising for the first time that God was with her. "A feeling of safety, as if I wasn't alone, seeped into my soul."

Another listener shared: "I know that my family and I might be hungry for physical food, but I've discovered that we are even more hungry for heavenly food."

## Yemen

In yet another Arab country rocked by war, the good news is continuing to spread unabated. Yemen continues to struggle profoundly, nearly 12 years into a relentless civil war. But TWR's *Hope for Yemen* programme is making a real difference, sharing the Gospel through accessible media platforms including podcasts, online radio and social media.

Yemenis are even being blessed by the personal stories of individual listeners. One man, Mohammed, spent 11 days in daily discussions with a TWR follow-up team, asking questions about Jesus Christ and the Bible. Eventually, he chose to follow Christ and is now studying the Bible with great enthusiasm.

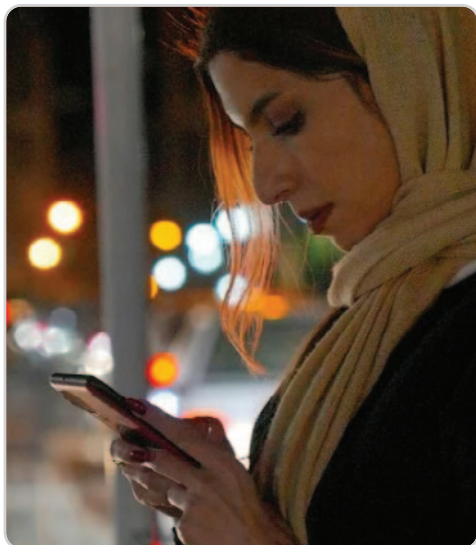
Another listener, named Ahmed, wrote the

following: "I've seen innocent people die. I was angry at God. But then I heard your message: 'God sees. God knows. He will restore what is broken.' Now, I am no longer running from him — I am searching for him. Thank you for answering my questions and helping me understand when I was feeling lost. Now I dare to say, Jesus is Lord and my Saviour."

While another, named Abdul, said: "Life here is unbearable. I lost everything — my job, my hope, even my will to pray. But then I found your programme. You spoke about Jesus — the One who heals broken hearts. For the first time in years, I felt that someone cared."

Like Abdul, many people in the Middle East are searching for answers to life's toughest questions. But praise the Lord — the message of the cross continues to spread and touch the lives of all those who truly seek Him; many discovering their identity in Jesus as 'heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.' (Roman 8:17)

Do join us in thanking God for the boundless spread of His kingdom and the part we are all privileged to play as Jesus continues to build his church in spite of adversity, suffering and war.



# Ukraine's Valuable Media Ministry Four Years into War



Wars are often measured in numbers: those killed and wounded, the displaced, the territory lost, the cities reduced to rubble.

According to estimates, around 1.8 million soldiers on both sides have been killed, injured or are missing. The United Nations reports that roughly nine million Ukrainian civilians have been displaced, while nearly a fifth of Ukraine's territory remains under Russian control.

But behind every chart and report, people are continually trying to endure, adapt and cling on to hope.

## **Hope for Ukraine**

Beyond statistics and diplomatic statements, TWR is seeking to make a spiritual difference as the team battles to overcome internet outage, access restrictions and other war-related disruption.

With local partners and ministry friends on both sides, TWR continues to reach people through radio programmes and digital platforms under the *Hope for Ukraine* initiative.

Numerous programmes have been developed and tailored for the country's many beleaguered but tenacious communities, seeking to meet people where they are and offer the good news of Jesus.

Of course in times of war many people hold on firmer to their faith, but for some the opposite is true. At the same time many have lived through experiences that can shatter their understanding of the world and raise profound

questions about how suffering can coexist with a loving God.

## **Reality of war**

Thankfully a podcast by **TWR Ukraine** has been blessing many struggling with these very questions.

*How Were We Able* interviews men who were on the front line, exploring trauma, memory and survival, while repeatedly returning to questions about God in the midst of violence, loss and hardship.

Meanwhile, another programme addresses experiences from the other side. *Live On* explores how bereaved families and individuals try to cope when a son, brother, husband, or loved one does not return home.

Where can those affected find the strength to go on? How can others help carry the pain?

These two programmes make it clear: even in times of greatest uncertainty there are ways to share pain, bring help and healing, and encounter the 'peace of God, which surpasses all understanding' (Philippians 4:7).

## **Resilient ministry**

Alex Chmut, leader of **TWR Ukraine**, recently took part in a special interview to mark the fourth anniversary of the war, and reminded us that millions of families have been separated: "Currently, the biggest challenges we face concern people – their emotional, spiritual and physical condition. The team is exhausted. The constant

*shelling, sleepless nights, the ever-present threat of death and the uncertainty about what the future holds – all this affects our productivity and mood...*

*“Another challenge is the lack of people whom we could involve in the ministry. There is currently a severe shortage of personnel... People continue to leave the country.*

*“The last challenge is the financial donations from Ukrainian listeners, which continue to decline... Furthermore, the economic situation does not encourage expectations of increased donations soon.”*

### **Strength over strife**

Thankfully, in spite of this profound suffering, Alex remains encouraged by the effects of TWR's ministry and feedback online: *“Our message truly transforms the way people think, as evidenced by the comments they leave under our videos and audio materials. People are beginning to understand God better. We represent him as he truly is, as the biblical God.*

*“It is crucial for people to reconcile the injustice prevailing in this world with the presence of the almighty God who controls everything. We encourage people, above all, to entrust their lives to Jesus, and many are responding to this call.”*

Alex is also hopeful for the future of **TWR Ukraine** and partnerships on the ground: *“Our desire is to involve more dedicated and talented people in the ministry of TWR who can further advance this work. We aim to actively engage local churches to help spread our content throughout Ukraine, reaching both believers and nonbelievers alike.* *“We plan to continue creating content that is relevant and understandable to various groups of people in our country. We will focus on sharing testimonies of transformed lives, teaching practical solutions to people's problems and presenting accessible Bible study materials.”*

And regardless of the circumstances, Alex continues to witness first-hand God's very real blessing on the ministry:

*“One pastor was mobilised and sent to the front lines. After being wounded, he was transferred to the rear and shared that he had spent several days in a shelter amid bombardment. During that time, he listened to our podcast on the message to the Ephesians, which greatly strengthened him.*

*“A woman approached me at church and said she found our church through a video of my sermons on the internet and now attends regularly. We have many testimonies of people who have accepted Jesus into their hearts through listening to our programmes.”*

### **Pray**

TWR is hugely encouraged that in spite of such human difficulty, suffering people are drawing divine hope from the unchanging message of the cross. Praise the Lord for His unrelenting faithfulness.

Amid the challenge of war and such profound humanitarian need, do pray for the spiritual, emotional and physical restoration of TWR team members in Ukraine; for wisdom and vision in creating content for war-torn communities; and for God's ongoing protection over staff spreading the good news.



# Because You Cared



Thank you so much for supporting the work of TWR around the world.

We are delighted to provide the following update on how some of your donations are making real a difference in the lives of men and women hearing the good news across the globe through radio and new media.

## **Men of Courage**

Thanks to the £200,000 you gave to support *Men of Courage*, the programme is now expanding into new languages. One listener in Indonesia recently wrote: *“Men of Courage messages match what we really face in daily life – pressures, responsibilities, and the need to lead with strength and love. The programme gives encouragement and real answers. It helps me reflect and grow as a man who wants to follow God’s will, not just in words but in everyday action.”*

*Men of Courage* provides listeners with a biblical perspective on life’s daily challenges. Episodes are used in a variety of formats across AM, FM and online radio, podcasts, video and social media.

## **Ministry to the Chinese**

Over recent years it has become more and more difficult to be a Christian in China or gain access to biblical materials. However, God is using your prayers and gifts to continue comforting and teaching spiritually hungry listeners with the good news.

Our colleagues involved in distributing media resources visited 629 families, including 11 individuals who indicated a decision to follow Christ.

Your support of £191,000 is helping TWR continue the personal outreach among unreached people groups as we broadcast our Chinese programmes on a variety of platforms.

## **West Africa Transmitting Station (WATS)**

Your gifts of £177,000 to TWR’s West Africa Transmitting Station in Benin are a lifeline of spiritual food for listeners throughout the region, including areas of intense persecution of Christians.

One listener recently gave us the following incredible message of encouragement: *“I want to testify of God’s faithfulness in my family, that ever since we made it a daily habit to use TWR messages for our evening meditations, we have been witnessing so many positive changes. We do this regularly before retiring to bed. It’s been a tremendous blessing. My wife and I see our three children being drawn closer to our heavenly Father daily. Praise God!”*

## **A Season of Hope in Japan**

A Japanese listener to the *Power of the Gospel* programme recently told our team the following: *“As I listened, I found myself pondering what it means to be forgiven of sins, what it means to pray and what it means to have one’s life governed by the Saviour. Thank you for broadcasting such an interesting programme!”*

The £146,000 you gave to support TWR’s programmes in Southeast Asia is having an eternal impact on lives across Japan.

*Thank you!*

# Prayer Matters

## Speaking Hope

From July to September 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 *Hidden Treasures* programme, that it will continue to bless victims of human trafficking, console them with relatable stories from the Bible, inspire them to seek after Jesus and encounter eternal salvation.

#### TUESDAYS

Pray for believers and seekers across the Middle East, including in Iran, Israel, Syria and Yemen, as the region continues to face instability. Pray for programmes like *A Different World*, the *Nehemiah Project*, *Women of Hope* and *Youth in Mind*.

#### WEDNESDAYS

Pray that *Hope for Ukraine* continues to bless many, and that programmes on the struggles of war will help people make sense of bereavement. Pray for **TWR Ukraine** and its leader Alex Chmut, for renewed strength and vision.

#### THURSDAYS

Thank God for generous supporters of TWR ministries around the world – including in China, Japan, Indonesia and West Africa – and how this has boosted programmes like *Men of Courage* and *Power of the Gospel*.

#### FRIDAYS

Continue to pray for people around the world who connect with us through **TWR360**. Pray they are encouraged as they listen to Bible teaching in their own heart languages; that souls will be saved and lasting fruit produced.

#### WEEKENDS

**Please pray for TWR's ongoing work in the UK.**  
Pray for wisdom among the board of Trustees as it considers the future leadership of **TWR-UK**, following the retirement of Dr Russell Farnworth as CEO.

Pray for vision and perception among the production team as decisions are made about new UK programmes and guests – that output will reflect the Gospel ethos of Trans World Radio.

**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.