

Catherine Le Tissier and Nick Drayson

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The call in action

Dear friends,

Five months ago not many people would even have known the meaning of “Zoomed out”, let alone have the experience of being that. Today I think we are all more aware of the possibilities, as well as the drawbacks, of the sort of technology that allows us to meet with friends and colleagues from all over the world without having to go out of our door. Or more correctly, in some cases, without being allowed to go out of our door.

We have spent lockdown in England, which, despite amassing more than 46,000 dead from COVID-19, has allowed great freedom of movement. Yet we are acutely aware that our team in Argentina, despite only a fifth of that tally and no cases at all in the Province of Formosa, is still barely allowed to leave their houses, even for exercise. We trust and pray that extreme measures will continue to be effective against an extreme enemy.

So what has been going on in our enclosed worlds and through the technological lens?

1. Contact with the Diocese of Northern Argentina

It is strange to be leading a church family on the other side of the world, but in fact if we were in our home in Juarez we would have almost the same amount of contact – all by phone or computer!

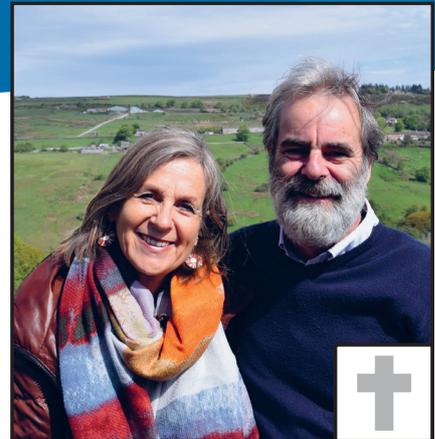
Although very few churches and individuals there have access to computers and internet, the use of telephones and WhatsApp is widespread. This means that we have conversations or glean news from all sorts of people each day, as well as contributing with prayers and messages, including sermons.

With movement restricted we understand that many families who cannot go to church are meeting in their homes, and some are finding creative ways of keeping in touch, as well as caring for those in need. Some of the AMARE women have started a regular radio programme, which allows for a much wider sharing of news, testimonies, teaching and prayer, and reaches all those not able to go out during lockdown.

2. All sorts of Zoom meetings

It wasn't until we started having Zoom meetings that we realised how effective they were. Now we seem to have them with everyone!

Catherine has been talking regularly to the women in AMARE, both locally and internationally, as well as attending other meetings with Mothers' Union, CMS and a few useful webinars. Nick has had bishops' meetings, Anglican Communion working groups, and even led a four-week seminar called “Whole Life Discipleship” with the Diocese of Uruguay. And we both continue to participate in discipleship “training huddles”, which were already up and running from before lockdown.



Name: Catherine Le Tissier and Nick Drayson

Location: Northern Argentina

Our call: To serve God's kingdom, making disciples in different cultures and enabling people to develop appropriate forms of church to respond to local needs.

Our role: Nick is diocesan bishop, overseeing 150 Anglican churches in rural and urban contexts. Catherine coordinates the work of AMARE, the Argentine branch of Mothers' Union.



Stay at home church during lockdown

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3. Time with family

One of our hopes when we “briefly” visited the UK in March was to spend a bit more time with our family. Little did we know how much time this would turn into! It has been such a pleasure to have first several months in Bradford with Stefi and Rhys, and then a few months in Leigh, near Tonbridge, within striking distance of Sam and Sally and their two. We have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know Cassian (3) and Merida (1). We even managed to have a week’s holiday all together near Pickering.

While in Kent we have managed to see Nick’s two sisters as well, and as we write we are quarantining in Guernsey prior to a few weeks with Catherine’s family here. Her sister has been poorly and we are glad to have the opportunity to be with her.

4. Enjoying the English countryside in spring and summer

It is a long time since we have been in the UK with time on our hands, and with good enough weather to explore the highways and byways. Walking from moorland to coast, exploring rivers and forests, we feel so privileged to be here just now, however frustrating it might sometimes be not to be able to travel as planned. We continue to await the moment when we can return to Argentina, but meanwhile so value God’s world and his timing.

5. A bit of preparation of materials

Not all of our Zoom time has been spent on South American church business. We have also enjoyed contact with a number of supporting friends and parishes in the UK, and sometimes taken part in their services or discussions. It has been an unexpectedly rich time in terms of attending online church, and sometimes recording videos or writing materials for use in different places.

Please pray:

- For the churches in Northern Argentina, as they adapt to lockdown and learn new ways to be church
- That a good use may continue to be made of Zoom and other platforms, especially in training of new leaders and gospel outreach
- For our family, as they reach moments of change in their lives
- That our society would Build Back Better, drawing on the blessing of seeing God’s creation breathe in these days
- That we would be inspired to write and record useful materials

With our love,

Nick and Catherine

Photos from top to bottom: Radio broadcasts by AMARE; One of many Zoom meetings; Catherine with the grandchildren; Day out with the family.



GOING FURTHER WITH CHURCH MISSION SOCIETY

Adelante goes online: Join us for our first virtual gathering to celebrate, learn about and pray for mission in and from Latin America on 25–26 September. Sign up today at churchmissionsociety.org/Adelante

If you would like to discuss your mailings with us or to receive this link letter on a regular basis, please email supporter.care@churchmissionsociety.org or call 01865 787400

You can give to Catherine and Nick at: churchmissionsociety.org/drayson

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