During 2019 Blythswood Care

**Cared for**
- 85 young people through Talita Kum, western Romania.

**Delivered**
- 19 shipments of aid during 2019 to eight countries in Eastern Europe
- three fire engines to Moldova and two fire engines and two ambulances to Ukraine through our 999 Project.

**Supported**
- 50 poor families through our Basis Project, in Romania

**Delivered**
- 110,926 Christmas shoeboxes, each of which included a Bible story book, a testimony booklet or a calendar with Bible verses

**Distributed**
- food to 9,329 recipients from our Highland and Edinburgh South East Foodbanks, 77 tonnes of food from Highland alone.

**Funded**
- 50,000 Christian children's books in Pakistan

**Recycled**
- Recycled over 2,000 tonnes

**Cared for**
- Care for over 40 children at Dayspring House, India

**Awarded**
- 271 grants for Gospel Tracts to 128 grantees in 14 countries, which including Bibles, New Testaments and tracts in local languages.
From our Chairman

Blythswood has experienced many challenges over the six decades of its existence and the charity has adapted to changing attitudes in society as well as responding to many different areas of need. The Blythswood pioneers who distributed Christian leaflets around the streets of Glasgow could not have foreseen the collapse of the Iron Curtain which led Blythswood into Eastern Europe, which is such a focus of our activity in 2020.

The core mission of the organization remains unchanged however - to introduce men, women, boys and girls to the transforming grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our work under God is to sow the seed of His Word through the distribution of Christian literature and the support of Christian ministries which reach people of different ages through education and relief projects.

In his own report our Chief Executive James Campbell shares some remarkable stories of the part which the whole Blythswood community has played in the lives of people in Scotland and much further afield. When I refer to the Blythswood community I am referring to everyone who contributes to the life and mission of the charity – those who support financially and in prayer and the many who work as staff and volunteers across a range of activities in a range of countries. On behalf of the trustees I extend our sincere thanks for what you have done individually and collectively.

While we are reporting here on a year which has passed, we cannot ignore the ongoing impact of a global pandemic for which none of us was prepared. As a consequence of the lockdown in March of this year the majority of our staff were furloughed and our retail outlets closed. At the time of writing, however, the majority of our staff are back working, financial support has not flagged and we have benefited from many of the grants offered to businesses and to the third sector. The support from all quarters has been truly humbling.

My final word is a reminder to all of us that none of this would have happened without the generous provision of the Lord who knows our every need and who has continued to guide Blythswood to this day. To Him belongs the praise and the glory.

David K Laing
Chair of Trustees
Blythswood Care Trustees’ Report

The Trustees present their report and the group’s financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2019

Charitable Aims

Our charitable purposes are:
- the advancement of the Christian religion
- the relief of sickness and financial hardship and the promotion and preservation of good health, and
- the promotion of education, particularly in the understanding of the Christian religion, by the printing, publishing, production and distribution of Christian literature and literacy materials.

In brief we aim to see God transforming lives through Christian care for body and soul.

We want to give more people at home in the UK and across the world, real hope, a true purpose and an exciting future, by sharing the love of Jesus with them in ways which offer an opportunity for changed values and more fulfilling lives.

On this journey our projects:
- Focus on the educational, practical and spiritual needs of the most vulnerable people;
- Are managed by capable local leadership;
- Are grounded in a strong financial base leading towards self-sustainability.

Our Mission

Blythswood Care seeks to be an instrument in God’s hands to transform lives through education, community action and the promotion of the gospel.
- Blythswood is committed to long-term care projects, enabling disadvantaged children and young people to fulfil their potential through EDUCATION.
- We provide practical help for people in their COMMUNITY to give them opportunities to provide for themselves.
- Communicating the life-bringing message of the GOSPEL of the good news of Jesus Christ is the underlying motivation in all that we do.

Our Values

As an organisation committed to Biblical principles and the gospel of Jesus Christ, we aim to operate to the following values:
- Compassion – we are committed to going out of our way to help with the physical, spiritual, or emotional hurts or pains of those in need;
- Excellence – we seek to provide services to the highest professional standards;
- Impartiality – we seek to act fairly and sensitively with all, regardless of background or belief, according to their individual needs;
- Integrity – we are honest and trustworthy and will always seek to do the right thing;
- Respect – we respect the individual and are committed to equal opportunity for all staff and volunteers;
- Responsibility – we ensure our actions are always lawful, reasonable, proportionate and necessary;
- Sustainability – we work towards making every project self-sustaining.

From our Chief Executive

How should we measure Blythswood Care’s achievements in 2019?

We can look at outcomes in the lives of individuals and there is much to encourage us.

Take Mahender at Dayspring House near Hyderabad, India. In two years he has gone from being a malnourished child dressed in rags to a chubby, confident 12-year-old who loves to play kabaddi, works hard at school and dreams of being a doctor.

Or look at Dani in Jimbolia, Romania. His parents may not understand the importance of education but the after-school programme at Talita Kum is giving the teenager the support he needs to break the cycle of illiteracy and to persevere at school.

Nearer to home our foodbanks in the Highlands and in southeast Edinburgh provided a three-day food supply to over 9,000 people, preventing them from going hungry during personal financial crises.

This report gives you facts and figures that help describe the outcomes of your gifts, your voluntary time, and the dedicated efforts of our workforce. I’m humbled to be part of such a team.

The gospel is the beating heart of this organisation and so we must look for spiritual results as well.

In 2019 we co-published The Lost Boy in seven languages. Alone in a prison cell, Dumitru Sevastian recalled a story he had heard as a child, the story of the Prodigal Son. Now he understood it, experienced the Father’s welcome and was changed for good.

Working for Blythswood’s Basis project, Agnes Csiszer visits some of the poorest homes in Cluj, Romania, bringing food, clothes and sound advice. Recently she told me how the story of the Tax Collector and the Pharisee changed her attitude towards those who have made bad choices in life.

When we see our own need of God’s mercy and forgiveness, we realise we are not here to judge but to serve.

In that spirit I offer you this report. Thank you for supporting the work of Blythswood Care.

James Campbell
Chief Executive
Imagine this. Your mum can neither read nor write. Your dad you see only occasionally. Neither appreciates the importance of education. And when you are at home you are expected to look after your older sister’s children.

That’s the situation facing 12-year-old Dani. It’s only through your support for Blythswood’s afterschool programme, Talita Kum, that he receives the encouragement he needs to persevere at school.

“He enjoys everything the programme has to offer – food, games, activities. He loves acrobatics and is always trying to improve his front and back flips.”

“Dani’s attendance is very good,” says Carmen Popa who teaches at Talita Kum, in Jimbolia, western Romania. “He’s been with us four years and has now joined TK2, the programme for junior secondary pupils.

“He doesokay at school but still needs the extra tuition we can give. He prefers maths to Romanian. Once he grasps an idea he insists on working independently and finishes all his homework.

“Dani’s story is valid for all kids like him. He needs support for his skills. Children like Dani would never get this opportunity.”

Looking at the wider impact of the programme, Adrian observes that the rate of early school leaving fell from 45% in 2009 to just 1.5% in 2018. “It’s more than just educational achievements,” he adds.

Dani has learnt to work independently and finish his homework.
Mahender is a healthy twelve-year-old lad whose favourite game is kabaddi, the vigorous contact sport popular throughout the Indian subcontinent.

But two years ago his situation was very different. His father had died, following years of alcohol abuse, leaving his young family in extreme poverty.

It was an uncle who approached Dayspring House, near Hyderabad, seeking admission for the malnourished boy, who was dressed in rags.

“Since coming to Dayspring, his health has improved, says Pastor Samuel Babu who oversees the welfare and education of 35 children with support from Blythswood Care.”

Meals at Dayspring are based on a traditional Indian diet of rice, pulses and vegetables with milk, eggs, chicken and fruit to make sure the children receive the protein and vitamins they need.

“Mahender is gaining weight and doing well at school,” Samuel Babu says. “His ambition is to become a doctor.”

These stories of transformation – and many others like them – are possible only because of the generosity of individuals, churches and funders.
In all, 242 tonnes of aid was delivered through 40 different organisations around the world. Some medicines were purchased to satisfy individual requests and some food was purchased within recipient countries. All other aid was donated by individuals, by other charities or organisations such as hospitals or by manufacturers. Our ongoing membership of Global Hand has also widened our support network.

This aid included 110,926 Christmas shoeboxes, all of which were sent out before the end of the year.

Since it began in 1993 the appeal has delivered 2,407,831 boxes.

Blythswood support has helped prevent children from being taken into care.

National policy in Romania is to keep children in families but this is not always possible. The Almas family has ten children between the ages of one and 15. Their father is receiving treatment for lung cancer and is unable to work. This leaves the family entirely dependent on the children’s allowance which equates to less than 90p per day for each child.

“The first time I visited, the eldest girl was making a packet of instant soup for their breakfast,” says Blythswood’s Basis Project worker Agnes Csiszer. “The children were inadequately dressed and their parents were not there.” Now Agnes visits the family every month, bringing a large box of staple foods such as rice, flour, sugar and cooking oil. She also brings clothes and footwear as required.

“The eldest is attending school through a government programme called Second Chance,” Agnes explains. “Their home is half-built, just a single room which they all share. There are several families in a similar situation in that village. These people are barely surviving. For them the monthly food parcel is very significant.”

The Basis project currently gives assistance to 31 families within a 50 kilometre radius of the city of Cluj.

1,082 aid loads sent since 1990 valued at £35,496,582
Crisis Intervention

The Highland Foodbank network has continued to help people in crisis, distributing 77 tonnes of food in 2019 by providing a three-day food supply to 7,724 people, preventing them from going hungry during personal financial crises.

People utilise foodbanks for a variety of reasons, the most common being benefit delays, low income and benefit changes. Apart from the two foodbanks in Inverness, rural foodbanks have been supported in Alness, Aviemore, Dingwall, Tain, Nairn, Kyle, Thurso and Wick throughout 2019.

Edinburgh South East Foodbank also distributed food to 1605 clients.

Gifts to Blythswood’s Highland Foodbank enabled a retail worker on a zero-hours contract to survive a post-Christmas collapse in her wages.

“Up until Christmas Wilma* was working 40 hours a week,” says Highland Foodbank manager Lorna Dempster. “But she had very few shifts in January and had to apply for Universal Credit.

“The week in which she was referred to us by Citizens’ Advice Bureau she had worked only four hours and had no prospect of more.

“She had spent her savings on rent and bills and would have to wait another two weeks for her first payment of Universal Credit. She was so grateful for the help Foodbank gave her and told one of our volunteers that she didn’t know what she would have done without it.

“Wilma is single and has no family living in the area. Friends had invited her to pop round for meals but she felt there were only so many times she could do that.”

From its origins as the Blythswood Tract Society in 1966, Blythswood has promoted the good news of Jesus Christ through the printed page. This remains central to our strategy today.

The 2019 Shoe Box Appeal presented us with our biggest opportunity to distribute the gospel message most widely in print. Our objective is to present a Biblical message in a way that is attractive and culturally relevant. For younger children we produced Daniel the Praying Prince in six east European languages. For teenagers we published The Lost Boy, the testimony of Dumitru Sevastian, one of our key partners in Moldova. Boxes for adults contained a colourful calendar with a text for each month. These we obtained in five languages from the Trinitarian Bible Society and produced one in Bulgarian ourselves, utilising pictures by Mike Ogborne around the theme of work. In all 126,800 items were procured at a cost of £42,146, giving an average unit cost of 33p.

Support from one donor allowed us to forward £10,500 Christian literature and ministry

Christian literature and ministry to Pakistan Sunday School Ministry to print 50,000 more children’s books in Urdu in country.

In the course of the year 271 grants of tracts, books and bibles were made to 128 grantees in 14 countries (Bulgarian, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Kosovo, Liberia, Malawi, Moldova, Nigeria, Pakistan, Romania, UK, Zambia).

Bibles, NTs and other items of Christian literature were obtained in 27 languages at a cost of £4,769 for the Seafarers’ Centre in Invergordon.

Our charity shops carried a small stock of Christian books, completely refreshed three times throughout the year, with the first batch aimed at Easter, the second for summer reading and the third leading up to Christmas. An outlay of £6,568 put books in 20 shops. Unsold stock is reused for grants and free distribution. Our prayer is that customers coming in simply for clothes or bric-a-brac may go out with something of eternal value.

Blythswood supported 10 pastors in Eastern Europe, and village ministry and child evangelism in Asia. And with an eye to reaching young people in our own immediate community, we supported the ministry of Street Pastors in Inverness, and of Dingwall Youth Café.

Over 62,000 people fed through our foodbanks since starting in 2005

2,500,000 gospel tracts distributed

400 pastors supported in the last 20 years
Trading & Recycling

Throughout 2019 Blythswood Trading continued to develop our collection, processing, charity shop sales and end markets for the many items generously donated to us e.g. clothes, shoes, furniture, bric-a-brac, media, toys and books.

Blythswood’s end-to-end capability (retail, recycling and humanitarian aid coupled with our logistical expertise), makes the organisation highly effective in the stewardship of these donations and provides employment for people who otherwise might struggle to find jobs.

Blythswood Trading’s turnover for 2019 was £2.315M

Over 2,000 tonnes of donated goods were reused and recycled by Blythswood Trading, equating to over six million individual items. This created employment and volunteering opportunities for people with various skill levels and backgrounds.

Blythswood is a member of Community Resources Network Scotland (CRNS), The Charity Retail Association (CRA) and also Revolve, the Scottish reuse retail quality accreditation scheme, which demonstrates our effectiveness in selling second-hand goods.

Volunteers

People of all ages find opportunity to volunteer their time and skills in Blythswood Care.

We have over 1,000 volunteers around the country – checking shoeboxes, fundraising, participating in support groups, marking correspondence courses, giving talks, serving in charity shops, sorting donated goods, driving vehicles, and helping to run summer camps for children in Eastern Europe.

We wish to thank them for all their hard work throughout the year.

Over 74,500 volunteer hours given in 2019 valued at more than £616,000 at the national minimum wage

Appreciation

The Trustees are very grateful and take this opportunity to express publicly their gratitude to our dedicated staff and volunteers for the huge contribution they make throughout the year. Without their hard work, vision and willingness to go the extra mile, much of what is accomplished through Blythswood Care would not be possible.

“And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written: They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor their righteousness endures forever. Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.”

2 Corinthians 9: 8-11

Results. Administration Costs

Trustees

The trustees who served during the year were as follows:

J M Campbell (Chief Executive)
I Gillies
C Gordon (appointed 30 May 2019)
L Gray (appointed 30 May 2019)
D Laing (Chairman)
P Lyall
R M McCheyne
G B Smith (retired 22 August 2019)
D Vardy (retired 21 November 2019)
S Worgan

Appointment of New Trustees

The Trustees, together with the Chief Executive, seek to identify potential new trustees with the character, energy, shared vision, skills and experience to provide a positive contribution to Blythswood Care. Prospective Trustees are given significant exposure to Blythswood before a decision is made on their appointment.

The power to appoint new Trustees rests with the non-executive Trustees who are guarantors of the charitable company under the Articles of Association. That power is exercised by special resolution.

Induction of New Trustees

A full induction programme is provided for new trustees covering areas that include:

• Our vision, mission and values.
• Explanations of all of Blythswood’s projects and services.
• Details of our objectives for our coming year and our Strategic Plan.
• The roles and responsibilities of trustees under charity law and our governance rules.

Organisational structure

Blythswood Care is as a company limited by guarantee which is registered as a Scottish Charity. The charity previously operated under a trust deed (and that entity continues to exist under the name Blythwood Care 1993).

Blythswood Care 1993 holds legal title to some of the retail properties which are operated through Blythswood Trading Ltd. and acts as the prospective recipient of any legacies for the benefit of Blythswood Care. Transfer of title to those properties will follow in due course.

Blythswood Trading Limited (“BTL”) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Blythswood Care.

Organisational change

For many years Blythswood Ireland Ltd. (“BIL”), a charitable company and a charity in Northern Ireland, has worked in partnership with Blythswood Care. In order to more closely align the work of the two organisations, on 01 January 2020 Blythswood Care became the sole member of BIL when its trustees stepped down as members. They remain in office as Directors of BIL.

Related Parties

The Trustees all gave of their time and expertise without any form of the remuneration or other benefit in cash or kind (2018: £nil). Expenses paid to trustees during the year 2019 amounted to £634.95 (2018: £1,661.06)

During the year 2019, six trustees donated £6,510.61 to the charity’s general funds. (2018: Three trustees donated £3,200)

Future Plans

The demands upon the charity increase both in the UK and overseas. The Foodbanks continue to serve an increased customer base. Applications to the charity, as it becomes more widely known, from all around the world present increasing challenges as to how the available resources can be allocated for maximum impact. The Trustees earnestly hope and pray they will be able to identify additional sources of income, through generous donations and internal activities, so they are able to increase their support to needy people both at home and abroad as they seek to transform lives through Christian care for body and soul.
We continue to work through trusted partners and regularly evaluate projects with the aim of leading them on towards self-sufficiency & self-sustainability.

Reserves Policy
The Trustees keep the level of reserves under regular review. Blythswood was founded on the basis of the Christian belief that a faithful God will supply all our needs. Therefore, the Trustees continue to maintain that it is not appropriate to retain significant surpluses. As a general policy the Trustees intend to maintain sufficient reserves to meet the day-to-day operational needs of the charity.

Risk management
The Trustees are required to produce a statement of policy on risk identification and management, and this has been done to a good and established standard. To support this action the Trustees follow a formal risk management process to assess business risks and implement risk management strategies. This involves identifying the types of risks the organisation faces, prioritising them in terms of potential impact and likelihood of occurrence, and identifying means of mitigating the risks. This process is monitored by the Board quarterly and reviewed annually.

This work has identified that financial sustainability is the major financial risk for both the charity and its trading subsidiary. A key element in the management of financial risk is a regular review of available liquid funds to settle debts as they fall due, regular liaison with the bank, and active management of trade debtors and creditors balances to ensure sufficient working capital by both organisations. Attention has also been focused on non-financial risks arising from fire, health and safety at all the organisations facilities. These risks are managed by ensuring the organisation has robust policies and procedures in place, and regular awareness training for staff working in these operational areas. The Trustees also review the central accident book and ‘near misses’ on a quarterly basis.

Post Balance Sheet Events
The directors consider that there has been no change to the operating activities of the group during 2019.

Accordingly, the Directors have concluded that the financial statements give a true and fair view of the Bythswood Care’s financial position, financial performance and cash flows; that the company has complied with FRS10.

The global pandemic of COVID-19 has had a significant effect on trading from the national lockdown on 24th March 2020, when all of our shops, depots and offices closed down overnight. Apart from key administrators, and our Foodbank personnel all of the staff were immediately placed on furlough. We are grateful that the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme enabled us to pay all the staff eighty percent of their salaries, throughout the lock-down period.

As a result of the gradual lifting of restrictions in Scotland, permission was granted to re-open retail outlets from 29th June 2020. We were able to achieve a gradual re-opening of shops and depots throughout July and August. Trading has been very encouraging since the shops have re-opened, and the re-introduction of collections and deliveries will enhance this further when safe to do so.

We received a Third Sector Resilience Grant which enabled us to maintain payments to our landlords and utility companies from April to June 2020. In addition Scottish Business Grants which were made available for many of our shops from the Scottish Government has supported the phased re-opening of our retail operation.

## 2019 Finances

### Income Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Resources</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>£</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
<td>15.35%</td>
<td>1,232,858</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legacies</td>
<td>5.31%</td>
<td>426,581</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital Grants</td>
<td>0.32%</td>
<td>25,898</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trading Income</td>
<td>28.83%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investment Income</td>
<td>0.07%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gift in Kind (Donated Goods)</td>
<td>50.12%</td>
<td>4,025,582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,031,680</strong></td>
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# 2019 Finances

## Resources Expended

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources Expended</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian Literature</td>
<td>0.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct project costs</td>
<td>5.01%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special projects support</td>
<td>6.87%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trading Costs</td>
<td>29.42%</td>
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<td>Support Costs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising Costs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gift in Kind (Donated Goods)</td>
<td>49.91%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Resources Expended: 8,066,413