

## **Celebrate a love that builds hope this Advent**

It's rare for us to live through a phenomenon which affects us in the UK at the same time as people right across the world. Not often in our lives have we experienced a threat that is shared by our global neighbours in countries as wide-ranging as Ethiopia, Lebanon and Nicaragua.

Covid-19 and measures to curb its spread have held much of the world in its thrall throughout 2020 destroying lives, instilling fear, devastating livelihoods and forcing vulnerable people into more desperate poverty.

As we approach Christmas though we are reminded of a person who turned the world upside down for good, whose life in a time of oppression and fear introduced a hope that transformed the globe as it spread across it.

Looking to Emmanuel, God with us, this Christmas, we are reminded that God walks with us through deeply difficult times and works through us in all circumstances to show love to this world. A love that never fails. A love that unites. A love that builds hope.

Inspired by Jesus, Christian Aid supporters walk alongside those for whom coronavirus is yet another threat on top of existing ones, including the climate crisis, conflict and in 2020 the impact of locust swarms.

Your gifts and actions help people like Mekonnen Sofar in Ethiopia's South Omo region, who digs a metre deep in dry river beds to try to find a water source to keep his livestock alive as the climate crisis pushes his family into hunger and threatens his whole way of life.

Friends, fellow herdsmen and children have died through digging so deep that the dry bed collapses above them.

Christian Aid is working with families like Mekonnen's to provide community water sources and explore alternative means of raising income such as through making soap from aloe vera and planting drought resistant crops.

The new restrictions placed on how we meet and interact have caused us to rethink what it is to be community, but our supporters know that we are bound together by much more than a virus and have shown a deep determination to continue to reach out to others.

This Christmas churches are being invited to join **in a moment of solidarity and hope on Advent Sunday, 29 November** by using the carol '*When out of poverty is born*' in their worship and taking a collection for Christian Aid.

The hymn, which is freely available to use to use from [caid.org.uk/christmasresources](https://caid.org.uk/christmasresources) celebrates Mary's faith in the Magnificat and begins with the words '*When out of poverty is born a dream that will not die*'. This Christmas we can celebrate the incredible truth that we are bound together globally by a love that builds resilience in the face of disease, drought and darkness, that builds up hope for all our neighbours.

To find out more about Christian Aid's Christmas Appeal, including how to act for climate justice, visit [caid.org.uk/hope](https://caid.org.uk/hope). This Advent, £15 could train one woman to make aloe vera soap, £80 could provide two goats to help a family build a better future and £290 could pay for the materials and tools to build a pond, providing life-saving, reliable water for a whole community.



Photo credit Christian Aid/Elizabeth Dalziel. Captions:

1. Low rainfall leaves herdsman Mekonnen Sofar struggling to find water for his cattle in Ethiopia
2. Mekonnen Sofar digs in a dry river bed to find water for his livestock