



See the Way

15 February – 14 May 2019

Worship Resources

This guide will help you make the most of the **See the Way** appeal in your church this spring. Feel free to use and adapt any of these resources in ways that will inspire your congregation to think about the gift of sight and encourage them to raise and give support. In these notes you will find:



Prayers and
intercessions



Lamplight parade



Bible passages



Sermon notes



Hymns and songs



Stories of children
you can help



Visual ideas



Reflection



Further information

Visit www.cbmuk.org.uk/seetheway-fundraise to find more resources to help your church be part of our **See the Way** appeal:

- a film and presentation to help bring Christian Blind Mission's facts and stories to life
- a downloadable children's activity sheet
- a downloadable fundraising ideas sheet
- printed prayer bookmarks, donation envelopes, posters and leaflets for you to order for your congregation

The UK government will match every £1 your congregation raises for our **See the Way** appeal between 15 February and 14 May 2019 – **so every collection, sponsored event or other fundraising activity during this time will have double the impact in the world's poorest places.**



1. Prayers and intercessions

A call to worship

Blessed are you, O Lord;
teach me your ways.
With my whole heart I seek you;
do not let me stray from your commandments.
Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path.
Give me understanding, that I may keep your law
and observe it with my whole heart.
Turn my heart to your decrees,
and not to selfish gain.
Open my eyes,
that I may see wonderful things.
My tongue will sing of your promise,
for all your commandments are right.
Give life according to your justice
For great is your mercy, O Lord.

Adapted from Psalm 119

An offering prayer

Take these gifts Lord of light, bless them and use them,
let there be more of your light in the world because of them.
Let there be light in the eyes of children whose sight is restored;
as we share your blessings to give the gift of sight.

And may the light shine bright in their futures
as they are able to see and do so much more;
Lord use our gifts to shine a light in the happy faces of the families who love them and who never imagined their darkness would end.

Shine a light to show us the change we can bring into the lives of more children as we seek to show your love in action.

A suggested form for intercessions

The response is *Lord guide us, that we may see the way you have prepared.*

We pray for our church, our church leaders and all the people of God, that as Jesus promised he will build his church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it¹.

Lord guide us, that we may see the way you have prepared.

We pray, thanking God who has made the world and everything in it², that we may protect the beauty of creation. We pray for peace among the nations and for those in authority over us.

Lord guide us, that we may see the way you have prepared.

We pray for our community, that in humility we will value others above ourselves³. Help everyone around us to know the love of their neighbours and see the love of God.

Lord guide us, that we may see the way you have prepared.

We pray for those who are suffering from loss, illness, and those in need; that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God⁴.

Lord guide us, that we may see the way you have prepared.

We thank God for the lives of those who have died in Jesus Christ, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named⁵. May we see his everlasting kingdom.

Lord guide us, that we may see the way you have prepared.

¹ Matthew 16:18 (ESV)

² Acts 17:24 (ESV)

³ Philippians 2:3 (ESV)

⁴ 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (NIV)

⁵ Ephesians 3:15 (ESV)



2. See the Way lamplight parade

An idea for an all-ages event that can help to unite your church behind the inspiring work of restoring sight to the millions of people in the world who are needlessly blind.

- Plan an early-evening service and lamplight parade between 15 February (sunset at 5:15pm) and 14 May (sunset at 8:45pm). Announce the date and time well in advance, reminding participants that the UK government will match every £1 donated to our **See the Way** appeal between 15 February and 14 May 2019 – so every collection, sponsored event or other fundraising activity during this time will have double the impact in the world's poorest places.
- Invite members of your congregation to bring lanterns, torches, phone lights, or any other kind of hand-held light that can be used indoors and outdoors. In addition, consider handing out candles as people enter. Don't forget matches or a lighter.
- Invite people to enter quietly, in a darkened church and to keep their lights off at first. Ask them to pray for people who are needlessly blind, who are living in darkness and poverty. Ask them to pray that many churches will respond generously to the **See the Way** appeal, giving people who are needlessly blind the opportunity to see.
- Select readings (see p. 4) and hymns (see p. 7) that bring to mind the needs of those who are poor, and whose poverty means they cannot afford an operation to restore their sight or the sight of their child. Invite members of the congregation in advance to stand and read. During this time, light one of the candles from a single source and watch light spread throughout the church.

- Read or adapt the story of Charlotte or Allen who have experienced sight-loss due to cataract (p. 8) Give a short reflection (see p. 10).
- Take an offering while a hymn is sung, or consider asking volunteers to stand with plates at the back for a retiring offering. Remind the congregation that if they have given something up for Lent, that through their small sacrifice they could give a little more to charity and their church.
- Then, ask the congregation to begin the lamplight parade, bringing and lighting their lanterns and torches.
- In a line, slowly walk out of the church into the darkness and **See the Way** back to the light of God's church. Consider printing additional posters to mount on card and carry, or donation envelopes to hand to people you pass. Sing songs

about light as you walk. "This Little Light of Mine" by Harry Dixon Loes is easy for everyone to learn.

- An enthusiastic Sunday school teacher could work in advance, helping children make Papier-mâché lanterns to carry during the lamplight parade, with battery powered tea lights inside. Or the children could make and decorate paper bag lanterns to line the path to the church so others can **See the Way**.
- Return to the church for a final prayer and hymn. Remember to thank those who have given a gift.

Depending on your procession route, this evening event may require a risk assessment, high-visibility jackets, and wardens with torches to help parents and children avoid hazards and safely cross streets.



3. Suggested Bible passages to use as readings

Psalms

Psalm 17:5 - "My steps have held to your paths..."

Psalm 25:4 - "Show me your ways, Lord..."

Psalm 140:12 - "... the Lord secures justice for the poor..."

Psalm 146:8 - "...the Lord gives sight to the blind..."

Old Testament

Deuteronomy 19:9-19 - "Do not put a stumbling block in front of the blind but fear your God..."

Isaiah 35:1-5 - "...they will see the glory of the Lord, the splendour of our God..."

Isaiah 29:18 - "...out of gloom and darkness, the eyes of the blind shall see..."

Isaiah 53:6 - "...each of us has turned to our own way..."

Epistle

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 "...we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but what is unseen..."

Ephesians 5:8-14 "...now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light..."

Gospels

Matthew 5:14-16 "...that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father..."

Luke 4:18-21 - "...he has sent me to proclaim recovery of sight for the blind..."

John 9:1-8 - "...While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

John 14:6 - "I am the way and the truth and the life."



4. Sermon notes

The following are suggestions that will help link sermons to the Gospel readings for Lent. Each reflection includes a related, secondary scripture, and you may find these helpful even if your church does not follow lectionary readings.

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**Ash Wednesday,
6 March 2019**

Matthew 6:1-6; 16-21
"...beware of practicing your piety before men, in order to be **seen** by them..."

When we choose to do good or help others, God is not blind to our actions. Instead of wanting to be noticed let "your light shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:16).

.....
**First Sunday in
Lent, 10 March**

Luke 4:1-13
"...the devil led him up and **showed** him ... all the kingdoms of the world..."

Satan tempted Jesus with a dazzling display of world power, hoping He would succumb to the "lust of the eyes" (1 John 2:16). We should be grateful for the gift of sight and use it well, looking for ways to please God and help others.

.....
**Second Sunday
in Lent, 17 March**

Luke 13:31-35
"...you will not **see** me again until the time comes..."

Jesus mourns for Jerusalem, because "the true light...was coming into the world," but "the world did not recognise him" (John 1:9,10). What blessings has God given us that we have not seen? Have we recognised what we can do for others?

.....
Luke 9:28-36 (37-43a)
"...a cloud came and **overshadowed** them, and they were terrified when they entered the cloud..."

At the Transfiguration of Christ, the voice of God came from inside a terrifying cloud. We are afraid of what we can't see. Having cataracts is like being in a cloud, seeing no people or object. Being blinded can be terrifying.

.....
**Third Sunday in
Lent, 24 March**

Luke 13:1-9
"...he came **looking** for fruit on it and found none..."

There are still people who believe that blind people must have committed some sin. Rather than thinking about what others have done wrong, we should accept God's grace for us and ask what good we can do in response.

**Fourth Sunday in
Lent, 31 March**

Luke 15:1-3 11b-32
“...while he was still
far off, his father **saw**
him and was filled with
compassion...”

What would be better than for them to spot you at a distance and run to embrace you, even though you have done nothing to deserve their love? God’s overwhelming love for us should inspire us to reach out and love others.

**Fifth Sunday in
Lent, 7 April**

John 12:1-8
“You always have the
poor with you, but you
do not always have
me.”

Jesus seems to be saying that we should take every opportunity to be with Him, in worship and thanks. He did not say we should ignore people who are poor, but that we will always have the opportunity to help them, even as we can today.

**Palm Sunday,
14 April**

Luke 19:28-40
“...blessed is the king
who **comes** in the
name of the Lord...”

As He enters Jerusalem, Jesus can see the path ahead of him, dreadful as it may be. Yet there can be joy amid all our suffering. Imagine a person whose sight you restore calling you blessed, because you come in God’s name!

**Easter Sunday,
21 April**

John 20:1-18
Or Luke 24:1-12
“...on the first day of
the week, at early
dawn, they came to
the tomb...”

The Gospel of John says that this happened “while it was still dark,” so it must have been very early dawn indeed. It’s thrilling to imagine how our response now can bring light out of darkness in much the same way.





5. A selection of helpful music

Hymns

Thou art the way: to thee alone	<i>George W. Doane</i>
Guide me, O thou great redeemer	<i>William Williams</i>
Hail the day that sees him rise	<i>Charles Wesley</i>
Tell out my soul, the greatness of the Lord!	<i>Timothy Dudley-Smith</i>
All things bright and beautiful	<i>Cecil Frances Alexander</i>
Be thou my vision	<i>Irish traditional</i>
Great is thy faithfulness	<i>Thomas O. Chisholm</i>
How great thou art!	<i>Stuart K Hine</i>
I, the Lord of sea and sky	<i>Dan Schutte</i>
When I survey the wondrous cross	<i>Isaac Watts</i>

Praise songs

Indescribable	<i>Laura Story</i>
Light of the world (Here I am to worship)	<i>Tim Hughes</i>
Lord, you have my heart	<i>Martin Smith</i>
Make me a channel of your peace	<i>Sebastian Temple (from the prayer of St Francis)</i>
Open the eyes of my heart Lord	<i>Paul Baloche</i>
Show me the way of the cross once again	<i>Matt Redman</i>
We have nothing to give	<i>Matt Redman</i>
God of justice	<i>Tim Hughes</i>
When I look into your holiness	<i>Cathy Perrin</i>
10,000 reasons (Bless the Lord)	<i>Matt Redman</i>
When I needed a neighbour	<i>Sydney Carter</i>
Thy Word is lamp unto my feet	<i>Amy Grant & Michael W. Smith</i>



6. See the Way through the eyes of children with sight loss

Consider including all or part of the stories below as part of a reading in a special service, or incorporated into a sermon. Charlotte and Allen are both examples of children whose blindness is treatable but whose family can't afford a simple operation to restore their sight.

Every £1 your congregation raises for Christian Blind Mission's **See the Way** appeal between 15 February and 14 May 2019 will be doubled by the UK government. Donations will help people with sight problems in the world's poorest places to **See the Way** to a brighter future, providing sight-saving surgery, glasses and support. Match funding from the UK government will improve access to sight-saving eye-health services in Rwanda.

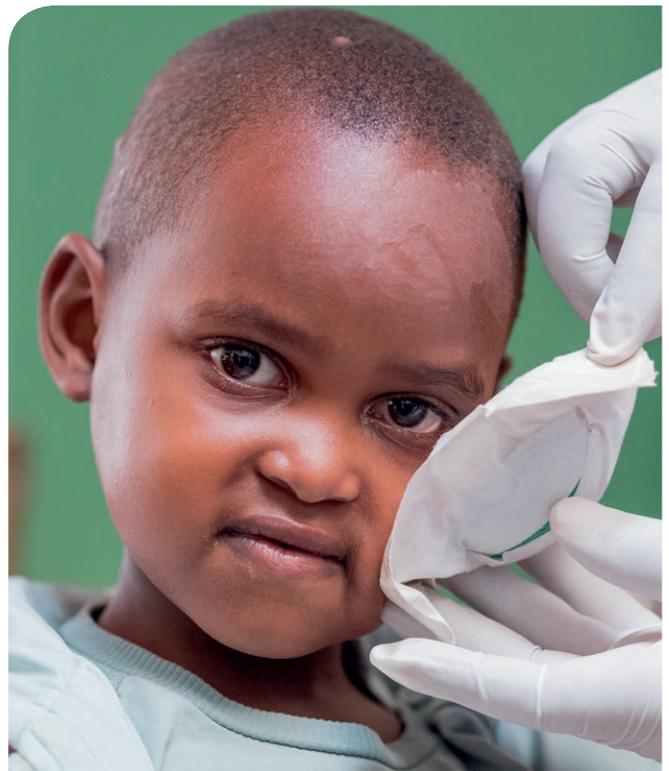
Charlotte was given the answer to her mother's fears

Charlotte and her family from Rwanda, East Africa, live a hard life: her father left the family when she was very young and they currently live a hand-to-mouth existence, farming crops such as soya and sweet potato for their own consumption. Charlotte's mother, Médiatrice spends a lot of time farming their land to feed the family. They used to sell extra crops at the market, but recently there hasn't been much rain so most of their seeds died.

To add to Médiatrice's worries, her youngest child, Charlotte has cataracts, meaning she is unable to see clearly. She can barely see anything out of her left eye and although treatment is available, there is no way the family can afford it. Médiatrice worries about her daughter's future – how will she go to school?

Hope shines through when her mother finds out about the Christian Blind Mission-supported eye clinic in Kabgayi in Southern Rwanda where Charlotte will be able to receive free sight-saving treatment. She is assessed by a CBM-funded surgeon and diagnosed with cataract, which can be removed with a simple operation.

The operation only takes 45 minutes and thankfully, Charlotte is happy and active afterwards. The surgeon tells them that the



surgery has gone really well, and with the extra support of glasses, Charlotte will have good vision.

There is new hope for the whole family now that Charlotte can see. She can now go to school to gain an education and can **See the Way** to a brighter future. Médiatrice feels more confident leaving her in the care of her older siblings while she earns money to support her family.



Allen wants to be seen as a person, not a disability

"I want to be able to see like others, I will go back to school to perform better than others. I want to become a nurse to treat the sick."

9-year-old Allen from East Africa, dreams of becoming a nurse. But when she developed vision problems, her mother feared for her future. Allen has cataracts, a condition that causes the lens of the eye to become cloudy. Cataracts can be removed with surgery, but for poor families like Allen's, too often treatment is out of reach.

Most of the children in Allen's community treat her well. But there are bullies, who don't see a person. They see a disability, and mock her with chants of 'muzibe' (a word meaning blind person).

She lives with her mother, Elizabeth, her older sister Robinah, and her four-year-old niece Immaculate. The family is very poor; Allen's father left them when she was young and her mother works hard to support the family.

Allen has had problems with her vision since she was two years old. She used to do okay in school as she had an understanding teacher who tried to help. Unfortunately, after this teacher left, Allen struggled at school. Her mother says, "I started finding Allen outside the classroom. She would tell me teachers had pushed her out of the classroom because she could not see."

On a typical day, the girls walk to the river to collect water, but Elizabeth is concerned Allen will be attacked again. She explains, "One time, she went to the water spring and the children she found there smeared hot pepper in her eyes. They beat her up and she came back crying. I felt like someone was piercing my heart with an arrow. I stopped her going to that place alone."

Every day, children like Allen in the world's poorest places become needlessly blind because of conditions that can be easily treated, like cataracts. Many women, men and children in poverty have no access to the most basic of eye health services.



7. Visual ideas for See the Way

Remind people of the importance of vision for those who have it, and the injustice of being denied it when treatment could be available. This or another simple visual aid of your own creation can link people's physical need with our spiritual lives and demonstrate what it's like trying to move from place to place with or without sight.

- Using fairy lights or yellow lines on the floor create a curving path in your church, a few metres long. Encouraging people to follow in contemplation of what it means to **See the Way**, and to continue their journey with God as they help others. Ask them to imagine how they would negotiate this exercise without sight, or if it is safe to do so, consider incorporating a blindfold

into the exercise. If there are members of your congregation with visual impairment, make sure they are helped by others.

- Allow the lit path to direct church members and visitors to a place of prayer for people who are needlessly blind. Place a poster or some other appropriate image there for inspiration. You may want to order some of our prayer bookmarks that people can use and keep.
- Invite people to post words or images on your church website or social media channels, showing what it means to **See the Way**. Encourage the children to have a poetry or drawing competition about "Seeing" and publish winners in the church newsletter/ on the website.



8. Reflection

A short talk you may use or adapt when inviting people to think about what it's like to live needlessly blind, and consider their response to this life-changing appeal.

What comes to your mind when I invite you to consider what it means to **See the Way**? To see what path we are on, we need light, and there can hardly be a concept we see more often in the Bible. None of us need reminding that the first words spoken as God created the universe are "Let there be light." And at the complete opposite end of the Bible, John describes the end of time, when the servants of God "will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light." (Revelation 22:5).

So God is light. All light comes from him. But what does this really mean both physically and spiritually? As we try to **See the Way** we should go, we learn that we cannot do it without God. But we also have to *choose* to walk in the light. We have to

recognise it. We even have to choose to see it. The opening verses of the Gospel of John describe this in detail, "The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognise him."

To know the way we should go, we need to see the light. To recognise it for what it is. And to make that daily effort to stay on the paths that God has prepared for us. He has set out the way that we and all people should follow, but also guides us individually through the changes of life.

But even if we follow God's path, it can be a rocky and difficult road. David says in Psalm 17, "My steps have held to your paths; my feet have not stumbled." But just a few verses later, we read that "My mortal enemies...have tracked me down, they now surround me, with eyes alert, to throw me to the ground."

It makes me think of what happened to a girl named Allen who is needlessly blind and living in a part of East Africa where eye health services are scarce. She can see just enough to collect water, but her mother Elizabeth explains, "One time she went to the water spring and the children she found there smeared hot pepper in her eyes. They beat her up and she came back crying. I felt like someone was piercing my heart with an arrow."

It's terrible to think that a mother and child have to suffer needlessly, because Allen's condition is treatable. Her cataracts can be removed to restore good vision. What strikes me is this: because the world did not recognise the light - the true light - when it was coming into the world, could this be part of the reason why children are still needlessly blind, and don't receive the help they need?

If everyone on earth recognised what it meant to have Jesus walking among us,

we would have changed the way we treat others. But now the task is for those of us who do know the light, and work in our own feeble ways to follow the path through life that is lit up by him. Knowing this, it only makes sense to do what we can today, and in the future, to help restore the sight of people who *could* see, but can't because until someone helps, they can't afford the medical care they need.

As individual members of our congregation any donations we make to support Christian Blind Mission's **See the Way** appeal will be doubled by the UK government. So we know this is an important, urgent need. People's lives will change. And the multiplying effect of this gift reminds me of the words of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke, chapter 6, "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap."



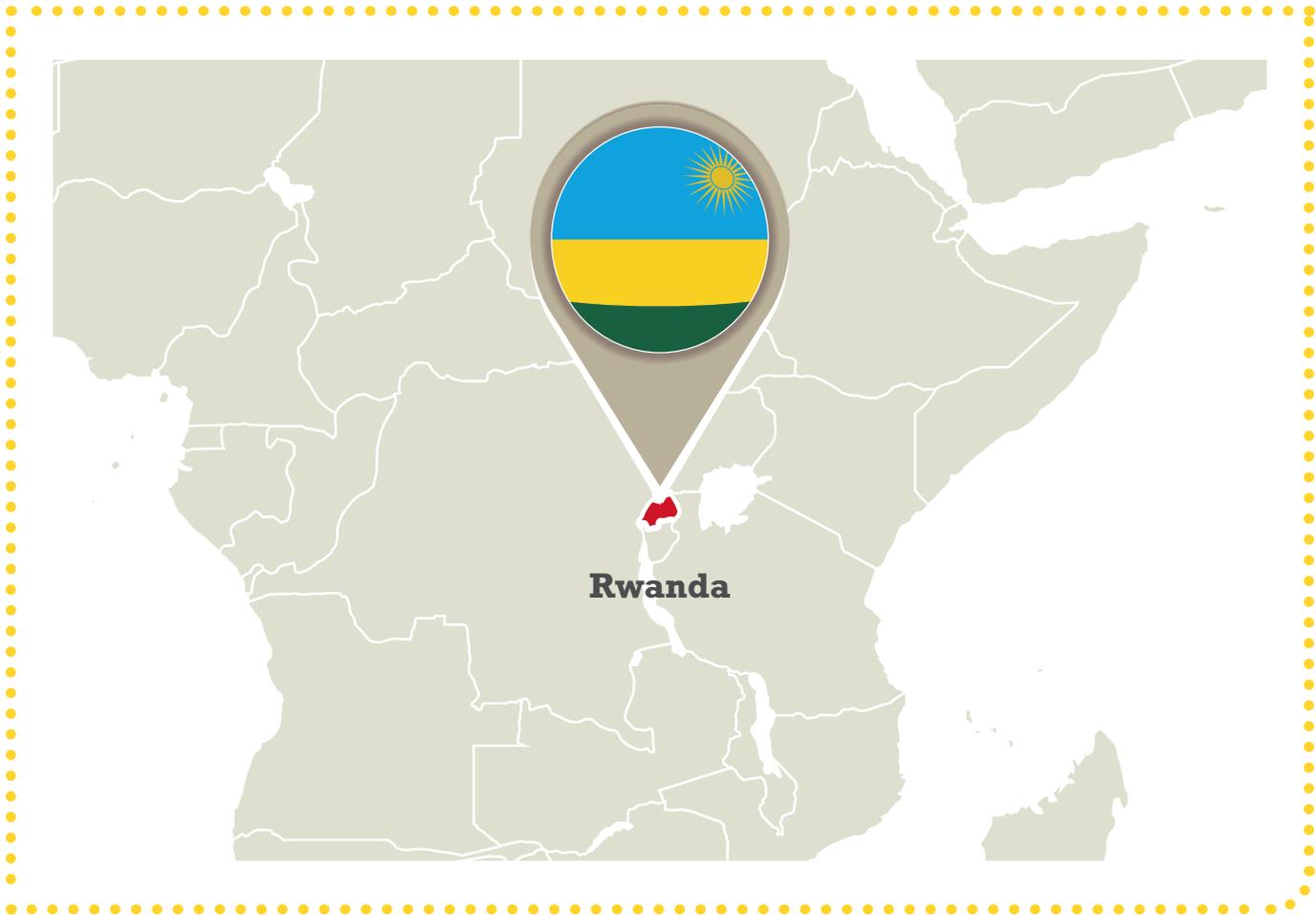
9. More information about blindness, Rwanda and CBM



Every day, people in the world's poorest places become needlessly blind because of conditions that can be easily treated, like cataracts. Many women, men and children in poverty have no access to the most basic of eye health services. Worldwide, an incredible 3 out of 4 people who are blind don't need to be. And too often, if you live in a poor community, losing your sight also means losing the chance to go to school, live independently or earn a living.

Donations from your church members will help people in the world's poorest places **See the Way** to a brighter future, by:

- improving access to sight-restoring cataract surgery and treatment for blinding conditions like glaucoma.
- reaching people at risk of blindness in remote areas, far from the nearest eye hospital, helping them access treatment before it is too late.
- ensuring people with low-vision can access glasses and support, so they can go to school, earn a living and be active in their communities.
- training local staff, equipping hospitals and strengthening eye health systems to ensure the maximum long-term benefit.



Donate today and gifts from your church congregation could help twice the number of people, like Allen and Charlotte, **See the Way** to a brighter future.

Until 14th May 2019, all public donations to our **See the Way** appeal will be doubled by the UK government. So every pound you can give will have double the impact – it could fund twice as many sight-saving surgeries, pairs of glasses or eye-health outreach activities in the world's poorest places.

Your donation will help prevent blindness and transform lives wherever the need is greatest. Match funding from the UK government will improve access to sight-saving eye-health services in Rwanda.

Find out more at www.cbmuk.org.uk/seetheway-fundraise

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